

MA'ĀRIFUL-QUR'ĀN

BY

MAULĀNĀ MUFTI MUḤAMMAD SHAFI' رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ

Translated by

Maulānā Aḥmed Khalīl Azīz

Revised by

Maulānā Muḥammad Taqī 'Usmānī

Volume 8

Sūrah Muḥammad to Sūrah An-Nās

CONTENTS

1.	Preface _____	28
2.	Transliteration Scheme _____	29

SŪRAH MUḤAMMAD

1.	Verses 1 - 3: Translation and Commentary _____	30
2.	Verse 4...: Translation and Commentary _____	32
	Four Options Regarding POW _____	35
	The Issue of Slavery in Islam _____	35
	An objection and its rebuttal _____	36
3.	Verse ...4 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	39
	Wisdom in the Legality of Jihād _____	40
4.	Verses 12 - 15: Translation and Commentary _____	42
	Essential Characteristics of Paradise _____	43
5.	Verses 16 - 18: Translation and Commentary _____	44
6.	Verse 19: Translation and Commentary _____	46
7.	Verses 20 - 31: Translation and Commentary _____	48
	Strict Maintenance of Kinship Ties _____	51
	Law Relating to Cursing a Particular Person: The Issue of Cursing Yazīd _____	52
8.	Verses 32 - 38: Translation and Commentary _____	54
	Ruling: _____	57

SŪRAH AL-FATH

(The Victory)

1.	Verses 1 - 3: Translation and Commentary _____	63
	The Event of Hudaibiyah _____	65
	Part [1]: The Prophet's ﷺ Vision _____	65
	Part [2]: The Prophet ﷺ Invites his Companions and Bedouins to Join him: Some refused _____	65
	Part [3]: Setting out for Makkah _____	66
	Part [4]: Preparing for Confrontation with Makkans _____	66
	A Strange and Simple Network of Communication _____	66
	The Informants of Holy Prophet ﷺ _____	67
	Part [5]: The Camel of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Refuses to Move _____	67

S.No	Subject	Page
	Part [6] : A Miracle at Hudaibiyah _____	68
	Part [7]: Negotiation with the Deputations of the People of Makkah _____	69
	Part [8] : Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ؓ Despatched as a Special Envoy _____	70
	Part [9] : Tension between Quraish and Muslims: Seventy Makkans Captured _____	71
	Part [10] : The Pledge of Ridwān _____	72
	Part [11] : Peace Treaty at Hudaibiyah _____	72
	Terms and Provisions of the Treaty Upset the Companions _____	75
	The Case of Abu Jandal: The Prophet's Commitment to the Treaty _____	76
	Putting Off the Pilgrim Garb and Slaughtering the Sacrificial Animals _____	77
	The Noble Companions' Strength of Faith and Obedience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ Tested Once Again _____	78
	The Effects and Advantages of the Treaty _____	78
	Analysis of Verses _____	80
	Definition of Hidayah _____	81
2.	Verses 4 - 7: Translation and Commentary _____	81
	Bounties of Allah upon the Participants of Hudaibiyah _____	82
3.	Verses 8 - 10: Translation and Commentary _____	82
	Injunctions and Related Considerations _____	83
4.	Verses 11 - 14: Translation and Commentary _____	85
	Related Considerations _____	86
5.	Verses 15 - 17: Translation and Commentary _____	86
	Injunctions and Related Issues _____	87
	Divine Revelation is not restricted to the Qur'an; Many injunctions are revealed without being a part of the Qur'an, and Prophetic <i>aḥādīth</i> have also the status of being 'Allah's injunctions' _____	88
	Some of the Laggards Repent and Become Sincere Muslims _____	90
6.	Verses 18 - 21: Translation and Commentary _____	91
	Vilification of, and Finding Fault with, the Noble Companions Prohibited _____	93
	The Tree of Ridwān _____	93
	Conquest of Khaibar _____	94
7.	Verses 22 - 26: Translation and Commentary _____	96
	Natural Safeguard of the Noble Companions against Mistakes _____	97
8.	Verses 27 - 29: Translation and Commentary _____	99
	Recapitulation of the Event of Hudaibiyah _____	100

Importance of <i>insha-allah</i> for the Performance of Future Works _____	101
The Qualities, Merits and Special Marks of the Noble Companions _____	104
All Companions Are Inmates of Paradise: Their Sins Are Forgiven and to Belittle them is a Major Sin _____	110

SŪRAH AL-ḤUJURĀT (The Apartments)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	113
	Respect for Islamic Scholars and Religious Leaders _____	114
	It is Prohibited to Greet and Speak Aloud in front of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Mausoleum _____	115
	Ruling _____	115
	The Apartments of the Mothers of the Faithful _____	117
	Occasion of Revelation _____	118
	Additional Notes _____	118
	Ruling _____	118
2.	Verse 6: Translation and Commentary _____	119
	Ruling _____	121
	Injunctions and Rulings Related to Verse [6] _____	121
	An Important Question and Answer Regarding the Truthfulness of the Companions _____	122
3.	Verses 7 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	124
	The Holy Prophet's ﷺ Decision is Better _____	124
4.	Verses 9 - 10: Translation and Commentary _____	125
	Occasion of Revelation _____	126
	Related Issues and Injunctions _____	127
	Ruling _____	128
	Conflicts of the Noble Companions ﷺ _____	128
5.	Verse 11: Translation and Commentary _____	131
	Prohibition of Ridiculing One Another _____	131
	Exception to the Rule _____	134
	It is Sunnah to call people by Good Titles _____	135
6.	Verse 12: Translation and Commentary _____	135
	Analysis of the Verse _____	136
	[1] Prohibition of Unfounded Suspicion _____	136
	Qurtūbī quotes the Qur'ānic verse _____	138
	[2] Prohibition of Spying _____	138

S.No	Subject	Page
	[3] Prohibition of Backbiting _____	139
	Some Issues Related to Backbiting _____	140
	Rulings _____	142
7.	Verse 13: Translation and Commentary _____	143
	All of Mankind are the Children of 'Ādam and Ḥawwa' _____	143
	Circumstances of Revelation _____	143
	Taqwā of Allah is the basis of Honour _____	144
	Analysis of Important Words in the Verse _____	144
	Lineal, National and Linguistic Division of Mankind: The Underlying Divine Wisdom is identification _____	145
8.	Verses 14 - 18: Translation and Commentary _____	145
	Sequence of Verses in the Sūrah _____	146
	Circumstances of Revelation _____	146
	Lexical and Technical Analysis of the Concepts "Islam" and "Īmān" _____	147

SŪRAH QĀF

1.	Verses 1 - 15: Translation and Commentary _____	149
	Linkage with the preceding Sūrah _____	150
	Characteristics and Virtues of Sūrah Qāf _____	150
	Is it Possible to Observe the Heaven? _____	151
	Removal of a Doubt relating to Resurrection _____	151
	Consoling the Holy Prophet ﷺ _____	152
	Who are people of Rass? _____	153
	Thamūd _____	153
	'Ād _____	153
	Fir'aun _____	154
	Brothers of Lūṭ _____	154
	Dwellers of Aikah _____	154
	People of Tubba' _____	154
2.	Verses 16 - 29: Translation and Commentary _____	154
	Allah is Nearer to Man than his Jugular Vein: An Analysis _____	156
	The Two Recording Angels with every Man _____	158
	Explanation of Ḥasan Baṣrī _____	159
	Every Utterance of Man is Recorded _____	159
	Daze of Death _____	160
	Two Angels to Lead Man to the Plane of Ḥashr _____	161
	The Unseen World Becomes Visible at Death _____	162

S.No	Subject	Page
	Man and Devil Dispute before Allah _____	163
3.	Verses 30 - 35: Translation and Commentary _____	164
	Analysis of "Awwāb" and "Ḥāfiẓ" _____	164
4.	Verses 36 - 40: Translation and Commentary _____	166
	Warning the Disbelievers of the imminent Torment _____	167
	Channels of Acquiring Knowledge _____	167
5.	Verses 41 - 45: Translation and Commentary _____	169

SŪRAH ADH-DHARIYĀT (The Scatterers)

1.	Verses 1 - 23: Translation and Commentary _____	171
	Affirmation of After-Life _____	172
	Differing Beliefs of the Pagans _____	173
	Remaining Awake at Night for Voluntary Prayers _____	174
	Merits of Seeking Forgiveness in the hours before dawn _____	175
	Special Guidance for Philanthropists _____	176
	Allah's Signs on the Earth and in Mankind _____	177
	The Development of the Sperm and Embryo in the Womb _____	178
2.	Verses 24 - 46: Translation and Commentary _____	179
	Comforting the Messenger of Allah ﷺ _____	181
	Rules of Entertaining Guests _____	182
3.	Verses 47 - 55: Translation and Commentary _____	184
	Proofs of Allah's Oneness abound in the Creation of the Heavens and Earth _____	185
4.	Verses 56 - 60: Translation and Commentary _____	185
	The Purpose of Jinn's and Mankind's creation _____	186

SŪRAH AṬ-ṬUR (The Mount)

1.	Verses 1 - 28: Translation and Commentary _____	189
	Al-Bait-ul-Ma'mur _____	191
	The Incident of Sayyidnā 'Umar ؓ _____	192
	The Believing Children of the Righteous will benefit from their relationship with their Believing Parents in Paradise _____	193
	Allah's Fairness to Sinners _____	194
2.	Verses 29 - 49: Translation and Commentary _____	194

Kaffarat-ul-Majlis : A recitation at the end of a meeting that
expiates sins _____ 197

SŪRAH AN-NAJM

(The Star)

1.	Verses 1 - 18: Translation and Commentary _____	199
	Characteristics of Sūrah An-Najm _____	200
	Allah Swears that the Messenger is True _____	200
	The Reason for Describing the Holy Prophet ﷺ as 'your companion' _____	201
	The Holy Prophet's ﷺ Words are a Revelation from Allah _____	202
	Divergent Interpretation of the Verses of Najm _____	203
	Ibn Kathīr's Findings _____	205
	An Academic Problem and its Solution _____	207
	The Present Locale of Paradise and Hell _____	210
	Another Approach to Interpreting the Preceding Verses: A Useful Analysis _____	212
	The Question of the Beatific Vision of the Creator _____	216
2.	Verses 19 - 28: Translation and Commentary _____	218
	Refuting Idolatry _____	219
	Various Types of Zann _____	219
3.	Verses 29 - 32: Translation and Commentary _____	220
	Necessity of turning away from the Misguided People _____	221
	A Special Warning _____	221
	Allah Forgives the Small Faults, Al-Lamam _____	221
	Definition of Major and Minor Sins _____	222
4.	Verses 33 - 62: Translation and Commentary _____	224
	Special Characteristic of Ibrāhīm ؑ: Fulfilment of Covenant _____	227
	Scriptures of Mūsā ؑ and Ibrāhīm ؑ: Special Guidance and Teachings _____	228
	None shall carry the Burden of Any Other on the Day of Resurrection _____	228
	Offering Reward of Good Deeds to others _____	230

SŪRAH AL-QAMAR

(The Moon)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	237
----	--	-----

S.No	Subject	Page
	Linkage between Sūrah An-Najm and Sūrah Al-Qamar _____	238
	The Phenomenon of Moon-Splitting : A Miracle _____	238
	Criticism against the Miracle of 'Moon-Splitting' _____	240
2.	Verses 9 - 17: Translation and Commentary _____	242
	The Story of the People of Nuḥ <small>عليه السلام</small> and the Lesson Learnt from it _____	243
	Qur'ān is Made Simple to Memorize and to Take Heed; Not for <i>Ijtihād</i> or <i>Istinbat</i> _____	244
3.	Verses 18 - 42: Translation and Commentary _____	245
	Lexicological Analysis _____	247
4.	Verses 43 - 55: Translation and Commentary _____	248

SŪRAH AR-RAḤMĀN (The All-Merciful)

1.	Verses 1 - 25: Translation and Commentary _____	252
	Linkage of the Sūrah and the Wisdom of Repeating the words, 'Which of the bounties of your Lord will you deny?' _____	253
	Was Sūrah Ar-Raḥmān Revealed in Makkah or Madīnah? _____	254
	Allah's Signs _____	256
	Mankind and Jinn are surrounded by Divine Bounties _____	261
	The Creation of Humans and Jinns _____	261
	Allah is the Lord of the Two Points of Sunrise and the Two Points of Sunset _____	261
	Allah created Different Types of Water _____	262
2.	Verses 26 - 45: Translation and Commentary _____	263
	Allah is the Ever-living, Free of all Need _____	264
	A Warning for Humans and Jinn _____	267
	This Verse does not point to Space Exploration by Rockets and Sputniks _____	269
	The Horrors of the Day of Resurrection _____	270
3.	Verses 46 - 78: Translation and Commentary _____	271
	The Delight of the Righteous in Paradise _____	273
	Related Considerations _____	274

SŪRAH WAQI'AH (The Imminent Event)

1.	Verses 1 - 56: Translation and Commentary _____	277
----	---	-----

	Special Characteristic of Sūrah Al-Waqi'ah: Sayyidnā 'Abdullah Ibn Mas'ūd's Didactic Story on his Deathbed _____	279
	Horrors of the Day of Resurrection _____	280
	Three Categories of People on the Day of Resurrection _____	281
	Who are Awwalin (earlier generations) and 'Ākhirin (later ones)? _____	282
	The reward of As-Sabiqun _____	287
	The Reward of Those on the Right _____	287
2.	Verses 57 - 74: Translation and Commentary _____	291
	Proof of the occurrence of the Day of Resurrection _____	292
	Creation of Plants, Sending down of Rain and Creation of Fire are Proof of Allah's Oneness _____	294
3.	Verses 75 - 96: Translation and Commentary _____	296
	Sequencing of Arguments _____	297
	Allah swears to the Greatness of the Qur'ān _____	297
	Some Rulings about touching the Holy Qur'ān _____	300

SŪRAH AL-ḤADĪD

(The Iron)

1.	Verses 1 - 6: Translation and Commentary _____	304
	Some of the Merits of Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd _____	305
	Remedy for Diabolical Whisperings _____	305
2.	Verses 7 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	307
	Ordering Faith _____	308
	Conquest of Makkah: The Dividing Line in Determining the Status of the noble Companions _____	310
	Allah promises Paradise and Forgiveness to all Noble Ṣaḥābah _____	312
	The Status of the Noble Ṣaḥābah in the light of Qur'ān and Sunnah, not in terms of Historical Narratives _____	313
	Unanimous Belief of the Ummah regarding the Noble Ṣaḥābah _____	314
3.	Verses 12 - 19: Translation and Commentary _____	316
	The Believers will be awarded Light on the Day of Resurrection _____	318
	Causes of Light and Darkness on the Plane of Gathering _____	320
	Special Note _____	323
	Is every Believer a 'Ṣiddīq' and a 'Shāhid'? _____	324
3.	Verses 20 - 21: Translation and Commentary _____	326

S.No	Subject	Page
	The Life of this World is Fleeting Enjoyment _____	326
4.	Verses 22 - 24: Translation and Commentary _____	330
	Factors affecting Mankind are duly measured and destined ____	331
	Patience and Gratitude _____	331
5.	Verse 25: Translation and Commentary _____	332
	Establishing Justice: The Real Purpose of sending Prophets and Divine Books _____	332
	Special Note [1] _____	334
	Special Note [2] _____	334
6.	Verses 26 - 29: Translation and Commentary _____	335
	Many of the Nations of the Prophets were Rebellious _____	336
	Monasticism: An Analysis _____	338
	Is <i>rahbaniyyah</i> (Monasticism) absolutely Prohibited or is it a relative Concept? _____	341

SŪRAH AL-MUJADALAH (The Debate)

1.	Verses 1 - 6: Translation and Commentary _____	344
	Zihar _____	347
	Definition of <i>zihar</i> and its effect in Shari'ah _____	348
	The Expiation for Zihar _____	348
	The Fate of those who Challenge Allah and His Apostle _____	350
2.	Verses 7 - 13: Translation and Commentary _____	351
	Ethics and Etiquette of Secret Consultation _____	355
	Mischief of the Jews _____	355
	Manners of the Secret Conference _____	356
	Return Good for Evil _____	356
	Manners for Assemblies _____	357
	Ruling _____	359
	Only Sayyidnā 'Alī  Acted upon the verse _____	360
3.	Verses 14 - 22: Translation and Commentary _____	360
	Chastising the Hypocrites for their Secret Alliance with the Jews _____	362
	Believers cannot entertain intimacy with non-Believers _____	363
	Ruling _____	364

SŪRAH AL-ḤASHR

(The Mustering)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	366
	Cause of Revelation _____	367
	The Characteristics of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr and the History of Banū Nadir _____	369
	A Lesson _____	371
	The Story of 'Amr Ibn Umayyah Damuri _____	371
	Tolerance and Human Rights in Islam: A Model for Present-day Politicians _____	372
	Commandment of the Holy Prophet ﷺ is in fact the Commandment of Allah: A Warning for those who Refute the authority of the Aḥādīth _____	374
	Disagreement in <i>ijtihād</i> is not a sin _____	375
	Ruling _____	375
2.	Verses 6 - 10: Translation and Commentary _____	375
	The Concept of Fai' and its Law of Distribution _____	377
	Effective Measures taken by Islam against concentration of wealth _____	380
	The Messenger's Command is Binding like the Qur'ānic Command _____	383
	Priority should be given to the Indigent Righteous and Religious Scholars serving the Cause of Islam when distributing Charity _____	384
	The Merits of al-Muhajirin [The Emigrants] _____	385
	An Important Issue: The rule about the control of unbelievers over the wealth and property of the Muslims _____	385
	The Merits of Anṣār [The Helpers] _____	386
	Distribution of Banū Nadir's properties _____	388
	Disposing of a Possible Doubt _____	392
	Muhajirīn [The Refugees] Reciprocate the Ansars' Self-Sacrifice _____	393
	Being free of Malice and Jealousy is a sign of one's being in Paradise _____	395
	All Muslims after the Muhajirīn and the Anṣār are entitled to <i>fai'</i> _____	396
	Love for the Blessed Companions is a sign that the Ummah is on Truth _____	396
2.	Verses 11 - 17: Translation and Commentary _____	398
	The Expulsion of Banū Qainuqa' _____	399

S.No	Subject	Page
3.	Verses 18 - 24: Translation and Commentary _____	402
	The Command to Taqwa and to prepare for the Day of Resurrection _____	403
	A Few of Allah's Attributes of Perfection _____	406
	Benefits and Blessings of the Concluding Verses of Sūrah Al-Ḥashr _____	409

SŪRAH AL-MUMTAHINAH

(The Examiner)

1.	Verses 1 - 6: Translation and Commentary _____	410
	Background of Revelation _____	412
	Allaying a Doubt _____	416
2.	Verses 7 - 9: Translation and Commentary _____	417
	Ruling _____	419
3.	Verses 10 - 13: Translation and Commentary _____	420
	Peace Treaty of Hudaibiyah and an Analysis of some of its Clauses _____	422
	Exemption of Women from the Terms of the Treaty is not a Breach of Treaty. It is a clarification by Mutual Agreement of Parties Concerned _____	424
	Testing the Believing Emigrant Women _____	425
	Ruling _____	426
	Did some of the Muslim Women become Apostates and flee to Makkah? _____	430
	Bai'ah of Women _____	431
	Men's <i>bai'ah</i> was Concise and Women's <i>bai'ah</i> Elaborate _____	432

SŪRAH AŞ-ŞAFF

(The Row)

1.	Verses 1 - 9: Translation and Commentary _____	435
	Ruling _____	438
	Difference between a Claim (Da'wa) and Preaching (Da'wah) _____	438
	Prophecy of The Final Messenger of Allah in Injīl _____	440
2.	Verses 10 - 14: Translation and Commentary _____	441
	Three Groups of Christians _____	443

SŪRAH AL-JUMU'AH

(Friday)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	445
	The Three Objectives of the Advent of the Prophet ﷺ _____	447
	A Question and Answer _____	448
	The Example of a Non-Practicing Scholar _____	450
	Is Longing for Death Permissible? _____	452
	Laws pertaining to Avoiding the Causes of Death _____	452
2.	Verses 9 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	453
	Special Note _____	456
	Adhān of Jumu'ah _____	456
	Blessings in Business after Jumu'ah _____	48
	Admonishing those who abandon the Imām while he is delivering the Jumu'ah Khuṭbah [Sermon] _____	458

SŪRAH AL-MUNĀFIQUN

(The Hypocrites)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	461
	Co-operation on the basis of Tribal, Racial, National or Regional Bias is the Slogan of Pre-Islamic Paganism _____	463
	The Above Story Imparts Guiding Principles on Important Issues _____	469
	The Noble Companions' Unparalleled Adherence to Islamic Principles and their Lofty Station _____	471
	Taking Care of General Welfare of Muslims: Protecting them from Misunderstanding _____	472
2.	Verses 9 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	473

SŪRAH AT-TAGHUBUN

(Loss and Gain)

1.	Verses 1 - 10: Translation and Commentary _____	477
	Two Nations Theory _____	479
	The Reason Why the Day of Gathering is called the Day of Loss and Gain _____	481
2.	Verses 11 - 18: Translation and Commentary _____	484
	Ruling _____	486

Wealth and Children are a Trial _____ 486

SŪRAH AṬ-ṬALĀQ

(The Divorce)

1.	Verses 1 - 7: Translation and Commentary _____	488
	The Status of Marriage and Divorce in Shari'ah:	
	The Wise Legal Framework _____	490
	Rules _____	493
	Three Simultaneous Divorces: Unlawful but Effective _____	501
	The wise and Educative style of the Qur'an in the laws of Crime and Punishment _____	503
	The Cause of Revelation of the Above Verse _____	505
	Ruling _____	506
	A Proven Prescription to avert calamities and achieve the objectives _____	507
	Five Blessings of <i>taqwā</i> _____	509
	Do not Hurt Divorced Women during their <i>'iddah</i> _____	510
	Maintenance of Divorcees during their <i>'iddah</i> _____	510
	Fees for Suckling the Child _____	511
	Quantum of Divorcee's Maintenance _____	512
	Special Note _____	513
2.	Verses 8 - 12: Translation and Commentary _____	513
	Where are the Seven Earths and in What Form? _____	515

SŪRAH AT-TAḤRIM

(Prohibiting)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	517
2.	Verses 6 - 7: Translation and Commentary _____	522
	Education and Training of Wife and Children:	
	Every Muslim's Responsibility _____	523
3.	Verses 8 - 12: Translation and Commentary _____	524

SŪRAH AL-MULK

(The Kingdom)

1.	Verses 1 - 30: Translation and Commentary _____	529
	The Virtues of Sūrah Al-Mulk _____	532

S.No	Subject	Page
	The Reality of Life and Death _____	534
	Various Categories of Death and Life _____	535
	What is a Good Action? _____	537
	Specifying ears, eyes and Heart _____	542

SŪRAH AL-QALAM

(The Pen)

1.	Verses 1 - 52: Translation and Commentary _____	544
	Pen and its Significance _____	549
	Special Note _____	551
	The Holy Prophet's r Exalted Quality of Character _____	551
	Ruling _____	554
	The Story of the Owners of a Garden _____	555
	Warning _____	558
	A note of caution _____	558
	A Rational Proof of Resurrection _____	559
	Special Note _____	563

SŪRAH AL-ḤAQQAH

(The Imminent Happening!)

1.	Verses 1 - 52: Translation and Commentary _____	564
	A Cautionary Note _____	572

SŪRAH AL-MA'ARIJ

(The Stairways)

1.	Verses 1 - 44: Translation and Commentary _____	574
	The Length of the Day of Judgement - A thousand years or Fifty Thousand Years? An Analysis _____	578
	Rates of Zakāh are Specified by Allah _____	582
	Masturbation is Forbidden _____	582
	Rights of Allah and Rights of Human beings both are included in Trust Obligations _____	583

SŪRAH NUḤ

(Nuh)

1.	Verses 1 - 28: Translation and Commentary _____	585
----	---	-----

Fluctuation in Man's Life Span _____	588
Qur'an Confirms Punishment in the Grave _____	593

SŪRAH AL-JINN

(The Jinns)

1. Verses 1 - 28: Translation and Commentary _____	594
Preliminary Remarks _____	597
Reality of Jinn _____	598
Circumstances of Revelation _____	598
Abū Ṭālib's Death and the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Journey to Ṭā'if _____	599
A Jinn Companion of the Holy Prophet ﷺ _____	601
Rafi' Ibn 'Umair's ﷺ Islam on account of the Jinn _____	603
The Jinn Used to Go only up to the Clouds to Eavesdrop, Not to the Sky _____	604
Meteors Existed Since the Inception of Time, but were not Used to Repel the Devils before the Advent of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. It happened only after his Advent _____	605
Ruling _____	607
Difference between 'Knowledge of the Unseen' and 'Reports of the Unseen Events' _____	608
The concluding part of the last verse says: _____	609

SŪRAH AL-MUZZAMMIL

(The Wrapped up one)

1. Verses 1 - 20: Translation and Commentary _____	611
Injunctions Pertaining to Ṣalāt-ut-Tahajjud and its Abrogation _____	614
Rulings _____	616
A Special Note _____	619
An Important Note _____	622
Remembrance of Allah through Repetition of His Personal Name _____	622
The Correct Concept of Tawakkul [Trust] _____	623
The Righteous Elders' Fear of the Hereafter _____	626
The Obligatory Nature of Tahajjud Prayer Abrogated _____	627
The Concept of Abrogation in Shari'ah _____	628

SŪRAH AL-MUDDATHHIR

(The enveloped one)

1.	Verses 1 - 56: Translation and Commentary	634
	Injunctions	638
	The Annual Income of Walīd Ibn Mughirah: Ten Million Guineas	641
	Dialogue between Abū Jahl And Walīd: They Concur on the Holy Prophet's ﷺ Veracity	642
	Unbelievers Abstained from Telling Lies	644
	Children's Stay with the Father is a Great Boon	644
	No Intercession will Benefit an Unbeliever, but will Benefit a Believer	647
	A Special Note	647

SŪRAH AL-QIYAMAH

(Resurrection)

1.	Verses 1 - 40: Translation and Commentary	649
	Interpretation of Lawwamah	652
	Three kinds of <i>Nafs</i>	652
	Divine Wonders in the Resurrection of Bodies	653
	Muqtadis (those praying behind an Imam) should not recite the Qur'ān in <i>ṣalāh</i>	657

SŪRAH AD-DAHR

(The Time)

1.	Verses 1 - 31: Translation and Commentary	661
	Man Is Made up of Particles from Different Parts of the World	665
	Ruling	667
	Miracles of Nature Respecting Human Joints	670

SŪRAH AL-MURSALĀT

(Those Sent)

1.	Verses 1 - 50: Translation and Commentary	672
	Occasion of Revelation	674

SŪRAH AN-NABA'

(The Great Event)

1.	Verses 1 - 40: Translation and Commentary _____	680
	Sleep Is a Great Gift _____	683
	Problem of Eternity of Hell _____	687

SŪRAH AN-NĀZI'AT

(Those who pull out)

1.	Verses 1 - 46: Translation and Commentary _____	692
	The third quality of the angels is: _____	695
	The fourth quality of the angels is: _____	695
	The fifth quality of the angels is: _____	696
	Reward and Punishment in the Grave _____	696
	<i>Nafs</i> [Self] <i>Rūḥ</i> [Spirit/Soul]: <i>Qāḍī</i> Thana'ullah's Research and Analysis _____	697
	Three Levels of Suppressing [the Base] Self _____	699
	Tricks of the Base Self _____	700

SŪRAH 'ABAS

(Frowning)

1.	Verses 1 - 42: Translation and Commentary _____	703
	An Important Qur'anic Principle of Teaching and Preaching _____	707

SŪRAH AT-TAKWIR

(Folding)

1.	Verses 1 - 29: Translation and Commentary _____	713
	Important Note _____	717
	Abortion After Four Months is Tantamount to Infanticide Ruling [1] _____	717
	Ruling [2]: Birth Control _____	717

SŪRAH AL-INFITĀR

(Cleaving)

1.	Verses 1 - 19: Translation and Commentary _____	721
----	---	-----

SŪRAH AT-TATFIF (Curtailing the Rights)

1.	Verses 1 - 36: Translation and Commentary _____	725
	Tatfif has a Wider Scope _____	727
	Various Forms of Poverty, Famine and Curtailment of Sustenance _____	729
	<i>Sijjin</i> and <i>'illiyin</i> _____	730
	The Locale of Paradise and Hell _____	731
	Special Note _____	732
	The Abode of Human Souls After Death _____	734

SŪRAH AL-INSHIQĀQ (The Splitting)

1.	Verses 1 - 25: Translation and Commentary _____	738
	Two Categories of Divine Commands _____	740
	Return to Allah _____	741
	Vicissitudes of Human Life, His Eternal Journey and His Final Destination _____	745

SŪRAH AL-BURŪJ (Stellar Formations)

1.	Verses 1 - 22: Translation and Commentary _____	750
	The Story of the People of Trench _____	752
	Special Note _____	754

SŪRAH AT-ṬARIQ (The Night-Comer)

1.	Verses 1 - 17: Translation and Commentary _____	756
----	---	-----

SŪRAH AL-A'ĻĀ (The Most Exalted)

1.	Verses 1 - 19: Translation and Commentary _____	761
	Rulings _____	762

Subtle and Profound Wisdom in the Creation of the Universe	763
Maulana Rūmī says: _____	764
The Knowledge of Science is a Divine Gift to Man _____	766
Themes of the Scripts of Prophet Ibrāhīm ﷺ _____	770
Themes of the Scripts of Prophet Mūsā ﷺ _____	771

SŪRAH AL-GHASHIYAH

(The Overwhelming Event)

1. Verses 1 - 26: Translation and Commentary _____	772
How will Grass or Tree Survive in Hell _____	774
Etiquette of Living _____	776
In conclusion of the Chapter, the Messenger of Allah is comforted thus: _____	777

SŪRAH AL-FAJR

(The Dawn)

1. Verses 1 - 30: Translation and Commentary _____	778
Wealth and Poverty are no Signs of One's Acceptance or Rejection _____	784
Spending on the Orphan is not Sufficient. Their respect is also necessary _____	785
A Few Strange Incidents _____	790

SŪRAH AL-BALAD

(The City)

1. Verses 1 - 20: Translation and Commentary _____	792
Absolute Comfort, without Hardship, Is not Possible in the World: Man Must be Prepared to Endure Hardships _____	795
Obligations of a Believer _____	798

SŪRAH ASH-SHAMS

(The Sun)

1. Verses 1 - 15: Translation and Commentary _____	799
The second oath is taken by: _____	800

S.No	Subject	Page
	The fourth oath is taken thus: _____	801
	The fifth oath is: _____	801
	The sixth oath is: _____	801

SŪRAH AL-LAIL (The Night)

1.	Verses 1 - 21: Translation and Commentary _____	804
	The Two Diverse Types of Human Efforts Divide Humankind into Two Groups _____	805
	All of The Blessed Companions will be Saved from the Ordeal of Hell _____	808

SŪRAH AD-DUHA (The Forenoon)

1.	Verses 1 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	811
----	---	-----

SŪRAH AL-INSHIRAH (Peace of heart)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	818
	Note Carefully _____	821
	The Command for Teachers and Preachers to Remember Allah During Spare Hours _____	822

SŪRAH AT-TIN (The Fig)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	824
	Man is the Most Beautiful of Allah's Creation _____	825
	A Wonderful Story of Human Beauty _____	825
	Ruling _____	829

SŪRAH AL-'ALAQ (The Clot)

1.	Verses 1 - 19: Translation and Commentary _____	830
----	---	-----

Beginning of The Qur'anic Revelation _____	831
The Holy Prophet's ﷺ First Experience of Revelation _____	831
Pen and Writing: The First and Most Important Means of Transmitting Knowledge _____	835
Three Types of Pen _____	836
Who was First Trained in the Writing Skill and Art ? _____	836
Writing Skill and Art: A Great Divine Gift _____	836
Writing Skill and Art: Attitude of Scholars in All Ages _____	837
Writing Skill and Art: The Reason Why the Holy Prophet ﷺ was not Taught _____	837
Many other Means of Teaching _____	838
Acceptability of Supplication in the Posture of Prostration _____	842
Ruling _____	842

SŪRAH AL-QADR

(The Qadr)

1. Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	843
Meaning of The Night of Qadr _____	844
Date of the Nigh of Qadr _____	845
The Value and Importance of the Night and a Special Du'ā for the Night _____	846
Revelation of the Holy Qur'an _____	846
All Heavenly Books were revealed in Ramaḍān _____	847
Descent of the Angels and the Spirit with Divine Decrees _____	847
Special Note _____	848
Ruling _____	848

SŪRAH AL-BAYYINAH

(The Clear Proof)

1. Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	849
Situation of the People of the Book and of Pagan Arabs before the advent of the Final Messenger of Allah _____	850

SŪRAH AZ-ZILZAL

(The Quake)

1. Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	855
---	-----

S.No	Subject	Page
	The Merits of Sūrah Az-Zilzāl _____	855
	The Scene of the Day of Resurrection _____	856

SŪRAH 'AL-ADIYAT (The Running Horses)

1.	Verses 1 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	858
	Lexicographical Analysis _____	859
	Special Note _____	862

SŪRAH AL-QARI'AH (The Striking Event)

1.	Verses 1 - 11: Translation and Commentary _____	863
	Human Deeds, Good or Bad, will be Weighed _____	863

SŪRAH AT-TAKATHUR (Competition in Amassing)

1.	Verses 1 - 8: Translation and Commentary _____	865
	Special Merit of Sūrah At-Takathur _____	865
	Warning against materialistic attitude _____	866

SŪRAH AL-'ASR (The Time)

1.	Verses 1 - 3: Translation and Commentary _____	869
	Virtue of [Studying] Sūrah al-'Aşr _____	869
	Relationship between 'Time' and 'Human Loss' _____	870
	Need to salvage the entire Muslim society _____	872

SŪRAH AL-HUMAZAH (The backbiter)

1.	Verses 1 - 9: Translation and Commentary _____	874
	Warning against dreadful end of those committing three obnoxious sins _____	874

SŪRAH AL-FIL (The Elephant)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	877
	The subject-matter of the Sūrah _____	877
	When did the event take place? _____	877
	Story of the People of the Elephants _____	878
	Lexical Analysis _____	883
	Conclusion _____	884

SŪRAH AL-QURAIISH (The Quraish)

1.	Verses 1 - 4: Translation and Commentary _____	885
	The Subject-matter of Sūrah al-Fil and Sūrah al-Quraish _____	885
	Lexical Analysis _____	885
	Superiority of Quraish _____	886
	Special Note _____	888
	A Great Benefit _____	888

SŪRAH AL-MA'UN (The Small Gifts)

1.	Verses 1 - 7: Translation and Commentary _____	889
	The love of the world causes nations to lose faith and consign Allah to oblivion _____	889

SŪRAH AL-KAUTHAR (The Kauthar)

1.	Verses 1 - 3: Translation and Commentary _____	892
	The River or Fountain of Kauthar _____	893
	Prayer and Sacrifice _____	895
	The Enemy of the Prophet is Cut Off _____	896

SŪRAH AL-KAFIRUN (The Disbelievers)

1.	Verses 1 - 6: Translation and Commentary _____	898
----	--	-----

S.No	Subject	Page
	Virtues and Characteristics of the Sūrah _____	898
	Cause of Revelation _____	899
	Peace Treaty with Unbelievers is Permissible in Some Cases but not in Others _____	902

SŪRAH AN-NAṢR

(The Help)

1.	Verses 1 - 3: Translation and Commentary _____	904
	Name of the Sūrah and place of its revelation _____	904
	The Last Sūrah and the Last Verses of the Noble Qur'an ____	904
	When the approach of death is sensed, one needs to exert oneself immensely in Tasbiḥ and Istighfar _____	907

SŪRAH AL-LAHAB

(The Flame)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	908
	Name and Nickname of Abū Lahab _____	908
	Cause of Revelation _____	909
	The Fate of 'Umm Jamil, the Wife of Abu Lahab _____	911
	Tale-Bearing: A Gravely Major Sin _____	911

SŪRAH AL-IKHLĀṢ

(The Sincerity)

1.	Verses 1 - 4: Translation and Commentary _____	914
	Virtues of the Sūrah _____	915
	Oneness of Allah _____	915
	Allah is Above having Children and Procreating _____	916
	Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ: A Comprehensive Concept of Allah's Oneness and a complete Negation of Shirk _____	916

SŪRAH AL-FALAQ

(Break of Dawn)

1.	Verses 1 - 5: Translation and Commentary _____	918
	Preliminary Remarks _____	918
	Cause of Revelation _____	918

S.No	Subject	Page
	Magic and its effect on the Holy Prophet ﷺ _____	920
	Mu'awwadhatain are Sūrahs that afford protection against physical and spiritual afflictions _____	921
	Virtues of Mu'awwadhatain _____	921
	Lexicological Analysis of important words and interpretation of the Sūrah _____	922
	The word <i>Sharr</i> : 'Allamah Ibn Qayyim's Exposition _____	922
	Ḥasad [Jealousy] and <i>Ghibtah</i> [Envy] _____	924
	Summary and Conclusion _____	924

SŪRAH AN-NAS (The Mankind)

1.	Verses 1 - 6: Translation and Commentary _____	926
	Introductory Remarks _____	926
	The Importance of Seeking Protection against Satanic Whisperings _____	929
	Special Note _____	930
	A Clarification _____	930
	A subtle difference between the two Sūrahs of Mu'awwadhatain _____	931
	Human and Satanic Enemies: their differential treatments _____	931
	The Guile of Satan is Feeble _____	934
	Relationship between the Prologue and the Epilogue of the Qur'ān _____	934
	Conclusion _____	935
	Index _____	936





Preface

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله الكريم، وعلى آله وصحبه
أجمعين وعلى كل من تبعهم بإحسان إلى يوم الدين

By the grace of Allah Ta'ālā this last volume of Ma'āriful Qur'an is now in your hands. When presenting it to the readers, I am unable to find suitable words to express my gratitude to Allah Ta'ālā who has enabled us to accomplish this project. It was a long journey that I commenced more than thirty years ago with numerous obstacles in my way. Alhamdulillah, it is reaching its final destination today. Ma'āriful Qur'an, with all its eight volumes, is perhaps the first complete and comprehensive commentary on the Holy Qur'an that appeared in English, and I hope it will help the English speaking people to fully understand the message of the last Divine Book in its true perspective.

I am extremely grateful to Maulānā Aḥmed Khalīl Azīz who translated this volume in such a speedy manner that the work did not stop for a moment. May Allah grant him the best of health and bless him with the best of rewards both here and in the hereafter.

Acknowledgements are due to Mr. Ibrāhīm Nafīs who composed the whole work, to Mr. Rafat Saghīr Farooqui and Maulānā 'Abdullāh Memon who were responsible for proofreading, and to Mr. Yūsuf Ghani who not only rechecked the final proof but also prepared the basic material for the Index.

I am also thankful to Mr. Khalīl Ashraf 'Usmānī, Mr. Ishāq Noor and Mr. Yousuf Noor whose financial contributions facilitated the process of translation and publication of this volume. May Allah bless all of them with His pleasure and His rewards in the hereafter.

Lastly, I would request the readers to remember the esteemed author of the book, all the translators and this humble servant in their prayers. May Allah make this book beneficial to all those who wish to understand the message of their Creator and to order their lives in accordance with its guidance. A'min.

Muḥammad Taqī Usmānī

11 Rajab 1425 - 28th August 2004

Transliteration Scheme

Arabic Letter	Name of Letter	English Transliteration
ا	الف -- Alif	a
ب	باء -- bā	b
ت	تاء -- tā	t
ث	ثاء -- tha	th
ج	جيم -- jīm	j
ح	حاء -- ḥā	ḥ
خ	خاء -- khā	kh
د	دال -- dāl	d
ذ	ذال -- dhal	dh
ر	راء -- rā	r
ز	زاي -- zā	z
س	سين -- sīn	s
ش	شين -- shīn	sh
ص	صاد -- ṣād	ṣ
ض	ضاد -- dād	ḍ
ط	طاء -- ṭā	ṭ
ظ	ظاء -- ḏā	ḏ
ع	عين -- 'ayn	'
غ	غين -- ghayn	gh
ف	فاء -- fā	f
ق	قاف -- qāf	q
ك	كاف -- kāf	k
ل	لام -- lām	l
م	ميم -- mīm	m
ن	نون -- nūn	n
ه	حاء -- hā	h
و	واو -- wāw	w
ء	همزة -- hamzah	'
ي	ياء -- yā	y

Short Vowels

: Faṭḥah	a
: Kasrah	i
: Dammah	u

Long Vowels

ا	: Shortened Alif	ā
آ	: Maddah Alif	ā
ي	: Maddah Yā	ī
و	: Maddah Wāw	ū

Diphthongs

اي	: Alif and Yā	ay (also ai in some cases)
او-اؤ	: Alif and Wāw	aw (also au in some cases)

Sūrah Muḥammad

Sūrah Muḥammad was revealed in Madīnah It has 38 Verses and 4 Sections.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 3

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿١﴾ وَالَّذِينَ
 آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
 وَأَصْلَحَ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِيَ الرِّجَالَ سُبُلَ الْأَعْيُنِ
 وَمَنْ يَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّهِمْ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ مِنْ عِنْدِ
 كُلِّ نَبِيٍّ مِنَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَرَبُّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٢﴾
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
 كَذَلِكَ يَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ أَمْثَالَهُمْ ﴿٣﴾

Those who disbelieved, and prevented (others) from Allah's way, He (Allah) has rendered their deeds vain. [1] And those who believed and did righteous deeds and believed in that which is revealed to Muḥammad-and it is the truth (that has come) from their Lord-, He will write off their evil deeds, and will set aright their state of affairs. [2] That is because the disbelievers have followed falsehood, while the believers have followed the truth (that has come) from their Lord. This is how Allah explains their (respective) situations to the people. [3]

Commentary

Another name of Sūrah Muḥammad is Sūrah Al-Qitāl [Sūrah of war] because this Sūrah lays down the rules of Jihād and Qitāl [i.e. armed struggle in the cause of Allah]. This Sūrah was revealed immediately

after migration to Madīnah. Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه is reported to have said regarding Verse 13 كَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ "And how many a city ... have We destroyed!,..." that it was revealed in Makkah, because it was revealed at a time when the Holy Prophet ﷺ left Makkah with the intention of migration, and looked at the sacred city of Makkah and the Holy Ka'bah and said: "You are the dearest of all cities to me in the world. Had it not been for Makkans driving me out from this place, I would never have given up this Holy City." According to the technical parlance of the Qur'ānic commentators, verses revealed in the course of migration from Makkah to Madīnah are regarded as Makkī. In sum, the Sūrah was revealed immediately after migration to Madīnah, reaching there, ordinances relating to *jihād* and war with infidels were revealed.

In the phrase صَلُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ "prevented (others) from Allah's way" (47:1), "Allah's way" refers to Islam. The phrase أَضَلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ "He (Allah) has rendered their deeds vain" (47:1) includes actions which are good in themselves, as for instance, helping and assisting the destitute, supporting and protecting the neighbours, generosity, charity and other good deeds. These deeds are, though, good and righteous in themselves, in the Hereafter they will yield benefit only if blessed with faith, because faith is a necessary condition for the credibility of good actions. Thus these righteous deeds will be of no use to the infidels in the Hereafter. The disbelievers take their comfort in this worldly life as a reward of their good deeds. In the Hereafter they will be punished with Hell-fire.

وَأَمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيَّ مُحَمَّدٍ

...and believed in that which is revealed to Muḥammad ...(47:2)

Although the previous sentence has referred to faith and righteous deeds which includes faith in the messengership of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ and the revelation that was sent down to him, this sentence specifies explicitly the fact that the actual basis of faith is to embrace all the teachings of the Last Holy Prophet ﷺ.

The word "بال" (*bāl*) in "وَأَضْلَحَ بِأَلْهَمِ...and will set aright their state of affairs..(47:2)" is sometimes used in the sense of state of affairs and condition, and at other times in the sense of heart. Here it could refer to both the senses. In the first sense, it means that Allah has set all their affairs aright, that is, He has set aright all their matters of this world and

of the Hereafter. In the second sense, it would mean that Allah has improved their hearts. This also has the same implication, that is, corrected all their works, because correction of works is a logical result of improvement of heart, both being necessary to each other.

Verse 4...

فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبَ الرِّقَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَثْخَتْتُمُوهُمْ فَسُدُّوا
الْوُثَاقَ ۖ فَمَا مَنَّا بَعْدُ وَإِنَّا فِدَاءٌ ۚ حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا ۗ

So, when you encounter those who disbelieve, then (aim at) smiting the necks, until when you have broken their strength thoroughly, then tie fast the bond, (by making them captives). Then choose (to set them free) either (as) a favour, or (after receiving) ransom, until the war throws down its load of arms...

Commentary

This verse lays down two points of law: first, it lays down that when war breaks the might and power of the enemy, and does away with their pomp and glory, they should be arrested rather than being killed. The Muslims are then given two options regarding the prisoners of war - either confer favour on them and release them without ransom or compensation; or release them against payment of ransom. There are several ways in which ransom may be taken, for instance by exchanging Muslim prisoners of war for non-Muslim prisoners of war. It is also possible to set them free after accepting pecuniary ransom. This injunction is apparently in conflict with the rule mentioned in Sūrah Al-Anfāl. The prisoners of the battle of Badr were released against the payment of ransom, but Allah disapproved and expressed His displeasure against those who opined in favour of releasing them on ransom. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have said: "A grave punishment of Allah for this action of ours was very close, and if it had been meted out, no one besides 'Umar Ibn Khaṭṭāb and Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh would have been spared, because only these two companions had disagreed with the idea of accepting pecuniary compensation for the release of the Prisoners of War (POW). (For details, see Ma'āriful Qur'ān, vol 4, pp 272-281). In short, the verses of Sūrah Al-Anfāl prohibits release of prisoners against ransom,

consequently their release without ransom would be prohibited all the more.

On the other hand, this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad permits both the alternatives. Therefore, most of the Companions and jurists express the view that this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad has abrogated the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl. Tafsīr Mazharī records this to be the opinion of Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar, Ḥasan, ‘Aṭā’ رضی اللہ عنہم اجمعین and majority of the Companions and majority of the jurists. Among the jurists, Thawrī, Shāfi‘ī, Aḥmad and Ishāq also hold this view.

Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās ؓ says that on the occasion of the battle of Badr, the number of Muslims was small. Therefore, releasing the prisoners against ransom or releasing them as a gesture of grace were both prohibited. Finally, when Islam and Muslims went on to achieve total ascendancy, Allah Ta‘ālā abrogated the earlier injunction, and revealed this verse which permits both options. Qāḍī Thanā’ullah cites this in his Tafsīr Mazharī confirming that this is the authentic and preferred view, because the Holy Prophet ﷺ himself acted upon it, and after him the Righteous Caliphs also did the same. Therefore, this verse repeals the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl - the reason being that the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl was revealed on the occasion of the battle of Badr which took place in the 2nd year of Hijrah. The prisoners that were released by the Holy Prophet ﷺ in the battle of Ḥudaibiyah without ransom in the 6th year of Hijrah was in accordance with this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad.

It is recorded in Ṣaḥīḥ of Muslim on the authority of Sayyidnā Anas ؓ that about eighty Makkans climbed down the mount Tan‘īm with the intention of launching a sudden attack on the Messenger of Allah and the Muslim camp. They were all captured, but the Messenger of Allah set them free without any compensation, lest it became the cause of war on that critical occasion. At this, the following verse of Sūrah Al-Faṭḥ [48:24] was revealed:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي كَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ وَارْتَمَتْهُم مِّنْ مَّكَّةَ بَعْدَ أَنْ أَظْفَرَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ

"It is He who held their hands back from you, and your hands from them in the valley of Makkah, after giving you victory² over them."

According to one version, a popular view of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah is that setting the prisoners of war free with or without ransom is not lawful. Therefore, the Ḥanafī scholars regard this verse of Sūrah Muḥammad as abrogated by the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl. But Tafsīr Mazharī made it clear that the verse of Sūrah Al-Anfāl was revealed first, and the verse of Sūrah Muḥammad later - thus the later verse repealing the earlier verse. Therefore, the preferred view of Imām A'zam - in keeping with the opinion of the great majority of the Companions ﷺ and leading jurists - it is lawful, if it is in the best interest and well-being of the Muslims. From amongst the Ḥanafī scholars, 'Allāmah Ibn Humām shows his inclination towards this view in his Fath-ul-Qadīr. He writes that according to the version cited in Qudūrī and Hidāyah, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah does not see it permissible to set prisoners of war free against payment of ransom. But according to another version of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, cited in As-Siyar-ul-Kabīr, it is permitted in conformity with the majority view. Among these two versions, the latter is more likely to be his preferred view. Imām Ṭaḥāwī in his Ma'ānī-l-'Athār has also regarded the latter version as that of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah.

In sum, according to the majority of Companions ﷺ and jurists, neither of the verses under discussion is abrogated. The wordings of the verses of Sūrah Al-Anfāl and Sūrah Muḥammad leave us with the impression that none of these two can be called the abrogator or the abrogated. In fact, they are two injunctions for different situations. The leader of the Muslims may adopt either of the options depending on the conditions and needs of the Muslims. Qurṭubī, on the basis of the Holy Prophet's ﷺ practice and that of the Righteous Caliphs ﷺ, has shown that the prisoners of war were sometimes killed, sometimes enslaved, at other times they were set free against ransom, and yet at other times they were released without compensation. Exacting ransom includes exchange of non-Muslim POWs for Muslim POWs or setting non-Muslim POW free against pecuniary compensation. Having cited these cases, he says that verses that have been regarded as abrogator and abrogated are in fact *Muḥkam* or operative and perspicuous. Thus none of them is abrogated, because when the disbelievers are arrested and come into our control, the leader of the Muslims has four options: [1] if he deems appropriate, he may kill them ; [2] if he feels that it is in the best interest of the Muslims,

he may hold them in bondage; [3] if it is appropriate, he may release them in lieu of pecuniary ransom or in exchange of Muslim POWs ; and [4] if it seems proper, they may be released.

"This is the view of the scholars of Madīnah, Imām Shāfi'ī and Abū 'Ubayd. Imām Ṭaḥāwī cites this as the opinion of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah as well, although his generally known view is that which we have already mentioned. [Qurṭubī: V. 16, p. 228; sentence 16].

Four Options Regarding POW

The foregoing discussion makes clear that the leader of the Muslims has four options regarding prisoners of war. There is a consensus of the entire Ummah on the permissibility of killing them and holding them in bondage. Although there is some difference of opinion on the issue of setting them free against ransom or without ransom, majority of the jurists holds the latter options lawful as well.

The Issue of Slavery in Islam

A question arises here regarding prisoners of war. There are some juristic differences whether they could be set free, but there is no difference of opinion with regard to the permissibility of the latter two cases, i.e. killing them or holding them in bondage. Why did the Qur'ān not mention these two cases explicitly? It merely mentions the two cases where it is permissible to release them. Imām Fakhr-ud-dīn Rāzī responds to this in his Tafsīr Kabīr. He says that only those two options have been mentioned here which are not permissible to enslave Arab POW. Killing of the crippled is not lawful either. Besides, the question of killing has been dealt with elaborately earlier. [Tafsīr Kabīr: p. 508; v. 7].

Another point needs consideration: the permissibility of killing and enslaving was a common knowledge; all knew that the two cases are lawful. As opposed to this, the setting free of POW was prohibited on the occasion of the battle of Badr. On the present occasion, however, the intention was to permit them to be released with or without compensation. Here, there was no need to mention cases that were already known to be permissible. Therefore, these verses are silent about them. Thus, it is not correct to conclude from these verses that after their revelation, the permission to kill or enslave them has been abrogated. If the injunction to enslave had been abrogated, its prohibition would have been mentioned

somewhere in the Qur'ān or in a Ḥadīth. If this verse was an indication of its prohibition, then why were POW held in bondage by the Holy Prophet ﷺ, and after him by the Companions ﷺ so ardently dedicated to Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, in a large number of battles after the revelation of the present verses? The narratives of enslaving are recorded in such large numbers in Ḥadīth and history with chains of transmission effectively uninterrupted that denying them would be unreasonable obstinacy.

An objection and its rebuttal

Let us now address the objection that Islam is the great upholder of human rights. Then how is it that it allows the enslaving of human beings?

This objection is a fallacy based on the false analogy drawn between Islamic concept of slavery and its practice in other religions and communities; whereas in Islam after the rights given to the slaves and the social status granted to them, they can hardly be called slaves in the generally accepted sense of the word. They in fact constitute a brotherhood. If the reality and spirit of Islamic concept of slavery is analyzed, we will realize that no better treatment can be meted out to POW than these instances found in Islamic history. A famous orientalist in his book Arab Civilization writes:

"When the word 'slave' is uttered in the presence of a European who is used to reading American writings, he conceives in his mind those helpless people who are shackled with chains, around whose necks are iron collars, who are lashed with whips and driven forth, whose food is barely enough to subsist, and for whom nothing more than dark dungeons are available to live in. I am not concerned here with how far this is true and to what extent atrocities committed by the British in America for the past several years fit the description . . . However, there is absolutely no doubt about the fact that Islam's concept of slavery is completely different from the Christian concept of slavery."

The truth of the matter is that in many instances there is no better solution than enslaving the POW, because if they are not enslaved, then logically there are three ways of sorting out the problem: either kill them, or set them free, or keep them as prisoners permanently. More often than not, all these three possibilities might not be in the best interest of the

Muslim Ummah. Killing them might not be appropriate because the POW might be a talented person and his talent would be wasted and lost. Setting him free might be risking the danger of his going away to Dar-ul-ḥarb and once again conspiring against the Muslims. Now there remains two options only: Either to keep him as a prisoner for good and confine him to some remote and separate island as has been the practice nowadays, or enslave him, make use of his talent and take full care of his human rights. It is obvious to every one which of these options is the best, especially since the Islamic viewpoint regarding slaves has been made plain in a famous Ḥadīth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ as follows:

أخوانكم جعلهم الله تحت أيديكم فمن كان أخوه تحت يديه فليطعمه مما يأكل
وليبسه مما يلبس ولا يكلفه ما يغلبه فان كلفه ما يغلبه فليعنه (بخارى، مسلم،
ابوداود وغيرهم)

"Your slaves are your brothers, and Allah has put them under your control. So whoever has a brother under his command should feed him of what he eats, and dress him of what he wears. Do not overburden them [slaves] to do things beyond their capacity, and if you do so, then help them." [Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dawūd and others]

The social and civil rights that Islam has accorded to the slaves are almost equal to free individuals. Thus, as opposed to other nations, Islam has not only permitted the slaves to marry but also emphasized that the masters should marry off those of their slaves and slavegirls who are righteous [24:32] so much so that he can even marry a free woman. A slave's share from the spoils of war is equal to that of a free *mujāhid*. If he gives refuge to an enemy, it would be respected in the same way as given by a free individual. There are so many injunctions in Qur'ān and Ḥadīth regarding good treatment of slaves that if they are collected together, they can be compiled into a voluminous book. Sayyidnā 'Alī رضي الله عنه says that the last words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ before his departure from this earthly life were:

الصَّلَاةُ الصَّلَاةُ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِيمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

"Take care of prayer; take care of prayer. Keep your duty to Allah regarding slaves under your command".

Islam organized education and training programme for slaves: its

effect was seen during the reign of ‘Abd-ūl-Mālik Ibn Marwān in almost all the provinces of Islamic State. Some of the best and greatest authorities on education and intellectual development were slaves whose chronicles are narrated in several history books. Furthermore, this nominal slavery was gradually abolished or reduced. There is a huge number of Qur’ānic verses and Holy Prophetic Traditions which set out the virtues and merits of setting the slaves free. There is no act better than emancipation of slaves. In juristic injunctions, pretexts have been looked for to emancipate slaves: expiation for violating fast, for murder, for *zihār*, for violating oaths and vows - in all these cases the first compulsory command is to emancipate a slave. A Ḥadīth tells us that if a person has slapped a slave, its expiation is to set him free. Thus, the Companions used to emancipate slaves in large numbers. The author of al-Najm-ul-Wahhāj gives us the following table of the slaves set free by the Companions:

1. Sayyidah ‘Ā’ishah رضى الله عنها69
2. Sayyidnā ‘Abbās ﷺ70
3. Sayyidnā Ḥakīm Ibn Ḥizām ﷺ100
4. Sayyidnā ‘Abdullāh Ibn ‘Umar ﷺ1000
5. Sayyidnā ‘Uthmān Ghani ﷺ20
6. Sayyidnā Dhul-Kilā’ Al-Himyari ﷺ 8000 [in a day]
7. Sayyidnā ‘Abdurrahmān Ibn ‘Auf ﷺ30 000 ¹¹

This table shows that only seven Companions ﷺ set free 39, 259 slaves. Obviously, thousands of other Companions ﷺ must have emancipated countless slaves.

To sum up: anyone who looks impartially at the comprehensive reforms Islam introduced in the system of slavery, he cannot escape the conclusion that drawing analogy between Islamic concept of slavery and its practice among other nations is absolutely false. In fact, permission to enslave POW after these reforms is a great boon to them.

Furthermore, holding POW in bondage is only up to the point of permissibility which means that if an Islamic State deems it appropriate, it may hold them in bondage, but it has not been taken as an obligatory or as a commendable act. As a matter of fact, the collective teachings of

Qur'an and Ḥadīth lead us to believe that emancipating them is more meritorious. Then this permission, too, extends up to the time the Muslims have not entered into a compact with the enemies. If there is an agreement with the enemies which includes a clause to the effect that neither the enemies will enslave Muslim POW nor will the Muslims enslave the enemy POW, the clause will be binding. In our times, many countries have entered into such covenants. If Muslim countries have participated in such covenants, it would not be lawful for them to enslave as long as this agreement stands.

Verses ...4 - 11

ذٰلِكَ ۙ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللّٰهُ لَانتَصَرْتُمْ ۗ وَلٰكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ ۙ
وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٤﴾ سَيَهْدِيهِمْ
وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ ﴿٥﴾ وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ ﴿٦﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ
آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللّٰهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ ﴿٧﴾ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
فَتَعَسَىٰ لَهُمُ الْاَضَلُّ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٨﴾ ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّهُمْ كَرِهُوا مَا اَنْزَلَ اللّٰهُ
فَاَحْبَطَ اَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٩﴾ اَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْاَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ
عَاقِبَةُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ۗ دَمَّرَ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ اَمْثَالُهَا ﴿١٠﴾
ذٰلِكَ بِاَنَّ اللّٰهَ مَوْلَىٰ الَّذِينَ اٰمَنُوا وَاَنَّ الْكٰفِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿١١﴾

That (is the law). And if Allah willed, He would have (Himself) taken vengeance upon them, but (Allah ordered you to fight,) so that He may test some of you through some others. And those who are killed in Allah's way, He will never let their deeds go in vain. [4] (Instead,) He will guide them, and will set aright their state of affairs, [5] and will admit them to the Paradise He has identified for them. [6] O those who believe, if you will help (the religion prescribed by) Allah, He will help you, and will stabilize your footings. [7] As for those who disbelieve, (destined) for them is destruction, and He has rendered their deeds vain. [8] That is because they hate what Allah has sent down; therefore Allah has nullified their deeds. [9] Have they not travelled in the land so that they might

see how was the end of those before them? Allah brought utter destruction on them. And (ready) for (these) disbelievers are the likes thereof. [10] That is because Allah is the supporter of those who believe. As for the disbelievers, there is no supporter for them. [11]

Commentary

Wisdom in the Legality of Jihād

وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْتَصَرْنَا لَهُمْ (And if Allah willed, He would have [Himself] taken vengeance upon them,...- 47:4) In this verse Allah says that legalizing of armed struggle in His cause against the infidels is a blessing as it replaces celestial punishments. The previous nations were punished with celestial and earthly calamities for their infidelity to Allah, for idolatry and for rebellion against Allah. The Ummah of Muḥammad ﷺ could have suffered the same fate but the Holy Prophet ﷺ is a mercy unto mankind. as a result, the Ummah has been spared destruction by such general calamities. In place of them, *jihād shar'i* has been instituted. This, compared to general calamities, has many facilities and expedience. First of all, in general calamities the entire nation including men, women and children are decimated whereas in the case of Jihād according to the rules of war, women and children are safe and secure. As far as men are concerned, only those of the unbelieving men will have to face the believers who commit aggression and violence against those who protect the religion of Allah. Even among them not all men are killed, because many of them develop the ability to embrace Islamic faith, (or submit themselves as subjects of an Islamic state). Another wisdom in the institution of *Jihād* is that both the sides of war - Muslims and the enemies - are tested: which side is willing to sacrifice his life and wealth at the command of Allah and which side obstinately and stubbornly continues to reject the Truth or, having seen the crystal-clear evidence of Truth and being convinced by the Qur'ānic arguments, embraces Islam.

وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ (And those who are killed in Allah's way, He will never let their deeds go in vain. - 47:4) At the beginning of the Sūrah it was asserted that those who persist in infidelity and idolatry and obstruct others from practising Islam, Allah rendered all their good deeds void, such as charity, alms, donations, and philanthropic and public welfare activities, because these deeds are not worthy of reward in the Hereafter without faith. Faith is a necessary condition for good works to

be rewarded in the next world. As opposed to the case of the infidels, this verse asserts that those who sacrificed their lives to acquire the glorious privilege of a martyr in the cause of Allah - Allah will never imprint their works with irreverence, profanity or damnation. Even if they did commit sins, their sins will not have a negative impact on their good actions. In fact, often these good deeds of theirs will serve as an expiation for their sins.

سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُصْلِحُ بَالَهُمْ (He will guide them, and will set aright their state of affairs - 47:5). This sentence refers to two of Allah's bounties: First, He will steer them by His guidance; and secondly, He will improve their conditions. The word "state of affairs" includes the conditions of both the worlds - those of this world and those of the Hereafter. Even if a Muslim did not acquire the glorious privilege of a martyr in this world, he too will receive the reward of a martyr; and in the Hereafter he will be spared the torment of the grave and the anxiety of resurrection. If he violated the rights of some human beings, Allah will take upon Himself the responsibility of vindicating him and clearing him of all blame. Steering them by His guidance through the Holy Prophet ﷺ means causing them to reach their desired destination which is the Paradise. The Qur'ān says that the inmates of Paradise, having entered the gardens of Paradise, will show their gratitude to Allah by saying:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا

"All praise to Allah who has led us unto this. [7:43].

وَيُدْخِلُهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَفَهَا لَهُمْ (and will admit them to the Paradise He has identified for them. - 47:6). This is the third bounty of Allah. He will not only admit them into Paradise but will identify for them the gardens of bliss and will make them familiar with such bounties as houris and mansions in a way that it would seem to them that they have been living there since eternity. If such an acquaintance was not made, Paradise would have seemed a strange world. It would have taken them time to find their abode, to accustom themselves with the new environment, and they would not overcome the sense of unfamiliarity for a period of time.

Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "By Him who sent me with the religion of Truth! As you are closely familiar with your wives and homes in this world, so you will know your abode

and your wives of Paradise - rather even better. Some reports of Ḥadīth tell us that an angel will be appointed for every single inmate of Paradise who will introduce them to their abode and wives in Paradise. Allah knows best.

وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ أَمَثَالُهَا (And [ready] for [these] disbelievers are the likes thereof. - 47:10). Grammatically, the article "*alif lām*" in *al-kafirīna*" in this context is used to indicate some specific disbelievers, and refers to the infidels of Makkah. The purpose of this sentence is to warn them: as the previous generations were punished for their iniquity, so will you meet similar fate for your iniquitous behavior. Do not be unconcerned!

وَأَنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ لَا مَوْلَى لَهُمْ (As for the disbelievers, there is no supporter for them. - 47:11). The word مولى "*mawlā*" is used in several different senses. One of its meanings is "protector" or "supporter". This is the sense in which it is used here. Another sense of the word is "owner/master". In Qur'an [10:30] we come across: رُدُّوْا اِلَى اللّٰهِ مَوْلٰهُمُ الْحَقَّ "They will be returned to Allah, their Master, the Truth" (10:30). In this phrase, Allah is called the "*mawlā*" of the infidels, that is, their Master / Owner because the mastership / ownership of Allah extends over all - the believers as well as the non-believers; without any exclusion.

Verses 12 - 15

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُدْخِلُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ
تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَتَمَتَّعُونَ وَيَأْكُلُونَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ الْأَنْعَامُ
وَالنَّارُ مَثْوًى لَّهُمْ ﴿١٢﴾ وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ قَرْيَةٍ هِيَ أَشَدُّ قُوَّةً مِنْ قَرْيَتِكَ
الَّتِي أَخْرَجْتِكَ ۖ أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ فَلَا نَاصِرَ لَهُمْ ﴿١٣﴾ أَفَمَنْ كَانَ عَلَىٰ بَيْنَةٍ
مِّن رَّبِّهِ كَمَنْ زَيْنَ لَهُ سُوءَ عَمَلِهِ وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٤﴾ مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ
الَّتِي وُعِدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ ۖ فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِّن مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّن لَّبَنٍ لَّمْ
يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ خَمْرٍ لَّذَّةٍ لِلشَّرِيبِينَ ۖ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِّنْ عَسَلٍ مُّصَفًّى
ۖ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ ۖ كَمَنْ هُوَ خَالِدٌ فِي

النَّارِ وَسُقُوا مَاءً حَمِيمًا فَقَطَّعَ أَمْعَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٥﴾

Surely, Allah will admit those who believe and do good deeds to the gardens beneath which rivers flow. And those who disbelieve enjoy (the worldly life), and eat as cattle eat, and the Fire is the final abode for them. [12] And how many a town, stronger in might than your town that has expelled you, have We destroyed! Then, there was none to help them. [13] Then, can one who holds on to a clear proof from his Lord be like those for whom their evil deeds are beautified, and who followed their desires? [14] (Here is) a description of the Paradise that is promised for the God-fearing! In it there are rivers of water, never spoiling, and rivers of milk the taste of which would not go bad, and rivers of wine, delicious to the drinkers, and rivers of honey, fully purified. And for them there are all sorts of fruits, and forgiveness from their Lord. Are they like those who will live in Fire forever, and will be given boiling water to drink, and it will tear their bowels into pieces. [15]

Commentary

Essential Characteristics of Paradise

Verse sixteen mentions four kinds of favours and blessings in the next world, that is, rivers of pure water, rivers of milk of which the taste does not change, rivers of wine which gives delight and rivers of purified honey which will be given to the righteous in plenty.

Worldly waters become polluted by getting mixed with earth, vegetation and other adulterating substances which make them stink. But in Paradise, there will be rivers having un-pollutable water. The river of pure, clean water that will not go bad in taste, smell or colour, (and will flow uninterruptedly without layers of dregs, scum or any other unpleasant-looking substances).

Milk, in this world, is secreted by the mammary glands of female mammals, such as the cow's udders or the breasts of the human female, and soon it starts to deteriorate. In Paradise it will flow in rivers and the Heavenly milk will never be spoilt. Its taste will be eternally delicious, relishing and delightful.

Worldly wine has a foul smell and a bitter taste, (though the ones

addict to it do not feel its bitterness, being accustomed to it). But the Heavenly wine will give endless delight to the drinker. In Sūrah As-Ṣaffāt [37:47] the Qurʾān describes the Heavenly wine as لَا فِيهَا غَوْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ عَنْهَا يُنْزَفُونَ : "which has no headache in it, nor from it will they be intoxicated."

Honey, in this world, is the secretion derived principally from the nectaries of flowers, from which it is extracted by bees in the form of nectar and deposited in their honey-sacs, where it undergoes a certain change prior to storage in the cells of the comb. When it is ripe, that is, it has become sufficiently thick by evaporation, it may now be extracted or thrown from the honey-comb by centrifugal force or by gravity. When it is so extracted, it needs to be clarified of the accompanying particles of wax, scum and other unwanted substances. However, the honey in Paradise will be pure and clean and will be available amply, as rivers of honey will flow uninterruptedly without layers of dregs, scum or any other unpleasant-looking substances.

All four kinds of rivers - of water, milk, wine and honey - are used in their primary senses. There is no need to apply them unnecessarily in their figurative sense. However, it is obvious that the bounties of Paradise cannot be compared to things of this world. The taste and quality of the bounties of Paradise will be unique and can only be experienced in the gardens of Paradise.

Verses 16 - 18

وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ يَسْتَمِعُ إِلَيْكَ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا خَرَجُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ
 أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ مَاذَا قَالَ آنِفًا ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ
 وَاتَّبَعُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ﴿١٦﴾ وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًىٰ وَآتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ
 ﴿١٧﴾ فَهَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَهُمْ بَغْتَةً ۖ فَقَدْ جَاءَ أَشْرَاطُهَا ۗ
 فَأَنَّىٰ لَهُمْ إِذَا جَاءَهُمْ ذِكْرُهُمْ ﴿١٨﴾

And among them there are ones who (pretend to) give ear to you, until when they go out from your presence, they say to those who have been given knowledge, "What

did he say just now?" Those are the ones on whose hearts Allah has put a seal, and they have followed their desires. [16] As for those who have adopted right path, Allah improves them in guidance, and gives them their piety. [17] They are waiting for nothing but the Hour that it should come upon them suddenly. So, its signs have already come. Then, once it will come upon them, how would they have an opportunity to accept the advice (already) given to them? [18]

Commentary

The lexical item اشراط "ashrāt" occurring in this passage means "signs". The portents of the last Hour starts with the very advent of Khatam-un-Nabiyyīn [the Last of the Holy Prophets] as the end of the Holy Prophethood is the sign of the approach of the last Hour. The miracle of the splitting of the moon by the Holy Prophet ﷺ has been described thus in the Holy Qur'ān [54:1]: اقترَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ "The hour has drawn near and the moon has split." - indicating that this miracle is also one of the signs of the last Hour. These are initial portents of the Hour which appeared at the time of the revelation of the Qur'ān. Besides, there are many other portents that have been predicted in authentic Aḥādīth, one of which is reported by Anas ؓ in which he says that I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "Among the signs of the last hour is the removal of knowledge, abundance of ignorance, the prevalence of fornication, the prevalence of wine-drinking, the small number of men and the large number of women so that fifty women will have one man to look after them". (Bukhari and Muslim) A version has "knowledge will dwindle and ignorance will be widespread."

Abū Hurayrah ؓ reports Allah's Messenger ﷺ as saying: "When the spoils of war are taken as personal wealth, property given in trust is treated as spoil, *zakāh* is treated as a fine, learning is acquired for other than religious purpose, a man obeys his wife and is undutiful towards his mother, brings his friend near and drives his father far off, voices are raised in the mosques, the most wicked member of a tribe becomes its ruler, the most worthless member of a people becomes its leader, a man is honored through fear of the evil he may do, singing-girls and stringed-instruments make their appearance, wines are drunk, and the last members of this community curse the earlier ones, look at that time for a violent wind, an earthquake, being swallowed up by the earth,

metamorphosis, pelting rain, and signs following one another like bits of a necklace falling one after the other when its string is cut. (Tirmidhi)

Verse 19

فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ط
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مُتَقَلَّبَكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ ﴿١٩﴾

So, know for sure that there is no god but Allah, and seek forgiveness for your fault, and for (the faults of) the believing men and believing women. And Allah knows your moving from place to place and your permanent abode. [19]

Commentary

In this verse the address is to the Holy Prophet ﷺ and he is, through an imperative verb, commanded to know that there is no object of worship besides Allah. It is quite obvious that every Muslim has the knowledge of this - let alone the leader of the Holy Prophets ﷺ who should have its knowledge more profoundly. Then why is he enjoined to acquire this knowledge? There can be two responses to this question: it can either mean that the Holy Prophet ﷺ is enjoined to be steadfast in his worship of Allah or it could mean that he must fulfill the demands of his knowledge. Qurtubī cites the incident of Sufyān Ibn ‘Uyaynah رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى who was asked about the significance of knowledge, he replied: Did you not read verse 19 of Sūrah Muḥammad: "فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ" "So, know for sure (O Holy Prophet ﷺ) that there is no god but Allah, and seek forgiveness for your fault. It is required in this verse that knowledge should be acquired before action. Similarly, on other occasions in the Qur’ān, first it is enjoined to acquire knowledge and then to fulfil its corresponding demands. For example, in [57:20] the Holy Qur’ān has said, "إِغْلُظُوا إِنَّمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ" "Know that the present life is but a sport and a diversion ..." Then it was said, "سَابِقُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ" "Race to forgiveness from your Lord (57:21)". In Sūrah Anfāl, (verse) the Qur’ān says: "وَاعْلَمُوا إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ

"Know that your wealth and children are a trial..." The demand of this knowledge is mentioned in Sūrah At-Taghābun (Verse 14): "فَاخْذُوا زُجُومَهُمْ" "...so be fearful of Him.". Thus on these occasions first the knowledge of

different things are imparted, and then it is enjoined to fulfil the demands of that knowledge.

In this context, although the Holy Prophet ﷺ had prior knowledge of the Oneness of Allah, the injunction here is for the Holy Prophet ﷺ to fulfil the demand of this fundamental knowledge, that is, "وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِدُنُوبِكَ" and ask forgiveness for your faults (47:19)". The Holy Prophet ﷺ is infallible and immune from sin, and therefore the possibility that he would commit sins is unthinkable. Despite this, the possibility of Allah's Holy Prophets ﷺ committing misjudgment in *Ijtihād* cannot be ruled out. But, according to the sacred law, such mistakes are not regarded as sins. In fact, they are rewarded, though the prophets عليهم السلام are told about the correct position, and keeping in view the high status of the prophets, such mistakes too are sometimes referred to as "*dhanb*" (fault or sin), as for instance in Sūrah 'Abasa [80] the Holy Prophets] was criticized for his misjudgment. The details will be set out when discussing that Sūrah. The error of judgement referred to in that Sūrah was not really a sin. In fact, a reward was promised to him for that, but because it was not in conformity with his high status, Allah Ta'ālā expressed His dislike. This type of "*dhanb*" (fault) is referred to in the current verse.

Note

Sayyidnā Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq ؓ reports that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said: Recite *لا اله الا الله لا ilā-ilāha-illallāh* and *استغفار istighfār* frequently because Iblīs (Satan) says, 'I got people involved in sins and destroyed them, but they destroyed me by reciting *illallāh*, so I got them involved in false and baseless thoughts and notions which they pursue as true, authentic and righteous, (for instance, the common religious innovations (*bid'āt*), because they treat them as righteous,) hence, they do not feel any need to repent for their practice of innovations.

مُتَقَلِّبِكُمْ وَمَثْوَاكُمْ, last line (your moving from place to place and your permanent abode.) The word مُتَقَلِّبٌ *mutaqallab* lexically means "turning around or turning over". The word *mathwā* means "permanent resting place". It is open to several interpretations. As a result, the commentators have assigned different meanings to the phrase. As a matter of fact, all the meanings attached to the phrase are correct, sound, authentic and true, because human beings are confronted by two types of conditions: in

the one case their involvement in something is temporary, and in the other case it is permanent. Likewise, in some places man's stay is temporary and in other places it is permanent. In the concluding phrase of the current verse, the word مُتَقَلِّبٌ *mutaqallab* has been used to describe "temporary" and مَثْوًى *mathwā* is used to describe "permanent". Thus this verse signifies that Allah is fully aware of all conditions of human beings.

Verses 20 - 31

وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَتْ سُورَةٌ ۚ فَإِذَا أُنزِلَتْ سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ
 وَذُكِرَ فِيهَا الْقِتَالُ لَا رَأَيْتَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَيْكَ
 نَظَرَ الْمَغْشِيِّ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ فَأَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٠﴾ طَاعَةٌ وَقَوْلٌ
 مَّعْرُوفٌ ۚ فَإِذَا عَزَمَ الْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صَدَقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ﴿٢١﴾
 فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطِّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ
 ﴿٢٢﴾ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ فَأَصَمَّهُمْ وَأَعَمَّىٰ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٣﴾
 أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا ﴿٢٤﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ارْتَدُّوا
 عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهِمْ مِن بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ ۚ الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ۗ
 وَأَمَلَىٰ لَهُمْ ﴿٢٥﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لِلَّذِينَ كَرِهُوا مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ
 سَنُطِيعُكُمْ فِي بَعْضِ الْأَمْرِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ إِسْرَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٦﴾ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا
 تَوَفَّتْهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يُضْرَبُونَ وَجُوهَهُمْ وَأَدْبَارَهُمْ ﴿٢٧﴾ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ
 اتَّبَعُوا مَا أَسْخَطَ اللَّهَ وَكَرِهُوا رِضْوَانَهُ فَاحْبَطَ أَعْمَالَهُمْ ﴿٢٨﴾ أَمْ
 حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْعَانَهُمْ ﴿٢٩﴾
 وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَاكُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمِهِمْ ۗ وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ
 الْقَوْلِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٠﴾ وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ حَتَّىٰ نَعْلَمَ
 الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنكُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ ۗ وَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِأَخْبَارِكُمْ ﴿٣١﴾

And the believers say, "Why has a (new) *sūrah* not been revealed?" Then, once an operative *sūrah* is sent down, and fighting (in Allah's way) is mentioned in it, you notice those who have disease in their hearts, looking to you like one who is faint because of death. So, destruction is very close to them. [20] The (reality of their) obedience and (truthfulness of their) speech is fully known (as being mere deception). So, had they been truthful to Allah, once the matter had become serious, it would have been much better for them. [21] So, (O hypocrites,) do you not apprehend that, in case you turn away (from Jihād), you will spread disorder in the land, and will sever your ties of kinship? Those are the ones whom Allah has cursed; so He has made them deaf, and made their eyes blind. [23] Then, do they not give serious thought to the Qur'ān, or do they have locks on their hearts? [24] Surely those who turn back after the guidance has appeared to them clearly, it is Satan who has tempted them and involved them in far-fetched fancies. [25] That is because they say to those who hate that which Allah has revealed, "We will obey you in some respects." And Allah knows their secret talk. [26] So, how (will it be) when the angels will exact their souls, smiting their faces and their backs. [27] That is because they followed that which has angered Allah, and they disliked His pleasure; therefore He has nullified their deeds. [28] Do those having disease in their hearts rather think that Allah will never expose their grudges (against Islam)? [29] And if We will, We would show them to you, so as you would definitely recognize them by their features. And (still) you will recognize them by the tone of (their) speech. And Allah knows (all) your deeds. [30] And We will certainly test you until We know those of you who carry out Jihād (struggle in Allah's way) and observe patience, and until We check the reports about you. [31]

Commentary

سُورَةٌ مُّحْكَمَةٌ (an operative *sūrah*): The word مُّحْكَمَةٌ *muḥkamah* lexically means "firm". In this lexical sense, every *sūrah* is *muḥkam*, but here it is used in its technical sense. In the technical parlance of the sacred law, the term *muḥkam* is used as an antonym of *mansūkh*, ("abrogated"). Here the word *Sūrah* has been qualified by the adjective *muḥkamah* so that the eagerness of the believers for a new *Sūrah* is understandable only when it embodies an operative divine commandment that is not abrogated.

Qatādah رضي الله عنه says that all Sūrahs which contain the injunctions of *Jihād* and *Qitāl* are operative and not abrogated. As the main objective of this Sūrah is to enjoin fighting and to persuade people to carry out the injunction, the adjectival phrase is: Sūrah *muḥkamah* - indicating the injunction of *Jihād*. (Qurtubi)

أَوْلَىٰ لَهُمْ (So, destruction is very close to them - 47:20] The Arabic word used in the text, according to Asma'ī, means that the causes of destruction have approached or drawn near to them (Qurtubi).

فَهَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ أَنْ تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَتَقَطَّعُوا أَرْحَامَكُمْ (So, [O hypocrites,] do you not apprehend that, in case you turn away (from *Jihād*), you will spread disorder in the land, and will sever your ties of kinship? - 47:22). The word تَوَلَّى *tawalla* used in the text lexically has two senses: it could mean *I'rād*, that is, "turning away" and it could also mean to be placed in authority over the people. Some of the commentators of the Qur'ān assigned the first meaning to this word in the context of this verse, and Abū Ḥayyān in his *Al-Baḥr-ul-Muḥiṭ* prefers this interpretation, (and the translation given above is based on it.) From this point of view the meaning of the verse would be: If you turned away from *Jihād* [struggling in the cause of Allah] and other injunctions of *Sharī'ah*, you would return to the ancient system of ignorance which Islam has abolished. In the Pre-Islamic Days, according to the practices of *jāhiliyyah*, for centuries they caused corruption and severed ties of kinship. For example, they practiced injustice; they cut each other's throat; one tribe attacked another tribe; they committed carnage and massacre; and they buried alive their daughters with their own hands. Islam abolished and wiped out all these and other heinous practices of the Days of Ignorance. In order to wipe out these heinous crimes of those days, Islam enjoined *Jihād* which apparently seems to be bloodshed, but in reality it is analogous to amputation of the diseased limb of a body, so that the rest of the body may remain healthy. *Jihād* establishes justice and equity and maintains ties of kinship and relationship.

Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, Qurtubī and others take the second meaning of the word *tawallī* in this context, that is, to be placed in authority over people. From this point of view, the meaning of the verse would be: if your ambitions of being placed in authority over people and the affairs of the world are entrusted to you whilst you are morally unhealthy, you would

othe
kins
from
the s
Islan

cause corruption in the land and cut off ties of kinship and relationship.

Strict Maintenance of Kinship Ties

The word *أَرْحَام* 'arḥām' is the plural of *رَحِم* 'raḥīm' (womb). This is a receptacle or repository in the mother where the young humans are conceived, held, protected and developed before birth. Because that is the source of all relationships and kinship, it is idiomatically used in the sense of human relationship and kinship. Tafsīr Rūḥ-ul-Ma'ānī, on this occasion, has explained in detail the relations covered by the term *dhawil arḥām* or *arḥām*. Islam has laid great stress on fulfilling the rights of relationship. Bukhārī records a Ḥadīth on the authority of Sayyidnā Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه and two other Companions to the effect that whoever maintains good relations with the kith and kin Allah will keep good relations with him, but whoever severs his bonds of kinship, Allah too will sever His relations with him. This Ḥadīth indicates how important it is to treat relatives kindly in terms of words, deeds and wealth. In the same Ḥadīth, Abū Hurairah رضي الله عنه refers to the verse under discussion [47:22] and says "Read it if you wish to". In another Tradition, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said that there is a sin for which one will be punished, not only in the Hereafter, but also in this world, that is, ... breaking kinship bonds. In Thawbān رضي الله عنه Ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Whoever wishes to have his life prolonged and his sustenance blessed should treat his relatives kindly." We come across the following Ḥadīth in Bukhārī:

ليس الواصل بالمكافى ولكن الواصل الذى اذا قطعت رحمه وصلها

"The person who perfectly maintains the ties of kinship is not the one who does it because he gets recompensed by his relatives for being kind and good to them, but the one who truly maintains the bonds of kinship is he who treats his kinsmen fairly, even though others have severed the ties of kinship with him." (Ibn Kathīr)

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ (Those are the ones whom Allah has cursed - 47:23) In other words, people who cause corruption in the land and break bonds of kinship have been cursed by Allah, that is, Allah has driven them away from His mercy. On the basis of this verse, Sayyidnā 'Umar رضي الله عنه regarded the sale of *ummul-walad* unlawful. *Ummul-walad* is a term used in Islamic law for a female slave who has borne a child to her master, and

who is consequently free at his death. Thus the sale of the mother would result in separating the child from the mother, and this would lead to severing kinship tie between mother and child which necessitates the curse of Allah. Therefore, the sale of *ummul-walad* was declared unlawful²³.

Law Relating to Cursing a Particular Person: The Issue of Cursing Yazīd

When ‘Abdullāh asked his father Imām Aḥmad about the permissibility of cursing Yazīd, the Imām replied: "Why should we not curse a person whom Allah has cursed in the Qur’ān?" ‘Abdullāh said that he read the Qur’ān in its entirety but he did not find Yazīd is cursed anywhere. The father recited the present verse and said, 'Who could be worse than Yazīd in breaking up relationships? He did not even care for the Holy Prophet's ﷺ relations.' However, majority of the Ummah hold the view that it is not permissible to curse any particular person unless we know for sure that he died in the state of disbelief. We can nevertheless use cursing phrase with general characteristics, such as curse of Allah be upon the liars, curse of Allah be upon the mischief-makers, and curse of Allah be upon the breaker of kinship]. Rūḥ-ul-Ma‘ānī on this occasion has discussed this issue elaborately.

أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا (or do they have locks on their hearts? - 47:24) The meaning of this phrase is synonymous with similar phrases in other verses of the Qur’ān where words like *khatm* or *ṭab'* "[Allah] has set a seal [on their hearts] have been used to describe how the disbelievers refuse to employ their hearts for the comprehension of truth, as a natural consequence their capacities to distinguish right from wrong have become atrophied. Carelessly, committing sins all the time is the main cause of this. Allah forbid!

الشَّيْطَانُ سَوَّلَ لَهُمْ ط وَأَمَلَىٰ لَهُمْ (it is Satan who has tempted them and involved them in far-fetched fancies. - 47:25). In this sentence, two acts have been ascribed to the devil: - *taswīl* [meaning the act of decking out evil works fair to some people, and *imlā'* meaning the act of giving respite. First, he made their evil works look good and beautiful to them, and then prolonged their false hopes which will never be fulfilled.

أَمْ حَسِبَ الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ أَنْ لَنْ يُخْرِجَ اللَّهُ أَضْغَانَهُمْ (Do those having disease in

their hearts rather think that Allah will never expose their grudges [against Islam]? - 47:29)" The word *adghān* is the plural of *dighn* which means secret enmity, rancour, malice or spite. This verse was revealed in connection with hypocrites to expose their bitter hatred and rancour against Islam which they were hiding in their hearts. Outwardly, they expressed their love for the Holy Prophet ﷺ and inwardly they harbored violent hatred and enmity for him. They knew that Allah is the knower of the unseen, yet they were not concerned that He would expose their inner secret and covert enmity to the people. Ibn Kathīr says in Sūrah Barā'ah that Allah has described their works, actions and activities which expose their hypocrisy and they would be identified as hypocrites. Therefore, another name of that Sūrah is *fāḍiḥah* meaning exposing to shame or disgrace, because specific qualities of the hypocrites are set out in it.

وَلَوْ نَشَاءُ لَأَرَيْنَهُمْ فَلَعَرَفْتَهُمْ بِسِيمَتِهِمْ (And if We will, We would show them to you, so as you would definitely recognize them by their features - 47:30). In other words, if Allah wishes, He could pinpoint and define precisely who the hypocrites are and describe their features so that the Holy Prophet ﷺ could identify each hypocrite personally. Grammatically, the Qur'an has introduced this clause by the hypothetical particle *lau* "if". Thus introduced, the sentence implies that what is supposed either does not occur or is not likely to take place. From this point of view, the clause implies that if Allah had willed, He would have pinpointed every hypocrite to you personally, but His wisdom and clemency did not wish to expose them to shame and disgrace in this way, and thus maintain the principle that all worldly matters be decided by their outer appearance, and the inner conditions and matters of the heart be left to the All-Knowing Allah. However, Allah has given to the Holy Prophet ﷺ the insight, so that he is able to perceive into the inner nature and real character of the hypocrites by the style of their speech. This is the meaning of *وَلَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ فِي لَحْنِ الْقَوْلِ* "... And (still) you will recognize them by the tone of (their) speech. - 47:30]...". (Ibn Kathir)

Sayyidnā 'Uthmān Ibn 'Affān ؓ says that anyone who conceals a secret in his heart, Allah displays it on his face, and brings it out by the slip of his tongue. In other words, in the course of conversation, some such words slip out which express their inner secrets. Likewise there is a Ḥadīth which reports that any person harboring a secret thought in his

heart, Allah puts a cover on it; if it is good, it becomes manifest, and if it is evil, that too becomes manifest. Some narrations of *aḥādīth* have described that the Holy Prophet ﷺ was imparted the knowledge of a group of the hypocrites by name. For example, it is recorded in Musnad of Imām Aḥmad on the authority of ‘Uqbah Ibn ‘Amr ؓ that the Holy Prophet ﷺ in one of his sermons called out the names of particular hypocrites and asked them to leave the congregation. Thirty-six names were counted altogether. (Ibn Kathir)

حَتَّى نَعْلَمَ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ مِنْكُمْ (...until We know those of you who carry out Jihād,... - 47:31) Allah's knowledge of every person's works and deeds is all-encompassing and eternal. It may be noted here that knowledge is of two kinds: [i] a *priori* knowledge or fore-knowledge, knowledge about a thing before its occurrence; and [ii] a *posteriori* knowledge or -in Mariam knowledge, knowledge about a thing after it has actually happened. Here knowledge refers to the second category. Allah's knowledge of things is since eternity. In this context, the knowledge about things is a *posteriori*, after the occurrence of the events in the external world. (Ibn Kathir) (The purport of this part of the verse is that Allah has enjoined fighting on the believers so that sincere believers may become distinguished from the hypocrites who shrink in horror at the very thought of fighting). Allah knows best.

Verses 32 - 38

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَشَاقُّوا الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ
مَاتَبِينَ لَهُمُ الْهُدَىٰ ۚ لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ۖ وَسَيُحِبِّطُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ
﴿٣٢﴾ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اطِّيعُوا اللَّهَ وَاطِّيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَلَا تُبْطِلُوا
أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٣﴾ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا
وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ ﴿٣٤﴾ فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ ۗ
وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتْرُكَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٥﴾ إِنَّمَا
الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ ۖ وَإِنْ تُؤْمِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا يُؤْتِكُمْ أَجْرَكُمْ وَلَا
يَسْئَلْكُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ ﴿٣٦﴾ إِنَّ يَسْئَلْكُمْ مَوَالِيهَا فَيُحْفِكُمْ تَبَخَّلُوا وَيُخْرِجْ

Co
fro
the
'Ab
occa
and
upor
the t
differ

أَضْغَانِكُمْ ﴿٣٧﴾ هَآأَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تُدْعُونَ لِتُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ ؕ
فَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يَبْخُلُ ؕ وَمَنْ يَبْخُلْ فَإِنَّمَا يَبْخُلْ عَن نَّفْسِهِ ؕ وَاللّٰهُ
الْغَنِيُّ وَأَنْتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ ؕ وَإِن تَوَلَّوْا يَسْتَبْدِلْ قَوْمًا غَيْرَكُمْ ؕ ثُمَّ لَا
يَكُونُوا أَمْثَالِكُمْ ﴿٣٨﴾

Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, and oppose the Messenger, after the Guidance has appeared to them clearly, shall never bring harm to Allah in the least, and He will render their deeds vain. [32] O those who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger, and do not nullify your deeds. [33] Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, then die as unbelievers, Allah will never forgive them. [34] So, do not lose heart, and do not appeal for peace; you will be the uppermost, and Allah is with you; and He will never deprive you of your deeds. [35] The worldly life is but play and pastime. And if you believe and be God-fearing, He will give you your rewards, and will not ask you your riches. [36] If He were to ask you of it, and were to press you, you would show miserliness, and He would expose your grudges. [37] Yes, you are such that you are called upon to spend in Allah's way, but some of you withhold in miserliness_ and he who withholds in miserliness withholds against himself_ and Allah is the Need-Free, and you are the needy. And if you turn away, He will replace you by some other people, then they will not be like you. [38]

Commentary

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَلُّوا عَن سَبِيلِ اللّٰهِ (Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way ... - 47:32) This verse also refers to the hypocrites, and the Jewish tribes of Banū Quraizah and Banū Naḍīr. Sayyidnā Ibn 'Abbās رضي الله عنه says that this verse refers to those hypocrites who, on the occasion of the battle of Badr, joined forces with the infidels of Quraysh and helped them in such a way that twelve men of the two tribes took upon themselves the responsibility of feeding the entire army. Each one of the twelve men took turns to organize meal for the enemy camp on different days.

وَسَيُحِطُّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ (...and He will render their deeds vain - 47:32)

Ḥabt-ul-a'māl (rendering deeds vain) could have one of the two meanings: [i] their efforts to undermine Islam would be unsuccessful and fail as explained in the foregoing commentary of this verse; and [ii] on account of their disbelief and hypocrisy, their good deeds - such as charity, free will offerings, philanthropic activities and so on - will all be rendered void and will not be acceptable.

لَا تَبْطُلُوا أَعْمَالَكُمْ (... and do not nullify your deeds... - 47:33) Here the Qur'an has employed the phrase *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* instead of *ḥabt-ul-a'māl* because the scope of the former phrase is much wider than the latter phrase, because *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* may be interpreted in two ways: In the one case it takes place on account of disbelief which was described in the foregoing verse by the phrase *ḥabt-ul-a'māl* because no action of a die-hard infidel is ever acceptable on account of disbelief. If anyone embraced Islam and later abandoned it, all his good actions performed during the days of Islam will be rendered vain albeit good works of the days of Islam are acceptable. The good works, in this case, will be made vain because of the subsequent disbelief and apostasy.

The other case of *ibtāl-ul-a'māl* is that the acceptability of some righteous deeds is sometimes conditional upon other righteous acts. If the condition is not fulfilled, the righteous deeds will be rendered fruitless. For example, for every righteous action to be acceptable, the necessary condition is that it must be performed exclusively and sincerely for Allah. It must not be performed to make an ostentatious display to people. Let us take a few examples of this rule from the Qur'an: In [98:5] we read:

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

"They were commanded only to worship Allah, making their submission sincere for Him, (98:5)".

On another occasion in the Qur'an [39:3] we read:

الْإِلَهَ الدِّينِ الْخَالِصُ

"Unquestionably, for Allah is the pure religion" [39:3].

This goes to show that all good works - to be acceptable - must be done with the sincerity of heart and honesty of purpose. Otherwise they will be rendered void by Allah. On a third occasion in the Qur'an [2:264] we read: لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى "O those who believe, do not nullify your charities

by boasting about favour, and teasing (2:264)". This shows that giving charity to a needy person and then following it up by demands of gratitude or insulting words or hurting him in some other way will only nullify his charitable act. This probably could be the meaning of what Ḥasan Baṣrī has said when interpreting this verse: "Do not render vain your own good works by means of sins." Although the apparent sense of this statement is that if one commits a sin, all his good deeds are nullified, yet this being against the well-established position, its real purpose cannot be other than it refers only to those sins that are relevant to a particular virtuous act and which nullify that particular act only. It is similar to what Ibn Jurayj has said to explain this verse: "(Do not nullify your virtuous acts) by doing them only to show off and to win a good name among the people." Likewise, Muqātil and others have explained it by saying: *bil-manni*, that is, (Do not nullify your deeds) by boasting about your favour. Otherwise, according to the unanimity of *ahl-us-sunnah wal-jamā'ah*, no sin - not even a major sin other than *kufr* or *shirk* -- can destroy the righteous acts of a believer. For example, if a believer, who performs his prayer regularly and keeps his fasts, were to steal something, the sacred law does not declare his prayers and fasts null and void or demand him to repeat them. Therefore, in the statement of Ḥasan Baṣrī the word 'sins' refers only to those sins refraining from which is a necessary condition for the acceptability of good works. For example, the acceptability of good works, it is necessary to refrain from *riyā'*, that is, to avoid showing off or making an ostentatious display of accomplishments. Moreover, it is also possible that Ḥasan Baṣrī's statement regarding refers to the deprivation of the blessings of righteous works, and not to the absolute nullification of a righteous work itself. This may apply to all types of sin in the sense that if a believer's sins are much more than his good deeds, the few good deeds that he has to his credit will be devoid of the blessing that may save him from the punishment of his sins. According to the rule of retribution, he will be punished first for his sins and finally through the virtue of his faith he will attain salvation and be admitted into the gardens of Paradise.

Ruling:

If a believer starts a *nafl* (an act of worship that is not obligatory), and then deliberately disrupts it before its completion, this too is deemed

by Imām Abū Ḥanīfah as nullifying the deed, and is impermissible according to him. Therefore, if a person commences righteous acts that were initially not compulsory or obligatory, their completion, according to this interpretation of the verse, becomes obligatory. Otherwise he would be committing *ibṭāl-ul-a'māl* [nullification of actions]. If anyone does this without a legitimate reason or nullifies them purposely, he would be a sinner, and it would be obligatory for him to make *qaḍā'* for such nullification. According to Imām Shafi'ī, neither he is a sinner nor is it obligatory for him to make *qaḍā'*. His argument is that the act was not initially compulsory or obligatory, therefore its abandonment or nullification would not entail a sin. Ḥanafīs argue that the wordings of the current verse are general in their scope embracing all righteous acts, whether obligatory or supererogatory. Therefore, if a supererogatory act is initiated, its completion becomes obligatory. On this occasion, in Tafsīr Mazharī, a large number of *aḥādīth* are quoted and the issue is discussed in detail.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ مَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ (Those who disbelieve and prevent (others) from Allah's way, Allah will never forgive them...- 47:34): verse [32] has a similar warning in similar words. The present verse [34] seems to repeat almost the same warning. But the difference is probably that verse 32 describes the loss of the infidels in this world, and the current verse describes their loss in the next world as indicated in the commentary. It is also possible that in the earlier verse the reference was to infidels in general which included those people who embraced Islam later on. The ruling regarding them was that all the good works which they had done in the state of disbelief would go to waste. Even after embracing Islam they would not be rewarded for them. The current verse refers in particular to those infidels who persisted in their disbelief and idolatry until their dying day. The ruling regarding them is that Allah will never forgive them in the next world. Allah knows best.

فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ (So, do not lose heart, and do not appeal for peace;) ... - 47:35". This verse prohibits the Muslims to invite the infidels to enter into peace treaty. But on another occasion in the Qur'ān such a treaty is allowed : "وَأِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا" "And if they tilt towards peace, you tilt towards it..." (9:61). This verse indicates that if the infidels want peace, it is permissible to enter into peace agreement with them. Therefore, some