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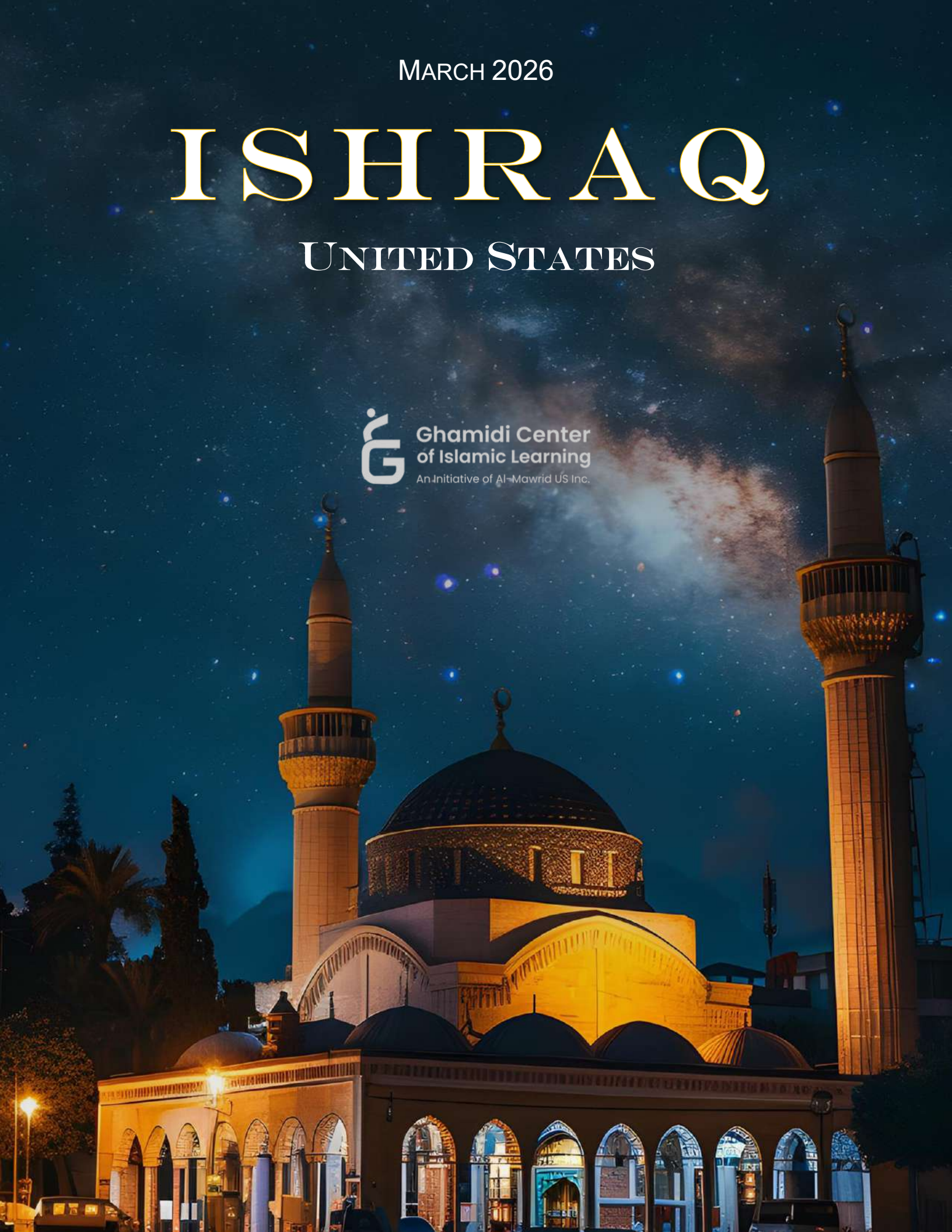
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PROHIBITIONS IN MORALITY

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

In *Surah An-Nahl* (16), verse 90, the prohibitions within the sphere of ethics are stated in principle. These consist of three matters: indecency (*fuḥshā*), wrongdoing (*munkar*), and transgression (*baghy*). It is stated:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ، يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ.
Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and giving to relatives, and He forbids indecency, wrongdoing, and transgression. He admonishes you so that you may take heed.

In *Surah Al-Araf* (7), verse 33, these same matters are also declared unlawful. It is stated:

فَلْ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَ مَا بَطَّنَ وَ الْإِثْمَ وَ الْبَغْيَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَ أَنْ تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا وَ أَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ.
Say: My Lord has only forbidden immoralities, whether open or hidden, and injustice and wrongful transgression, and that you associate with Allah anything for which He has sent down no authority, and that you attribute to Allah what you do not know.

When the verse of Al-Araf is examined in comparison with the directive mentioned above in An-Nahl, two differences become evident. First, in place of wrongdoing (*munkar*), the word '*ithm*' (sin) has been used. Second, two additional prohibitions have been added: shirk and religious innovation. The purpose of choosing the word '*ithm*' instead of '*munkar*' is to particularize the meaning of 'violation of rights.' If moral evils, sins, and wrongdoings are classified into categories, only three types emerge: first, those evils that are of the nature of indecency; second, those that manifest oppression and injustice; and third, those that involve the usurpation of the rights of others. All moral vices fall within these three categories, and no fourth category can reasonably be conceived. By employing the word '*ithm*' in place of '*munkar*', the Quran has clarified that among the three forms of wrongdoing declared unlawful, the third category—besides immoralities and wrongful transgression—is the violation of rights.¹ The respected teacher, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, writes:

... By using the word '*ithm*' at another place, the Quran has clarified that it refers here to those acts through which the rights of others are violated.² (*Al-Bayan*, 3/42)

¹ In *Surah al-Nahl* and *Surah al-Araf*, the words '*munkar*' (evil/wrong) and '*ithm*' (sin), when used in their unqualified and independent sense, denote generality. That is, they refer to all forms of wrongdoing that the innate human moral sense recognizes as evil. In the present context, however, these words occur in conjunction with '*fuḥshā*' (indecency) and '*baghy*' (transgression), which themselves are included among the *munkarat* and *atham*. Therefore, the meaning of generality cannot be derived from them here. Rather, in this context they must be understood as referring to the third category of moral wrongdoing—namely, the violation or usurpation of rights.

² The word '*ithm*' originally carries the sense of *ta akhkhur*—that is, 'lagging behind' or 'falling behind.' Thus, '*athimah*' is used for a she-camel that falls behind because of exhaustion. From this, the term came to be used for falling short in the discharge of rights, whether they are the rights of God or the rights of human beings. In this sense, it stands in opposition to '*birr*', whose primary meaning is the fulfillment of rights.

The word '*ithm*' is also used in conjunction with '*udwan*', because in matters pertaining to rights, sin is of two kinds: one consisting of negligence or the failure to fulfill rights, and the other consisting of aggression and transgression. The first type is denoted by the word '*ithm*', while the second is denoted by '*udwan*'.

As for the two additional prohibitions mentioned in Surah Al-Araf—namely polytheism and religious innovation—their nature is not that of independent categories. Rather, they are branches of the previously mentioned prohibitions, singled out because of their extraordinary gravity. Regarding the first, the words ‘*an tushriku billah*’ (that you associate partners with Allah) are used. This is a branch of ‘*ithm*’, that is, violation of rights. Polytheism constitutes an explicit violation of the rights of Allah Almighty, for it is exclusively His right to be acknowledged as the Deity, the true object of worship, and the Absolute Sovereign. If a person associates anyone with Him in His essence or attributes, he commits the crime of usurping His rights. Moreover, this also amounts to fabrication against Allah; therefore, it fully embodies the meaning of ‘*baghy*’, that is, wrongful transgression.

For the second matter, the words ‘*أَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ*’ (that you attribute to Allah what you do not know) are used. This signifies fabricating lies about Allah. Such an act constitutes *bidah*, that is, introducing additions into religion, and therefore amounts to open rebellion before Allah Almighty. Consequently, it falls under the category of ‘*baghy*’.

The primary reason for presenting these two applications—*shirk* and *bidah*—as distinct prohibitions is their exceptional heinousness. Alongside this, a secondary reason is that, in terms of application, both function as categories themselves. This means that, like immoralities, violation of rights, and wrongful transgression, they are also principled headings under which innumerable unlawful acts take shape. For example, angel-worship, star-worship, ancestor-worship, priest-worship, idol-worship, grave-worship, and belief in *al-jibt* (*magic, sorcery*) and *al-taghut* (*Satan*) are among many polytheistic practices that fall within the category of *shirk*.



In the verse under discussion (al-Baqarah 2:182), this word occurs together with ‘*janaf*’. As has already been explained, ‘*janaf*’ signifies partiality or bias. In contrast to it, the most appropriate meaning of ‘*ithm*’ in this context would be the violation or usurpation of rights. (*Tadabbur-i Qur’an*, 1/441)

THE PROHIBITION OF PORK

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

In matters of food and drink, the basis of permissibility and prohibition rests upon the distinction between pure (*tayyib*) and impure (*khabiṭh*). Accordingly, wholesome things are lawful, whereas impure things are unlawful. Religion seeks the purification of the human self in every respect; therefore, it requires that, alongside inner purification, the distinction between pure and impure be observed in matters of consumption under all circumstances. This distinction is grounded in an innate criterion embedded within human nature itself. For this reason, recognition of impure things has never been alien to human beings. By virtue of natural habits and instinctive inclinations, humans feel an inherent aversion toward certain things. Gradually, this feeling develops into a consistent pattern of conduct and ultimately assumes the form of a clear moral avoidance. As a result, humans not only refrain individually from consuming such things but also, at a collective level, avoid accepting them as food.

However, there are certain cases in which, despite natural guidance, practical application does not become entirely clear. This occurs because some animals simultaneously exhibit characteristics belonging to different categories in their physical structure as well as instinctive and dietary habits, making it difficult to determine with certainty, at the natural level, whether they belong to the pure or impure class. In such situations, these overlapping similarities create ambiguity and confusion for human reason. The issue of animal consumption represents a prominent example of this kind. To clarify this distinction, the Quran has provided principled guidance regarding lawful animals. It states:

أُجِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ.

Livestock animals have been made lawful for you. (Al-Maidah 5:1)

The expression ‘*bahimah al-anām*’ refers to animals that are grazing by nature—that is, whose diet consists entirely of vegetation. In modern terminology, these are called herbivores. Examples include cattle, goats, and sheep. Their physical structure, digestive system, and general habits are all suited to grazing, and they possess no natural inclination toward animal prey. Such animals have been declared lawful.

From this Quranic guidance, it becomes self-evident that animals not included within this category fall among the impure. Thus, animals that hunt, attack with claws and sharp teeth, tear and rip apart their prey, and display predatory instincts fall outside this domain. The Prophet (PBUH) further clarified the Quranic intent by describing the outward signs of predation. It is narrated from Ibn Abbas (RA):

نَهَى عَنْ كُلِّ ذِي نَابٍ مِنَ السَّبَاعِ وَعَنْ كُلِّ ذِي مَخْلَبٍ مِنَ الطَّيْرِ.

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) forbade the consumption of every beast possessing fangs and every bird that hunts with talons. (Sahih Muslim, No. 5103)

This guidance of the Quran thus clearly establishes the division between pure and impure in matters of consumption. However, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) also drew attention to another highly important principle through which the domains of lawful, unlawful, and doubtful matters are clarified. He said:

الْحَلَالُ بَيْنَ وَالْحَرَامِ بَيْنَ وَبَيْنَهُمَا مَشْتَبِهَاتٌ .

The lawful is clear and the unlawful is clear, and between them are doubtful matters. (Sahih Bukhari, No. 52)

That is, permissibility and prohibition are fundamentally clear, yet between them certain matters may arise that involve ambiguity. It is precisely at this point that questions of application emerge regarding some animals.

In such cases, decisive guidance is obtained from the natural dietary habits of animals, because these habits practically manifest the distinction between purity and impurity. When dietary behavior is taken as the basis, the situation becomes largely clear. On one side are herbivores that subsist purely on vegetation; these fall within the category of *bahimah al-anām* and are lawful. On the other side are carnivores that hunt and, by virtue of their predatory nature, fall outside this category. The real question concerns a third category—animals that consume both plant and animal matter, known as omnivores.

Although omnivorous animals form a broad category, clear distinctions exist within it. Among land animals, bears, baboons, and certain species of monkeys are classified as omnivores, yet they share a fundamental trait: they actively hunt, attack with claws and teeth, tear apart prey, and display evident predatory instincts. These characteristics remove them from the mere category of omnivores and place them, in principle, among predatory beasts. Therefore, no additional textual directive is required concerning them.

By contrast, some omnivorous animals cannot be deemed predatory merely because of omnivory. Birds such as chickens and ducks may consume insects or small organisms, yet they neither hunt nor tear apart prey; rather, they swallow what they eat. Their claws are not designed for hunting, nor do they possess predatory instincts. Hence, their status does not remain doubtful. The same principle applies to fish. Many fish swallow their food and lack teeth designed for tearing prey, leaving no ambiguity regarding them. In contrast, certain fish—such as sharks—tear apart prey, possess teeth specifically suited for this purpose, and clearly exhibit predatory traits; thus, they also fall, in principle, within the predatory category.

After these clarifications, the case of the pig comes into view, and this is precisely where ambiguity becomes fully apparent. The pig is neither like bears and baboons, whose form and behavior clearly reveal predation, nor like chickens and ducks, whose dietary habits decisively clarify their status.

At first glance, the pig appears close to livestock such as goats and cattle due to its physical structure, especially its cloven hooves. Moreover, it becomes domesticated, lives alongside humans, and its meat is considered palatable. This outward resemblance and familiarity bring it seemingly close to the category of *bahimah al-anām*. Furthermore, whether domestic or wild, pigs are not fundamentally hunting animals. They neither pursue prey nor systematically kill animals, nor do they attack using claws in the manner characteristic of predators. From this perspective, placing them among purely carnivorous beasts does not appear immediately correct.

However, when analysis moves beyond outward resemblance to dietary habits, another aspect of the pig's animal nature becomes evident. Being omnivorous, when animal food becomes available, the pig does not merely swallow it; rather, it bites, chews, and crushes it with powerful jaws. The structure of its jaws and the presence of molars enable it to tear raw meat—an ability absent in purely herbivorous animals.

Thus, while certain outward features resemble livestock, predatory tendencies associated with flesh consumption are also clearly present. This internal contradiction produces ambiguity regarding the animal's true classification. The Torah describes this ambiguity by stating that it possesses cloven hooves but does not chew the cud. The Book of Leviticus states:

And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you. You shall not eat their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you. (Leviticus 11:7–8)¹

Here, cud-chewing is not merely an animal habit; rather, it signifies that the animal's nature and digestive system are fully designed for plant-based nourishment. Animals such as cattle, goats, and sheep first swallow vegetation and then bring it back to chew again, clearly demonstrating their purely herbivorous nature. Since the pig does not perform this process, it does not truly belong to the category of grazing livestock despite possessing cloven hooves.

In view of this principled distinction and ambiguous condition, the Quran did not leave the matter to human conjecture or estimation. Instead, it explicitly declared the pig unlawful, thereby resolving the issue with complete certainty so that no ambiguity remains regarding lawful and unlawful matters. It states:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَ مَا أُبِلَ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ.

He has only forbidden for you carrion, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. (Al-Baqarah 2:173)

From this decisive ruling of the Quran, another important reality also becomes clear: upon what basis the Shariah legislates. Religious guidance is fundamentally embedded within human nature, and in most matters, humans distinguish right from wrong through this innate awareness. However, there exists a domain in which natural guidance does not attain definitive clarity and doubts arise due to outward similarities. This is the domain of doubtful matters (*mushtabihāt*).

In such situations, Allah does not suffice with general principles alone; rather, He issues explicit legal rulings so that all possibilities of human conjecture, disagreement, and uncertainty are eliminated. The explicit prohibition of pork stands as a prominent example of this principle, wherein the Shariah resolved ambiguity by determining the boundary between lawful and unlawful with complete decisiveness.



¹ This indicates that any form of practical association or familiarity with this animal has been prohibited, so that its ambiguous nature and potentially predatory disposition are not overlooked, and the prohibition may thus remain grounded in its original underlying wisdom.

OUR CALL

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

Religion is the guidance of Allah which He first inspired within human nature and thereafter conveyed to humanity, with all its necessary details, through His prophets. The final prophet in this chain is Muhammad (PBUH). Consequently, the sole source of religion is now his blessed person alone, and the true religion is only that which he, through his word and deed, approval and endorsement, has declared to be religion.¹

We invite all people of the world to believe in this religion and to purify their individual as well as collective lives in accordance with it. Those who accept this call shall be rewarded with the Paradise of God—whose vastness encompasses the entire universe; wherein there is no death alongside life, no pain alongside pleasure, no sorrow alongside joy, no anxiety alongside tranquility, no hardship alongside comfort, and no misfortune alongside blessing. Its repose is everlasting, its delight boundless, its days and nights eternal, its peace perpetual, its happiness imperishable, its beauty unfading, and its perfection without limit. Allah has prepared therein for His servants that which no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human heart has ever conceived.²

Those who already profess faith in this religion are invited to bring their deeds into harmony with their belief so that they may attain this Paradise of God. They should fulfill the rights of Allah and the rights of His servants with complete honesty and sincere devotion, and commit no injustice against anyone's life, property, or honor.³

We invite them to counsel one another toward righteousness within their environment and sphere of influence and to restrain one another from wrongdoing. This is a duty imposed upon them by their Lord. It is an obligation owed by a father to his son and by a son to his father; by a husband to his wife and by a wife to her husband; by a brother to his sister and by a sister to her brother; by a friend to a friend and by a neighbor to a neighbor—in short, by every person toward all those connected with him. Therefore, whenever they observe that someone among their associates has adopted a path contrary to truth, they should, according to their knowledge and ability, advise them to adopt the way of rectitude.⁴

In any matter relating to religion or worldly affairs, if emotions, prejudices, interests, or desires attempt to divert them from justice, they must remain steadfast upon truth and fairness. Indeed, if testimony is demanded of them, they should fulfill this demand even at the risk of their lives. They should speak the truth, bow before the truth, bear witness with justice, and never adopt anything other than justice in belief or conduct.⁵

If they become the target of religious persecution, they should respond with patience rather than violence.⁶ If possible, they should leave such a place and migrate to a location where they may openly practice their religion.⁷

By the grace of Allah, the leading scholars of the Farahi School have, in the present age, presented the true religion free from every admixture of jurisprudential speculation, theological disputation, philosophical influence, and

¹ Surah al-Jumuah, 2:62

² Surah al-Ala, 87:14-17

³ Surah al-Nahl, 16:90

⁴ Surah al-Tawbah, 9:71

⁵ Surah Al-Nisa, 4:35; al-Maidah, 5:8

⁶ Surah Ha Mim al-Sajdah, 41:33-35

⁷ Surah Al-Nisa, 4:97

mystical accretion, restoring it purely and completely upon the foundation of the Quran and *Sunnah*. The dissemination of this religion, the education and moral training of people in accordance with it, and the intellectual renewal of Muslim religious thought in its light constitute a great *jihad* (*jihad kabir*). We invite people to support this endeavor with their endorsement, their time, and their resources. This is the support of God's true religion—nothing should be dearer to a believing servant than this.⁸

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا، كُونُوا أَنْصَارَ اللَّهِ، كَمَا قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ لِلْحَوَارِيِّينَ: مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ؟ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ: نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ.

O believers, become helpers of Allah, just as Jesus, son of Mary, said to the disciples: 'Who are my helpers in the cause of Allah?' The disciples replied: 'We are the helpers of Allah.' (Al-Saff, 61:14)

[2012]



⁸ Surah al-Tawbah 9:24

THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

[1]

It is narrated from Abdullah bin Abbas [RA] that once a solar eclipse occurred, and the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) performed the prayer. The Companions were also present with him on that occasion. When he completed the prayer, the sun had already cleared. He then delivered a sermon and said: “The sun and the moon are two signs among the signs of Allah. They are not eclipsed because of anyone’s death or life. Therefore, whenever you see such a phenomenon, remember your Lord.”

The Companions said: “O Messenger of Allah, during the prayer we saw that you, while standing in your place, appeared to reach out to take something, and then we saw you step back.” He replied: “I was shown Paradise, and I wished to take a cluster of its fruits. Had I taken it, you would have continued to eat from it as long as the world remained. Then I was shown Hell, and I saw in it a scene the like of which I had never seen before. I saw that most of its inhabitants were women.”

The people asked: “Why is that, O Messenger of Allah?” He said: “Because they are ungrateful.” They asked: “Are they ungrateful to Allah?” He replied: “No, they are ungrateful to their husbands and do not acknowledge kindness. If you were to treat one of them kindly throughout your life, and then something displeasing were to occur from you, she would immediately say: ‘I have never seen any good from you.’” (*Muwatta, No. 441*)

[2]

Jabir [RA] reports that he attended the Eid prayer with the Prophet (PBUH). He led the prayer before the sermon, without *adhan* or *iqamah* (adhan before congregation). Afterward, he stood leaning on Bilal and exhorted the people to adopt God-consciousness, encouraged them to obey Allah, delivered admonition and reminders to them, and counselled them.

He then moved forward toward the women, addressed them similarly with exhortation and reminder, and said: “Give charity, for among those who will become the fuel of Hell, the majority will be from among you.” Upon hearing this, a woman with reddish-dark cheeks stood up from among the women and asked: “Why is that, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “Because you complain frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands.”

Jabir says that upon hearing this, the women began giving their jewelry in charity; they removed their earrings and rings and placed them into the cloth that Bilal had spread out for this purpose. (*Sahih Muslim, No. 1473*)

[3]

It is narrated from Abu Saeed al-Khudri (RA) that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) once went out toward the place of prayer on the day of Eid al-Adha or Eid al-Fitr. As he passed by the women, he said: “O women, give charity, for I have seen that you form the majority among the inhabitants of Hell.”

One woman among them, who appeared intelligent, asked: “Why will that be, O Messenger of Allah?” He replied: “You frequently invoke curses and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone with diminished

responsibility in both religious and rational matters who is nevertheless capable of overwhelming a sensible and intelligent man as you are.”

The women asked: “What deficiency is there in our religious and rational responsibilities, O Messenger of Allah?” He said: “Is not the testimony of a woman equal to half that of a man?” They replied: “Yes.” He said: “That is the reduction regarding rational responsibility. And is it not the case that when a woman is menstruating, she neither performs prayer nor fasts?” They replied: “Yes.” He said: “That is the reduction regarding religious responsibility.” (*Sahih Bukhari, No. 296*)



TAFHEEM AL-ATHAR (UNDERSTANDING THE TRADITIONS) [17]

Ammar Khan Nasir

Dialogues between the leaders of Persia and the Companions

(12)

عن أبي عُثْمَانَ النَّهْدِيِّ قَالَ: لَمَّا جَاءَ الْمُغِيرَةَ إِلَى الْفَنْطَرَةِ فَعَبَّرَهَا إِلَى أَهْلِ فَارِسَ حَبَسُوهُ وَاسْتَأْذَنُوا رُسُومَ فِي إِجَارَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يُعْبَرُوا شَيْئًا مِنْ شَارْتِهِمْ تَفْوِيَةً لِنَهَاؤِهِمْ، فَأَقْبَلَ الْمُغِيرَةَ بَنُ شُعْبَةَ، وَالْقَوْمَ فِي زِيهِمْ، عَلَيْهِمُ النَّبِجَانُ وَالثِّيَابُ الْمُنْسُوجَةُ بِالذَّهَبِ، وَبُسْطُهُمْ عَلَى غَلْوَةٍ لَا يَبْصُلُ إِلَى صَاحِبِهِمْ حَتَّى يَمْسِي عَلَيْهِمْ غَلْوَةٌ، وَأَقْبَلَ الْمُغِيرَةَ وَلَهُ أَرْبَعُ صَفَائِرَ يَمْسِي، حَتَّى جَلَسَ مَعَهُ عَلَى سَرِيرِهِ وَوَسَادَتِهِ، فَوَثَبُوا عَلَيْهِ فَنَزَرُوهُ وَأَنْزَلُوهُ وَمَعْتَوْهُ، فَقَالَ: كَأَنْتُمْ تَبْلُغُنَا عَنْكُمْ الْأَحْلَامَ وَلَا أَرَى قَوْمًا أَسْفَهُ مِنْكُمْ! إِنَّا مَغْتَرِبُ الْعَرَبِ سَوَاءً، لَا يَسْتَعْبِدُ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ مُحَارِبًا لِصَاحِبِهِ، فَطَنَنْتُ أَنْكُمْ تَوَاسُونَ قَوْمَكُمْ كَمَا تَتَوَاسَى، وَكَانَ أَحْسَنَ مِنَ الَّذِي صَنَعْتُمْ أَنْ تُخْبِرُونِي أَنَّ بَعْضَكُمْ أَرْبَابُ بَعْضٍ، وَأَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ لَا يَسْتَقِيمُ فِيكُمْ فَلَا نَصْنَعُهُ، وَلَمْ آتِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ دَعَوْتُمُونِي، الْيَوْمَ عَلِمْتُ أَنَّ أَمْرَكُمْ مُضْمَحِلٌّ وَأَنْتُمْ مَعْلُوبُونَ، وَأَنَّ مُلُكًا لَا يَفُومُ عَلَى هَذِهِ السَّبِيْرَةِ وَلَا عَلَى هَذِهِ الْعُقُولِ.

فَقَالَتِ السَّقْلَةُ: صَدَقَ وَاللهِ الْعَرَبِيُّ، وَقَالَتِ الدَّهَاقِيُّ: وَاللهِ لَقَدْ رَمَى بِكَلَامٍ لَا يَزَالُ عِبِيدُنَا يَنْزِعُونَ إِلَيْهِ، قَاتَلَ اللهُ أَوْلِيَانَا، مَا كَانَ أَحْمَقَهُمْ حِينَ كَانُوا يُصْعِرُونَ أَمْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ! فَمَارَحَهُ رُسُومٌ لِيَمْحُوَ مَا صَنَعَ، وَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا عَرَبِيُّ، إِنَّ الْحَاشِيَةَ قَدْ تَصَنَعَتْ مَا لَا يُوَافِقُ الْمُلْكَ، فَيَتَرَاخَى عَنْهَا مَخَافَةً أَنْ يَكْسِرَهَا عَمَّا يُبْغِي مِنْ ذَلِكَ، فَالْأَمْرُ عَلَى مَا تُحِبُّ مِنَ الْوَفَاءِ وَقُبُولِ الْحَقِّ، مَا هَذِهِ الْمَغَارِزُ الَّتِي مَعَكُمْ؟ قَالَ: مَا ضَرَّ الْجَمْرَةَ إِلَّا تَكُونُ طَوِيلَةً! ثُمَّ رَامَهُمْ. وَقَالَ: مَا بَالُ سَيْفِكَ رَثًا! قَالَ: رَثَ الْكِسْوَةِ حَدِيدُ الْمَضْرَبَةِ، ثُمَّ عَاطَاهُ سَيْفَهُ.

ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ رُسُومٌ: تَكَلَّمْ أَمْ أَتَكَلَّمُ؟ فَقَالَ الْمُغِيرَةُ: أَنْتَ الَّذِي بَعَثْتَ إِلَيْنَا فَتَكَلَّمْ، فَأَقَامَ التَّرْجُمَانُ بَيْنَهُمَا، وَتَكَلَّمَ رُسُومٌ، فَحَمِدَ قَوْمَهُ وَعَظَّمَ أَمْرَهُمْ وَطَوْلَهُ، وَقَالَ: لَمْ نَزَلْ مُتَمَكِّنِينَ فِي الْبِلَادِ، ظَاهِرِينَ عَلَى الْأَعْدَاءِ، أَشْرَافًا فِي الْأُمَمِ، فَلَيْسَ لِأَحَدٍ مِنَ الْمُلُوكِ مِثْلُ عِرْنَا وَشَرْفِنَا وَسُلْطَانِنَا، نُصِرَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْيَوْمَ وَالْيَوْمَيْنِ أَوْ الشَّهْرَ وَالشَّهْرَيْنِ لِلذُّنُوبِ، فَإِذَا انْتَقَمَ اللهُ فَرَضِي رَدَّ إِلَيْنَا عِرْنَانَا، وَجَمَعْنَا لِعِدْوَانَا شَرَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ آتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ، ثُمَّ إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِي النَّاسِ أُمَّةٌ أَصْعَرَ عِدْدَانَا أَمْرًا مِنْكُمْ، كُنْتُمْ أَهْلُ قَسْفٍ وَمَعِيشَةٍ سَيِّئَةٍ، لَا نَرَاكُمْ شَيْئًا وَلَا نَعُدُّكُمْ، وَكُنْتُمْ إِذَا قَحَطَتْ أَرْضُكُمْ وَأَصَابَتْكُمْ السَّنَةُ اسْتَعْتَمْتُمْ بِنَاجِيَةِ أَرْضِنَا، فَتَأْمُرُ لَكُمْ بِالشَّيْءِ مِنَ الثَّمَرِ وَالشَّعِيرِ ثُمَّ تَرُدُّكُمْ، وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَجْمَلِكُمْ عَلَى مَا صَنَعْتُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنَ الْجَهْدِ فِي بِلَادِكُمْ، فَأَنَا أَمْرٌ لِأَمِيرِكُمْ بِكِسْوَةٍ وَبَعْلٍ وَأَلْفِ دِرْهَمٍ، وَأَمْرٌ لِكُلِّ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ بِوَقْفِ تَمْرٍ وَبِنُوبِينِ، وَتَنْصَرِفُونَ عَنَّا، فَإِنِّي لَسْتُ أَشْتَهِي أَنْ أَقْتُلَكُمْ وَلَا أُسِرَكُمْ.

فَتَكَلَّمَ الْمُغِيرَةُ بَنُ شُعْبَةَ، فَحَمِدَ اللهُ وَأَثْنَى عَلَيْهِ، وَقَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَرَازِقُهُ، فَمَنْ صَنَعَ شَيْئًا فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ الَّذِي يَصْنَعُهُ هُوَ لَهُ، وَأَمَّا الَّذِي ذَكَرْتَ بِهِ نَفْسِكَ وَأَهْلَ بِلَادِكَ مِنَ الظُّهُورِ عَلَى الْأَعْدَاءِ وَالنَّمَكُنِ فِي الْبِلَادِ وَعَظَمِ السُّلْطَانِ فِي الدُّنْيَا فَتَحْنُ نَعْرِفُهُ وَلسْنَا نُنْكِرُهُ، فَاللهُ صَنَعَهُ بِكُمْ وَوَضَعَهُ فِيكُمْ، وَهُوَ لَهُ دُونَكُمْ، وَأَمَّا الَّذِي ذَكَرْتَ فِيْنَا مِنْ سُوءِ الْحَالِ وَضَبِيقِ الْمَعِيشَةِ وَاحْتِلَافِ الْقُلُوبِ فَتَحْنُ نَعْرِفُهُ وَلسْنَا نُنْكِرُهُ، وَاللهُ ابْتَلَانَا بِذَلِكَ وَصَيَّرَنَا إِلَيْهِ، وَالدُّنْيَا دَوْلٌ، وَلَمْ يَزَلْ أَهْلُ شَدَائِدِهَا يَتَوَفَّعُونَ الرِّخَاءَ حَتَّى يَصِيرُوا إِلَيْهِ، وَلَمْ يَزَلْ أَهْلُ رَحَائِهَا يَتَوَفَّعُونَ الشَّدَائِدَ حَتَّى تَنْزِلَ بِهِمْ وَيَصِيرُوا إِلَيْهَا، وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِيمَا آتَاكُمْ اللهُ دَوِي شُكْرٍ كَانَ شُكْرُكُمْ يَقْصُرُ عَمَّا أُوتِيتُمْ، وَأَسْلَمْتُمْ صَعْفَ الشُّكْرِ إِلَى تَغْيِيرِ الْحَالِ، وَلَوْ كُنَّا فِيمَا ابْتُلِينَا بِهِ أَهْلٌ كُفْرٍ كَانَ عَظِيمٌ مَا تَتَابَعَ عَلَيْنَا مُسْتَجْلِبًا مِنَ اللهِ رَحْمَةً يُرْفِقُ بِهَا عَنَّا، وَلَكِنَّ الشَّانَ غَيْرُ مَا تَدَّهَبُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْرِفُونَنَا بِهِ، إِنَّ اللهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى بَعَثَ فِيْنَا رَسُولًا — ثُمَّ ذَكَرَ مِثْلَ الْكَلَامِ الْأَوَّلِ، حَتَّى انْتَهَى إِلَى قَوْلِهِ — وَإِنْ اخْتَجَّتْ إِلَيْنَا أَنْ نَمْنَعَكَ فَكُنْ لَنَا عَبْدًا تُؤَدِّي الْجَزِيَّةَ عَن يَدِ وَأَنْتَ صَاعِرٌ، وَإِلَّا فَالْسَيْفُ إِنْ أَبَيْتَ! فَتَحَرَ نَحْرَهُ وَاسْتَشَاطَ غَضَبًا، ثُمَّ حَلَفَ بِالسُّمِّ لَا يَرْتَفِعُ لَكُمْ الصُّبْحُ عَدَا حَتَّى أَقْتُلَكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ.

فَانصَرَفَ الْمُغِيرَةُ، وَخَلَصَ رُسُومٌ تَأَلَّفًا بِأَهْلِ فَارِسَ، وَقَالَ: أَيْنَ هُوَ لَاءَ مِنْكُمْ؟ مَا بَعْدَ هَذَا! أَلَمْ يَأْتِكُمْ الْأَوْلَانُ فَحَسَرَاكُمْ وَاسْتَحْرَجَاكُمْ، ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ هَذَا فَلَمْ يَخْتَلِفُوا، وَسَلَكُوا طَرِيقًا وَاجِدًا، وَلَزِمُوا أَمْرًا وَاجِدًا، هُوَ لَاءَ وَاللهِ الرَّجَالُ، صَادِقِينَ كَانُوا أَمْ كَاذِبِينَ! وَاللهِ لَنْ كَانَ بَلَّغٌ مِنْ إِرْبِهِمْ وَصَوْنِهِمْ لِسِرِّهِمْ أَلَا يَخْتَلِفُوا فَمَا قَوْمٌ أَلْبَغُ فِيمَا أَرَادُوا مِنْهُمْ، لَنْ كَانُوا صَادِقِينَ مَا

يَقُومُ لَهُوْلَاءِ شَيْءٍ! فَالْجُوا وَتَجَلَّدُوا، وَقَالَ: وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّكُمْ تَصْعُونَ إِلَى مَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ، وَأَنَّ هَذَا مِنْكُمْ رِيَاءٌ، فَارْدَادُوا لَجَاجَةً.

Abu Uthman al-Nahdi reports that when al-Mughirah reached the bridge and crossed it toward the Persians, they detained him and sought Rustam's permission to allow him to proceed. The Persians did not alter anything in the setting they had arranged, intending thereby to reinforce an impression of indifference.

When al-Mughirah ibn Shubah arrived, the people remained dressed in their ceremonial attire: crowns upon their heads, garments woven with gold, and carpets spread over a vast area such that one could not reach their leader without walking a considerable distance upon them. Al-Mughirah himself had four braided locks of hair. He advanced until he sat beside Rustam upon his throne and cushion. Rustam's guards immediately rushed at him, shook him violently, dragged him down, and forced him off the throne.

Al-Mughirah said: "We had heard reports of your wisdom, yet I see no people more foolish than you. We Arabs are equals among ourselves; none enslaves another except in the context of warfare. I had assumed that you Persians treated your people with the same equality as we do. It would have been better had you informed me beforehand that among you some are masters and others slaves, and that such conduct (as sitting beside the ruler) is not permitted among you, so that we would not have acted in this manner. I did not come to you on my own—you invited me. Today I have realized that your authority is declining, that you are destined to be defeated, and that no dominion can endure upon such conduct and such minds."

Upon hearing this, members of the lower classes among them said, "By God, the Arab has spoken the truth," while their nobles remarked, "By God, he has uttered words toward which even our slaves will now incline. May God destroy our predecessors—how foolish they were in belittling this community!"

Rustam then attempted, through humor, to neutralize the effect of al-Mughirah's words. He said: "O Arab, sometimes courtiers commit actions that do not please the king, yet he overlooks them lest he discourage them. Let matters proceed in accordance with loyalty and acceptance of truth as you prefer. What are these spindles you carry?" Al-Mughirah replied: "What harm is there if an ember is not long?" Then he demonstrated his skill with the spear. Rustam said: "Why is your sword-sheath so worn?" He replied: "The sheath may be worn, but the blade strikes sharp." He then handed his sword to Rustam to examine. Rustam asked: "Will you speak, or shall I?" Al-Mughirah replied: "You are the one who summoned us; therefore you should speak."

A translator was placed between them. Rustam began by praising his people, magnifying their power, and elaborating at length. He said: "We have long been established firmly in the lands, victorious over enemies, honored among nations. No king possesses glory, nobility, or authority equal to ours. We prevail over others, and none prevail over us except briefly—perhaps for a day, two days, or a month—because of our sins. When God has punished us and becomes pleased again, He restores our honor and gathers us against our enemies for their worst day. Among all peoples, none were more insignificant to us than you Arabs. You lived in hardship and poverty; we considered you nothing. Whenever famine struck your lands, you sought relief at the borders of ours, and we would grant you dates and barley and then send you back. I know that what has brought you here is merely the hardship you suffer in your own lands. Therefore, I will order that your commander be given clothing, a mule, and one thousand dirhams, and each of your men a load of dates and two garments. Then depart from us, for I have no desire to kill or enslave you."

Al-Mughirah ibn Shubah then spoke. After praising and glorifying God, he said: "Indeed, God is the Creator and Provider of all things; whatever anyone does, it is in reality God who enables it. As for what you mentioned concerning your dominance over enemies, your firm rule, and your great worldly authority—we

know this and do not deny it. God granted this to you and placed it among you, yet it belongs to Him, not to you. As for what you said about our former condition—poverty, hardship, and division—we also acknowledge it and do not deny it. God tested us with that condition. The world alternates in cycles: those in hardship anticipate ease until they attain it, and those in prosperity anticipate hardship until it befalls them. Had you been truly grateful for God’s favors, your gratitude would still have fallen short of what you were given, and insufficient gratitude leads to changing circumstances. Likewise, had we been ungrateful amid our trials, the magnitude of our afflictions would have drawn divine mercy toward us and brought relief. But the matter is not as you suppose, nor are we as you once knew us. God has sent among us a Messenger—”

Then al-Mughirah repeated the earlier message until he concluded: “If you wish us to grant you protection, then become subject to us and pay the jizyah with submission and humility; otherwise, the sword awaits if you refuse.”

At this, Rustam’s nostrils flared and he became enraged. Swearing by the sun, he declared: “By tomorrow morning, before dawn rises upon you, I will have killed you all.”

Al-Mughirah then departed. Rustam gathered the Persian nobles and said: “What comparison is there between you and these men? Were not their first two envoys here who left you humiliated and constrained? Then this man came, and they differed in nothing—they followed one path and adhered to one position. By God, these are truly men, whether truthful or not. If their resolve and secrecy have reached the point that they show no disagreement among themselves, then no people could be more effective in achieving their aims. If they are truthful, nothing can stand against them.”

The Persians began arguing and displaying outward firmness. Rustam said: “By God, I know you are inwardly inclined toward what I say, though you pretend otherwise.” At this, they argued with him even more fiercely. (Tārikh al-Ṭabarī, 3:518–524)

LEXICAL EXPLANATION

ala ghalvatin: The word *ghalwah* literally denotes the distance reached by an arrow shot from a bow. The expression is used to indicate spaciousness or a considerable distance. Here it means that carpets had been spread over a large area of the court.

tartarubu: meaning “they shook him violently.”

maghathubu: meaning “they dragged or manhandled him.”

al-magbazilu: *Magbazil* (sing. *magbzal*) refers to spindles used for spinning thread. Because of their pointed shape, they resemble spears. Rustam sarcastically referred to the Arabs’ small spears as spindles.

istashata: derived from *shata*, conveying the sense of exceeding limits or raging; according to one linguistic opinion, the word *shaytan* is derived from the same root. Here it means “he flared up in anger.”

COMMENTARY AND EXPLANATION

1. Al-Mughirah’s seemingly unusual act of sitting upon Rustam’s throne was intended to provoke a reaction from the Persians and thereby demonstrate that their society had divided people into masters and subjects, and imposed artificial ceremonial norms around rulers. This reflected not strength but internal weakness and revealed that their political order was approaching decline.

2. Al-Mughirah ibn Shubah also clarified the general divine law (*sunnah takwīniyyah*) of God concerning the rise and fall of nations in matters of sovereignty and power, a law that operates in the world. Alongside this, he

explained the particular divine purpose that God intended to realize through the mission of His Prophet.

While explaining this general cosmic principle, al-Mughirah ibn Shubah stated that, in accordance with His wisdom, God grants sovereignty, authority, and the means and resources of the earth to some nations, while consigning others to conditions of hardship and deprivation. However, such a decree is never permanent for any nation. According to this general principle, God could have willed—after granting the Persians power for a long period—to take it away from them, and, after the prolonged destitution of the Arabs, to grant them control over the resources and means of the earth.

Yet the matter does not end there. God has also decreed to raise a Prophet among the Arabs for the guidance of humankind. Those who believe in him have been charged with the mission of conveying this religion to other nations; and those who refuse to accept it are to be deprived of political authority over the earth.

The Prophet (PBUH) explained this historical context and purpose of his mission in the following hadith:

عن عياض بن حمار المجاشعي، أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال ذات يوم في خطبته: ألا إن ربي أمرني أن أعلمكم ما جهلتم مما علمني يومي هذا، كل مال نحلته عبداً حلالاً، وإني خلقت عبداً حلفاء كلهم، وإنهم أتتهم الشياطين فاجتالتهم عن دينهم، وحرمت عليهم ما أحللت لهم، وأمرتهم أن يشركوا بي ما لم أنزل به سلطاناً، وإن الله نظر إلى أهل الأرض فمقتهم عربهم وعجمهم إلا بقايا من أهل الكتاب، وقال: إنما بعثتك لأبتيك وأبنتي بك

Iyad ibn Himar al-Mujashi'i reports that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said in a sermon: "Indeed my Lord commanded me to teach you what you do not know... I created My servants upon pure monotheism... but devils turned them away... God looked upon the inhabitants of the earth and became displeased with them, Arabs and non-Arabs alike, except for remnants of the People of the Book. Then He said: I have sent you to test you and to test others through you." (Sahih Muslim, No. 7386)

3. Al-Mughirah's statement, *'fa kun lana abdan tuaddi al-jizyah an Yadin wa anta saghirun'* ("become subject to us and pay the jizyah in submission") clarifies the historical nature of *jizyah*. In the political conventions of that era, *jizyah* symbolized subordination: weaker nations paid it to stronger powers in exchange for protection from warfare. Rustam's anger upon hearing this reflected his understanding of it as a declaration of political supremacy.

VARIANTS

This dialogue between Rustam and al-Mughirah ibn Shubah has also been transmitted through the narration of Sayf ibn Umar (RA) by al-Kalai (*al-Iktifa*, 2/457–461). Both narrators cited only part of al-Mughirah's speech and referred the remaining portion to other reports, which are presented later.

(13)

... فَكَلَّمَهُ رُسْتَمُ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّكُمْ مَعَشَرَ الْعَرَبِ كُنْتُمْ أَهْلَ سَقَاةٍ وَجَهْدٍ، وَكُنْتُمْ تَأْتُونَنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ تَاجِرٍ وَوَجِيرٍ وَوَأْفِدٍ، فَأَكَلْتُمْ مِنْ: عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الرَّبِيعِ، قَالَ طَعَامِنَا، وَشَرِبْتُمْ مِنْ شَرَابِنَا، وَاسْتَنْظَلْتُمْ مِنْ ظِلَالِنَا، فَذَهَبْتُمْ فِدَعَوْتُمْ أَصْحَابَكُمْ، ثُمَّ أَتَيْتُمُونَا بِهِمْ، وَإِنَّمَا مَتَلَّكُمْ مِثْلَ رَجُلٍ كَانَ لَهُ حَانِطٌ مِنْ عَيْبٍ، فَرَأَى فِيهِ تَعَلُّبًا وَاجِدًا، فَقَالَ: مَا تَعَلَّبٌ وَاجِدٌ! فَانْطَلَقَ التَّعَلُّبُ، فَدَعَا التَّعَالِبَ إِلَى الْحَانِطِ، فَلَمَّا اجْتَمَعْنَ فِيهِ جَاءَ الرَّجُلُ فَسَدَّ الْخُجْرَ الَّذِي نَحَلْنَ مِنْهُ، ثُمَّ قَتَلَهُنَّ وَقَدْ أَعْلَمَ أَنَّ الَّذِي حَمَلَكُمْ عَلَى هَذَا مَعَشَرَ الْعَرَبِ الْجَهْدُ الَّذِي قَدْ أَصَابَكُمْ، فَارْجِعُوا عَنَّا عَامَكُمْ هَذَا، فَإِنَّكُمْ قَدْ شَعَلْتُمُونَا عَنْ عِمَارَةِ بِلَادِنَا جَمِيعًا وَعَنْ عَدُونَا، وَنَحْنُ نُؤَفِّرُ لَكُمْ رِكَابَكُمْ قَمَحًا وَتَمْرًا، وَنَأْمُرُ لَكُمْ بِكِسْوَةٍ، فَارْجِعُوا عَنَّا عَافَاكُمْ اللَّهُ!

فَقَالَ الْمُغِيرَةُ بْنُ شُعْبَةَ: لَا تَذْكُرْ لَنَا جَهْدًا إِلَّا وَقَدْ كُنَّا فِي مِثْلِهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ مِنْهُ، أَفْضَلْنَا فِي أَنْفُسِنَا عَيْبًا الَّذِي يَقْتُلُ ابْنَ عَمِّهِ وَيَأْخُذُ مَالَهُ فَيَأْكُلُهُ، نَأْكُلُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالِدَّمَ وَالْعِظَامَ، فَلَمْ نَزَلْ كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى بَعَثَ اللَّهُ فِيْنَا نَبِيًّا، وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابَ، فَدَعَانَا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَإِلَى مَا بَعَثَهُ بِهِ، فَصَدَّقَهُ مِنَّا مُصَدِّقٌ وَكَذَّبَهُ مِنَّا آخَرٌ، فَقَاتَلَ مَنْ صَدَّقَهُ مِنْ كَذِبِهِ حَتَّى نَحَلْنَا فِي دِينِهِ، مِنْ بَيْنِ مُوقِنٍ بِهِ وَبَيْنِ مَقْهُورٍ، حَتَّى اسْتَبَانَ لَنَا أَنَّهُ صَادِقٌ، وَأَنَّهُ رَسُولٌ مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ.

فَأَمَرْنَا أَنْ نَقَاتِلَ مَنْ خَالَفَنَا، وَأَخْبَرْنَا أَنَّ مَنْ قُتِلَ مِنَّا عَلَى دِينِهِ فَلَهُ الْجَنَّةُ، وَمَنْ عَاشَرَ مَلَكًا وَظَهَرَ عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَهُ، فَتَحْنُ نَدْعُوكَ إِلَى أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتَدْخُلَ فِي دِينِنَا، فَإِنْ فَعَلْتَ كَانَتْ لَكَ بِلَادُكَ، لَا يَدْخُلُ عَلَيْكَ فِيهَا إِلَّا مَنْ أَحْبَبْتَ، وَعَلَيْكَ الزَّكَاةُ وَالْخُمْسُ، وَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ ذَلِكَ فَالْجَزْيَةُ، وَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ ذَلِكَ فَاتَّلْنَاكَ حَتَّى يَخُكَّمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكَ.

Abdullah ibn al-Zubayr states: Rustam addressed al-Mughirah ibn Shubah and said: “O assembly of Arabs, you were a people afflicted with misery and hardship. You used to come to us as merchants, laborers, and visitors; you ate our food, drank our beverages, and sheltered under our shade. Then you departed, invited your companions, and returned to us with them. Your likeness is that of a man who owned a vineyard. He saw in it a single fox and said, ‘What harm can one fox do?’ The fox then went and brought other foxes into the vineyard. When they had gathered together inside it, the owner came, blocked the hole through which they had entered, and killed them all. I know well, O assembly of Arabs, that what has driven you to this is the hardship that has befallen you. Therefore, return from us this year, for you have distracted us from cultivating our lands and from confronting our enemies. We shall load your mounts with wheat and dates and provide you with garments to wear. Depart from us—may God grant you well-being.”

Al-Mughirah ibn Shubah replied: “You recount to us hardship, yet we indeed lived in conditions similar to, even worse than, what you describe. The most honorable life among us was considered that of a man who would kill his cousin, seize his wealth, and consume it. We ate carrion, blood, and bones. Such was our condition until God raised among us a Prophet and revealed to him the Book. He called us to God and to that with which He had sent him. Some among us affirmed him, while others denied him. Then those who affirmed him fought those who denied him, until we entered his religion—some in firm conviction and others by compulsion—until it became clear to us that he was truthful and that he was a Messenger from God.

He then commanded us to fight those who oppose us and informed us that whoever among us is killed upon his religion shall have Paradise, and whoever lives shall attain dominion and prevail over those who oppose him. Thus we invite you to believe in God and His Messenger and to enter our religion. If you do so, your land shall remain yours, and none shall enter it except those whom you permit. And you shall be obliged to pay zakah and the khums (one-fifth of war gains). If you refuse that, then pay the jizyah. If you refuse that as well, we shall fight you until God judges between us and you.” (Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī, 3/574)

EXPLANATION AND CLARIFICATION

1. In this portion of the dialogue, al-Mughirah ibn Shubah explains the process of *itmam al-hujjah* (the completion of conclusive proof), through which the truthfulness of the Prophet (PBUH) became manifest to the people of the Arabian Peninsula. After passing through stages of denial, resistance, and armed conflict, the entirety of Arabia—whether willingly or under compulsion—accepted his authority.

Thereafter, the community that accepted the Prophet’s leadership was entrusted with the responsibility, in his stead, of conveying this religion to surrounding nations and of implementing God’s judgment against those who rejected it, just as the Prophet (PBUH) had undertaken armed struggle against his direct addressees upon their rejection. The Quran expresses this responsibility with the term “*shahadah ala al-nās*” (witness over mankind).

In Surah Al-Hajj 22:78, God says:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مَلَّةً أَيْبِكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ.

And strive in the cause of God as is His due. He has chosen you and has placed upon you no hardship in religion—the way of your father Abraham. He named you Muslims before and in this [Quran], so that the Messenger may be a witness over you and that you may be witnesses over all mankind. (Al-Hajj, 22:78)

The Companions had already explained—both in the court of Yazdegerd and repeatedly in their dialogues with Rustam—that through the mission of the Prophet (PBUH) the proof had been fully established (*itmam al-hujjah*) upon the Arabs, and that they had subsequently been entrusted with the responsibility of bearing witness to the truth before mankind (*shahadah ala al-nās*).

At a later stage, this same point was articulated with equal clarity in the statements made by the Arab representatives who were sent to Rostam as a delegation. This aspect will be mentioned in the narrations that follow.

2. In this narration, the phrase at the end of al-Mughirah’s speech — ‘*wa Alayka al-zakah wa al-khums*’ (“and upon you shall be *zakah* and the *khums*”) — appears contextually incongruous and seems to result from a narrator’s erroneous inference. Al-Tabari transmits the dialogue with Rustam through multiple chains, and this clause is mentioned only in this particular route. Moreover, it is absent from other recorded dialogues with Persian leaders.

This condition was originally applicable to tribes residing within the Arabian Peninsula who were required to accept the political authority of the Medinan state and to remit *zakah* and the *khums*. With respect to kingdoms outside Arabia, the Companions’ demand was limited to accepting Islam and committing to govern according to the Divine Book. They were not required to dissolve their sovereignty into the Arab polity or establish a formal political subordination; hence, imposing *zakah* or *khums* upon them would not have been consistent with that framework.

SOURCE CRITICISM AND VARIANT REPORTS

Al-Tabari records additional reports concerning the dialogue between al-Mughirah ibn Shubah and Rustam through various narrators.

For example:

- In the reports of al-Shabi and Saeed ibn Marzaban, the interpreter between Rustam and al-Mughirah is named Abud, an Arab resident of al-Hirah (*Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 3/524).
- Shaiq reports that he participated in the Battle of al-Qadisiyyah and had reached maturity at that time. According to him, the Muslim army numbered twelve thousand. He also relates that when al-Mughirah ascended Rustam’s throne and sat beside him, Rustam’s brother expressed strong displeasure. Al-Mughirah responded:

لَا تَنْخَرْ، فَمَا زَادَنِي هَذَا شَرَفًا وَلَا نَقَصَ أَحَاكَ.

Do not snort in disdain. By sitting here, neither has my honor increased nor has your brother’s honor diminished. (Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī, 3/525)

In the narration of Abu Wa’il, the Muslim forces are said to have numbered approximately seven thousand, while the Persians fielded thirty thousand troops (*Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, 3/496–497).

Through Abu Wail’s chain, this account is also recorded in: *Kitāb al-Kharaj* by Abu Yusuf (1/40) and *Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah*, No. 33747.

(14)

عن ابن الرقيل عن أبيه، قال: فأرسل مع المغيرة رجلاً وقال له: إذا قطع القنطرة ووصل إلى أصحابه فتاد: إن الملك كان منجماً قد حسب لك ونظر في أمرك، فقال: إنك غداً تُفقد عينك، ففعل الرسول، فقال المغيرة: بشرتني بخير وأجر، ولولا أن أجاهد بعد اليوم أشباهكم من المشركين لتمنيث أن الأخرى ذهب أيضاً، فرأهم يضحكون من مقالته ويتعجبون

مِنْ بَصِيرَتِهِ، فَرَجَعَ إِلَى الْمَلِكِ بِذَلِكَ، فَقَالَ: أَطِيعُونِي يَا أَهْلَ فَارِسَ، وَإِنِّي لَأَرَى لِلَّهِ فِيكُمْ نَفْمَةً لَا تَسْتَطِيعُونَ رَدَّهَا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ.

Ibn al-Rufayl narrates from his father that he said: Rustam sent a man along with al-Mughirah and instructed him: "When he crosses the bridge and reaches his companions, call out to him and say: 'The king is an astrologer. He has calculated and examined your matter and has declared that tomorrow your eye will be gouged out.'" The messenger did as instructed. Al-Mughirah replied: "You have given me glad tidings of goodness and reward. Were it not that after today I must continue striving in jihad against idolaters like yourselves, I would have wished that my other eye also be taken." The messenger observed that the people laughed at al-Mughirah's statement and marveled at his perceptiveness. He conveyed this response back to the king (i.e., Rustam), whereupon Rustam said: "O people of Persia, obey me. I perceive a punishment from God descending upon you—one which you will not be able to repel from yourselves." (Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī, 3/524)

EXPLANATION AND CLARIFICATION

One of al-Mughirah ibn Shubah's eyes had been lost during the Battle of Yarmuk. Rustam, noticing this, attempted to mock him in order to demoralize the Muslims. His implication was that since one of al-Mughirah's eyes was already gone, the other would be put out in the impending battle. Al-Mughirah, however, turned the remark back upon Rustam through his wit and presence of mind. His response conveyed that if any eye were to be lost, it would be a means of reward with God; yet the eye destined to be lost was the one already without sight, while the remaining eye would be preserved—so that after defeating the Persians, he might continue striving against other disbelievers. Thus, by reinterpreting Rustam's taunt, al-Mughirah effectively transformed it into an omen of Persian defeat, implying that he himself would survive the battle with his remaining eye intact to participate in subsequent campaigns.

SOURCE CRITICISM AND VARIANT REPORTS

Apparently, this specific incident is transmitted only by al-Tabari in *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*.

[To be continued.....]



THE NIGHT JOURNEY AND ASCENSION (7)

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

Based on Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Conversation with Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

DETAILS

The event of *Mi'raj* as described in the hadith narrative is as follows:

1. One night, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sleeping in Masjid al-Haram. The word used by the narrator are *Wahuwa na'imun fi al-Masjid al-Harām* (he was sleeping in the Sacred Mosque). Some other people were also sleeping there¹.
2. While sleeping, he saw that three angels arrived and recognized him². That night, the angels went back after seeing him asleep.
3. They arrived again on another night³. They found the Prophet (PBUH) sleeping in the Sacred Mosque again. It is evident from the words *Yara qalbuhu, wa tanamu 'aynu* (his eyes were asleep but his heart was awake).
4. They lifted his sacred body and brought it to the well of Zamzam. There, Gabriel (AS) opened his chest and cleansed his heart with Zamzam water. A golden bowl filled with wisdom and knowledge was brought; Gabriel (AS) took the wisdom and knowledge from the bowl⁴ and put it into his chest. Afterwards, they closed his chest⁵.
5. Once this process was finished, Gabriel (AS), the trustworthy, guided the Prophet (PBUH) through the heavens. He traveled upwards, meeting a prophet at each of the seven heavens. As remembered by the narrators, the Prophet met Adam (PBUH), Idris (PBUH), Aaron (PBUH), Moses (PBUH), and Abraham (PBUH). In the second heaven, He also saw earthly rivers of Euphrates and Tigris and the Celestial Pond of Kauthar, depicted symbolically as three streams.
6. After ascending through the seven heavens, the Prophet (PBUH) was taken to *Sidrat al-Muntaha*. Near this location, he achieved a proximity to the Divine Presence, akin to the closeness of the two ends of a bow. There, Allah Almighty revealed the commandment of fifty daily prayers.
7. When the Prophet (PBUH) was returning from his journey with the directive, he once again met Prophet Moses (PBUH) on the seventh heaven. Moses asked him about the covenant with Allah. The Prophet informed

¹ The following interaction among the angels supports this assumption: '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.'

² They probably intended to ensure that when they come to take him for the coming Night of Ascension, they make no mistake in recognizing him.

³ The hadith report does not specify whether they arrived the very next night or a few nights later.

⁴ The style of the conversation indicates that intangible things like wisdom and knowledge were shown to him symbolically in form of a physical object.

⁵ All these occurrences happened in the realm of a dream because it has already been in the beginning of the hadith that the eyes of the Prophet were asleep when the incident occurred.

him of the obligation to perform fifty prayers. Moses, drawing upon the experience with his own people, suggested that performing fifty prayers a day would be difficult for his *Ummah* (community). It would therefore be appropriate for him to return to the Divine Court and request a reduction in the number of prayers. The Prophet (PBUH) found the suggestion reasonable, so he returned to the Divine Presence and requested a reduction in the number of prayers. Allah Almighty accepted the request and granted a concession of ten prayers. Upon returning, he met Prophet Moses (PBUH) again, who repeated the same advice. The Prophet (PBUH) went back to Allah's Presence and obtained further concessions of ten prayers again.. This process of requesting reductions continued until only five prayers remained. With utmost generosity, Allah Almighty declared each prayer equal to ten prayers and informed the Prophet (PBUH) that the fifty prayers would remain as they are in *Umm al-Kitab* (the Mother of the Book), but only five prayers would be obligatory for his Ummah. Thus, when his people perform five prayers, they will be counted as fifty.

8. After this, Prophet Moses (PBUH) advised further reductions even in the five prayers, but this time, the Prophet (PBUH) did not accept his suggestion. Afterwards, he returned to Masjid al-Haram with the gift of five prayers.

EXPLANATION

The important points of clarification and explanation of the hadith are as follows:

Firstly, the Prophet's (PBUH) journey and all the events and observations occurred in the world of dream. The introductory and final words of the hadith explicitly clarify this nature. The opening statement reads:

They arrived another night to see that the Prophet's eyes were sleeping but his heart was not. This is the case of the prophets that even when they sleep, their eyes sleep but their hearts stay awake.

The closing words are: when (Prophet Muhammad) woke up, he was in the Masjid al-Harām

Secondly, to describe proximity to the Divine Being, the phrase *Hatta kana minhu qaba qawsayni aw adna* has been used. These are almost the same words used in Surah Al-Najm to convey the closeness of the Angel Gabriel (AS) to the Prophet (PBUH), as it states: *Fa-kana qaba qawsayni aw adna*. In the Arabic language, such metaphorical phrases are akin to expressions in our language like 'a distance of a yard or two' or 'a gap of a few hand-lengths,'⁶ which are used to convey the idea of closeness or proximity between locations or objects. Thus, it is plausible to assume that the narrative borrowed the style of expression from Surah Al-Najm to emphasize the Prophet's (PBUH) nearness to Allah.

Thirdly, based on the mentioned style of expressing divine proximity, it is highly likely that the Prophet (PBUH) had the honor of beholding Allah Almighty. Some other hadith narratives also ascribe the following statement to the Prophet (PBUH): "I saw my Lord in the most sublime form." It is evidently clear that this refers to seeing in the world of dream. The reason is that the words of the narrative *Wa tanamu 'aynubu, wa la yanamu qalbubu* (His eyes sleep, but his heart remains awake) indicate that the incident of *Mi'raj* occurred when the Prophet's (PBUH) eyes were asleep but his heart was not. It is also narrated in some other hadith narratives that the Prophet (PBUH) saw Allah Almighty in the world of dreams while the Prophet (PBUH) was sleeping. Here is one such

⁶ This well-known verse attributed to Qa'im Chandpuri is as follows:

"Qismat ki khoobi dekhiye, tooti kahan kamand"
"Behold the irony of fate—where the rope of ambition broke."

hadith narrative⁷:

عن معاذ بن جبل رضي الله عنه، قال: احتبس عنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات غداة عن صلاة الصبح حتى كدنا نترأى عين الشمس، فخرج سريعًا فتوب بالصلاة فصلّى رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وتجاوز في صلاته، فلما سلم دعا بصوته، فقال لنا: على مصافكم كما انتم، ثم انفتل إلينا، ثم قال: أما إنني ساعدتكم ما حبسني عنكم الغداة. اني قمت من الليل فتوضأت وصليت ما قدر لي، فنعست في صلاتي حتى استنقلت فإذا انا بربي تبارك وتعالى في احسن صورة. فقال: يا محمد، قلت: لبيك رب، قال: فيم يختصم الملا الاعلى؟ قلت: لا ادري، قالها ثلاثًا. قال: فرايته وضع كفه بين كتفي حتى وجدت برد انامله بين ثديي، فتجلى لي كل شيء وعرفت.

Mu'adh bin Jabal said: God's Messenger was detained one morning from observing the prayer with us (because he had not arrived to lead the congregation) till the sun had almost appeared over the horizon. He then came out quickly and led the congregation. He conducted the prayer in a shortened form (because of shortage of time); then when he had given the salutation, he called out to us saying, "Keep to your rows as you were." Then turning to us he said, "I shall tell you what detained me from you this morning. I got up during the night, performed ablution, and prayed what I could; but during my prayer I dozed and was overcome, and there and then I saw my Lord in the most beautiful form. He addressed me by name, and when I replied, 'At Thy service, my Lord,' He asked, 'What do the angels near My presence dispute about?' and I replied that I did not know. He asked it three times. Then I saw Him put the palm of His hand between my shoulder-blades, so that I experienced the coolness of His fingers between my nipples so everything became clear to me and I attained knowledge. (Tirmidhi No. 3235)

Fourthly, the words *Fabiya khamsuna fi Ummil-Kitab wa hiya khamsun 'alayka* indicate that the obligation of the five daily prayers was established at this particular event. This view is also the common position among our scholars. However, this position does not align with the Quran and certain hadith narratives, as prayer has been a fundamental aspect of Allah's religion from the beginning. The Quran clearly states that prayer was the main duty enjoined upon the noble prophets by Allah Almighty. A Hadith from Sunan Abi Dawud, No. 393, reinforces this perspective, where it is stated that once Gabriel the Trusted informed the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) that prayers have always been performed five times a day. Therefore, the most probable assumption from this perspective is that the obligation of prayer commenced with the prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and that during the *Mi'raj*, the background realities of this duty may have been symbolically presented to him.



⁷ A detailed discussion on this issue has been provided in an upcoming section titled "The Vision of the Almighty"

SALAT AL-TASBIH: IN THE LIGHT OF FIQH AND HADITH (6)

A Research Study

Dr. Amir Gazdar

9. The Hadith of Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA)

In the chapter concerning *Salat al-Tasbih*, the final narration attributed to Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA) has been transmitted in several Hadith sources. In chronological order, this narration may be found in the following references:

- Al-Qiraah Khalf al-Imam, al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), No. 149.
- Sunan Ibn Majah (d. 273 AH), No. 1387.
- Sunan Abi Dawud (d. 275 AH), No. 1297.
- Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah (d. 311 AH), No. 1216.
- Al-Mujam al-Awsat, al-Tabarani (d. 360 AH), Nos. 2318, 2879.
- Al-Mujam al-Kabir, al-Tabarani (d. 360 AH), Nos. 11365, 11622.
- Al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn, al-Hakim (d. 405 AH), Nos. 1192, 1193, 1195.
- Hilyat al-Awliya wa Tabaqat al-Asfiya, Abu Nuaym (d. 430 AH), 1/25.
- Al-Dawat al-Kabir, al-Bayhaqi (d. 458 AH), No. 444.
- Al-Sunan al-Kubra, al-Bayhaqi (d. 458 AH), Nos. 4916, 4917, 4918.
- Shuab al-Iman, al-Bayhaqi (d. 458 AH), Nos. 2816, 2817.
- Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi (d. 463 AH), Nos. 5, 8, 10, 11.

Upon careful examination, it becomes evident from the above references that across the third, fourth, and fifth centuries AH, nine scholars of Hadith transmitted this narration attributed to Ibn Abbas in twelve books, through multiple chains, amounting in total to 22 narrations.

INVESTIGATION OF THE CHAINS OF TRANSMISSION

A careful examination of the chains of these 22 narrations attributed to Ibn Abbas reveals that there are seven distinct chains reaching him. In the light of the science of *al-rijal*, and the established principles of Hadith criticism, we shall present to the readers an independent analysis of each of these seven chains along with their legal classification.

THE FIRST CHAIN

One chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas is as follows:

عن موسى بن عبد العزيز، عن الحكم بن أبان، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.
Mūsā ibn Abd al-ʿAzīz, from al-Ḥakam ibn Abān, from ʿIkrimah, from Ibn ʿAbbās, from the Messenger of God (PBUH).

It should be noted that in the discussion of *Salat al-Tasbih*, this is the chain most confidently relied upon by those who affirm the validity of this prayer. This chain appears in the following works among the twelve sources mentioned above:

Al-Qiraah Khalf al-Imam, al-Bukhari, No. 149
 Sunan Ibn Majah, No. 1387
 Sunan Abi Dawud, No. 1297
 Sahih Ibn Khuzaymah, No. 1216
 Al-Mujam al-Kabir, al-Tabarani, No. 11622
 Al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn, al-Hakim, No. 1192
 Al-Dawat al-Kabir, al-Bayhaqi, No. 444
 Al-Sunan al-Kubra, al-Bayhaqi, Nos. 4916, 4917
 Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, No. 8

MUSA IBN ABD AL-AZIZ IN THE VIEW OF THE AUTHORITIES OF RIJAL

The first problematic narrator in this chain is Musa ibn Abd al-Aziz al-Qanbari (d. 175 AH).

It must first be noted that he is a narrator of very limited transmission. In the entire corpus of Hadith, only 13 chains include Musa ibn Abd al-Aziz. Among the nine Hadith sources listed above, with the exception of al-Bayhaqi's *Shuab al-Iman* and al-Tabarani's *Al-Mujam al-Kabir*, the remaining seven books mention Musa ibn Abd al-Aziz only in connection with the present narration of Ibn Abbas. It is therefore a factual observation that these seven Hadith scholars did not transmit any other narration of his in these works.

Imam al-Bayhaqi and Imam Ibn al-Jawzi declared him to be *majbul* (unknown).

Imam al-Dhahabi stated: "*ma huwa bilhujjab*" — "He is not authoritative."

Al-Dhahabi also wrote: "*hadithuhu min al-munkirat*" — "His narrations are counted among the rejected (*munkar*) reports."

Imam Ali ibn al-Madini declared him weak (*daif*) and *munkar al-hadith*.

Imam Ahmad ibn Ali al-Sulaymani (d. 404 AH) also judged him *munkar al-hadith*.

In contemporary scholarship, Dr. Bashshar Awwad Maruf and Shaykh Shuayb al-Arnaut have likewise declared him weak (*daif*).¹

THE VIEWS OF THE HADITH AUTHORITIES REGARDING HAKAM IBN ABAN AL-ADANI

As for Hakam ibn Aban al-Adani, the teacher of Musa ibn Abd al-Aziz in this chain:

Imam Ibn Khuzaymah stated that the scholars of Hadith have expressed criticism regarding reliance upon his narrations.

Imam Muhammad ibn Abd Allah ibn al-Mubarak al-Mukharrimi included him among those narrators whose reports he advised should be rejected entirely due to weakness.

Imam Ibn Adi also declared him weak (*daif*).

Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli included him in *Al-Duafa al-Kabir* and declared him weak, adding that any

¹ *Al-Takmil fi al-Jarh wa al-Tadil wa Ma'rifat al-Thiqat wa al-Duafa wa al-Majabil*, Ismail ibn Umar ibn Kathir al-Qurashi, 1:256–257, no. 396.

Mizan al-Itidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 2:212–213, no. 8893.

Tabdhib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 10:356, no. 635.

Tabrir Taqrib al-Tabdhib li al-Hafiz Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, ed. Dr. Bashshar Awwad Maruf and Shaykh Shuayb al-Arnaut, 3:435, no. 6988.

corroboration found for his narrations appears only through weak chains.

Imam al-Dhahabi also mentioned him in *Al-Mughni fi al-Duafa*.²

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE FIRST CHAIN

From the above analysis, it is established that the first chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas, transmitted in the nine Hadith sources mentioned earlier, is weak and unreliable.

Among contemporary Hadith researchers, Dr. Bashshar Awwad Maruf and Shaykh Shuayb al-Arnaut have likewise declared it a *munkar* narration.³

It is therefore clear that *Salat al-Tasbih* cannot be established on the basis of this chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas.

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE SECOND CHAIN

In *Al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn*, No. 1193, there is another chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas in which the two weak and rejected narrators from the first chain are again present. In addition, the narrator from whom Imam al-Hakim himself transmits in this chain—Muhammad ibn Harun al-Hadrami—is unknown to the scholars of *rijal* (narrators). Due to this unknown (*majbul*) narrator, the chain is also *munqati* (disconnected). It is therefore self-evident that this is an extremely weak chain.

In *Al-Mustadrak*, the chain is recorded as follows:

حدثناه محمد بن هارون بن سليمان الحضرمي، ثنا إسحاق بن أبي إسرائيل، ثنا موسى بن عبد العزيز أبو شعيب القنباري ثنا الحكم بن أبان، حدثني عكرمة، عن ابن عباس عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.

It was narrated to us by Muḥammad ibn Hārūn ibn Sulaymān al-Ḥadramī, who said: Ishāq ibn Abī Isrāʿīl narrated to us; he said: Mūsā ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Abū Shuʿayb al-Qunbārī narrated to us; he said: al-Ḥakam ibn Abān narrated to us; ʿIkrimah narrated to me, from Ibn ʿAbbās, from the Prophet (PBUH).

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE THIRD CHAIN

One chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas was transmitted by al-Tabarani in *Al-Mujam al-Kabir*, No. 11365, with the following chain:

حدثنا إبراهيم بن نائلة، ثنا شيبان، ثنا نافع أبو هرمز، عن عطاء، عن ابن عباس، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.
Ibrāhīm ibn Nāʾilah narrated to us; he said: Shaybān narrated to us; he said: Nāfi ʿAbū Harmuz narrated to us, from ʿAtāʾ, from Ibn ʿAbbās, from the Prophet (PBUH)

The fundamental defect in this chain lies in the presence of the narrator Abu Hurmuz Nafi ibn Hurmuz al-Sulami.

Imam al-Bukhari declared him *munkar al-badith*. Several Hadith scholars classified him as *matruk al-badith* (abandoned in transmission) and *dhahib al-badith* (his narrations are worthless). Imam Yahya bin Main labeled him a *kadhdhab* (liar). Imam Ibn Hibban stated that this individual fabricated a collection of narrations which

² *Al-Kamil fi Duafa al-Rijal*, Abu Ahmad Abd Allah ibn Adi, 2:355, no. 487.

Al-Duafa al-Kabir, Abu Jafar al-Uqayli, 1:255, no. 310.

Al-Mughni fi al-Duafa, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 1:182, no. 1647.

Tabdhib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, vol. 2, pp. 423–424, no. 736.

³ *Tabrir Taqrib al-Tabdhib* of al-Hafiz Ahmad ibn Ali ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, edited by Dr. Bashshar Awwad Maruf and Shaykh Shuʿayb al-Arnaʿut, 3:435, no. 6988.

he attributed to Ata, Ibn Abbas, and Aishah (RA). It is neither permissible to regard him as authoritative nor to record his narrations—except that scholars, in the course of academic investigation and analysis, may review such reports merely for the purpose of critical awareness.⁴

It is therefore evident that this chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas is, according to the principles of Hadith criticism, *matruk* (abandoned) and *mawzu* (fabricated). It holds no probative value.

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE FOURTH CHAIN

Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi transmitted a unique chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas in *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbeeh*, No. 5, through the narrator Hammad ibn Amr al-Nasibi. The chain is as follows:

حدثنا حماد بن عمرو النصيبي، عن أبي رافع، عن محمد بن المكندر، عن عبد الله بن عباس، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Hammād ibn ‘Amr al-Nasībī narrated to us, from Abū Rāfi‘, from Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, from ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās, from the Prophet (PBUH)

Hammad ibn Amr al-Nasibi has been declared *munkar al-hadith* by some authorities of *rijal*, *daifun jiddan* (very weak) by others, and *matruk al-hadith* by yet others. Some scholars have stated that he has no standing at all. Numerous Hadith authorities have explicitly described him as a *wazza* (fabricator) and *kadhhab* (liar), stating that he used to fabricate narrations and attribute them to reliable transmitters in order to circulate false Hadith among people.⁵

Furthermore, in this chain, the person from whom Hammad ibn Amr narrates is Ismail ibn Rafi ibn Uwaymir Abu Rafi, who was regarded by the Hadith scholars as a storyteller. Some authorities of *rijal* declared him *daif*, others *munkar al-hadith*, and several classified him as *matruk al-hadith*. Numerous leading scholars also stated that he possesses no standing in Hadith transmission.⁶

Accordingly, in light of the established principles of transmission, this chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas is also *mawzu* (fabricated) due to Hammad ibn Amr al-Nasibi. Therefore, according to the Hadith scholars, it is not permissible to present this narration to the public as a Prophetic Hadith without clarifying its status.

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE FIFTH CHAIN

The fifth chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas appears in three sources:

1. Al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn, al-Hakim, No. 1195.
2. *Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, al-Bayhaqi, No. 4918.
3. *Shuab al-Iman*, al-Bayhaqi, Nos. 2816, 2817.

The chain is recorded as follows:

⁴ *Al-Kamil fi Du‘afa’ al-Rijal*, Abu Ahmad ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Adi, 10:209–213, no. 1987.

Al-Majruhin min al-Muhaddithin wa al-Du‘afa’ wa al-Matrukin, Muhammad ibn Hibban al-Tamimi al-Busti, 3:59, no. 1123.

⁵ *Al-Kamil fi Du‘afa’ al-Rijal*, Abu Ahmad ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Adi, 3:10, no. 415.

Al-Du‘afa’ wa al-Matrukin, Ibn al-Jawzi, 1:234, no. 1000.

Al-Mughni fi al-Du‘afa’, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 1:189, no. 1720.

Mizan al-Itidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 1:598, no. 2262.

⁶ *Tabdhib al-Kamal*, al-Mizzi, 3:85–90, no. 442. *Tabdhib al-Tabdhib*, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, 1:294–296, no. 547.

ثنا إسحاق بن إبراهيم الحنظلي، أنبأ إبراهيم بن الحكم بن أبان، عن أبيه، عن عكرمة، عن ابن عباس، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ḥanẓalī narrated to us; he said: Ibrāhīm ibn al-Ḥakam ibn Abān informed us, from his father, from 'Ikrimah, from Ibn 'Abbās, from the Prophet (PBUH).

This chain contains two criticized narrators: Ibrahim ibn Hakam al-Adani and his father Hakam ibn Aban al-Adani, who also appeared in the first chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas. For the readers' reminder, the opinions of the Hadith authorities regarding Hakam ibn Aban are repeated below.

THE VIEWS OF THE HADITH AUTHORITIES REGARDING HAKAM IBN ABAN AL-ADANI

Imam Ibn Khuzaymah stated that the scholars of Hadith have raised objections to deriving proof from his narrations. Imam Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn al-Mubarak al-Mukharrimi included him among those narrators whose reports he advised should be rejected entirely due to weakness. Imam Ibn Adi declared him weak. Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli mentioned him in *Al-Du'afa al-Kabir* and classified him as weak, stating that even when corroborations are found for his narrations, they appear only through weak chains. Imam al-Dhahabi also mentioned him in *Al-Mughni fi al-Du'afa*.⁷

STATEMENTS OF THE SCHOLARS OF RIJAL REGARDING IBRAHIM IBN HAKAM AL-ADANI

Ibrahim ibn Hakam al-Adani was declared weak by Imam Abu Zurah al-Razi and Imam al-Daraqutni. Imam Yaqub ibn Sufyan al-Fasawi wrote that there is no disagreement regarding his weakness. Imam Abu Dawud stated: *"la abdithu anhu"* ("I do not narrate any Hadith from him.") Some leading authorities were even more severe in their judgment. Imam Yahya ibn Saeed al-Qattan, Imam Yahya ibn Main, and Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli stated: *"laysa bi shayin"* ("He is nothing (of worth) in Hadith transmission").

Imam Ibrahim ibn Yaqub al-Jawzajani declared him *saqit* (fallen).

Imam al-Nasai classified him as *matruk al-hadith* and stated that his narrations should not even be recorded.

Imam Abu al-Fath al-Azdi described him as *matruk al-hadith saqit*.

Imam al-Dhahabi likewise declared him *matruk*.⁸

From the analysis of this chain, it is abundantly clear that, according to the principles of Hadith criticism, this chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas is also extremely weak and cannot, under any circumstance, serve as proof for the establishment of Salat al-Tasbih.

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE SIXTH CHAIN

The sixth chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas appears in three references:

⁷ *Al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal*, Abu Ahmad 'Abd Allah ibn 'Adi, 2:355, no. 487.

Al-Du'afa' al-Kabir, Abu Ja'far al-Uqayli, 1:255, no. 310.

Al-Mughni fi al-Du'afa', Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 1:182, no. 1647.

Tabdhib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, 2:423–424, no. 736.

⁸ *Tabdhib al-Kamal*, al-Mizzi, 2:74–76, no. 164.

Tabdhib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, 1:115–116, no. 205.

Al-Du'afa' wa al-Matrukun, Abu 'Abd al-Rahman Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb al-Nasa'i, p. 12, no. 12.

Diwan al-Du'afa' wa al-Matrukin wa Khalq min al-Majhulin wa Thiqat Fihim Lin, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, p. 15, no. 172.

1. *Al-Mujam al-Awsat*, al-Tabarani, No. 2318.
2. *Hilyat al-Awliya wa Tabaqat al-Asfiya*, Abu Nuaym, 1/25.
3. *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih*, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, No. 10.

The chain is recorded as follows:

حدثنا هشام بن إبراهيم أبو الوليد المخزومي، حدثنا موسى بن جعفر بن أبي كثير، عن عبد القدوس بن حبيب، عن مجاهد، عن ابن عباس، عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.
Hishām ibn Ibrāhīm Abū al-Walīd al-Makbūmī narrated to us; he said: Mūsā ibn Ja‘far ibn Abī Kathīr narrated to us, from ‘Abd al-Quddūs ibn Ḥabīb, from Mujāhid, from Ibn ‘Abbās, from the Messenger of God (PBUH).

In this chain, three narrators are subject to criticism:

The first is Hisham ibn Ibrahim. The biographical sources of *ilm al-rijal* (science of narrators) are devoid of any substantial information regarding him. Only Ibn Hibban mentioned him among trustworthy narrators. However, it is a fact that neither the major authorities of this discipline prior to Ibn Hibban nor those after him made any mention of this narrator in terms of either criticism or validation. In other words, apart from Ibn Hibban, he is unknown to the leading scholars of *rijal* and remains an unidentified (*majhul*) narrator. Scholars are aware that when a narrator is declared trustworthy solely by Ibn Hibban, while remaining unknown to the rest of the Hadith authorities, such solitary authentication does not elevate him to the rank of an accepted and reliable transmitter in the judgment of Hadith scholars.

The second criticized narrator is Musa ibn Jafar ibn Abi Kathir al-Ansari. Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli states concerning him:

‘مجهول بالنقل ولا يتابع على حديثه ولا يصح إسناده’

He is unknown in transmission; his narrations are neither supported by corroboration nor is his chain sound.

Imam al-Uqayli also stated that he transmitted a fabricated Hadith. Regarding him, al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar said:

I have not seen any mention of him.

Imam al-Dhahabi stated:

He is unknown, and his report is invalid.

In *Diwan al-Duafa*, al-Dhahabi wrote:

*His narrations are fabricated.*⁹

The third criticized narrator in this chain is Abd al-Quddus ibn Habib al-Wahazi. Imam Ibn Adi states that his narrations are *munkar* both in chain and text. Imam al-Daraqutni also declared him *munkar al-hadith*. Imam al-Bukhari said that he is *munkar al-hadith* and that the scholars abandoned him. According to Imam Ahmad, he

⁹ *Al-Du‘afa’ al-Kabir*, Abu Ja‘far al-Uqayli, 4:155, no. 1724.

Al-Mughni fi al-Du‘afa’, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 2:682, no. 6483.

Diwan al-Du‘afa’ wa al-Matrukin wa Khalq min al-Majhulin wa Thiqaat Fihim Lin, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, p. 401, no. 4273.

Mizan al-Itidal fi Naqd al-Rijal, al-Dhahabi, 4:396, no. 8354.

Lisan al-Mizan, Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, 6:113–114, no. 396.

is extremely weak. Imam Abu Hatim al-Razi and Imam al-Nasai classified him as *matruk al-hadith*. Imam Amr ibn Ali al-Fallas stated:

The scholars are unanimously agreed upon abandoning his narrations.

Imam Yahya ibn Main declared him:

Discarded in Hadith.

Imam Muslim and Imam Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Mawsili described him as:

His narrations are worthless.

Imam Abu Dawud stated that this narrator has no standing.

Imam Abu al-Samani said:

He fabricates Hadiths in the names of trustworthy narrators.

Imam Muhammad ibn Abdullah al-Mukharrimi declared him a *kadhhab* (liar).

Imam Ibn Hibban stated:

He used to fabricate Hadiths in the names of trustworthy narrators; it is not permissible to record his narrations nor to transmit from him.

Ismail ibn Ayyash al-Ansi said:

I do not testify to anyone's falsehood except in the case of Abd al-Quddus ibn Habib.¹⁰

Thus, in light of the principles of Hadith methodology, it is established that this chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas is *mawzu* (fabricated) due to Abd al-Quddus ibn Habib. Therefore, according to the Hadith scholars, it is impermissible to present this narration to people as a Prophetic Hadith without clarifying its status.

LEGAL STATUS AND RULING OF THE SEVENTH CHAIN

The seventh and final chain of the narration of Ibn Abbas appears only in two sources:

1. *Al-Mujam al-Awsat*, al-Tabarani, No. 2879.
2. *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih*, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, No. 11.

The chain is recorded as follows:

حدثنا يحيى بن عقبة بن أبي العيزار، عن محمد بن جادة، عن أبي الجوزاء، قال: قال ابن عباس عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Yahyā ibn ‘Uqbah ibn Abī al-‘Ayzār narrated to us, from Muḥammad ibn Juḥādah, from Abū al-Jawzā’, who said: Ibn ‘Abbās said, from the Messenger of God (PBUH).

¹⁰ *Al-Kamil fi Duafa al-Rijal*, Abu Ahmad Abdullah ibn Adi, 10:209–213, no. 1987.

Al-Majrubin min al-Muhaddithin wa al-Duafa wa al-Matrukun, Muhammad ibn Hibban al-Tamimi al-Busti, 2:131, no. 728.

Al-Duafa wa al-Matrukun, Ibn al-Jawzi, 2:113, no. 1969.

Siyar Alam al-Nubala, Shams al-Din Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Dhahabi, 8:135–136, no. 12.

Lisan al-Mizan, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 5:233–235, no. 4864.

This chain contains the following three defects:

1. Imam Ibn Adi states about Yahya ibn Uqbah ibn Abi al-Izar al-Kufi that generally his narrations lack corroboration from other transmitters. Several authorities of *rijal* declared him weak. Imam al-Bukhari and Imam Salih ibn Jazrah classified him as *munkar al-hadith*. Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar described him as *matruk al-hadith*. Imam Abu Dawud and others said:

He is nothing (of worth).

Imam Ibn Tahir stated that he was among those who fabricated narrations in the names of trustworthy transmitters and that he has no standing in Hadith transmission.

Imam Yahya ibn Main said:

A wicked liar, an enemy of Allah; he was mocked, and his Hadith is not to be written.

Imam Abu Hatim al-Razi stated:

Abandoned; he used to fabricate Hadith and insert falsehood into it.

Imam Abu Hafs Ibn Shahin also declared him a liar.

Al-Hafiz Ibn al-Jawzi accused him of falsehood.

Imam Ibn Hibban said:

He was among those who narrated fabricated reports in the names of reliable authorities; it is not permissible to use him as proof under any circumstances.¹¹

2. The second criticized narrator in this chain is Abu al-Jawza Aws ibn Abd Allah al-Rabi, whom Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli included among weak narrators. Imam al-Bukhari stated:

There is scrutiny regarding his chain.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar wrote that he frequently narrated *mursal* reports without naming the Companion, and due to this aspect the scholars of *rijal* criticized him.

Imam Ibn Adi narrates from his teacher Yahya ibn Muhammad ibn Saeed that, in reality, it was not established that Abu al-Jawza personally heard Hadith from Ibn Abbas or other Companions. For this reason, Imam al-Bukhari stated that his chain is subject to scrutiny; in any case, according to Imam al-Bukhari, he is a weak narrator.¹²

¹¹ *Al-Majrubin min al-Muhaddithin wa al-Duafa wa al-Matrukin*, Muhammad ibn Hibban al-Tamimi al-Busti, 3:117, no. 1205.

Tarikh Asma al-Duafa wa al-Kadhdhabin, Ibn Shahin Umar ibn Ahmad al-Baghdadi, 196, 690.

Al-Duafa wa al-Matrukun, Ibn al-Jawzi, 3:200, no. 3742.

Lisan al-Mizan, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 8:464, no. 8502.

Tadbkirat al-Huffaz, Ibn al-Qaysarani Muhammad ibn Tahir al-Maqdisi al-Shaybani, 47, no. 91.

Jamiat al-Rijal wa al-Ilal, Encyclopedic compilation of the statements of Yahya ibn Main, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Abu al-Hasan al-Daraqutni on the men of hadith and their defects, al-Sayyid Abu al-Mati al-Nuri, 8:753, no. 7484.

¹² *Al-Duafa al-Kabir*, Abu Jafar al-Uqayli, 1:124, no. 148.

Tabdhib al-Kamal, al-Mizzi, 3:392–394, no. 580.

Al-Kamil fi Duafa al-Rijal, Abu Ahmad Abdullah ibn Uday, 2:107–109, no. 225.

3. The third impugned narrator in this chain is Muhammad ibn Juhadah al-Awdi, whom Imam Abu Jafar al-Uqayli has included among the weak narrators. He has also transmitted the statement of Imam Abu Awanah al-Waddah regarding him that he was given to excess (*ghuluw*) in Shiism.¹³

Accordingly, in light of the established principles of the science of transmission, critical examination of the chain demonstrates that this final route of the hadith of Ibn Abbas is likewise *mawzu* (fabricated) due to the presence in its chain of Yahya ibn Uqbah ibn Abi al-Ayzar al-Kufi. Therefore, this route too cannot, under any circumstances, be advanced as proof for the establishment of *Salat al-Tasbih*.

INCONSISTENCIES OF HADITH OF IBN ABBAS

Apart from the lack of authenticity of all its chains, the various textual versions of the hadith of Ibn Abbas also contain several inconsistencies and contradictions, as follows:

1. On the one hand, according to the majority of its routes, Ibn Abbas (RA) reports that the Prophet (PBUH) granted the prayer of *Salat al-Tasbih* as a gift to his father, al-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib (RA). On the other hand, in certain narrations—such as al-Mujam al-Awsat, al-Tabarani, no. 2318—Ibn Abbas states that this gift, in the form of this prayer, was bestowed by the Prophet upon him personally rather than upon his father. Moreover, in some texts—such as al-Mujam al-Awsat, al-Tabarani, no. 2879—there is no mention at all of this prayer being granted as a gift to either of them; rather, it merely transmits a statement attributed to the Prophet concerning *Salat al-Tasbih*.
2. In al-Mujam al-Kabir, al-Tabarani, no. 11365, it is reported that al-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib came to the Prophet (PBUH) at an unexpected time and mentioned a certain difficulty and anxiety. On that occasion, the Prophet granted him this prayer as a gift. In contrast, *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 5, reports that al-Abbas said: on one occasion the Messenger of Allah passed by me, and at that time he granted me this prayer as a gift.
3. In some routes—such as al-Mujam al-Kabir, al-Tabarani, no. 11622—there is only a general statement concerning the forgiveness of sins, whereas in most of the texts there is a prediction of forgiveness encompassing all sins: past and future, minor and major.
4. In certain versions of the hadith of Ibn Abbas—such as *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih* by al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 10—there appears an instruction to recite a specific supplication with fixed wording in the final sitting of the prayer after the *tashabbud*. This element is absent from the majority of the remaining versions of this narration, and in all other corroborative reports attributed to other Companions regarding this prayer, no such specified supplication at this point has been transmitted.
5. In most versions of the hadith of Ibn Abbas, the exhortation to perform this prayer daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, or once in a lifetime is described in the same manner as in the majority of other supporting reports. However, in *Dhikr Salat al-Tasbih*, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, no. 5, there is mention of performing it every month and also at half-yearly intervals, while there is no mention of performing it once in a lifetime.

From this detailed analysis, it becomes clear that the hadith of Ibn Abbas, in addition to being unsound in terms

Tabdhib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 1:383–384, no. 702.

Taqrib al-Tabdhib, Ibn Hajar, 155.

Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari, Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani, 1:461.

¹³ *Al-Duafa al-Kabir*, Abu Jafar al-Uqayli, 4:43, no. 1592.

of its chains of transmission, is also textually inconsistent (*muztarib*) and anomalous (*munkar*), and therefore cannot be regarded as an authentic report in any reliable sense.

[To be Continued...]



THE BODY OF PHARAOH AND THE STATEMENT OF THE HOLY QURAN (1)

A Research and Analytical Study of Exegetical Opinions. Presented in a Question & Answer Format

Dr. Amir Gazdar

This column of “Nuqta-e-Nazar” is reserved for the writings of various thinkers. The publication of an article here does not necessarily mean that the editorial board agrees with the views expressed in it.

Question: Has the Holy Quran stated anywhere that the body of Pharaoh will be preserved by God until the Day of Resurrection as a sign of admonition for people?

Answer: No. This statement is not mentioned anywhere in the Quran.

Question: Does the Quran state that God would preserve his body for later generations or future ages so that people might continue to observe it and take admonition from it?

Answer: No. The Quran does not explicitly state this either.

Question: If that is the case, how did the notion become so widespread among Muslims that God has preserved Pharaoh’s body to this day?

Answer: Upon investigation and reflection, the basic reason appears to be that many Urdu translators and exegetes of the Quran made an error in this regard. Consequently, in Surah Yunus (10), verse 92, where God speaks about Pharaoh’s body, they did not convey the meaning of the verse accurately in Urdu. Later translators apparently relied upon the renderings of their predecessors and, with only minor differences in wording, repeated the same interpretation—an interpretation that, according to many scholars, exegetes, and researchers, is not correct. Thus, this well-known notion gradually spread among us, and later Urdu translations and commentaries also interpreted the verse in accordance with that earlier translation.

Question: According to your research, who was the first scholar or translator in the Indian subcontinent in whose translation or commentary this lapse occurred?

Answer: According to my investigation so far, the earliest instance of this scholarly mistake in the translation and interpretation of this verse appears in the work of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (may God have mercy on him). Prior to him, I have not found, in any Arabic or Urdu commentary, the meaning or interpretation of the verse that he presented in his exegesis *Tarjuman al-Quran*.¹⁴ After him, many contemporary scholars—particularly those associated with the intellectual tradition of Shibli—essentially reproduced Maulana Azad’s translation and interpretation in their own styles in their respective commentaries.

Question: After Maulana Azad, which well-known Urdu translations and commentaries of the Quran, in your

¹⁴ *Tarjuman al-Quran*, Abu al-Kalam Azad, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, pp. 168–169.

view, have exhibited this same leniency in translating and interpreting the verse?

Answer: Apart from Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, examples may be cited from the translations and commentaries of Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, Mufti Taqi Usmani, and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. The details are as follows:

1. Maulana Azad translated: “So today We shall save your body (from the waves of the sea), so that you may become a sign (of the power of the Truth) for those who come after you.”¹⁵
2. Maulana Maududi writes: “Now We shall save only your corpse so that you may become a sign of admonition for later generations.”¹⁶
3. Imam Islahi’s translation is: “So today We shall save your body so that you may become a sign for those who come after you.”¹⁷
4. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan writes: “So today We shall save your body so that you may become a sign for those who come after you.”¹⁸
5. Mufti Taqi Usmani translates it as: “Therefore today We shall save (only) your body so that you may become a sign of admonition for those who come after you.”¹⁹
6. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes: “Thus today We shall save your body so that you may remain a sign (of God’s punishment) for those who come after you.”²⁰

In these translations, it is noteworthy that the Quranic expression ‘*liman khalfaka*’ has been rendered as “for later generations,” “for those who come after you,” or “for the people after you.” The error here lies in understanding the word *khalfaka* in the sense of *bada* (“after” in a temporal sense). However, in this context the Quranic word *khalfaka* denotes a spatial *zarf* (adverb of place), not a temporal adverb. Just as we use the word “behind” in contrast to “in front,” the expression here carries precisely that meaning.

Question: Does this word occur elsewhere in the Quran with the meaning of a spatial adverb as well? Please clarify with another example from the Quran.

Answer: Yes. In the Quran this word is used everywhere in the sense of spatial position. For instance, consider Surah al-Anfal (8), verse 57, where it occurs in the same way attached to the pronoun of address. The verse states:

فَمَا تَنْفَقْتَهُمْ فِي الْحَرْبِ فَسَرَدَ بِهِمْ مَنْ خَلْفَهُمْ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَدْكُرُونَ

Consider carefully the expression *khalfabum* in this verse and its meaning in the following three translations:

1. Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi translates the verse as: “So if you encounter them in battle, strike them in such a way that those who are behind them are also scattered, so that they may take heed.”

In explanation he writes: “The meaning is that at present whatever they are doing, they are doing covertly; none of them has the courage to confront openly. If any group among them dares to appear and you encounter them on the battlefield, then strike them in such a way that they are utterly shattered and that

¹⁵ *Tarjuman al-Quran*, Abu al-Kalam Azad, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, pp. 168–169.

¹⁶ *Tafhim al-Quran*, Sayyid Abu al-A‘la Mawdudi, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, p. 310.

¹⁷ *Tadabbur al-Quran*, Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 4, p. 73.

¹⁸ *Tazkir al-Quran*, Maulana Wahid al-Din Khan, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, p. 554.

¹⁹ *Asan Tarjuma-e-Quran*, Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, pp. 657.

²⁰ *Al-Bayan*, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, pp. 456.

those who are sitting behind them, measuring their chances, also lose their strength and courage.”²¹

2. Mufti Taqi Usmani translates it as: “Therefore, if they ever fall into your hands in battle, deal with them in such a manner that those who are behind them are also scattered, so that they may remember.”

His exegetical note states: “The meaning is that if they openly confront the Muslims in battle, they should be taught such a lesson that not only do they themselves realize the consequences of their treachery, but also the disbelievers of Makkah who incite them from behind are so admonished that their plans collapse.”²²

3. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi translates: “So if you encounter them in battle, strike them in such a manner that those who are behind them are also scattered, so that they may take heed.”

In his explanatory note he writes: “That is, they have not yet come forward for battle, but are sitting behind, weighing their chances.”²³

From the example above, it is clear that all three scholars understood and translated “*khalfabum*” in accordance with its spatial sense, meaning “those who are behind them.” If the translation were altered to a temporal sense—such as: “So if you encounter them in battle, strike them in such a way that the people or generations who come after them are scattered”—the error in such a rendering would become immediately obvious.

In short, this Quranic example also demonstrates that the word “*khalfa*” cannot be interpreted in the temporal sense of “*bada*” (“after”). Rather, wherever the Quran has used expressions such as “*khalfabum*”, “*khalfakum*”, “*min khalfihim*”, or “*min khalfibi*”, if we were to replace “*khalfa*” with “*bada*”, the meaning of the verse would become completely invalid.

For example, in Surah al-Araf (7), verse 17, the Quran quotes the statement of Iblis:

ثُمَّ لَآتِيَنَّهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ وَعَنْ أَيْمَانِهِمْ وَعَنْ شَمَائِلِهِمْ وَلَا تَجِدُ أَكْثَرَهُمْ شَاكِرِينَ

Then I shall surely come upon them from before them and from behind them, from their right and from their left, and You will find most of them ungrateful.

Question: In your opinion, why did later scholars exhibit such leniency in translating the verse under discussion? What might be the reason for this?

Answer: In my humble view as a student, there may be two reasons for this.

First, in some earlier commentaries the expression ‘*khalfaka*’ in this verse was explained by using the expression ‘*badaka*’. Influenced by this explanation, many later exegetes translated it in the sense of a temporal *zarf* (adverb of time). For example, in *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, Imam al-Suyuti clarified the meaning of this construction—namely ‘*khalfaka*’—through the expression ‘*badaka*’.²⁴ Consequently, many Urdu translators treated this Arabic explanation as synonymous with ‘*khalfaka*’ and interpreted it to mean “later times and generations.” However, if one examines the matter carefully, even in the explanations of some early exegetes who used the phrase ‘*man badaka*’, the intended meaning was actually the people present there in that very time after Pharaoh’s death—those who would witness his body—not the people of later generations and ages. Evidence for this interpretation

²¹ *Tadabbur al-Quran*, Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi, Surah Al-Anfal, Ayah 57, vol. 3, pp. 495, 499.

²² *Asan Tarjumah-e-Quran*, Mufti Muhammad Taqi Uthmani, Surah Al-Anfal, Ayah 57, vol. 1, p. 543.

²³ *Al-Bayan*, Jawid Ahmad Ghamdi, Surah Al-Anfal, Ayah 57, vol. 2, pp. 305–306.

²⁴ *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, al-Suyuti, p. 208.

lies in the details that these exegetes themselves provide in their explanations of this verse.²⁵ Moreover, the earlier commentators did not at all mention the continued existence or preservation of Pharaoh's body in later generations or eras.

The second major reason is that during the modern period, around the same time as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, some ancient mummies were discovered in Egypt. Around that very time, for the first time, the news also gained global attention that the body of the Pharaoh of Moses was preserved and present in a museum in Cairo—although this claim is not actually established from the standpoint of archaeology.²⁶ It is therefore likely that, following Maulana Azad, later scholars—while translating and interpreting this verse—were influenced by the widespread publicity of this report due to insufficient research and knowledge regarding it. As a result, they did not sufficiently reflect upon the original wording and expression of the Quran itself.

In short, on the one hand there was an error in determining the meaning of the word due to insufficient reflection, and on the other hand, instead of critical investigation, the widespread modern claim was accepted that the body of the Pharaoh of Moses had been discovered in Egypt in the late nineteenth century. Consequently, there was a lapse in correctly understanding the true intent of the Quranic statement.

Question: In your view, which scholars provide examples of the correct Urdu translation and explanation of the verse under discussion?

Answer: According to my investigation so far, among Urdu translations the earliest translators of the Quran—Maulana Shah Rafi al-Din Dehlavi and Maulana Shah Abd al-Qadir Muhaddith Dehlavi—and after them Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi,²⁷ Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, and Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, have translated this verse correctly in their translations and commentaries in accordance with the Arabic expression of the Quran. These scholars did not make any error in determining the meaning of the word. Moreover, in the marginal notes and commentary provided by Shah Abd al-Qadir and Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, no interpretation has been offered that would suggest that the Quran claims Pharaoh's body was to remain preserved for later ages.

1. Shah Rafi al-Din rendered the verse literally as follows: “So today We shall deliver you with your body so that you may be a sign for those people who are behind you.”²⁸
2. Shah Abd al-Qadir translated it idiomatically as: “So today We shall save you with your body, so that you may become a sign for those behind you.”

In explanation he writes: “Just as he believed at an improper time and his faith was of no benefit, likewise after he died God caused his body to be taken out of the river and placed upon an elevated spot so that the Israelites might see it, give thanks, and take admonition. What benefit could it bring him that his body was saved?”²⁹

3. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi translated it as: “Today We shall save your corpse (from sinking into the water) so that it may become a cause of admonition for those who are present after you.”³⁰

²⁵ Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Quran, Abu Ja'far al-Tabari, vol. 15, p. 194.

²⁶ Its detailed investigation will be presented subsequently.

²⁷ It is noteworthy here that, from a historical perspective, the era of these three scholars preceded the occurrence of the discovery of the mummies in the Egyptian museum.

²⁸ *Fa'iq al-Bayan fi Ma'ani Kalimat al-Quran*, Shah Rafi' al-Din, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, p. 521.

²⁹ *Muwadh al-Quran*, Shah Abdul Qadir Muhaddith Dehlawi, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, p. 283.

³⁰ *Tafsir Bayan al-Quran*, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, p. 198.

4. Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani translated the verse in these words: “So today We save your body so that you may become a sign for those behind you.”³¹
5. Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, in his commentary *Marif al-Quran*, presented exactly the same translation as that given by Shabbir Ahmad ‘Usmani. Then, in the *Khulasa-e-Tafsir* he writes: “Thus (instead of the salvation you desired), today We shall save your corpse (from sinking into the water) so that you may become a cause of admonition for those who are present after you (so that, by witnessing your wretched condition and destruction, they may refrain from opposing the commands of God).”³²

In all five of these translations, it may be observed that the translation has been made in accordance with the sense of a spatial adverb. Expressions such as “for later generations,” “for those who come after you,” or similar phrases have not been used.

Question: Has any Prophetic hadith been reported that explains or clarifies the verse under discussion?

Answer: No. In this matter the Prophet (PBUH) neither made any explicit statement himself nor has any saying of his been reported in response to a question from the Companions regarding this verse. All the sources of hadith and transmitted reports are completely silent on this issue.

Question: Is there any report from a Companion mentioned in the narrations concerning this verse?

Answer: Ibn Jarir al-Tabari and Hafiz Ibn Kathir, in their commentaries, have reported from among the Companions only a narration from Abdullah ibn Abbas (RA), and also from some scholars among the Successors. According to this report, when Pharaoh was drowned and destroyed in the sea, some among the Israelites—who had already crossed the sea with Moses (PBUH)—expressed doubt regarding his death. Therefore, by the command of God, the sea did not swallow Pharaoh’s body; rather, it cast it out and placed it upon a slightly elevated place on land so that the people of Moses might see it with their own eyes in a lifeless state and thereby become certain of his destruction.³³ Apart from Ibn Abbas, no report from any other Companion has been transmitted in this regard.

Question: In the major classical commentaries, has any exegete derived from this verse the meaning that the Quran declares Pharaoh’s body would be preserved for later ages so that people in future times might observe it and take admonition?

Answer: No. This meaning has not been stated by al-Tabari, al-Zamakhshari, or al-Razi in their commentaries. Likewise, none of the exegetes in the commentaries of al-Qurtubi, al-Baydawi, Ibn Kathir, al-Suyuti, or al-Shawkani have presented such an interpretation of this verse. If they had understood and stated such a meaning from this verse, its necessary implication would have been that they would have discussed, in their respective eras, the concrete example of this body and indicated its existence in some region. However, the fact is that the incident of Pharaoh mentioned in the Quran predates the Quran itself by two thousand years, and even until roughly thirteen hundred years after the revelation of the Quran there was no mention anywhere in the world of the body of Pharaoh.

Question: Regarding the incident mentioned above—reported from Ibn Abbas and some early scholars—that the sign in the form of Pharaoh’s body was shown in order to assure certain Israelites of Pharaoh’s death, what do

³¹ *Tafsir Usmani*, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 2, p. 106.

³² *Tafsir Ma’arif al-Quran*, Mufti Muhammad Shafi ‘Usmani, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 4, pp. 565–567.

³³ *Tafsir Ibn Jarir al-Tabari*, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 15, p. 196.

Tafsir Ibn Kathir, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 4, p. 294.

you say about it?

Answer: Yes, this incident has been reported by many exegetes among the earlier and later scholars. Mufti Muhammad Shafi' Usmani has also mentioned it in *Marif al-Quran*. While narrating it, he writes:

“The incident is that after crossing the sea, when Moses (PBUH) informed the Israelites that Pharaoh had been destroyed, they were so overawed and intimidated by Pharaoh that they began to deny it and said that Pharaoh had not perished. For their guidance and as a lesson for others, God caused a wave of the sea to cast Pharaoh’s dead body onto the shore. Everyone saw it and became certain of his destruction, and thus his corpse became a sign of admonition for all. After that, it is not known what ultimately happened to the body. The place where Pharaoh’s body was found is still known as Jabal al-Firawn (the Mountain of Pharaoh).”³⁴

In my view, if one examines this incident reported in the commentaries with careful scrutiny, the following four objections arise from the standpoint of critical analysis:

First, if this event from the time of Moses (PBUH) was indeed reported by Ibn Abbas (RA) or by some scholars among the Successors, then what was their source for an event that had occurred nearly two thousand years before their own time—especially when the Torah itself is completely silent about this event, and there exists no statement of the Prophet (PBUH) concerning this verse among the Companions either?

Second, when viewed in light of the context of the verse and the occasion of the discourse, the interpretation implied by this explanation appears as follows: in the time of Moses (PBUH), God addressed Pharaoh at the very moment of his death and, while rejecting his repentance, declared that he would not escape his fate. However, in order to provide assurance to some Israelites—who would soon doubt the report of Pharaoh’s death—God would preserve Pharaoh’s dead body from the sea and cast it onto the land before the Israelites so that they might see the sign of his death with their own eyes.

Upon closer examination, this interpretation implies that at the very moment when God was directly addressing Pharaoh before his death—rejecting his repentance and announcing his destruction and evil fate—He was also informing Pharaoh of His plan to remove a doubt that had not even arisen yet among the Israelites regarding Pharaoh’s death. If this were indeed the intended meaning, the question arises: why would such information be conveyed to Pharaoh himself before his death? If some Israelites later expressed doubt about Pharaoh’s destruction, they would naturally have done so before Moses (PBUH) after Pharaoh’s death. Hence, rationally speaking, the appropriate course would have been for God to inform Moses (PBUH) about the arrangement made to remove such doubt, not Pharaoh before his destruction. Therefore, it does not appear reasonable that God would address Pharaoh before his death and say: since the Israelites will not believe that you have died, I am informing you that I shall bring your body out of the sea and present it before them to assure them.

Third, when God addresses Pharaoh saying: “I intend that your body become a sign for those who are behind you,” the fundamental question arises: who are these people behind Pharaoh at that moment? The obvious answer is that they are Pharaoh’s own people and his followers who regarded him as their deity—those who, after this encounter, remained behind in Egypt awaiting his return. Therefore, the true referent of *‘liman khalfaka’* would be these very people. As for the Israelites, who were the companions of Moses (PBUH), they were actually ahead of Pharaoh at the time of pursuit, not behind him. According to the Quranic narrative, Pharaoh himself was following them, while they had already advanced and crossed the sea. From this perspective as well, the Israelites cannot be the intended referent of *‘liman khalfaka’* in the address to Pharaoh, because they were neither part of his people nor physically behind him at that moment. It is therefore clear that the people behind Pharaoh

³⁴ *Tafsir Marif al-Quran*, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Uthmani, Surah Yunus, Ayah 92, vol. 4, p. 567.

were his own nation—those who were truly waiting for the return of their supposed deity—and making his destruction and the divine punishment upon him a sign for them is entirely reasonable and appropriate.

Fourth, according to the explanation cited above from Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Pharaoh's body was found at a specific location which is still known today as *Jabal al-Firawn*. It is further implied that the body was seen simultaneously by the Israelites—so that they might become certain of Pharaoh's death—and by Pharaoh's own people, so that they might take admonition from the humiliating end of their false deity. The point requiring reflection here is that, according to the Quranic account, when Pharaoh died the Israelites had already reached the other side of the sea, whereas Pharaoh's people remained behind in their own land. If one accepts that the body was present at the location known as *Jabal al-Firawn*, how can it be imagined that people from both nations saw the body simultaneously at that very place? On land, such a location could only belong to one of the two sides, and it is known that this would be the western shore of the Red Sea. Therefore, to assume that the body lying at that spot was seen by the people of Moses from the opposite side of the sea is rationally impossible. For this would require imagining both nations present at the western shore near *Jabal al-Firawn*, which contradicts the Quranic account.

From the above internal critique, it becomes evident that the incident attributed to Ibn 'Abbas (may God be pleased with him) under the explanation of this verse is not supported by the text of the Quran itself, and several rational objections may also be raised against it.

[To be continued...]



A STUDY OF MUSNAD AHMAD (6)

Ammar Khan Nasir

Muti Syed: Ashath ibn Qays became a guest in the house of Umar (RA). He says that Umar (RA) struck his wife and said to Ashath that the Prophet (PBUH) had said that three matters should not be questioned from a person. One of these is that a man should not be asked why he struck his wife (No. 122). What is the proper context of the Prophet's statement that a man should not be questioned about this? Does this not create the impression that a husband is not accountable to anyone in matters concerning his wife and has absolute authority over her?

Ammar Nasir: The intent of the Prophet's statement is that an outsider should not interfere in someone's domestic matters. The affairs that occur between husband and wife sometimes cannot even be explained before an outsider, and the head of the household may also regard it as interference in his private matters. However, this does not mean that a man is absolutely not accountable in the matter of beating his wife. If he has exceeded the proper limits, then he is accountable. But the questioning may be done either by the authority (the ruler or judge), or if the wife brings a complaint against the husband, then he can be questioned on that basis.

Similarly, jurists write that if a husband has a violent temperament, the authority may assign the people of the neighborhood the responsibility of keeping an eye on him. In such a case, neighbors may also report complaints to the authority. So, if a situation arises in which a complaint becomes necessary, then justice will be sought. When the occasion for complaint arose, women would also bring their complaints to the Prophet (PBUH), and he would sometimes admonish the husbands and sometimes the wives according to the situation. But under normal circumstances, the instruction was given that if a man needs to exercise this authority in order to maintain order within his household or to preserve the proper environment of his home, others should not interfere. They should not exert pressure on him, because that might embolden the other party; and if such encouragement is given, the matter may deteriorate and its effects may spread.

Muti Syed: Even so, in today's age this seems quite strange to us.

Ammar Nasir: Yes, a great deal has changed in our culture. Especially regarding the status of women and the particular sensitivity that now exists concerning their rights, it has become quite difficult to understand such matters. The Quran gave this instruction primarily in order to stabilize the social order. If there is the possibility that this order may be disturbed and irresponsible behavior may arise, then such guidance serves as a preventive measure. In reality, this was a tribal social order, in which the entire structure of society and the responsibility of the family and household rested fully upon the man. If a man's authority within the home is challenged, then his entire life and the responsibilities placed upon him are affected. In a tribal civilization, individual rights do not possess fundamental significance. The primary concern is that the foundations upon which society stands—and the division of responsibilities and rights established within it—should not be undermined. If they are undermined, numerous problems will arise.

If such a tendency exists among women and they express it, the entire order of the household will be affected. You can see that the Quran proposes the disciplinary correction of the wife as a possible method. It does not say that if someone strikes his wife there is "*la junaha alaykum*"—that there will be no sin; rather, it proposes that this may be done for the sake of reform. The authority is given in the context of ensuring that the established social order is not disrupted.

Muti Syed: Dr. Fazlur Rahman wrote regarding *qiwamah* that the era in which it operated in that way no longer exists, and on this basis he says that it needs to be reconsidered in light of social change. He expresses a similar view regarding the shares of inheritance. Do you also see these matters in the same way?

Ammar Nasir: In society, different principles operate simultaneously. For example, the principle of *qawamiyyat* exists in the Shariah, but alongside it the principle of individual rights and personal dignity has also been articulated. In a sound and balanced society, the proportion between these two must be maintained. The real objective is to preserve the order of the household. When civilization changes, the relationship between these principles has to be determined again in a new way.

In today's environment, it would not be proposed that the authority of the man is absolute in the sense that no other person may intervene in it. Today the instruction would rather be that if a man has struck his wife, he should have an answer to the question of what circumstance compelled him to raise his hand. If such a restriction is imposed, it would not be contrary to the Shariah. Even in the society of his own time, the Prophet (PBUH) created a balance through his practice within the general permission given by the Quran. The Quran emphasizes the aspect of discipline, but the Prophet (PBUH), through his example, highlights the aspect of moral conduct—what a man's behavior should be according to good character. He said, "The best among you is the one who is best to his family," and he never struck any of his wives or servants. In other words, on the one hand the Quran describes the disciplinary aspect so that women do not become rebellious, while on the other hand the Prophet (PBUH) directs people toward good moral conduct so that men themselves do not become oppressive.

Muti Syed: Some people say that the ideal society is actually the one described in the Quran and Hadith, and that we have deviated from it. In other words, society should be brought back to that original form. If society continues to become distorted, should we also continue to become distorted along with it?

Ammar Nasir: That is one perspective, but it can be disagreed with. What should really be considered is this: maintaining order within the household is certainly a desired objective, but must the method of maintaining that order be the same in every civilization? If there is a society in which a woman is more sensitive regarding her personal dignity and self-respect, and psychologically does not accept the method of physical discipline, then could there not be some alternative method—acceptable in the view of the Shariah—for maintaining *qawamiyyat*? Maintaining order is the fundamental principle, but the strategy for achieving it can change according to the civilization. If we look at the matter in light of the fundamental objectives of the Shariah, then restricting and conditioning the permission for physical discipline would not seem incorrect.

Muti Syed: Before his death, Umar (RA) made a will that at the time of his death all the slaves who were Arabs should be set free (No. 129). In what sense did he say this? Was he declaring slavery to be prohibited for Arabs, or as the caliph was he instructing people to free Arab slaves?

Ammar Nasir: This was a political decision. In the Shariah, obviously no such distinction was made that non-Arabs may be slaves while Arabs may not be. Umar (RA) made this decision under the principle of *siyasa shariyyah* that no Arab should remain a slave. Even in the time of the Prophet (PBUH), Arab tribes who were captured in wars were eventually freed. For example, when the people of Banu al-Mustaliq were taken captive, they were collectively freed because of the marriage of the Prophet (PBUH) to Juwayriyah (RA). Likewise, in the Battle of Hunayn, those who were taken captive were distributed as part of the spoils of war, but afterward the Prophet (PBUH) asked the people to free them all and promised that compensation for their freedom would be given to them on a later occasion.

During his caliphate, Umar (RA) observed that many Arabs who had been captured in mutual wars during the age of ignorance were still living as slaves. During his rule he made efforts to have their price paid and to secure

their freedom. At the time of his death he also made a will that whoever remained among them should have their price paid from the *Bayt al-Māl*, and they should be set free.

Muti Syed: Why was this policy specifically directed toward Arab slaves? Was there any particular reason for this specification?

Ammar Nasir: It was not specific to Arabs in the sense that he took no measures for the freedom of non-Arab slaves. For example, some reports state that he advised the caliph who would succeed him that among the slaves owned by the *Bayt al-Māl*, every slave who performed prayer should be set free, although the caliph could continue to take service from them for two years if he wished (*al-Tabaqat al-Kubra* 3/333).

Similarly, he adopted the policy and wrote to all his governors that if a slave-woman had given birth to her master's child, the master could not sell her, because this would amount to severing family ties and would not be permissible (*al-Mustadrak ala al-Sahihayn*, No. 3708). He stated this because regarding a slave-woman who became the mother of her master's child, the Prophet (PBUH) had declared that upon the death of the master she would automatically become free. However, during the Prophet's time and the caliphate of Abu Bakr (RA), the Companions would sometimes sell such slave-women during their lifetime if the need arose. Umar (RA) exercised independent reasoning (*ijtihad*) that the fundamental moral principle of the Shariah requires that such a slave-woman should not be sold and separated from her child. Accordingly, with the agreement of the leading Companions, he imposed a prohibition on this and declared it equivalent to severing kinship ties.

As for making the freedom of Arab slaves a primary objective, that was a natural inclination. Sympathy and solidarity for one's own people tend to be stronger than for other groups.

Muti Syed: From the measures of Umar (RA), it appears that he wanted to gradually restrict slavery. Can it be said that if he had been given more opportunity, he might also have decided to abolish it altogether?

Ammar Nasir: I also have the impression that if the continuity of Umar (RA)'s measures had been maintained, and if either he himself or a later caliph with similar insight and courage had been given further opportunity, then perhaps at some stage the Muslims might have decided much earlier to abolish slavery completely. The Prophet (PBUH) had initiated a process, and Umar (RA) continued to advance it with considerable focus. However, the stage did not arise in which he could decide upon its complete abolition. After him, the continuity of this way of thinking was also not maintained in the same manner.

Muti Syed: Does the idea of considering Arabs superior to other peoples not involve an element of racial discrimination? The Jews also had a similar notion, which the Quran criticized. The Prophet (PBUH) also said in the Farewell Sermon—a very famous statement—“*La fadla li-arabiyyin ala ajamiyyin illa bil-taqwa.*” (There is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab except through piety). So in what sense do they have superiority?

Ammar Nasir: That is a good question. The key point here is whether superiority and equality can coexist. In other words, can a group be acknowledged as superior or distinguished in one respect while remaining equal to other groups in another respect? As far as superiority on the basis of race is concerned, Islam has not endorsed it. Rather, it has stated that all human beings are the children of the same parents, and no race possesses inherent superiority over another. In the sight of God, the criterion for being favored and close to Him is a person's deeds. In that sense, there is equality.

However, if God, in His wisdom, selects certain groups or peoples for a particular responsibility or role, then in that sense they possess a distinction over others. For example, the Israelites were chosen for prophethood and divine law, and after them the Ishmaelites were selected for *shahadah 'ala al-nās* (bearing witness over humanity). This is a distinction granted by God and has its own significance. The Israelites went wrong at this point when

they transformed a distinction granted because of responsibility and role into a notion of racial superiority. To a large extent, if a sense of superiority exists among Arabs as well, it has the same nature.

Muti Syed: There is a narration in which the narrator is Ibn ‘Abbas. He explains the context in which the Quranic verse ¹لَا تَجْهَرُ بِصَلَاتِكَ وَلَا تُخَافِتُ بِهَا was revealed in Makkah (No. 155). Why has this narration been placed in the *Musnad* of Umar (RA)?

Ammar Nasir: In this verse it is instructed that while offering prayer one should neither recite in a very loud voice nor in an excessively low voice. In the exegetical reports related to this verse, it is narrated that among the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH), Abu Bakr (RA) would recite in a low voice and Umar (RA) in a louder voice. The Prophet told Abu Bakr to raise his voice somewhat and told Umar (RA) to lower his voice slightly (*Tafsir al-Tabari*, 17/586). Since the narration of Ibn ‘Abbas (RA) also describes the occasion of revelation of this verse, it may have been placed in the *Musnad* of Umar (RA) due to this connection. However, it is also possible that it remained here by mistake, because Imam Ahmad did not have the opportunity to finalize the arrangement of the *Musnad*.

Muti Syed: A few days before his death, Umar (RA) delivered a sermon in which he spoke about several important matters, including stoning (*rajm*). He said that this is one of the limits set by God and that if he did not fear that people would say that Umar (RA) had added something to the Book of God, he would have written it in the margin of the *mushaf*. He also said that people would arise who would deny stoning, the punishment of the grave, and the coming of the *Dajjal* (No. 156). When Umar (RA) had similar concerns about the denial of other matters, why did he speak of writing only *rajm* in the *mushaf*?

Ammar Nasir: The reason he spoke in this way about *rajm* is explained in the reports which state that Umar (RA) said that its ruling had been revealed in the Quran. He said that the verse of stoning had been revealed and that they had memorized it well. In some narrations, the wording of this verse has also been transmitted:

‘الشَّيْخُ وَالشَّيْخَةُ إِذَا زَنَيَا فَارْجُمُوهُمَا أَلْبَتَّةَ

(*Al-Sunan al-Kubra*, *al-Nasa’i*, No. 7118).

Muti Syed: Maulana Islahi and Javed Ahmed Ghamidi have declared this narration fabricated. They say it was invented to cast doubt on the Quran. If the verse had been revealed in the Quran, then where did it go?

Ammar Nasir: One of their objections concerns the wording of the verse itself. They say that from the perspective of Arabic style it is extremely crude and cannot be accepted as a Quranic verse. However, the primary objection is that if the verse was truly revealed in the Quran, then why is it not present in the existing *mushaf*? Clearly, this objection is reasonable, and this difficulty has also been recognized by scholars.

For this reason, the hadith scholars do not take this statement in its literal sense. They explain it in this way: Umar (RA) was not referring to a Quranic verse, but to a ruling that had been revealed to the Prophet (PBUH) through revelation. This is the opinion of Imam al-Tabari. He says that some narrations mention that Umar (RA) said he once came to the Prophet (PBUH) so that he might have the verse of stoning written down, but the Prophet refrained from having it written (*al-Sunan al-Kubra*, al-Bayhaqi, Nos. 7107, 7110). From this it appears that the ruling had indeed been revealed through revelation, but not as a Quranic verse; otherwise the Prophet would not have refrained from having it written.

Similarly, some scholars say that Umar (RA) was in fact referring not to the Quran but to the verse of stoning revealed in the Torah, whose ruling is also present in our Shariah and mentioned in the Sunnah of the Prophet

¹ Surah Bani Israel 17:110

(PBUH). Some other hadith scholars hold the view that Umar (RA) was referring to a verse that had indeed been revealed in the Quran, but whose recitation was later abrogated; that is, it was not included in the *mushaf*, although its ruling remained. From this, the scholars of legal theory derived a separate category of abrogation called “*mansukh al-tilawah dun al-bukm*” (abrogation of recitation while the ruling remains).

However, this is intellectually difficult to comprehend. Maulana Maududi and others have criticized it from this perspective, arguing that it is understandable and logical for a ruling to be abrogated while the verse remains in the Quran, but what possible logic could there be in retaining the ruling while removing the words of the verse from the Quran?

Muti Syed: Another question arises: when Umar (RA) himself is stating that this ruling is not now in the Quran and that he cannot write it in the *mushaf*, then why does he not regard it as abrogated? For example, regarding *hajj tamattu* (Hajj following Umrah) and *nikah mutah* (temporary marriage), he would say that the Prophet (PBUH) had permitted them temporarily for some specific expediency granted by God. Why does he not view the ruling of *rajm* (stoning) in the same way? On what basis does he insist that people in the future should not deny it, but should continue to act upon it?

Ammar Nasir: This is a difficult question. Obviously, Umar (RA) himself did not provide an explicit answer. But if we try to understand his viewpoint by inference, it seems to me that he did not interpret it as abrogated or as a temporary ruling because the Prophet (PBUH) did not practically abandon the ruling of *rajm*, rather he continued to implement it.

You may recall that Umar (RA) once had a similar question in his mind regarding shortening the prayer (*qasr*) during travel. The Quran permits it in a situation of fear. When he saw that the Prophet (PBUH) continued to shorten the prayer even after the situation of fear had ended, he asked him about it. The Prophet (PBUH) explained that they were still doing so with God’s permission and not contrary to it. Perhaps Umar (RA) reasoned by analogy that even though the ruling of *rajm* is not written in the Quran, since the Prophet (PBUH) continued to act upon it, it is still part of the Shariah. Therefore, it should not be denied merely because it is not written in the Quran.

Muti Syed: Umar (RA) states that in three matters his opinion coincided with the will of God. One of these he mentions as follows: he said to the Messenger of God (PBUH) that both good and bad people come to you, so it would be better if you instructed the Mothers of the Believers to observe seclusion. Then the verse of hijab was revealed (No. 157).

Ammar Nasir: Yes, it is very clear both from the verse of the Quran and from the narrations that the requirement of hijab was specifically for the wives of the Prophet and its purpose was to ensure the sanctity and respect of the Prophet’s wives. Umar (RA) had already been insisting on this, and besides advising the Mothers of the Believers, he would also request the Prophet (PBUH) that not everyone should be allowed to freely visit and interact with his wives.

In a detailed article, I have gathered all the narrations which show that during the time of the Prophet and the period of the Companions and Successors, hijab was understood as a special ruling for the Mothers of the Believers, and the Companions would mention the observance of hijab as a distinctive sign for women who entered into marriage with the Prophet (PBUH). This article has been published in several episodes in the monthly magazine *Isbraq*.

Muti Syed: Umar (RA) once gave a horse in the path of God. After some time the same horse—or its offspring—came up for sale in the market. Umar (RA) asked the Prophet (PBUH) whether he could buy it. The Prophet

(PBUH) replied: *Do not go back on your charity* (No. 166). Apparently, this was not taking back charity; Umar (RA) was simply buying his horse again.

Ammar Nasir: This is a subtle point. It is not really a legal or juristic ruling. One aspect of charity and its reward is that a person willingly parts with something beloved and gives it in the path of God. Now if the same beloved item is purchased again, in a way it compromises the spirit of the charity. It is from this perspective that the Prophet (PBUH) described it as returning to one's charity.

Muti Syed: Samurah ibn Jundub sold wine, and Umar (RA) said "*May God destroy Samurah,*" adding that the Jews had done something similar with fat: when God made fat unlawful, they started selling it (No. 170). Samurah was among the prominent Companions. Was the prohibition of trading in wine not clear to him?

Ammar Nasir: It seems that the saying of the Prophet (PBUH)—in which he prohibited buying and selling anything that is itself unlawful—was not known to him. He probably reasoned by analogy that the prohibition related to the consumption of wine, but that it could still be sold for a price. In other words, one could not consume it personally but might sell it to a non-Muslim.

Muti Syed: From Umar's statement it appears that he did not take any action against him.

Ammar Nasir: Yes, he only made a comment. No punishment was imposed for an *ijtihadi* (analogical) mistake.

Muti Syed: The Prophet (PBUH) said: "*The child belongs to the bed (al-walad lil-firash)*" (No. 173), meaning that the child is attributed to the one who has marital or ownership rights over the mother. Could you clarify this a bit? Today we have many other means to determine who the father of a child is.

Ammar Nasir: The statement was originally made in a situation where a slave-woman belonged to one man, but another person claimed to be the father of her child. When the case came before the Prophet (PBUH), the two men themselves were not present; rather, their relatives were claiming the child's lineage. The Prophet (PBUH) ruled that since the slave-woman belonged to a particular man, the child would also be attributed to him. The other man was considered an adulterer, and his claim over the child was rejected.

From this, the juristic principle derived is that if a woman is in someone's marriage or ownership and she forms a relationship with another man during that time, then if the husband or owner does not deny the child, the child will be considered his. However, if the husband refuses to accept the child as his responsibility, then he must perform *lian* (mutual oath of condemnation). Likewise, if an owner does not accept responsibility for the child of his slave-woman, then the lineage will not be established through him.

Thus, the principle "*al-walad lil-firash*" primarily applies in situations where the husband or owner himself does not deny the child. In addition, there were cases brought before the Prophet (PBUH) where a slave-woman was jointly owned by several men and all of them claimed to be the father of her child. In such situations, the Prophet (PBUH) decided the matter by drawing lots, because no other method was available. In my opinion, if such a case arose today, medical means could be used instead of drawing lots. Similarly, if a husband accuses his wife of adultery and refuses to accept the child's lineage while the wife insists that it is his child, medical methods should also be used in such cases. The husband's denial alone should not be considered sufficient to negate the child's lineage.

Muti Syed: Asma' once sent her servant Abdullah to Ibn Umar (RA) to ask why he declared three things unlawful, one of which was placing silk patches on clothing. Ibn Umar (RA) explained that Umar (RA) had narrated to them the saying of the Prophet (PBUH): "*Whoever wears silk in this world will not wear it in the Hereafter*" (No. 181). However, it seems that the hadith literature permits small pieces of silk to be used in

clothing. So why was Ibn Umar (RA) prohibiting it?

Ammar Nasir: Yes, the narrations do contain that concession. In fact, the detailed narration of this incident mentions that when ‘Abdullah returned to Asma’ with the answer of Ibn Umar (RA), she brought out a cloak and showed it to him, saying that this was the cloak of the Prophet (PBUH) which he used to wear, and it also had silk patches on it (*al-Sunan al-Kubra*, al-Bayhaqi, No. 6084).

As for why Ibn Umar (RA) prohibited it, one possibility is that he may not have known that the Prophet (PBUH) had allowed it, and from the general prohibition of silk he inferred that even a small amount of silk should not be used. Another possibility is that he was aware of the concession but, based on the principle of blocking the means (*sadd al-dhariah*), he felt that people were not actually observing a proper limit and that allowing small pieces was effectively opening the door to widespread use of silk. Both explanations are possible.

[To be continued...]



HAYAT-E-AMIN (30)

Naeem Ahmad Baloch

To bear this grief required strength like a mountain, and Maulana's patience indeed proved to be like a mountain. Yet despite this, he was still a human being of flesh and blood, and moreover a person of an extremely sensitive heart. Eventually he was compelled to write:

“There is no doubt that this incident had shaken me completely from within, but now my Lord has steadied me. Sometimes in solitude I still feel like weeping, but Alhamdulillah, I have no complaint to my Lord in this matter. My heart is completely satisfied that whatever has happened contains goodness for everyone—in it is the good of the deceased as well, of his little children, of his grieving widow, and also of his sorrow-stricken parents and brothers and sisters.” (Monthly Mithāq, Lahore, June 1965)

The severe impact that this incident had on Maulana's life was evident to everyone, but in reality it was also a national tragedy. In this regard Maulana writes:

If the grief of Abu Salih had been my personal grief alone, I would not have mentioned it in these pages. Rather, I would have kept it as a secret within my chest and carried it with me to the grave. But the nature of the incident has turned it into a national sorrow. Abu Salih was no longer mine alone; he belonged to his nation. His abilities were the capital of the whole nation. His life was short, but it was magnificent. One may say that he rose from ‘Kohistan’, shone in ‘Mashriq’, and set in ‘Cairo’; yet in that brief span his pen secured for his work and his name an everlasting place in the history of journalism in the country. What is thirty-six years of age? Yet within this short life he attained such a position in journalism that today the leading figures and masters of our press count him among the foremost founders of modern journalism! In the eyes of a father a son always remains a child—and he was still a child—but the maturity, freshness, and creativity of his writing astonished even me. Sometimes I would think in my heart that if this boy were granted life, my family too might render some service to journalism and to the Urdu language. This aspect of his life has a collective significance, and for this reason I have written these few lines. If my health permits, perhaps in the next issue of Mithāq I will try to shed light on some aspects of his life that only I know as his father. Perhaps promising young people may benefit from them. Had this benefit not been in view, as I have said, I would not have liked to express a single word of this grief—one should weep only in solitude. (Monthly Mithāq, Lahore, June 1965)

As promised, Maulana wrote a second article on this topic in the following issue. Important excerpts from it are given below:

This issue of Mithāq has been compiled under extremely distressing circumstances. I cannot say what has been written and what has been printed. Even under normal conditions delay had become the routine of this magazine, but now, given the circumstances and problems in which I am entangled, I cannot say whether this journal will even continue with disorder and irregularity or not. During this period I also had to deal with the complications of moving houses, because in order to take care of the children of the late Abu Salih I had to move from Rahmanpura to Ferozepur Road, and until now no such house has been obtained in which it would be possible for me to live together with these children. The office of Mithāq has also been temporarily shifted to another place. Everything is entangled, and only God knows whether any way will be found to untangle this confusion. (Monthly Mithāq, Lahore, July 1965)

Societies rarely value the people of their own time; they mostly build statues only of the people of history. Today the world knows Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, and countless people would be ready to sacrifice life and wealth for him. Yet when he was passing through the greatest tragedy of his life, even a suitable arrangement for residence was not possible. One can gain a faint idea of the conditions and emotional state he was in from the lines above. Now consider the following excerpt:

For quite some time I had almost withdrawn from all other engagements except the commentary Tadabbur-e-Quran and the circle of Quranic reflection. Responsibilities, whether domestic or outside, felt burdensome to me. Because of financial necessity I had to give some attention to the small amount of agricultural land we had, but even this I did only under compulsion. My sons had taken up their responsibilities very gracefully, and now they were capable enough that I hoped they would discharge the few responsibilities related to me even better than I could. But the sudden death of the late Abu Salih completely changed the entire picture of circumstances. Now not only are my own responsibilities once again demanding my attention, but the late Abu Salih has also placed his responsibilities upon my frail shoulders. He has left behind six very small children, the eldest of whom is only eight years old. These children have been brought up in a particular way (in rather good circumstances), and because they lived far from me they are not very familiar with me either. Their innocence can be seen from the fact that one night my granddaughter—who in appearance, temperament, and habits is a complete reflection of her late father—asked her grandmother before sleeping: ‘Mother! What kind of frock does Allah wear?’ She replied, ‘A frock of light.’ This answer remained preserved in her memory. In the morning when she woke up and her grandmother bathed her and tried to change her frock, she became upset and insisted that she would wear a frock of light! She became so stubborn about the ‘frock of light’ that it turned into a problem for the entire household. Eventually I had to intervene with my modern theological arguments, and only then was the dispute settled.

From childhood I had memorized the deeply moving elegy that Maulana Shibli Nomani wrote for his brother Maulvi Ishaq. Among the verses that I particularly liked was the one in which Maulana refers to the children of the late Maulvi Ishaq:

*Ladle hain ke kisi aur ke bas ke bhi Nahin
Us ke bachche abhi saat aath baras ke bhi nahin*

*They are such beloved children that no one else can manage them;
his children are not even seven or eight years old yet.*

I often used to recite this verse with deep emotion. Now the secret has been revealed as to why I liked it so much. It became clear that Maulana had not only narrated the story of his own heart’s pain in this verse but had also included my pain within it. It has always been my firm belief that a person likes only those poems in which he hears the echoes of his own heart. (Monthly Mithāq, Lahore, July 1965)

While explaining the wisdom behind this trial that came from Allah Almighty, he also appears to engage in a deep self-examination. He writes:

I know very well that the responsibilities placed upon a person are assigned by God, and it is He who grants the ability and courage to bear them. The fear and apprehension that I am feeling is merely the result of deficiency in knowledge and a tendency of the temperament toward ease. The remaining tests will inevitably take place. They will not be postponed simply because I am afraid of the examination and have now begun to desire rest and relaxation after loosening my belt. These trials are the established practice of Allah, from which there is no escape under any circumstances. It is through them that a servant’s abilities are revealed

and his weaknesses are removed. Old age is no excuse for a person. Just as physical illnesses and weaknesses appear in old age, intellectual and spiritual illnesses also arise. When a person becomes dependent upon the 'staff of old age' (a walking stick), he begins to rely upon many improper supports. But Allah Almighty is extremely jealous regarding His Oneness; He does not wish His servant to place reliance on anyone besides Him. I feel that even at this stage of life a certain misplaced reliance had begun to develop within me. Although I had no personal need connected with Abu Salih, the pride and affection that a father feels for his son had unconsciously taken root in my heart as well. His fame and renown gave my heart pleasure. When people praised him, it felt as though my blood increased. When I saw his prosperous household, my heart rejoiced. When I would affectionately—or sometimes in irritation—call him a 'fool,' and he would smile and lower his gaze, I would feel proud that I could call one of the country's renowned writers and leading journalists a 'fool,' and he would be pleased by such an address from me. In this way, without realizing it, within the reliance I had upon Abu Salih I had constructed in my heart a sanctuary of pride. On the morning of 20 May 1965, Divine power demolished that sanctuary. It is true that this incident caused me immense grief, but it is also a fact that after this event no veil remained between my Lord and me. My prayer is that Allah Almighty cause my end to come in such a state that my heart is purified from every trace of reliance upon anyone besides Him.

Some friends of the deceased have persistently expressed the desire that I write an article about his early circumstances and the distinctive features of his temperament... but not yet. At present my effort is simply to lessen the dominance of his memory over my heart so that I may become capable again of reading, writing, thinking, and reflecting. I do not imagine that Abu Salih possessed only virtues. No! He had faults as well, but in his faults I used to see the reflection of my own. When his mother would complain about such things, I would reply to her not to worry, for he had inherited those traits from his father. Just as age and experience have corrected the father's mind, so too age and experience would correct his mind. Because of the traditions of my family, he maintained a certain reserve toward me, but that reserve was merely an outward veil. Behind that veil he was established in my heart just as deeply as I occupied his heart and mind. He had profound affection for his brothers, sisters, and relatives. He affectionately called his younger sister—Maryam Siddiqah—'Munni!' and fulfilled her every small and large wish without delay (it should be remembered that she was his step-sister). Recently when she fell ill, he devoted himself day and night to her care and nursing. When surgery became necessary, he made the best possible arrangements available in Lahore. His younger brother—Abu Sa'id Salmah—is in India, and he was more concerned about him than even I was. Another younger brother—Abu Sa'id Salmah—he had educated, and there was a plan for him to go to America in August 1965. His temperament was marked by dignity, generosity, and sympathy for others. Not only was no complaint ever heard regarding his character, but his close friends even testified under oath that they had not seen a young man with a more modest and pure gaze than his. I know that this quality in him did not arise out of deliberate piety, but rather from a natural nobility of temperament. Yet I was satisfied that this very nobility had protected him from many temptations. One aspect of this same nobility was that despite maintaining a high standard of living, he did not place a nameplate on his house, did not keep a telephone at home, and did not allow his photograph to be printed in newspapers. Indeed, he had instructed that even if his photograph appeared with a group, his image should be cut out and only the group photograph should be published. Likewise, he never put his name on his particular column, which had great popularity in the newspaper world.

His health was very good, and his eyes were always smiling. He read extensively and possessed wide knowledge, yet the burden of reading and information was not visible on his face. His face always remained as fresh and radiant as a blooming rose. Among forms of recreation, he was interested only in gathering with friends.

Most of his friends were older than him, yet it is commonly reported that in any gathering he attended, he stood out because of his eloquence, sound judgment, and breadth of knowledge. He did possess a desire to attain worldly success, but with great dignity and principle. Recently he received an important offer from a certain circle, but he declined it with remarkable indifference. His circle of acquaintances and relationships was very extensive across different social classes, yet he never attempted to derive personal benefit from it. Rather, he used those connections to help others in need. Pray that Allah Almighty overlook the weaknesses of the deceased and accept his good deeds!” (Monthly Mithāq, Lahore, July 1965)

RESOLUTION OF TANZIM-I ISLAMI

Because of the disagreements that arose at the Machhi Goth meeting of 1957, many members who separated from Jamaat-e Islami strongly desired to establish an alternative organizational structure. Efforts in this direction continued. Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Hasan (Faisalabad) and Shaykh Sultan Ahmad (Karachi) contacted individuals scattered throughout the country.

Maulana Islahi was not, in principle, in favor of establishing another organization, but despite this difference of opinion he agreed to cooperate at the strong insistence of these friends. However, he made it clear that he would be unable to assume any organizational responsibility.

Eventually, a gathering of like-minded scholars took place in Rahim Yar Khan from 6–9 September 1967. At this meeting a resolution was adopted for future work. According to it:

“In our view, the primary addressee of religion is the individual. His moral and spiritual development and his salvation are the principal subject of religion. Collective organization is sought only insofar as it assists the individual in achieving his ultimate objective—namely the attainment of the pleasure of Allah. (Maqalat-i Islahi, 2/355)

Maulana attended this gathering and also delivered a speech. Consequently, it was decided to establish an organization named *Tanzim-i Islami*, and a consultative council was appointed for it. The council consisted of the following seven members:

- Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi
- Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Hasan
- Maulana Abdul Haqq Jami
- Sardar Muhammad Ajmal Khan Laghari
- Dr. Nazir Ahmad
- Dr. Israr Ahmad
- Shaykh Sultan Ahmad (Secretary)

Despite this, the organization could not ultimately be established. However, in accordance with the decisions of the council, Dr. Israr Ahmad began a weekly *Dars-e Quran* at his home, in which Maulana also delivered lessons on the final surahs of the Quran.

[To be continued...]

THE STRATEGIC FORESIGHT OF JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI

How His Analysis Anticipated Today's Major Conflicts

Abid Mehmood Hashmi

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary Muslim intellectual landscape, political commentary is often dominated by ideological narratives and emotional rhetoric rather than sober strategic analysis. Yet a small number of thinkers attempt to understand global events through a combination of historical awareness, moral clarity, and political realism. Among them, the renowned Pakistani scholar Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has consistently offered analyses that later proved strikingly accurate.

Over the past two decades, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi warned about the destructive consequences of militant movements operating outside state authority, predicted that militant strategies against powerful states would bring catastrophic retaliation, and described how regional rivalries in the Middle East could escalate into direct wars involving global powers.

Today's geopolitical environment—marked by the Pakistan-Taliban confrontation, the devastation following Hamas's attacks on Israel, and the escalating Iran-Israel war involving the United States—demonstrates how many of those warnings have materialized.

The accuracy of these assessments lies not in prophecy but in a method: an attempt to analyze conflicts without ideological bias, emotional slogans, or romanticized narratives.

TALIBAN MILITANCY AND THE PAKISTAN–AFGHANISTAN MILITARY CONFRONTATION

For years, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi argued that militant organizations claiming religious legitimacy while operating outside state authority would eventually destabilize Muslim societies themselves. According to his interpretation of Islamic political ethics, armed struggle can only be initiated by a legitimate state; when private militant groups assume that authority, chaos becomes inevitable.

This view sharply contrasted with the popular narrative in parts of the Muslim world that romanticized militant movements as heroic resistance forces.

Recent developments between Pakistan and Afghanistan illustrate the trajectory he anticipated. After years of cross-border militancy and accusations that Afghan territory was being used by anti-Pakistan insurgents, the conflict has escalated into open military confrontation. Pakistani forces have carried out airstrikes and ground operations against militant targets inside Afghanistan, signaling that the conflict has moved beyond covert pressure into overt warfare.

International analysts now describe tensions between the two neighbors as approaching an “open war,” reflecting a dramatic shift in the relationship between Pakistan and the Taliban authorities in Kabul.

This outcome mirrors Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's earlier argument: militant ideologies that justify violence outside legitimate authority eventually threaten the very states that once tolerated or supported them.

What appeared to some observers as a tactical alliance between states and militant groups was always structurally

unstable. Once armed movements claim independent ideological authority, they no longer remain subordinate to state interests.

HAMAS, ISRAEL, AND THE STRATEGIC CONSEQUENCES OF MILITANCY

Another area where Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's analysis proved prescient concerns the Palestinian struggle and the role of militant organizations such as Hamas.

For many years, he argued that attacks targeting civilians or conducted by non-state actors against powerful states would not liberate oppressed populations but instead trigger overwhelming retaliation. Such actions, he maintained, also weaken the moral legitimacy of the cause they claim to represent.

When Hamas launched large-scale attacks against Israel, the consequences followed the pattern he had long predicted. Israel responded with extensive military operations that inflicted devastating destruction in Gaza and fundamentally reshaped the political landscape of the conflict.

Instead of strengthening the Palestinian position internationally, the attacks enabled Israel to frame its military response as a security necessity. The humanitarian catastrophe that followed illustrated the tragic imbalance between militant tactics and state military power.

The humanitarian consequences of the war that followed Hamas's October 7 attacks have been catastrophic for Gaza. According to available estimates from Gaza health authorities and international researchers, more than 72,000 Palestinians have been killed and over 170,000 injured since the start of the war, with many additional victims believed to remain buried under rubble or otherwise uncounted. Studies analyzing the casualties suggest that a large majority of those killed were civilians, with estimates indicating that roughly 80% of Palestinian fatalities were non-combatants, including a very high proportion of women and children. Some independent demographic analyses have suggested that the real toll may be even higher, with research indicating that violent deaths may exceed 75,000 and potentially surpass 100,000 when indirect deaths and missing persons are included. The scale of destruction has also produced widespread displacement and humanitarian collapse across Gaza's population of roughly two million people.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's analysis was rooted in a sober understanding of power asymmetry. Israel possesses one of the most technologically advanced militaries in the world and enjoys strong backing from major Western powers. Under such conditions, militant attacks lacking strategic feasibility risk provoking consequences that fall most heavily on civilian populations.

His argument therefore focused on political realism: resistance strategies must account for actual power dynamics rather than symbolic gestures of defiance.

THE IRAN-ISRAEL WAR AND THE RISK OF GLOBAL ESCALATION

Perhaps the most dramatic confirmation of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's geopolitical analysis is unfolding today in the Middle East.

For years he warned that the rivalry between Iran and Israel was not merely rhetorical hostility but a structural strategic conflict. Iran's regional network of proxy forces and Israel's doctrine of pre-emptive security created conditions where indirect confrontation could eventually turn into direct war.

That scenario has now materialized.

In February 2026, coordinated strikes by Israel and the United States targeted Iran's senior leadership in Tehran, killing several top officials including Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. The attack eliminated dozens of high-

ranking Iranian military and political figures and triggered a major leadership crisis inside the country. Since then, the conflict has escalated into an ongoing war involving sustained airstrikes and threats of further retaliation across the region.

The strategic implications are enormous:

- The conflict now directly involves major global powers.
- Regional allies and proxy groups could widen the war.
- Oil markets and global economic stability are being affected.
- The presence of nuclear capabilities among regional actors raises fears of unprecedented escalation.

For years, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi had warned that ideological confrontation combined with geopolitical rivalry could eventually push the region toward precisely such a dangerous scenario.

What he recognized early was that both Iran and Israel perceive each other as existential threats. When states adopt security doctrines built around survival rather than compromise, escalation becomes increasingly likely.

WHY GHAMIDI'S PREDICTIONS PROVED ACCURATE

The accuracy of these analyses stems from a distinctive intellectual method.

First, he approaches geopolitical issues without ideological bias. Rather than interpreting conflicts through the lens of religious solidarity or nationalist sentiment, he analyzes the strategic realities shaping political decisions.

Second, he separates religious principles from militant political narratives. His argument that armed struggle requires legitimate state authority challenges the ideological foundation used by many militant movements.

Third, he emphasizes historical patterns. By studying earlier conflicts within Muslim history as well as modern international relations, he identifies recurring dynamics that often determine the outcomes of political struggles.

Fourth, he focuses on structural forces rather than short-term events. Instead of reacting to daily political developments, he examines deeper factors such as power balances, institutional authority, and long-term strategic interests.

CONCLUSION

The wars and crises unfolding today—from Pakistan's confrontation with militant groups across the Afghan border to the devastating conflict in Gaza and the rapidly escalating Iran–Israel war—illustrate how dangerous ideological narratives can become when they ignore geopolitical realities.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's analyses stand out precisely because they resist such narratives. By emphasizing intellectual honesty, historical awareness, and moral clarity, he offers a framework that seeks to understand conflicts as they actually are rather than as people emotionally wish them to be.

In an age of polarized political discourse, this approach demonstrates that accurate geopolitical insight often comes not from louder rhetoric but from clearer thinking.



ANCIENT GENEALOGIES AND TRADITIONS

Dr. Khursheed Rizvi

Although the ancient historical and genealogical traditions of the Arabs are often criticized from the standpoint of modern research, these traditions are an inseparable part of their literary and social background; therefore, acquaintance with them is extremely necessary. According to these traditions, the basic division of the Arabs is as follows:¹

Arab Baidah²

Arab Baqiyah

Arab Aribah

Arab Mustarabah

Arab Baidah refers to those ancient tribes that became completely extinct and of whom only stories remain. Among them, the foremost are ‘Ad, Thamud, Tasm, and Jadis. In addition to these, several other tribes—such as Amaliq (or Amaliqah), Umaym, Abil, Ahl-Wabar, Ahl-Madyan, and Jurhum (the first group)—are also counted among the Arab Baidah.

In contrast to the Baidah are the Arab Baqiyah,³ that is, those tribes that survived and whose lineage did not come to an end. As is evident from the table, they are of two kinds: Aribah and Mustarabah.

Arab Aribah refers to the Arabs of southern Arabia, that is, the people of Yemen. In relation to their common ancestor “Qahtan”, they are also called “Qahtani.”

Arab Mustarabah refers to the Arabs of northern Arabia. They are the descendants of ‘Adnan and are therefore called “Adnani.”

Some essential details regarding each of these groups are presented below.

ARAB BAIDAH

‘Ad

The people of ‘Ad were the nation of Prophet Hud (PBUH), whose story is repeatedly mentioned in the Quran

¹ There is some variation in the terminology used for this classification. At times, “Arab Baidah” is itself referred to as “Arab Aribah,” or as “al-Aribah al-Ula,” or “al-Arab al-Araba.” Likewise, “Arab Aribah” is sometimes described with the designation “Arab Muta arribah.” In such cases, the designation “Arab Mustarabah” remains unchanged.

The term Aribah means “genuine” or “original Arabs.” Both Mutarribah and Mustarabah signify “those who adopted Arabness” or “those who became Arabs,” although Mustarabah is considered a category that follows Mutarribah in rank. Since rivalry between the southern Arabs (the people of Yemen) and the northern Arabs has existed since ancient times, it is reasonable to suppose that this classification originated with the former. According to this scheme, the northern Arabs appear as Arabs of a secondary or even tertiary rank. On this basis, the Yemenis used to claim that the northern Arabs learned the Arabic language from Yarub ibn Qahtan.

² This word is derived from *bad yabad*, which means “to perish” or “to be destroyed.”

³ For details and references, see: *Al-Arab al-Qadim*, pp. 163–194.

as a lesson.⁴ Their dwelling place was the land of *Abqaf*, after which the forty-sixth surah of the Quran is named.⁵ From the study of the Quranic verses, the picture that emerges of these people is that they were extraordinarily large in stature and immensely strong. Whenever they seized someone, they did so with great severity. This power produced in them an unjustified arrogance, and they used to say: “مَنْ أَسَدٌ مِّنَّا فُؤَةٌ” (“Who is stronger than we?”).

They were prosperous and highly civilized. They possessed great skill in architecture. Consequently, they not only constructed magnificent palaces and fortresses but also made it their pastime to build monumental structures in mountain passes or on elevated mounds merely for recreation or amusement. Despite the persistent preaching and admonition of Prophet Hud (PBUH), they paid no heed to the message of guidance and refused to abandon their ancestral deities. Moreover, they adopted an attitude of denial and arrogance.

As a result, a humiliating punishment descended upon them which utterly destroyed them, and none survived except Hud (PBUH) and his companions. This punishment came in the form of an exceedingly fierce wind, which the Quran describes as “*ribun sarsarun*” (a furious wind), “*al-rib al-aqim*” (a barren, unproductive wind), and “*ribun fiha azabun alimun*” (a wind containing a painful punishment). This wind was imposed upon them for seven nights and eight days and struck them down like the hollow trunks of fallen date palms.⁶ Its force was such that it shattered everything; whatever it approached became lifeless like decayed bones. In short, nothing remained of the people of ‘Ad except their empty dwellings.

Ibn al-Athir narrates the following report regarding the destruction of ‘Ad: when they denied Prophet Hud (PBUH), a severe drought was imposed upon them. Eventually they sent a delegation of their leading men to Makkah to pray for rain. As a result of their supplication, three clouds appeared: one white, one red, and one black. Then a voice called out:

“O Qil!⁷ Choose for yourself and for your people.”

Qil chose the black cloud, thinking that it contained the greatest amount of water. At this, a voice from the unseen proclaimed:

اخترت رماداً رمدياً. لا تبقى من عاد احداً. لا والداً تترك ولا ولداً. الا جعلته بمداً.

⁴ The verses that provide more detailed accounts are:

- 7:65–72
- 11:50–60
- 26:123–140
- 41:15–16
- 46:21–25
- 51:41–42
- 53:50
- 54:18–21
- 69:4–8
- 89:6–8

⁵ “Al-Ahqaf” is the plural of *hiqf*, which means “a rectangular, curved mound of sand.” It refers to a part of the Rub al-Khali desert adjacent to Hadramawt, though there is disagreement regarding its precise location.

⁶ This appears to indicate their extraordinary physical strength and stature. However, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi disagrees with the interpretation of the Quranic verses that ascribes unusually tall stature to the Ad people. In his view, the reference pertains solely to their might and power. (Arz al-Quran, 1/175)

⁷ Qil bin Ir, the leader of the delegation/caravan.

You have chosen a dusty ash that will spare none of ‘Ad—neither father nor son; it will render all of them lifeless.

Thereafter, by God’s command, the black cloud moved toward the people of Ad, and from it emerged the violent wind that destroyed the disobedient among them.⁸

The links of Ibn al-Athir’s report appear to correspond with the following verse of the Quran:

فَلَمَّا رَأَوْهُ عَارِضًا مُسْتَقْبِلَ أَوْدِيَّتِهِمْ قَالُوا هَذَا عَارِضٌ مُّمْطِرُنَا بَلْ هُوَ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُمْ بِهِ رِيحٌ فِيهَا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ.

So when they saw it as a cloud approaching their valleys, they said: ‘This is a cloud that will bring us rain.’ (No!) Rather, it is that which you had been asking to be hastened—a wind containing a painful punishment.⁹

From the Quranic verse “*wa annahu ahlaka ada nil ula*”,¹⁰ some people have also inferred that alongside “*Ad al-Ula*” (the earlier ‘Ad), there must have been another people called “*Ad al-Thaniyah*,” “*Ad al-Akhirah*,” or “*Ad al-Ukhra*.” One conjecture is that “*Ad al-Ukhra*” arose from the descendants of the believers who were saved from the people of Ad.¹¹

Al-Mubarrad has concluded from the above verse that “*Ad al-Ula*” refers to the people of Prophet Hud (PBUH), while “*Ad al-Akhirah*” refers to the people of Prophet Salih (PBUH), that is, the people of Thamud.¹²

According to another report, Ad al-Thaniyah settled in the region of Saba in Yemen, and the construction of the *sadi marib*¹³ was carried out by their king Luqman bin Ad Dhu al-Nusur.¹⁴

THAMUD

The dwelling place of the people of Thamud is described as the region of “Wadi al-Qura,” which formed part of the north-western area of the Arabian Peninsula.¹⁵ Their capital was the place called “Hijr,” located on the ancient highway leading from the Hijaz to Syria, and which is now commonly known as “Madain Salih.”¹⁶

⁸ Ibn Athir 1/48-49

⁹ Quran 46/24

¹⁰ 53/50

¹¹ For further details, see: Bayan al-Quran, under the relevant Quranic text, 7/72.

¹² Sharh al-Qasa'id al-Ashr: Muallaqa Zuhayr, verse 32. Discussion on “Ahmar Ad.”

¹³ “Nusur” is the plural of “Nasr,” which means vulture or carrion bird. “Dhu al-Nusur” literally means “the one with vultures.” According to tradition, Luqman ibn Ad accepted the message of Prophet Hud (PBUH) and was granted an age equivalent to seven vultures, one after another (noting that vultures have very long lifespans).

Al-Tarafah poetically remarks:

الم تر لقمان بن عاد تناجعت

عليه النور ثم غابت كواكبه

This verse alludes to the succession of vultures over Luqman ibn Ad, symbolizing the passage of immense time and his extraordinary longevity.

¹⁴ However, as is noted later, this is not confirmed by the ancient inscriptions. (See: p. 60, Hadith 4)

¹⁵ According to Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, in the Quranic verse “وَعَجْمَةُ الْوَيْدَيْنِ جَاهُوا الصَّخْرَ بِالْوَادِ” (89:9), the term “*al-Wad*” refers specifically to *Wadi al-Qura*. (Ard al-Quran, 1/186)

¹⁶ However, Rawlinson (Sir Henry C. Rawlinson) expressed in a letter to Doughty (details on pp. 54–55) the view that “Hijr” refers not only to the present-day *Mada'in Salih* but also to a wider area encompassed under the name “Hijr.” Within this area, a particular site now called *al-Khuraybah*, located ten miles south of *Madain Salih*, is likely the Hijr associated with “Hijr Thamud,” whereas *Mada'in Salih* corresponds to “Hijr of the Nabataeans.” Since both sites lie along

According to Sahih al-Bukhari¹⁷ and certain other sources, the Prophet (PBUH), while proceeding to Tabuk, passed through the place of “Hijr.” On that occasion he said:

لا تدخلوا مساكن الذين ظلموا انفسهم الا ان تكونوا باكين ان يصيبكم ما اصابهم

Do not enter the dwellings of those who wronged themselves unless you do so weeping, lest the affliction that befell them should also befall you.

The fifteenth surah of the Quran itself bears the name “Al-Hijr”, because in it the people of Hijr are mentioned as follows:

وَ لَقَدْ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْحِجْرِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٨٠﴾ وَ اتَيْنَاهُمْ آيَاتِنَا فَكَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ ﴿٨١﴾ وَ كَانُوا يَنْجُتُونَ مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا أَمْنِينَ ﴿٨٢﴾ فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الصَّيْحَةُ مُصْبِحِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾ فَمَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

Indeed, the people of Hijr denied the messengers. And We granted them Our signs, yet they turned away from them. They used to carve dwellings in the mountains in security. Then the mighty blast seized them at morning. So that which they used to earn availed them nothing.¹⁸

The majority of Muslim scholars have traditionally interpreted “*ashab al-hijr*” in these verses as referring to the people of Thamud, and the indication of the above-mentioned hadith has likewise been taken to refer to the dwellings of Thamud. However, Sayyid Sulayman Nadwi has expressed hesitation in accepting this interpretation for certain reasons. The essence of his investigation, in brief, is that the Quran mentions the people of Thamud in twenty-six places, yet nowhere are they explicitly called “*ashab al-hijr*.” Conversely, in this verse the term “*ashab al-hijr*” appears without mentioning Thamud by name. Similarly, in most narrations of the aforementioned hadith the name of Thamud does not occur, and in the one narration in which the words “*ard thamud*” are used for Hijr, it may be interpreted as meaning that Hijr was once part of the territory of Thamud. Sayyid Nadwi’s personal view is that “*ashab al-hijr*” refers instead to the Nabataean people (*qawn anbat*).¹⁹

Wherever the Quran mentions Thamud with clarity and detail,²⁰ the following picture of this people emerges.

After the people of Ad, they rose to prominence. They too were prosperous. They possessed springs, gardens, flourishing palm groves, and cultivated fields. Like the people of Ad, they also had remarkable expertise in architecture. They built palaces in the plains and skillfully carved dwellings in the mountains with great craftsmanship and dexterity. Prophet Salih (PBUH) was sent to them. He exerted great effort in admonition and preaching and reminded them of the blessings God had bestowed upon them. Nevertheless, they remained doubtful about the path of truth and persisted in their attachment to their ancestral deities, and—like other unfortunate nations—denied the prophet.

They demanded a miracle from Prophet Salih (PBUH), whereupon, by God’s command, a she-camel was manifested as a sign.²¹ This became a test for them. Prophet Salih instructed them to respect the sanctity of this she-camel and to observe its appointed turn for drinking water: its turn was fixed for one day and their turn for another. They were told to allow it to graze freely and not to harm it in any way, lest punishment descend upon

the same route only ten miles apart, it remains a matter for investigation which “Hijr” is actually meant in the Quran and Hadith.

¹⁷ Sahih of Bukhari, Kitab al-Anbiya, Chapter 17.

¹⁸ Quran 15:80-84

¹⁹ Arz al-Quran 2:75-76

²⁰ Quran, 7:73- 79, 11:61-68, 26:141-159, 27:45- 53, 41:13-18, 51:43- 45, 53:51, 54:23-31, 69:4-5, 89:9, 91:11-15)

²¹ According to general narrations, this she-camel, along with her offspring, emerged from a rock on the mountain; however, the Quran does not mention this mode of birth anywhere. (See: *Ard al-Quran*, 1/195)

them.

Only a few among the weak and oppressed people believed in the message of Prophet Salih (PBUH). The arrogant chiefs openly rejected him. They declared the prophet and his followers to be an omen of misfortune. In the city there were nine men who were exceedingly corrupt. They swore mutual oaths that together they would launch a night attack upon Prophet Salih (PBUH) and his followers, kill them, and then deny their crime. But their scheme was frustrated by God's decree. Eventually their entire community was destroyed, and their dwellings were left desolate as a consequence of their wrongdoing.

The form of the punishment was as follows: they refused to honor the sanctity of the she-camel and, disregarding all the warnings and admonitions of the prophet, persisted in rebellion. They incited the most wretched man among them,²² who rose and hamstrung the she-camel. Thereafter they said to Prophet Salih (PBUH): "If you are truly a messenger, then bring upon us the punishment with which you have been threatening us." He replied: "Enjoy yourselves in your homes for three days; this is a promise that will not be belied." Accordingly, after three days the punishment arrived, and they were seized with remorse for their deeds.

The Quran describes this punishment in various terms: "*sayhab*" ("a mighty blast"), "*sayhatan wahidatan*" ("a single overwhelming cry"), "*al-saiqab*" ("a thunderbolt from the sky"), "*saiqab al-adhab al-huni*" ("the thunderbolt of a humiliating punishment"), "*al-taghiyab*" ("an overwhelming blast"), and "*al-rajfab*" ("an earthquake").²³ This punishment utterly destroyed them, and they lay prostrate in their homes as though they had never inhabited them.

Prophet Salih (PBUH) departed in sorrow. God protected him and his companions from the punishment. The surviving remnants of Thamud are sometimes referred to as "*Thamud al-Thaniyah*."²⁴ Moreover, among the destroyed peoples mentioned in the Quran is "*ashab al-rass*."²⁵ Some commentators are of the opinion that these too were remnants of the people of Thamud.²⁶

The mention of Thamud also appears in ancient Assyrian, Roman, and Greek historical sources,²⁷ the details of which fall outside the scope of our present discussion. However, a related issue warrants brief consideration:

Some ancient monuments carved into the mountains of Madain Salih still exist, and Muslims have traditionally regarded them as structures created by the Thamud.²⁸ Ibn Battuta also mentions these structures in his travelogue in the same capacity.²⁹ Some inscriptions are engraved on these edifices. The well-known British traveler Charles Montague Doughty (1843–1926) visited the site in 1876 as part of a Hajj caravan and stayed among the Bedouins for an extended period. His primary objective was to conduct research on these structures. He sent copies of the

²² In the narrations, this person is named "Qudar ibn Salif." He is also called "Aqir al-Naqah" (the slayer of the she-camel) due to the killing of the she-camel, and his epithet "Ahmar" is likewise associated with him. In Zuhayr's Muallaqa (verse 32), the phrase "Ahmar Ad" refers to this individual, while "Ad" here denotes the Thamud.

²³ According to Sayyid Sulayman Nadwi, this could have been a volcanic earthquake, since the regions of Thamud are rich in volcanic materials. (Ard al-Quran, 1/195)

²⁴ Ard al-Quran, 1/195.

²⁵ Quran, 25:38; 50:12.

²⁶ See: *Bayan al-Quran* under the relevant Quranic text, 25/38.

²⁷ Thus, the Assyrian king Sargon II, in 715 B.C., launched a campaign against certain Arab tribes and had their names inscribed, among which Thamud is mentioned. Later, in the fifth century A.D., some Thamudic horsemen were identified in the Roman forces. (Doughty, 1/188, Letter by Sir Henry Rawlinson)

²⁸ Compare: *Peshgoftar* (Preface), pp. 14–15.

²⁹ Ibn Battuta, *Rihla*, Vol. 1, pp. 130–131.

inscriptions to the eminent French scholar Ernest Renan (1823–1892), who translated them into French and concluded that these structures were predominantly Nabataean tombs, bearing dates corresponding to the beginning of the Christian era; thus, they were unrelated to the Thamud. When Doughty’s renowned work *Travels in Arabia Deserta* was published in 1888, these inscriptions, along with Renan’s translations, were included. From that point, some Orientalists began to propagate the idea that this modern discovery undermined the Quranic account, arguing that, firstly, the structures were Nabataean rather than Thamudic, and secondly, that they were tombs rather than dwellings. While a detailed discussion on this matter constitutes a separate line of research, a few important points can be summarized here:

(1) The first and most important point is that the question of whether these particular structures are Thamudic or Nabataean dwellings or tombs has no bearing upon any explicit statement of the Qur’an, nor does any doctrine of the Qur’an depend upon it. The Qur’anic statement is limited to the fact that the people of Thamud had attained great proficiency in carving houses out of mountains. Nowhere does it explicitly state that any specific extant structure was carved by the Thamud. Consequently, even if these monuments are remnants of the Nabataeans, they would not conflict with any Qur’anic text. It is on this basis that Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, as mentioned above, adopted the view that these remains in fact belong to the Nabataeans and that the term “*Ashab al-Hijr*” refers to them. In short, the Qur’an has no fundamental concern with this debate.

(2) Strictly speaking, the issue may be considered resolved at this point; nevertheless, from a scholarly perspective, a few additional aspects may be examined. The Quran employs the word “*buyut*” for the structures carved by the Thamud. It is on the basis of this word that the debate regarding “dwellings” or “tombs” is raised. It should be noted that the word *bayt* allows for a considerable range of meanings. Besides “tent” or “house,” it may also denote a “room,” “chamber,” “cell,” or simply a “building,” whether residential or non-residential. In the Qur’anic verse “فِي بُيُوتِ الَّذِينَ أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ لِيَذْكُرُوا لَهُمْ فِيهَا السَّمْعَةَ”³⁰, the word “*buyut*” refers to mosques. Likewise, in “al-Bayt” and “Bayt al-Maqdis,” the word *bayt* signifies a place of worship, whereas in “Bayt al-Mal” it refers to a general building. By the same reasoning, the inscriptions deciphered by Renan are not, without exception, related to tombs. The very first inscription refers to “*mesgeda*,” which denotes a masjid—that is, a place of worship.³¹

Furthermore, a people capable of carving tombs out of mountains would not necessarily be prevented from constructing houses in the same manner. Indeed, a natural reaction upon observing the tombs of a people is to search for their dwellings in the surrounding area, since the existence of the dead presupposes the prior existence of the living, and the presence of dwellings must logically precede the construction of tombs. One is naturally led to ask: how did the people to whom these tombs belonged live?

In this regard, the Qur’anic verse “تَنْجِدُونَ مِنَ سُبُلِهَا فَصُورًا وَتَنْجُونَ الْجِبَالَ بُيُوتًا”³² provides a suggestive comparison between plains and mountains (*subul wa jibal*) and between palaces and houses (*qusur wa buyut*). One may therefore consider the possibility that the residential buildings, which once stood on the level ground at the foot of the mountains, were destroyed over time, leaving only the stone-carved remains within the mountains. It is entirely possible that these surviving rock-cut structures were not originally intended for residential purposes. The possibility that burials might have taken place within houses themselves also deserves consideration.

(3) Reference has already been made above to the letter written by Sir Henry Rawlinson to Charles Doughty, in which certain conjectures were proposed regarding the distinction between “Nabataean Hijr” and “Thamudic

³⁰ Al-Quran, 24/36

³¹ It is a niche carved into the rock in the pass, attributed to a deity named “Ira.”

³² Al-Quran V. 7, P. 74

Hijr.” The relevant passage reads:

*“Hejra, in Ptolemy, is a town of Thamud; yet Medain Salih, we understand by the epitaphs, to have been of the Nabateans! M. Salih is Hijr (Hejr) But what is Hijr? El-Hejr, in the tradition of the country Beduins and the Alowna, is all that valley plain and valley ground... lying between the Mezham and el-Ally (el-Ola), and as far as Bir el-Ghrannem. Now el-Khreyby... is likewise el-Hejr: the Khreyby we have seen is Himyaric, or of the people from the south; M. Salih is of the northern civil world. We might thus conjecture that el-Khreyby is Hejra of Thamud, and that Medain Salih, 10 miles to the N., is the Nabatean Hejra.”*³³

In parallel, Ptolemy’s map of Arabia, reconstructed by Sprenger,³⁴ lists Egra (Hijr) with two separate names: *Thamydeni* and *Napataei*, corroborating Rawlinson’s conjecture of a distinction between Thamudic and Nabataean Hijr.³⁵ Since the two locations are only ten miles apart, some confusion is understandable. Thus, the question arises as to which of these sites is meant in the Quran and Hadith by “*Hijr*” or “the land of Thamud.”

(4) The scholarly and archaeological study of the relevant sites in Madain Salih cannot yet be considered complete, as some researchers do not concur with the conclusions derived from the efforts of Doughty and Renan. Syed Abul Ala Maududi expressed in two letters to the author³⁶ that it is entirely possible that the Nabataeans inscribed the monuments at a later period over the earlier Thamudic structures, which they used as tombs. He also offered observations on the language, script, and architectural style of these inscriptions, which we do not elaborate here. Maududi’s definitive position is that the monuments are indeed Thamudic because the Nabataean structures in Petra, by comparison, are far more advanced architecturally than those at Madain Salih, clearly demonstrating a substantial chronological gap, indicating that the structures belong to two distinct peoples.³⁷ Notably, it is also possible that the inscriptions were not contemporaneous with the buildings themselves—a question that modern scientific methods could help resolve.

(5) The possibility of misreading the ancient inscriptions cannot be dismissed. For example, Dr. Rana Ihsanullah holds the view that where the original inscriptions contained the word *qusr* (“palace”), it was mistakenly read as *qabr* (“grave”), because in the Thamudic script the letters *s* and *b* are only minimally differentiated.³⁸ If this is the case, it becomes necessary to address and resolve such ambiguities.

(6) Dr. Rana Ihsanullah, who personally visited Madain Salih to study this issue, also observed that³⁹ on the

³³ Doughty, 1/188.

³⁴ For this map, see: Hitti, p. 47 – Hogarth, p. 17.

³⁵ However, in this map, Thamudic Hijr is shown in the northern region, whereas according to Sir Henry Rawlinson’s conjecture, its location in the south seems more plausible. It is possible that during Sprenger’s reconstruction, this arrangement was inadvertently reversed.

³⁶ In this matter, correspondence and verbal consultations were held with Dr. Sufi Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Dr. Sheikh Inayatullah, Dr. Rana Ihsan Elahi, and Syed Abul Ala Maududi. The author expresses gratitude to all these esteemed scholars for generously sharing their valuable insights. Special thanks are due to Dr. Sheikh Inayatullah, who, with great kindness, maintained extended correspondence and provided an English translation of the lengthy French notes of the French Orientalist De Vogue. Appreciation is also due to Nasir Ahmad for his assistance in providing English translations of the French versions of the inscriptions.

³⁷ For further details of Abul Ala Maududi’s viewpoint, see his *Tafhim al-Quran*, Surah Ash-Shuara, note 99.

³⁸ Al-Manhal (Makkah), Safar / Rabi‘ al-Thani 1391 AH.

³⁹ *Al-Risalah al-Islamiyyah*, Baghdad, February 1972, “Mada’in Salih wa Ma Jawaraha.” The relevant Arabic passage reads as follows:

وكان أوّل ما تفحصناه هو ابواب المغارات حيث لاحظنا أنّ غلق كلّ الابواب كان من الداخل وليس من الخارج (اللهم آلا الديوان وبيت الصانع كما يطلق عليه) وهذا دليل ناهض على ان تلك المغارات قد كانت مساكن لسكن الاحياء من الثموديين و ليست قبورًا من أوّل الزمان و الآ لما كانت وسيلة اغلاقها

interior side of every doorway there were four small square holes, two on each side, about two inches each. These clearly indicate that after closing the door, a wooden peg or bar would be inserted into the holes to secure it from the inside. This demonstrates that the doors were designed to be fastened from within, consistent with residential use rather than tombs. From this perspective, it is important to investigate whether these structures were originally intended as tombs or for some other purpose.

Further research on the Thamud, following the work of Doughty and Renan, should also be considered. For instance, an encyclopedia published in 1959 states:

“In the last few years, altogether some 13,000 of these Thamudic rock writings and pictures were discovered widely scattered over different regions in Central Arabia, dating from about the fourth century B.C. to the early seventh century of our era. While the greater part still awaits publication, those that have been deciphered are sufficient to reveal a quite clear picture of the surprisingly high civilization of their authors.”⁴⁰

In short, from a purely scholarly perspective, many questions remain unresolved in this research. As noted at the outset, in terms of the Quran, these details are not fundamentally relevant.

TASM AND JUDAIS

The Quran does not mention Tasm or Judais. According to ancient Arab traditions, these two tribes were settled in Yamama, with authority resting with Tasm. When governance reached a tyrannical and impious ruler named Amalq (or Amaloq), he inflicted severe oppression on the Judais tribe. At one point, in anger at the frank speech of a Judais woman named Hazila, he instituted the cruel custom that any Judais girl upon marriage would first be brought to her husband’s chamber before going to him. This reprehensible practice continued until a young woman named ‘Ufirah, sister of a prominent Judais figure, Al-Aswad, protested against it, arousing intense zeal among her people. In consultation, they resolved to hold a feast in honor of the king and, during the event, suddenly attacked, annihilating the elite of the kingdom. Subsequently, the remaining survivors were also killed selectively.

Those few who survived sought refuge with Hassan ibn Taba’ al-Himyari, the king of Yemen, petitioning him for justice. He responded and proceeded with a retaliatory campaign. Along the way, a man of Tasm, Rabah ibn

من الداخل و ذلك ان الناحية قد حفر في داخل كل باب اربع نقر مربعة الشكل (بوصيتين في بوصيتين). اثنتان منها (اي من النقر) في كتف الباب (Jamb) نحو اليمين والنقرتان الاخرتان نحو الشمال و قد لاحظنا ان النقرتين في كل جانب ليست عموديتين. فالنقرة العليا مائلة الى خارج المغارة (ومتصلة ببرواز الباب) و اما النقرة السفلى فمائلة الى الداخل. فما ذلك الا لاحكام الباب من الداخل. ونعتقد ان كل باب كان مصنوعاً من لوح واحد من الخشب وينتهي كل لوح في اعلاه ببروازين نحو الخارج يدخلان في النقرتين العلويتين. واما النقرتان السفليتين عند منتصف الباب فقد كانتا تستعملان لوضع قطعة من الخشب على شكل عارضة يقال لها السد او الضب.

“The first thing we examined was the entrances of the caves. We observed that the closing mechanism of all the doors was arranged from the inside rather than from the outside (with the exception of the *diwan* and the so-called *Bayt al-Sani*). This provides strong evidence that these caves were dwellings inhabited by the living Thamudis and were not originally tombs; otherwise, their method of closure would not have been from the inside. The reason is that the stone-cutter carved within each doorway four square sockets (two inches by two inches): two of them on the doorjamb on the right side and the other two on the left. We further observed that the two sockets on each side were not vertical. The upper socket was inclined toward the outside of the cave (and connected with the door frame), whereas the lower socket was inclined inward. This arrangement could only have been intended to secure the door from the inside. We believe that each door was made from a single wooden plank, and that the upper part of each plank ended with two projections extending outward which fitted into the two upper sockets. As for the two lower sockets located at about the middle of the door, they were used to place a wooden piece in the form of a crossbar, known as the *sadd* or *dabb*.”

⁴⁰ Enc. Arabic Civilization, 524, “Thamud”

Marrah, informed Hassan that his sister, Hazam,⁴¹ had married into the Judais tribe and possessed exceptionally keen eyesight, capable of spotting a mounted rider from thirty miles away. Fearing she would alert them prematurely, he advised that each man should carry a tree in hand⁴² and advance under its cover. The strategy was implemented, and Hazam observed the scene, warning, “O Judais! Trees are coming toward you.”⁴³ Her warning was ignored, and despite repeating it several times, the people remained oblivious. Hassan ultimately arrived and executed all, sparing only the leader Al-Aswad, who fled but was killed near the mountains of ‘Aja and Salma by members of the Tasm tribe, intimidated by his exceptional stature. In this manner, both tribes were wiped from existence.

Similarly long narratives exist for other tribes, which bear the mark of legend rather than strict history. These accounts often include dialogues, formal or poetic expressions, and embellished storytelling, clearly showing that they are not contemporaneous with the vanished tribes themselves but were transmitted orally and later cast into literary forms. From this perspective, such traditions are not historical documents in the strict sense but constitute an important literary heritage, reflecting the allegorical and narrative artistry of ancient Arabs.

[To be continued....]



⁴¹ This is the very woman who became known by the epithet Zarqa al-Yamamah on account of her blue eyes and who became proverbial for the sharpness of her sight. As mentioned above, it is related about her that she could see from a distance of thirty miles. In some reports, this same distance is described as “*masirah thalathata ayyam*”—a journey of three days. Another epithet attributed to Zarqa is *Dhat Ashfar*.

Al-Asha says:

ما نظرت ذات أشفار كنظرتها

”حقًا كما صدق الديني إذ سمعنا

(Diwan al-Asha, 103)

“No one with long eyelashes ever saw as she saw—
truly, just as al-Dhibi spoke the truth when he rhymed his lines.”

⁴² This may be an allusion to their extraordinary stature and physical build.

⁴³ An echo of this very idea may be found in Shakespeare’s play *Macbeth*:

“Let every soldier hew him down a bough

And bear’t before him;”

“As I did stand my watch upon the hill,

I look’d toward Birnam, and anon methought

The wood began to move.”

(*Macbeth*, Act 5, Scenes iv–v)

It is possible that during the period of Arab ascendancy, when Europe benefited intellectually from the Arabs, many ancient Arabian myths and literary traditions were also transmitted to the West. Some of these may have been absorbed into European folk traditions and later reappeared in their literary works.

NEWSLETTER

GHAMIDI CENTER'S RAMADAN TRANSMISSION

Under the auspices of the Ghamidi Center, a special Ramadan transmission has been organized during the blessed month of Ramadan. The transmission features programs on a variety of religious, ethical, and educational themes. These programs are presented by Javed Ahmed Ghamidi and several of his students. Most topics revolve around Ramadan and the worship of fasting. Recordings of all broadcasts are available on the Center's YouTube channel.

AL-BAYAN

As part of the Ramadan transmission, a program titled *Al-Bayan* is being broadcast, featuring recitation of the Quran along with Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Urdu translation. The translation is rendered by Shah Nawaz, while the Quranic recitation is performed by Mishary Rashid Al-Afasy. One episode is released daily on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

VIRTUES AND RULINGS OF FASTING

During Ramadan, recorded lectures on Prophetic traditions under the title "*Virtues and Rulings of Fasting*" are being aired on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel. In these sessions, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi discusses the merits and legal rulings of fasting, including missed fasts (*qaza*), fasting while traveling, and various juristic issues related to fasting. Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center's Youtube Channel.

AUDIO VERSION OF MAULANA MAUDUDI'S QURANIC TRANSLATION

The renowned Quranic translation by the eminent scholar, thinker, exegete, and founder of Jamaat-e-Islami, Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi, is being released serially in audio form on the Center's YouTube channel. The translation has been recorded in the voice of Mr. Arshad Mahmood. During Ramadan, one juz (section) is presented daily. All episodes are archived on the channel.

LIVE Q&A SESSIONS WITH GHAMIDI CENTER SCHOLARS

The Center has organized several live question-and-answer sessions during Ramadan, allowing participants to ask religious, ethical, and Ramadan-related jurisprudential questions. The first session was held on February 20 with Dr. Irfan Shahzad, who responded to questions via Zoom. The recording is available on the Center's YouTube channel.

RAMADAN AND THE QURAN: SELECTED SURAHS

Dr. Khalid Zaheer presents a daily short program titled "*Ramadan and the Quran: Selected Surahs.*" The aim is to highlight the spiritual blessings of Ramadan through selected Quranic passages and communicate their message in an accessible manner. Episodes are available on the Center's YouTube channel.

AFKAR-E-GHAMIDI (GHAMIDI'S THOUGHT)

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan's weekly YouTube program *Afkar-e-Ghamidi* serves as an important medium for presenting Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's ideas in simple language. Topics discussed in February 2026 included:

- What is the Purpose of Fasting?
- How Does Fasting Produce Taqwa?
- Ghamidi's Advice: Cultivate Moral Courage for Truth

- The Real Issue of Religion: The Hereafter, Not This World.

Recordings are available on the YouTube channel.

RAMADAN: A MONTH TO BECOME A BETTER HUMAN BEING

Organized by the Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, Al-Mawrid US, this special Ramadan program is presented by Muhammad Hassan Ilyas under the title “*Ramadan: A Month to Become a Better Human Being.*” Broadcast every Monday and Friday throughout Ramadan, the program aims to familiarize viewers with the true moral and spiritual demands of religion. Episodes are available online.

DIALOGUE SERIES

A special Ramadan *Dialogue Series* features discussions between Dr. Amir Gazdar and Mr. Shamsuddin Shagri on various Ramadan-related themes. Topics include:

- The Reality and Purpose of I’tikaf
- Understanding Tahajjud, Tarawih, and Witr
- Juristic and Legal Questions Related to Suhur and Iftar.

The objective is to acquaint viewers with both the spirit and legal dimensions of Ramadan practices. Recordings are available online.

ABU AL-QASIM MUHAMMAD AHMAD: THE STORY OF THE FINAL PROPHET’S LIFE

As part of the Ramadan transmission, a series introducing the Prophet’s biography to children and youth has been launched under the title “*Abu al-Qasim Muhammad Ahmad: The Story of the Final Prophet’s Life.*” Narrated by Mr. Naeem Ahmad Baloch and hosted by Daniyal Baloch, one episode is released daily on the Center’s YouTube channel.

Q&A SESSION WITH AL-MAWRID INDIA

In February 2026, Muhammad Hassan Ilyas, Director of Research and Communication at the Ghamidi Center, participated in a live session organized by Al-Mawrid India. The program featured an extensive Q&A discussion on various intellectual and religious topics. The recording is available online.

THE QURAN FOR RAMADAN

Dr. Shehzad Saleem’s program “*The Quran for Ramadan*” is broadcast daily in English during Ramadan. The program discusses selected Quranic passages, and recordings are available on the Center’s YouTube channel.

WEEKLY QURAN AND HADITH LECTURES

In February 2026, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi’s live Quran and Hadith lessons continued under the Center’s auspices. Quranic sessions covered verses 3–35 of Surah al-Nur. Key themes discussed in Hadith sessions included:

- The importance of prayer among the Companions
- Abandoning prayer as equivalent to disbelief
- Encouraging children to pray at age seven
- Boundaries governing relations during menstruation.

Recordings are available online.

ISTIFARSAR: WITH DR. AMMAR KHAN NASIR

In February 2026 sessions of the popular Q&A series *Istifarsar*, key questions included:

- Why would an infinite God be concerned with my actions?
- Is establishing an Islamic state a religious obligation?
- What is the legal status of licking fingers after eating?
- What is the Hanafi ruling on rebellion against the state?

Recordings are available on the YouTube channel.

ASK GHAMIDI

A monthly online session enables participants to seek direct guidance from Javed Ahmed Ghamidi on religious and ethical matters. Questions discussed in February 2026 included:

- Ethics of analyzing states and institutions
- Whether humans will enter Paradise with their current nature
- Permissibility of investment in National Savings institutions
- Why God requires worship from human beings.

Recordings are available online.

FIVE ETHICAL PROHIBITIONS

In this article, Syed Manzoor ul Hassan explains, based on Surah al-A'raf, the five fundamental ethical prohibitions declared unlawful by the Shariah: sexual immorality, violation of rights, unjust aggression, polytheism, and fabricating lies about God. He argues that all ethical evils mentioned in the Quran and Hadith fall under these categories, and nothing beyond them may be declared intrinsically forbidden. The article also clarifies that prohibitions relating to ritual conditions or social etiquette do not constitute *hurmah* (intrinsic prohibition). Published in last month's issue of *Ishraq US*.

DISCIPLINING A WIFE: IS THE ADDRESSEE THE HUSBAND OR SOCIETY?

In this article published in the February 2026 issue of *Ishraq US*, Muhammad Hassan Ilyas argues—based on Surah al-Nisa', verse 34—that disciplinary authority in cases of marital discord is addressed exclusively to the husband, not society at large. He maintains that although Quranic address may appear general, the ruling applies specifically to the role mentioned in context. Society's involvement begins only when the matter escalates into public disorder, as referenced in the following verse.

TAFHIM AL-ATHAR SERIES

This scholarly program examines reports attributed to the Companions and Successors, including explanation and discussion. Hosted by Dr. Syed Muti al-Rahman with Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir as guest, February sessions covered topics such as:

- Abu Hurayrah and Hadith transmission
- Israiliyyat narratives
- Companions' exegetical questions to the Prophet

- Quranic scholars among the Companions.

ASK HASSAN ILYAS

On the YouTube channel *Muslim Today*, Muhammad Hassan Ilyas addressed questions including:

- Ethics and limits of protest
- Guidelines for gender interaction in Islam
- Whether Jews claim Ezra as the son of God
- The distinction between interest and business profit.

Recordings are available online.

VARIANT READINGS (QIRAAT)

Dr. Shehzad Saleem continues summarizing topics from the *23 Objections* video series in English. Last month's episode addressed the subject of variant Quranic readings. Recordings are available online.

HAYAT-E-AMIN

In this article, Naeem Ahmad Baloch recounts the greatest tragedy in the life of Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi—the death of his son Abu Salih Islahi in an airplane crash—and highlights the Maulana's remarkable patience and steadfastness. The article also mentions a dream of Mian Tufail Muhammad that helped ease the Maulana's grief. The article was published in last month's issue of *Isbraq US*.

MORALS AND ETHICS — MEEZAN LECTURE SERIES

Dr. Shehzad Saleem's *Meezan Lecture Series* continues to introduce English-speaking audiences to discussions from Mr. Ghamidi's book *Meezan*. Two lectures on "*Morals and Ethics*" were recorded in February 2026 and are available online.

GHAMIDI CENTER ONLINE KHANQAH

Dr. Moiz Amjad conducts weekly spiritual training sessions titled *Online Khanqah*, focusing on moral reform and self-purification. Recent discussions addressed:

- Avoiding negative thoughts and self-blame
- Can comfort become a necessity?
- Should thoughts be stopped or transformed?
- What is hypnosis?

Recordings are available online.

ISLAM STUDY CIRCLE

Dr. Shehzad Saleem organizes a monthly *Islam Study Circle* covering religious, ethical, and social topics in light of the Quran and Hadith. Each session consists of three parts: Quranic discussion, selected Hadith analysis, and examination of a Biblical passage, followed by Q&A. Recordings are available on the YouTube channel.

ILM-O-HIKMAT: WITH GHAMIDI

In February 2026, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's weekly television program on Dunya News aired two episodes on *Islam and the State* and one on *The Excellence of Ramadan*. Questions discussed included:

- Should law in the modern state be independent of morality?
- Ethical constraints in seeking power
- Why is the reward of fasting extraordinary?
- The wisdom behind fixed numbers in acts of worship.

ONLINE PRIVATE CONSULTATION SESSIONS

Dr. Shehzad Saleem continues conducting online counseling sessions addressing social and family issues. More than thirty sessions last month focused on parental challenges and psychological and educational concerns of younger generations, offering guidance within ethical and religious boundaries.

ISSUANCE OF RELIGIOUS OPINIONS

The Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, Al-Mawrid US, has become an important platform providing religious guidance on legal applications of Shariah issues worldwide. Numerous opinions regarding marriage, divorce, inheritance, and socio-economic matters were issued last month. These opinions were compiled by Muhammad Hassan Ilyas in light of Mr. Ghamidi's thought. It is clarified that a fatwa represents a scholarly religious opinion, not a legal or judicial ruling.

TEACHING AL-BAYAN IN ENGLISH

Dr. Shehzad Saleem continued teaching Mr. Ghamidi's Quranic commentary *Al-Bayan* in English, covering Surah al-A'raf, verses 47–135, in January 2026. The initiative aims to make the work accessible to English-speaking scholars. Recordings are available online.

ASK DR. SHEHZAD SALEEM

A monthly live Q&A session allows participants to ask religious, ethical, and social questions in both Urdu and English. Recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.