

Quarterly

May - July 2024

# ISHRAQ

United States

This world is the place of regrets of the past and fears of the future. The knowledge and wisdom gifted to the humanity are for the purpose of understanding this reality. The Quran declares that this realization is the true wisdom, and whoever grasps it, attains a great treasure of Good.

~ *Javed Ahmad Ghamidi*

The Process of the development of the Arabic grammar is such that does not allow the appraisal of the Quranic language on the basis of the rules laid down by the grammarians of the Arabic language. Appraising or criticizing the Quran or any other source material used by the linguists, grammarians, lexicologists etc. is like refusing to accept Arabic, even as a language....and this, obviously is absolutely absurd.

~ *Moiz Amjad*

The education system of a society reflects its conditions. it is not an abstract or separate entity from the society. The national temperament, ideas, ideals, and objectives of a society shape its education system.

~ *Muhammad Hassan Ilyas*

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United States

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# THE CASE OF ATHEISM

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi

Religion, which invites belief in God, has always faced opposition from those who view the universe itself as humanity's creator. This is called atheism. Before the seventeenth century, religion and religious thought dominated politics on a global scale. For almost a thousand years after the advent of prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him), this dominance remained intact with the same authority. This duration has explicitly been described in the divine scriptures<sup>1</sup> It was a prophecy of God's messengers, thus it was fulfilled to the letter, and now this dominance has ended globally. In the resulting environment, a large number of prominent standard-bearers of atheism have emerged, and they are making their case against religion with strong conviction and certainty. The case they present is fundamentally based on four objections. We will explain here the manner in which the Quran has responded to them:

## First Objection

The first objection is that the concept of God is the result of the intellectual evolution of mankind. Therefore, we can see that the God introduced by the Quran does not have any traces in the early history of humans. Wherever you look, the manifestations of polytheism are present in every direction, but monotheism is nowhere to be seen. Thus, the reality is that the concept of a single God gradually emerged in this history, and even then, it was presented by its proponents in various roles depending on the circumstances: as a king, as a proud husband, and as a sympathizer of the poor, taking the position of a religious leader. Moreover, monotheism has

carried along the rites of worship from polytheistic religions, and in every era has demanded ascribing those rituals to it specifically. Keeping that in view, how is it possible for any rational being to readily accept this God, created by humans, as their creator, master, and deity?

In response to this objection, it must be stated that this tale of evolution is nothing more than fiction. It finds no basis in the realm of facts. Regarding the history of human religious thought, the information obtained so far can take us back at most five thousand years. However, is this also the age of humans on earth? If we consider the research carried out so far, even the lowest estimate of human existence on earth predates these figures by thousands of years. Then how can one refute the Quranic assertion that initially all humans followed a single religion whose guidance had directly descended from their Lord Himself? Deviations in their religious thought occurred afterward, leading to disputes. Polytheism emerged from that era. Hence, the truth is that the journey of religious thought has been from monotheism to polytheism, not the other way around.

Allah Almighty says:

وَمَا كَانَ النَّاسُ إِلَّا أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَاخْتَلَفُوا وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ سَبَقَتْ مِنْ رَبِّكَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي مَا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ۔

*[They should not give reference of their forefathers with regard to this polytheism of theirs.] In reality, people were one community only; later they have differed with one another and had a matter not been decided by your Lord previously,<sup>2</sup> the issue in which they are differing would have been decided among them. (Surah Yunus 10:19)*

The history of the last two thousand years also testifies to this truth. Scholars know that the beginning of this history was initiated with the call to monotheism by two distinguished prophets of God, Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them. However, subsequently, observe how the mix of philosophy and mysticism has caused deviations in their teachings, to the extent that the followers of Jesus, peace be upon him, have turned him into the son of God and his mother into the Mother of God, praying to them for intercession, and among the followers of Muhammad, peace be upon him, people have appeared who see the Unique (Ahad) behind the veil of Ahmad (Muhammad) and in a state of ecstasy exclaim:

وہی جو مستوی عرش تھا خدا ہو کر  
اتر پڑا ہے مدینے میں مصطفیٰ ہو کر

*“He who was God, the Occupier of the throne,  
Has descended in Medina in the guise of Mustafa (Muhammad).”*

Subsequently, it becomes unnecessary to seek further evidence to assert that worship rituals were essentially designated by God and for God alone, but when polytheism created its own objects of

worship, it adopted these rites with some modifications for its own deities as well. Therefore, when the prophets were sent, their first and foremost demand in their call to the people was this: O people, these rites of worship are exclusive for God and should remain so, because only He is your sustainer, the King of the universe, and the only deity; there is no deity besides Him.

As for the perception that the concept of God appears to be different in divine scriptures, it is entirely based on a misunderstanding. These scriptures are the finest examples of sublime literature. Hence, it can be shown on each occasion by segregating the verses of these scriptures from the historical accounts of their compilers, that people have demonstrated a lack of knowledge, contemplation, and refinement in attempting to understand and explain these scriptures, thus completely destroying their beauty with their interpretations. After that, it can only be said that: شعر مرا به مدرسه که برد۔ (How did my verse reach the Madrasah?)

## Second Objection

The second objection pertains to the way religious adherents have perceived and consequently developed religious thought, which embodies a collection of contradictions. There is a lack of consensus on the concept of God, His attributes and actions, His ways of dealing with humans, His commands and guidance, His demands from humans, or His conjectures regarding humans and the universe; as if to say: all friends have brought a different news from the gathering of elegance, (لائے ہیں بزم ناز سے یار خبر الگ الگ۔)! After this, can any sane person be expected to consider this collection of contradictions worthy of attention or believe in it?

The response to this objection is that the capacity for understanding existential realities and deriving conclusions from them, which has been granted to humans, inevitably leads to these differences. The achievements humans have displayed in this world are the fruits of this capacity. There is no doubt that its misuse has led to problems, but upon reflection, it becomes evident that this very ability is the true honor of a human being. It is what makes a person human. The Creator made him this way and has also promised eternal life with this very capability. After this, how can one expect God to snatch this ability from humans just to create unity in the understanding of guidance. Absolutely not, He has clearly decreed that *آيَا كَرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ* (*There is no compulsion in religion*)<sup>3</sup>; meaning no one is forced in matters of faith, nor will they ever be.

However, this does not mean that as a result, humans have been left to wander in the labyrinths of disagreements. The Quran has stated that the religion of God is only one, and it has always been known as 'Islam', but as soon as this state of confusion in understanding emerged, God began sending His prophets to every nation, and with them, He also sent down His scriptures. These scriptures were revealed as a scale (Meezan) and criterion (Furqan) to distinguish between truth and falsehood so that people could resolve their differences through them and thus establish justice in matters of truth. The Almighty says:

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَ  
مُنذِرِينَ سَمِعُوا وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ  
النَّاسِ فِي مَا اختلفوا فِيهِ -

*[They present differences among people as a pretext for their hypocrisy. They should know that] mankind was just a single community. Then [differences arose between them. So,] God sent forth prophets as bearers of glad tidings and as warners, and with them He sent down His Book as the decisive truth so that it may settle between people the differences among them. (Surah Al-Baqarah 2:213)*

The last scripture in this series is the Holy Quran. In the world of divine literature, it is now the only book about which it can be said with complete certainty that it is in our hands exactly as it was given, without any slightest alteration, in the same language, and the same order. Its continuous transmission (tawatur) itself is a miracle, because it is the only book in the world that even now, millions of Muslims can recite orally from memory—from the first chapter to the last. History informs us that this tradition of recitation has not been interrupted even for a single day over the past fourteen hundred years. This clearly indicates that its preservation has been arranged by the Creator of the world Himself. The aspects of the Quran to which the Quran itself draws attention at various places, as described in the words of Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi, are as follows:

*"First, during the period of the Quran's revelation, Allah Almighty specifically ensured that the devils could not interfere with the process of revelation of the Quran. It is a permanent arrangement in this cosmic system that devils cannot hear the discussions of divine matters, but...especially during the period of the Quran's revelation this arrangement was made so that the devils could not insert anything before it (مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ)<sup>4</sup>*

*Second, the angel chosen by the Almighty to reveal the Qur'ān has been described in the Qur'ān (81:20-21) as 'the one endued with power, held in honor before the Lord of the Throne, obeyed in the Heavens, moreover trustworthy.' In other words, the angel is so mightily powerful that evil spirits cannot overcome him, he is the leader of all angels, and he cannot forget anything. Whatever is entrusted to him by the Almighty, he executes precisely. There is not a semblance of a chance that the slightest of change can take place in the revelation entrusted to him. He has a very high rank before the Almighty, which signifies that he surpasses all creation in terms of his abilities. It is obvious that this arrangement has also been made so that the possibility of any falsehood entering the Quran from its origin is eliminated.*

*Third, the very person who was entrusted with the Qur'ān was firstly the best of creation in every aspect, and secondly, the responsibility for remembering the Quran and its preservation and arrangement was not placed solely on him, but Allah Himself took up this responsibility. Hence, in Surah Al-Qiyamah, it is said:*

لَا تُحَرِّكْ بِهِ لِسَانَكَ لِتَعْجَلَ بِهِ - إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا جَمْعَهُ وَقُرْآنَهُ - فَإِذَا  
قُرْآنُهُ فَاتَّبِعْ قُرْآنَهُ - ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ -

*To acquire this Qur'ān [O Prophet!] Do not move your tongue hastily over it. Indeed, upon Us is its collection and recital. So when We have recited it, follow this recital [of Ours]. Then upon Us is to explain it [wherever need be] (Surah Al-Qiyamah 75:16-19)*

*Narratives confirm that the portion of the Quran that had been revealed was kept memorized by the Prophet, peace be upon him, and his close companions and every Ramadan the Prophet would review it with Angel Gabriel to ensure there was no chance of error or forgetfulness, and this review was done in the order that Allah Almighty had preferred to arrange the Quran. It is also known from narratives that the Prophet, peace be upon him, conducted this review twice during the last Ramadan of his blessed life. Then the entire Quran was transferred to written form in that same order and with the same recitation, and later the Rightly Guided Caliphs sent its copies to other cities of the state. No previous scriptures received such attention and care in its arrangement. For instance, it is not even known when and by whose hands the different scrolls of the Torah were compiled.*

*The fourth point is that the Quran is a miracle with respect to its eloquence in words and its profundity in meanings, making it such that the speech of others cannot be integrated with it. Even the speech of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, despite his being the bringer of the Quran and the most eloquent among the Arabs and non-Arabs, cannot compete with it. Thus, there is no chance that the speech of another could be mixed with it. The attempts of those who have dared to produce a response to the Quran are recorded in the books of literature and history. Just place their examples in comparison with the Quran, and you will see the difference between substance and fluff as clear as day. In this way, the path for interpolation into the Quran from behind (وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ)<sup>5</sup> has been effectively blocked.*

*Fifth, along with the protection of the Quran, Allah Almighty has also promised the preservation of its language until the Day of Judgment. In the case of other heavenly scriptures, countless distortions entered through translations, due to the disappearance of their original languages, and now it is impossible to trace them. However, the original language of the Quran is preserved and will remain so until the Day of Judgment. Therefore, there is no chance for the intrusion of falsehood into it through translations and interpretations. If there is any attempt to insert falsehood into it, scholars can examine it against the original and cleanly separate out the falsehood.” (Tadabbur-e-Quran 7/112)*

### **Third Objection**

The third objection is that religion invites belief in a God whose behavior is extremely cruel. He makes children cry and kills them through illnesses and suffering, makes humans slaughter millions of animals daily and pits them against each other, does not stop a murderer or oppressor but instead provides them with opportunities to commit their injustices, creates countless creatures just so that humans can domesticate them and rule over them, utilizing every aspect of them for their own use, and even encourages humans to fight and kill each other, promising rewards for it. Moreover, this world created by Him is not perfect in every regard. It has earthquakes, lightning, famines, and pains. Not only this, deficiencies can also be pointed out in some places. How can one believe that such an entity is the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful, the All Knowing, and the All Wise, with an unlimited mind and boundless power?

The answer given by the Quran to this objection is that the world where God’s attributes of perfection, majesty, and beauty will predominantly manifest is currently hidden from our view,

and human beings were essentially created for that world. The colossal universe and its billions of galaxies that appear barren in front of Him are merely the materials for the construction of that world, scattered throughout the vast expanse of space. The Quran states that the day is not far when this world will be transformed into a different earth and sky, and all creatures will stand exposed before Allah, the One and the Overpowering<sup>6</sup>. Thereafter, a new world will come into existence, with its expanse as large as the entire universe. This will be a world of God's dominion and His mercy and favor. The world in which we open our eyes of conscience is merely a prelude to that world. It is not set up for administering divine justice, nor to display the entirety of His splendor. Its sole purpose is to test us, and both jinn and humankind are in a state of trial. It is said:

الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْغَفُورُ-

*[He] Who created death and life to test you as to which of you does better deeds. And He is also Mighty and Forgiving. (Surah Al-Mulk 67:2)*

As a result, existence in this world is inextricably intertwined with dualities: life with death, joy with sorrow, pleasure with pain, tranquility with anxiety, relief with affliction. Blessings, too, are often accompanied by tribulations, as if these pairs were designed as inseparable twins. This world is a place of regrets of the past and fears of the future. The knowledge and wisdom gifted to humanity are for the purpose of understanding this reality. The Quran declares that this realization is the true wisdom, and whoever grasps it, attains a great treasure of good<sup>7</sup>. It is through this understanding that a person recognizes the limits of human knowledge, and instead of blaming God, attempts to comprehend His plan with humility and confession of their incapacity, always remaining in prayer: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (وَرَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا)<sup>8</sup>. The greatest deprivation of the disciplines of science and philosophy is the lack of this wisdom. It is the lack of this wisdom that gives rise to objections against God and consigns humanity to perpetual darkness, beyond which there is no light.

#### **Fourth Objection**

The fourth objection is that in the era of human infancy, there might have been a need for religion, but now that human beings are mature and intelligent, they have discovered the key to solving every problem through their knowledge and science, based on experience, observation, deduction, and induction. They have also come to understand the universe around them to a great extent, and for the organization of society and the needs of politics and economy, they have created highly sophisticated social structures and institutions. By observing these, one can estimate how superior and elevated human knowledge is compared to those religious laws which human beings have been carrying around their necks in the name of religion for centuries. After this, who would be willing to accept these religious laws at any level?

In response to this objection, it is stated that only those who are unfamiliar with religion can make such a comparison. The reason for this assertion is because religion was never intended for any of these purposes. It was not revealed to teach humans the laws of science, nor was it meant



to fulfill their medical needs, nor to teach them how to organize society and address the needs of politics and economy by creating social structures and institutions. Whatever humans have accomplished in this world was meant to be done by humans themselves. Their Creator endowed them with extraordinary powers and abilities for this purpose. The objective of religion is the purification of a person's knowledge and actions, and of their individual and collective life. The contents of religion, described as Sharia include teachings and guidance regarding worship, physical cleanliness, purification of food and drink, and instructions for the refinement of moral conduct. All these things are essentially not required for this world, but for the hereafter. It is God's decree that His paradise is only for those who will attain purification in the above matters. Apart from these, religion has no interest in anything else. Therefore, God's law must be understood in light of this objective and goal. Its necessity will also be determined from this angle, and its status and rank among the sciences and arts of the world will also be determined accordingly.

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ  
وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِن كَانُوا مِن قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ-

*It is He who brought forth among the unlettered a Messenger from among them, who recites to them His revelations and purifies them and for this instructs them in the Law and in Wisdom. In reality, these people were in manifest error before this. (Surah Al-Jumu'ah 62:2)*

#### REFERENCES:

- [1]. The Bible, Revelations 20:7-9
- [2]. That is, the decisions on difference of opinion will be made on the Day of Judgment.
- [3]. Al-Baqarah 2:256
- [4]. Surah As Sajdah 41:42
- [5]. Surah As Sajdah 41:42
- [6]. Surah Ibrahim 14:48
- [7]. Surah Al-Baqarah 2:269
- [8]. Surah Taha 20:114



# GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THE QUR'AN?

Moiz Amjad

Mr. P. Newton with Mr. Rafiqul-Haqq has written an article titled: "Grammatical Errors in the Qur'an<sup>1</sup>". He writes:

Muslims claim the Qur'an not just to be a human literary masterpiece, but a divine literary miracle. But this claim does not square with the facts. For the Qur'an, which we have in our hands contains obvious grammatical errors which is plain to see for all who know Arabic.

Mr. Newton has cited the following verses of the Qur'an to substantiate his claim:

1. Al-Maaidah 5: 69
2. Al-Nisaa 4: 162
3. Ta Ha 20: 63
4. Al-Baqarah 2: 177
5. Aal Imraan 3: 59
6. Al-Anbiaa 21: 3
7. Al-Mominun 22: 19
8. Al-Hujraat 49: 9
9. Al-Munaafiqun 63: 10
10. Al-Shams 91: 5

11. Fussilat 41: 11
12. Al-Aa`raaf 7: 57
13. Al-Aa`raaf 7: 160

After citing these examples, Mr. Newton ends his article with the following words:

The Qur'an, because of these errors, is not even a masterpiece. If, humanly speaking, the Qur'an cannot be called a masterpiece, can anyone honestly call it a divine literary miracle?

The object of this article is to give answers to the following questions:

1. How does the grammar of a language develop?
2. Why and how did the Arabic grammar develop?
3. What were the sources of deriving grammatical rules of the Arabic language?

The writer believes that answers to these questions will themselves be an adequate evidence of the absurdity of trying to find Grammatical Errors in the Qur'an.

### **Grammar - A Stage in the Development of a Language**

It is a commonly known and an established fact that compilation of grammar is a stage in the development of a language. This statement needs a little explanation.

Laying down 'Grammatical Rules' of any language does not and cannot precede speaking and comprehension of that language by its native speakers. For instance, the English language was being spoken for a long time before someone sat down to lay down the rules of the English language. The grammar of a language is created, but not before that language is spoken and understood by the natives.

We can take Greek, as a case in point. Greek, as we know is a very old language. But it was only in the second Century B.C. that Dionysius Thrax, wrote a book of Grammar on the Greek language and that too was limited only to the word morphology. This work, incidentally, was the first systematic grammar of the Western tradition. It was not before the second century A.D. that a study of sentence syntax of the Greek language was conducted by Apollonius Dyscolus. Dionysius Thrax also defined Grammar. His definition is as under:

The acquaintance with [or observation of] what is uttered by poets and writers 2.

A close look at this definition would further substantiate the obvious. According to it, Grammar was developed:

1. Through the observation of the utterances of (established) poets and writer of that language - which obviously implies that before any grammatical rules were laid down, writers and poets were using that language to convey their messages and to do their works,

2. To get acquainted with the language of these (established) poets and writers - which, to some extent implies that such grammatical rules are not a need for a people whose native language is under consideration. It is a need for peoples for whom the language in question is either a foreign language or is a language not completely the same as the language they speak. For instance, a modern-day Englishman normally does not need to study English grammar to fully comprehend modern-day works. However, for comprehension of the classical English literature he may require to take a course in grammar and word usage of the classical English language.

It should be clear from the foregoing points that knowing the correct language is really a matter of knowing what and how the native speakers of that language speak. Grammatical rules are derived from this usage of the native speakers. This fact is irrefutable<sup>3</sup>. This fact also points out the reason and basis of development and change in a language. It is stated in Britannica:

When a child learns to speak he tends to regularize the anomalous, or irregular, forms by analogy with the more regular and productive patterns of formation in the language; e.g., he will tend to say "comed" rather than "came," "dived" rather than "dove," and so on, just as he will say "talked," "loved," and so forth. The fact that the child does this is evidence that he has learned or is learning the regularities or rules of his language. He will go on to "unlearn" some of the analogical forms and substitute for them the anomalous forms current in the speech of the previous generation. But in some cases, he will keep a "new" analogical form (e.g., "dived" rather than "dove"), and this may then become the recognized and accepted form.<sup>4</sup>

The reader should note the words: '... and this may become the recognized and accepted form.' This statement once again is evidence of the fact that what we refer to as 'correct language' is really the language recognized and accepted by the natives of that particular language as correct. This process is the usual case in the development of grammar and the dependable sources of deriving its 'rules'. Now, once these concepts are clearly understood, consider the following example:

Suppose that Group X was the accepted and recognized literati of Latin, prior to the compilation of Latin grammar. Later on, some scholars of Latin sat down to compile the Latin grammar. They looked for various sources for their work. The scholars find that the works of Group X comprises of Latin literature, recognized and accepted to be correct by the natives of that language. So these scholars, without any reservations accept the works of Group X as one of the sources for their work. Time moved on. After a few hundred years, some other 'scholars' sit to analyze the works of Group X on the basis of the work done by the 'grammarians' (the scholars who compiled the rules of grammar). Now, after "thorough deliberation" if they declare, on the basis of the work of the grammarians, that the writings of Group X contains a number of 'grammatical' errors, these modern "scholars" in their exuberance may even claim (or at least expect) a literary award for their findings, yet even an ordinary person would only laugh at their findings. For he would hopefully have the common sense of asking himself: "How can something be analyzed for errors on the basis of another thing which itself is based on the first thing". This basis for analysis would really be like saying: "the human body (the source) does not correspond to the books written on human physiology (the derived result), and therefore, the

human body (the source), when analyzed on the basis of these books has such and such errors". The common man, rather than going into such "sick" logic, would almost certainly take to the point that the books written on human physiology (the derived result) do not adequately describe the human body (the source). Obviously, the same principle would also apply to the appraisal of the writings of Group X on the basis of the work of the grammarians. If the rules laid down by the grammarians do not correspond to the writings of Group X, then the fault lies with the rules of the grammarians and not with the writings of Group X. Obviously, appraising the source, on the basis of the results derived from that very source is nothing but absurd.

### **Two Distinct Stages in the Development of a Language**

There is yet another important aspect of history of the development of a language.

If we analyze the development of a language closely, we shall see that in relation to conformity to grammatical rules, the history of a language can normally, be divided into two distinct stages. One is the "Pre-grammar" stage, and the other is the "Post-grammar" stage. Each of these stages has a set of characteristics peculiar to it.

First let us see the Pre-grammar stage. In this stage, a language is in its purest and most natural form. The natives of the language speak their hearts and minds out, and whatever and however they speak and accept and recognize as correct is the standard for correct language. In these times, poets, writers and orators are criticized, not for wrong grammar, as no such thing as compiled grammar has any existence, but for lack of clarity, non-idiomatic use of language, improper use of words and poor style. It is not just improbable, but inconceivable that these writers, poets or orators commit such mistakes as may be termed as "grammatical errors". For whatever they say and however they say it provides the very grounds on which, later on, the grammarians base their "grammatical rules". It is on the very authority of these writers, poets, orators and other established users of a language that "rules" of grammar are laid down. For instance, in later times, a grammarian might say: "XYZ is a rule of language A, as is obvious from the statements/verses of the poet D, who was accepted and recognized by the natives of language A, as qualified to be held as an authority on that language", or "XYZ is a rule of language A, because this is how it is spoken by the natives of that language". Another important aspect of this stage is that even such deviations from the common and regular usage as are recognized and accepted by the natives of that language to be correct, cannot be termed as incorrect. What the grammarians, in fact, do is to try and find out the reasons for such deviations and the added meaning a certain deviation provides to the regular and common usage, but even if some grammarians are unable to find out the reasons for these deviations, they still cannot be termed as incorrect.

Now, let us also have a brief look at the Post-grammar stage of a language. In the first stage, it is the poets, writers, orators and users of that language that provide guidelines for the work of the grammarians. In the Post-grammar stage, it is normally, the other way round. In this stage, generally, grammatical rules are held by the writers, poets, orators and other users, as the standard for the correctness of their written or spoken words. In the first stage, grammatical rules are derived from the usage of writers, poets etc., and every grammatical rule along with every

deviation from such a rule, which can be substantiated by the usage of such writers and orators is held to be correct. On the other hand, in the second stage it is normally the accepted rules (and the accepted deviations from these rules) that substantiate the correctness of a writer's, poet's, orator's or anyone else's usage. Obviously, it can so happen that a writer uses a style, which is considered to be against the general grammatical rules of the language. The writer is then criticized for this deviation. Nevertheless, sometimes the writer can provide examples of such deviations from the 'Original' authorities of the language, which had previously been missed by the grammarians of that language. In such an event, the style of the writer is then accepted to be correct. Furthermore, sometimes a writer, because of the native acceptance that he may acquire over time for his usage and style, can become so influential that even his deviations may later on be considered as authentic. Thus, grammatical rules may even be modified on the authority of the deviations of such a writer. This tendency of accepting new grammatical rules because of any new styles introduced by modern writers is far less in peoples who are more conscious and conservative about maintaining the purity of their language, as compared to those who are not.

These are some of the major changes that take place in the development of a language before and after the compilation of grammatical rules.

### **The Particular Case of the Arabic Language**

Generally, the grammar of a language is developed to teach that language to such peoples, who are not native speakers of that language. However, in the case of the development of the Arabic grammar there was a difference. One other factor played an important role in the initiation of the compilation of Arabic grammar. This factor was the concern and the consciousness of the Arabs for maintaining the purity of their language.

It is quite clear to all those who are aware of the history and psyche of the Arabs that they were a people who took great pride in the beauty, simplicity, purity and eloquence of their language. This pride was so deep-rooted in their psyche that the word used for non-Arabs in the Arabic language - `ajami - means 'a person who stammers and is not eloquent'.

The conquests of the Arabs and the conversion of a large number of non-Arabs to Islam, during the first century after the Prophet (pbuh) created a need for the compilation of Arabic grammar as a large number of non-Arabs, now developed an inclination of learning the Arabic language to understand the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh). Furthermore, these conquests and the resultant expansion of the Muslim state also opened up the hitherto closed Arabian society. This situation, on the one hand, provided an opportunity of rich social, cultural, political and economic exposure to the Arabs and, on the other, threatened the more conscious among them with the adulteration of their language by the social and cultural interaction with other peoples. This fear provided the other important basis for the yet unknown and unconsidered task of the compilation of Arabic grammar 5.

The first person to take up this task was Abu al-Aswad Al-Du'wali (A.D. 605-688). Some people ascribe the book "Usul al-Nahw al-`Arabi" to Abu al-Aswad. Later on, a chain of grammarians made their contribution to the now esteemed task of the compilation and research on Arabic

grammar. The grammarians' job, in the later stages became so esteemed and exalted that the most outstanding grammarian, along with the best Jurist, was given a distinct position in the royal assemblies.

### **The Primary Sources in the Compilation of the Arabic Grammar**

The Grammarians and other scholars of linguistic fields, in their task of compiling their rules, used all the compiled or scattered Arabic literature that was accepted by the Arabs to be in its unadulterated verbal tradition and representative of the correct usage of their language. The two major, unanimously accepted sources of this literature were the Qur'an and the pre-Islamic and Islamic poetry. There was a difference among the linguists regarding whether or not the words of the Prophet (SWS) and addresses of well known orators as reported in isolated narrations may be used as source material in their work. Those who were in favor of using these narratives believed such material to be reliable enough for the derivation of linguistic and grammatical rules and were of the opinion that because of the recognition of the Prophet (SWS), in particular, and the considered orators, in general by the Arabs as authorities in the Arabic language, such material should be held as a source for their work. On the other hand, those who were against using these traditions as source material gave their dissent on the basis that contrary to the Qur'an and the poetic works, it is difficult to rely on these narratives to be verbally accurate and unadulterated. The basis of their argument was that the *Qur'an*, because of its religious importance and the Arabic poetry, because of the Arab culture were not only accepted authorities in Arabic language, but were also transmitted from one generation to the other, in their exact and unaltered verbal form, whereas the narratives of the Prophet (SWS) and the addresses of the well known orators lacked this quality. *Abd al-Qadir ibn Omar al-Baghdadi* states in his book "*Khazanatul-Adab*"<sup>6</sup> writes:

*Undalasi* explaining his colleague's - *Ibn Jabir's* - literature, says: "There are six sciences related with language: Linguistics, Morphology, Syntax, Rhetoric, Connotation and the science related to the figures of speech. In the first three, a citable authority can only be the Classical Arab speech. While in the later three, as they are a matter related to the common sense and reason, even the post-classical people or even non-Arab people may be cited. This is the reason why in these fields citations have also been made from the literature of people like *Buhtari*, *Abu-Tamam*, *Abu-Tayyeb* etc.

My point of view is that a citable authority in linguistic sciences is of two kinds: one is poetry and the other anything besides poetry. As far as the first category is concerned, scholars have divided the Arab poets in four categories: 1) "*Al-Sho'ara al-Jahiliyyah*", that is the Classical, pre-Islamic poets... 2) "*Al-Mukhadhramun*" or the poets who witnessed the pre-Islamic as well as the Islamic era... 3) "*Al-Mutaqaddimun*" or the poets of the early Islamic era... and 4) "*Al-Muwalladun*" those after the early Islamic era till the poets of our day.

Citations from the first two groups are unanimously accepted by all linguists as authority... As far as the third group is concerned, [although there exists some difference] but it is [normally held to be] correct to accept their references as authoritative... While from the fourth group,

citations from only those who are held to be reliable among them are accepted as authority, this opinion is also held by *Zamakhshuriy*...

The non-poetic sources include either the Blessed Book of our Lord, the purest, the most fluent and the most eloquent piece of Arabic literature, citations therefrom are accepted to be authoritative, whether they are from its continual [most well known] tradition or from its irregular [not so well known] traditions, as has been declared by Ibn Janni in the beginning of his book "*Al-Mohtasib*". Besides [the Qur'an] such [non-poetical] sources include [speech] references from the first three categories of Arabs, as we have mentioned in the categorization of poets, above. As far as citations from the Hadith (narrative traditions) of the prophet are concerned, *Ibn Malik* accepts them as authoritative... while, *Ibn Dhai* and Abu Hayyan refuse to do so. Their refusal is based on two reasons: 1) these traditions are not verbal narrations of the speech of the Prophet. On the contrary, only their content has been narrated [in the words of the narrators]. And 2) the great grammarians of Basra and Kufa do not hold them as citable authorities [in the derivation of Grammatical rules].

Thus, all the grammarians and other linguists of the Arabic language, without exception have accepted the Qur'an as a source of grammar and other linguistic sciences of the Arabic language. It is because of this reason that such well known grammarians and linguists as *Al-Siibwayh*, *Al-Zamakhshuriy*, *Ibn Hisham*, *Malik*, *Al-Akhfash*, *Al-Kasai*, *Al-Farazdaq*, *Al-Farra'*, *Khalil*, *Al-Farahidi* and innumerable others, while stating a particular grammatical or linguistic rule present wherever possible, as evidence supporting their claim not only poetical but also Qur'anic verses. It would be accurate to say that for them - the fathers and founders of the compiled Arabic Grammar - the Qur'an has always been the most dependable source for their work. All that is required to appreciate the importance that these people give to the Qur'an is to have a look at their works. *Al-Farahidi* writes in the preface of his book, "*Kitab al-Jumal Fi al-Nahw*" (*Muassasatul-Risalah*, Beirut, 1987):

We have placed all the discussions in their respective chapters providing support for each argument from the Qur'an and Arabic poetry.

Likewise, Howell writes in the preface of his book, "A Grammar of the Classical Arabic language":

The object of the Grammarians being to demonstrate the classical usage, they endeavor to support every proposition and illustrate every rule by one or more evidentiary examples taken from the classical language. These examples consist of texts from the *Kur'an*, passages from tradition, proverbs, phrases transmitted by the learned from the Arabs of the desert, and verses from the poets.... A text from the *Kur'an*, as being the very word of God, delivered in the purest dialect of the Arabs, according to the theory of direct verbal inspiration inculcated by Muslim theologians, is of necessity infallible. A passage from tradition, if it be the word of the Prophet, is universally accepted as conclusive evidence; and if it be the word of a Companion, is generally so received, while some hyper critical purists affect to consider the Companions as liable to the suspicion of solecism. A proverb if it dates from heathen times, is admittedly excellent evidence of classical usage. But a saying transmitted by a Grammarian or a Lexicologist from an Arab of



the desert varies in authority with the antiquity of its transmitter, a saying transmitted by Ibn Hisham, for instance, not being nearly so authoritative as one transmitted by Al-Akhfash al-Akbar.<sup>7</sup>

This, then is the accepted and acknowledged position of the Qur'an in all the sciences of Arabic language and literature.

### **The Absurdity of Searching For Grammatical Errors in the Qur'an**

Once this position of the Qur'an, which it holds in the eyes of the most approved native or naturalized authorities of the Arabic language and literature and also in the eyes of the grammarians, lexicologists etc. of the Arabic language is fully understood and appreciated, one can easily see the absurdity of claiming 'Grammatical Errors in the Qur'an'.

The Qur'an being one of the major source materials of the grammarians' works can obviously not be judged on the basis of the grammarians' work. Trying to do so would actually be like trying to find faults in in the Universe on the basis of the books written by astronomers.

Logically, had the position of the "Human Body" or the "Universe" as a source material for the works of physiologists and astronomers respectively, been fully appreciated it would be more appropriate and understandable if someone challenged the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the works of these physiologists and astronomers. Similarly, had the position of the Qur'an as a source material of the compiled Arabic grammar been fully appreciated, it would have been more appropriate and understandable if someone had challenged the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the grammarians' work, rather than challenge the reliability of the Qur'an, when and if an inexplicable deviation was found in the Qur'an.

To sum it up, the process of the development of the Arabic grammar is such that does not allow the appraisal of the Qur'anic language on the basis of the rules laid down by the grammarians of the Arabic language. Appraising or criticizing the Qur'an or any other source material used by the linguists, grammarians, lexicologists etc. is like refusing to accept Arabic, even as a language... and this, obviously is absolutely absurd.

### **The Sayings Ascribed to `Ayesha (RA) and `Uthman (RA)**

From the foregoing discussion, it should be quite clear that the Qur'an, logically cannot be criticized on the basis of the work of the grammarians and other linguists, because of the simple fact that the Qur'an was the very basis (or one of the bases) of the works of these linguists and grammarians, and, furthermore, the Qur'an been recognized and accepted by all the linguistic authorities of the Arabic language as the most outstanding, in fact, miraculous piece of their literature. How, then, can we appraise or critically evaluate the reliability or otherwise of the language of the Qur'an.

Once it is known that the Qur'an was generally accepted and recognized by the Classical, pre-Islamic Arabs, as a piece of unparalleled literature in its purity, fluency and eloquence, then it

has to be accepted as such by the later people as well. As far as the primary evidence, in this regard is concerned, it is overwhelmingly in favor of the general acceptance of the Qur'an. It was obviously, primarily on the basis of this Qur'an that the Arabs - eloquent and proud of their language as they were - started converting to Islam. The Prophet during the first thirteen years of his prophethood had just the Qur'an to present to the people. Surprisingly, no one objected to the language or style of the Qur'an. On the contrary, even those Arabs who refused to accept Islam had nothing to say regarding its language and style. They could obviously see that it was effectively winning the hearts of more and more people each day. They knew that it was not human literature... yet they were just not willing to accept it to be Divine. Under these circumstances, they direly needed a good excuse for their refusal to accept the Qur'an as a revealed word of God. Yet, even under these circumstances, they - with all their eloquence and linguistic pride - were unable to point-out even a single error in the Glorious Qur'an; all that they could come up with was that "it is nothing but 'Magic' and 'Sorcery'."

Obviously, had the Qur'an - that claimed to be in "*Arabiyyun Mobin*" (clearest and purest Arabic dialect) - entailed any grammatical or other linguistic 'errors', it would then have been impossible for the Prophet to win even a single Arab soul. However, we know that during the first thirteen years, it was only the character of the Prophet and the content of Qur'an that had actually won the hearts and minds of the God-fearing Arabs, through whom, later on an Islamic State was setup first in *Medina*, and subsequently, in the whole of Arabia.

This is an irrefutable historical fact.

Now, with this in mind, let us examine another aspect of the arguments presented by the author of the referred article. He writes:

It is reported that *Uthman*, after viewing the first standard copy of the Qur'an, said, 'I see grammatical errors in it, and the Arabs will read it correctly with their tongues.'

Then, he further states:

The Muslim scholar *Ibn al-Khatib* who quoted the above report in his book *al-Furqan*, went on to mention another report on the authority of 'Aa'isha, one of Mohammad's wives, saying, 'There are three grammatical errors in the Book of Allah, they are the fault of the scribe:

In 20:63

"*Qaalu inna haazaani la-saahiraani ...*"

And in 5:69

"*Innal-laziina 'aamanuu wal-laziina haaduu was-Saabi'uuna wan-Nasaaraa man 'aamana bilaahi wal-Yawmil-'Aakhiri wa 'amila saali-hanfalaa khaw-fun 'alay-him wa laa hum yah-zanuun.*"

And in 4:162

"*Laakinir-Raasi-khuuna fil-'ilmi minhum wal-Mu'-minuuna yu'-minuuna bi-maaa 'unzila 'ilayka*

*wa maaa 'unzila min-qabluka wal-muqiimiin as-Salaata wal mu'-tuunaz-Zakaata wal-Mu'-mi-nuuna billaahi wal-Yawmil-'Aakhir: 'ulaaa 'ika sanu'-tii-him 'ajran 'aziimaa."*

In the following paragraphs, we shall analyze the cited sayings of `Ayesha (ra) & `Uthman (ra).

### **The Saying Ascribed to `Uthman (RA)**

The first among these narratives is ascribed to `Uthman (ra). According to this narrative, `Uthman is reported to have said that he could see (a few/many?) mistakes in the official standardized copy of the Qur'an, but was of the opinion that because the Arabs shall have no difficulty in finding these errors - appreciating them as "errors" - and shall be in a position to correct them, themselves, he, therefore, did not give such "errors" much importance.

Now, the first thing about this tradition is that even if we accept that the later generations were not aware of these errors (because of any reason), still it relates to a matter that concerns not a few but all the Muslims that were present during `Uthman's (ra) time. It thus relates to a matter, which, if it had really happened, should have been reported, not by one, two or a few people, but by hundreds and thousands of people. It should have become as well known a fact as, for instance the existence of a person called `Uthman is, but as we see, that is not the case. According to one of the principles of some of the Jurists, especially *Abu Hanifah*, if one, two, three or a few people report an incident that should logically be reported by hundreds or thousands of people, such traditions shall not be accepted. To understand this concept, let us consider an example of our everyday life. If someone declares that an earthquake in a neighboring country has killed thousands of people and that "someone" is the only person giving such a news, none of the newspapers or any other of the well known communication media is giving such a news, every reasonable person shall reject such a news on the same principle. Obviously, something as big, as significant and as well known cannot be accepted on the basis of a report of one, two or just a few people.

Furthermore, looking at this narrative closely, we are faced with another very serious question. If `Uthman (ra) had really known that there were mistakes in the text of the Qur'an, why did he not correct them immediately. It is generally believed that in his effort to standardize the reading of the Qur'an and to disseminate the official copy of the Qur'an, `Uthman ordered the burning of all the other copies of the Qur'an, which were in circulation at that time. If `Uthman could, as is generally believed, destroy all the copies of the Qur'an once, for the purpose of standardization, then why could he not do it a second time, for the purpose of correction? Obviously, the tradition does not answer this question. This simple, unanswered question leaves the tradition inconsistent with common sense. According to another one of the principles laid down by the *Muhaddithin* (the scholars of the Prophet's traditions), if a tradition is inconsistent with common sense, it shall not be accepted.

Then again, according to the cited narrative, `Uthman ignored the so-called 'mistakes' and 'errors' because he thought that the Arabs would have no problems in recognizing these 'errors' and, consequently, making emends in them. However, this narrative completely ignores the point that the original idea of the `Uthmanic compilation of the Qur'an - if it ever actually took place - was

to standardize the style of writing and the recitation of the Qur'anic text, for the very purpose of making it possible for the newly conquered non-Arab territories (and peoples) to be able to read the Qur'anic text in a standardized manner. It seems quite ridiculous that even though the whole exercise of standardizing the Qur'an was undertaken for the purpose of making it easier for the newly converted non-Arabs to read the Qur'anic text in a standardized manner, yet the so-called 'errors' and 'mistakes' were so easily ignored on the presumption that the 'Arabs would have no problems in recognizing these errors'. The whole incident reported in the cited narrative is, obviously, an unfounded concoction of someone, whose intention were only to create doubts about the Qur'anic text in the minds of the subsequent generations.

Moreover, this tradition ascribed to `Uthman very seriously questions the correctness of the verbal tradition of the Qur'an. It, therefore, can be termed as a tradition against the Qur'an. Thus, according to yet another one of the principles laid down by the *Muhaddithin* any narrative, which is against the Qur'an or the established unanimously held beliefs or unanimously followed actions of the Muslims is not acceptable. The afore mentioned principles of the *Muhaddithin* have been combined in a single statement, in one of the most well known and accepted books on the principles of the *Muhaddithin* relating to the acceptance of narratives. *Khatib* Baghdadi in his book "*Kitab ul-Kifayah fi `ilm al-riwayah*" writes<sup>8</sup>:

No such narative reported by a few people shall be accepted, which is against common sense, or against an established ruling of the Qur'an or against a known *Sunnah* of the Prophet or against any thing accepted and followed by the Muslims as the *Sunnah*, or against logic.

Unless satisfactory answers are provided for these questions, this narrative cannot be taken as correctly ascribed to `Uthman (ra). The general acceptance of the vast Arab population of the Qur'an as an infallible piece of Arabic literature makes the content of such narratives highly questionable. If such was really the opinion of `Uthman, as is mentioned in this narrative, the Qur'an would obviously not have received such tremendous acceptance from, at least the Arabs. To the contrary, we see that it was none other than the Arabs themselves, who not only accepted the Qur'an to be infallible in language, literary style, grammar, etc., but were also the primary source of propagation of this book in the whole world.

### **The Saying Ascribed to `Ayesha (ra)**

Now let us turn to the narrative ascribed to `Ayesha (ra).

Acceptance of this narrative again hangs on the answers to the following questions:

1. Why were these so-called 'errors' not recognized and reported by a large number of Arabs, rather than just one or two of them? It is even more surprising that even after these 'errors' were pointed-out by two of the most well known personalities of Islamic history, the common Arabs remained oblivious of them. If such narratives had any truth in them, they would have gained the status of generally accepted public narratives, which, even if they were not reported in the various compilations of narratives, would most certainly have become well known through simple public transmission.

2. Why did `Ayesha (ra) not take any step to correct these 'errors'? It must be kept in mind that `Ayesha (ra) is the person, who is said to have made a public appearance in a political matter after `Uthman's murder. Why did she not plan any action to correct the 'errors' that she knew were only a result of scribal and human mistakes? Why did she let these mistakes become so sacrosanct that even the possibility of retrieving the correct (original) words, in future, was reduced to non-existent?
3. This narrative is against the Qur'an. Thus, according to the cited principles of the *Muhaddithin* it cannot be accepted.

Besides these reservations, there are also some other problems in accepting these narratives as correct. Some of these problems are given below:

- This narrative is reported by Abu Mu`awiyah Mohammad ibn Khazim al-Tamimi al-Dharir al-Kufi to Ibn Hamid or Ibn Humaid. According to Abdullah ibn Ahmad ibn Hanbal, his father Ahmad ibn Hanbal said: Abu Muawiyah's narrations except those reported by Al-Aa`mash, are not reliable.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, Abu Dawood states: I asked Ahmad ibn Hanbal: what do you think about the narratives of Hisham ibn `Urwah (another narrator in this narrative) that are reported by Abu Muawiyah? He replied: These narratives include such narratives that are not reliable. According to Ibn Kharrash, narratives reported by Abu Muawiyah are dependable if they come through Al-Aa`mash<sup>10</sup>

The first verse stated in this narrative (20: 63) has been transliterated by the author of the article thus:

"*Qaaluuu inna haazaani la-saahiraani ...*"

he "error" in this verse, as is stated by the author is:

The word *saahiraan* should be *saahirayn*.

The word *saahiraan* was declined incorrectly because the word *inna* in the beginning of the nominal sentence causes a form of declension called "*nasb*" to the nominative and the "*yeh*" is the "sign of *nasb*".

At close examination of the actual verse, as it appears in the Qur'an, it, however, becomes obvious that the whole objection is unfounded. The referred verse does not even read as the author has stated. The reading as it appears in the Qur'an is:

"*Qaalu in haazaani la-saahiraani ...*" (Ta Ha 20: 63)

'Unfortunately', in this verse, it is not the word "*inna*" but "*in*". Because of this, the whole argument of the author is completely unfounded. The word "*in*" as the learned author would obviously be well aware of, does not "cause a form of declension called '*nasb*' to the nominative".

Thus, the narrative cited by the author does not even state the verse in its correct form. Now, how can such a narrative be accepted to be correctly ascribed to `Ayesha?

- The second 'error', mentioned in `Ayesha's (ra) narrative, lies in 5: 69. The verse reads thus:

*"Innal-laziina 'aamanuu wal-laziina haaduu was-Saabi'uuna wan-Nasaaraa man 'aamana bilaahi wal-Yawmil-'Aakhiri wa 'amila saali-hanfalaa khaw-fun 'alay-him wa laa hum yah-zanuun."*

The author states:

There is a grammatical error in the above verse. The word "Saabi'uuna" has been declined wrongly.

In two other verses, the same word, in exactly the same grammatical setting was declined correctly.

**2:62** *"Innal-laziina 'aamanuu wal-laziina haaduu wan-Nasaaraa was-Saabi'iina ..."*

**22:17** *"Innal-laziina 'aamanuu wal-laziina haaduu was-Saabi'iina wan-Nasaaraa ..."*

You notice that the word was written *Saabi'uuna* in 5:69 and was written *Saabi'iina* in 2:62 and 22:17. In the last two verses the word was declined correctly because the word *inna* in the beginning of the sentence causes a form of declension called "*nasb*" (as in cases of accusative or subjunctive) and the "*yeh*" is the "sign of *nasb*". But the word *Saabi'uuna* in 5:69 was given the 'uu, waw which is the sign of "*raf'a*" (as in cases of nominative or indicative). This then is an obvious grammatical error.

As is clear from the cited argument, the author has tried to establish that the two verses of the Qur'an: 2: 62 and 22: 17, are themselves an evidence that the word in the above verse should have been "*Saabi'iina*" rather than "*Saabi'uuna*". The author, by quoting the two verses (2: 62 and 22: 17) has, at least, recognized the fact that whoever authored the Qur'an was not unaware of the "correct" declension of the word "*saabi'uuna*". However, even after recognizing this fact, the author finds no option but to term such a deviation, of even someone who is fully aware of the general rule as an "Error".

The most well known and acknowledged grammarians of the Arabic language were also faced with the same situation. However, they dealt with it differently and thus, drew a different conclusion. After looking at the Qur'an, they felt that there could be no doubting the fact that the author of the Qur'an was fully aware of the general rules of the language (and most certainly that of the declension of nouns after "*inna*"). Then they were also faced with the verse 5: 69. Now, rather than finding the easier way out by calling the deviation from the general rule an "error", the grammarians, on the presumption that a "person" as knowledgeable as the author of the Qur'an, could not commit such a trivial mistake in a book as important and as significant as the Qur'an, started looking for such deviations in other sources of the Arabic literature and grammar.... and found them. They collected all such deviations and tried to analyze them. They

drew their conclusions and were, subsequently, in a position to safely say that such deviations in the Qur'an were not "errors". Even though these, indeed, were deviations from the normal usage, yet such deviations could not be called "errors". Thus, *Al-Zamakhshuriy* in his commentary on the Qur'an, under the referred verse has alluded to a verse of one of the pre-Islamic poets. The alluded verse reads as follows:

The part "*anna wa antum*" of this verse, as per the argument presented by the author of the article, should have read "*anna wa iyya kum*", but we can see that there is a deviation here from the generally followed rule. This is adequate evidence that such deviations cannot be termed as "Grammatical Errors". As far as the meaning added by such a deviation is concerned, it is not directly related to "grammar" or to "Grammatical Errors" and therefore, we leave it out of the folds of our discussion here.

The argument presented above, substantiates the fact that such deviations were and are known to be existent in the works of, at least the poets of the pre-Islamic era, and therefore cannot and could not have been termed as 'errors' by anyone, who was well versed with the language and its literature. It is thus difficult to accept that 'Ayesha (ra) could have missed the existence of such deviations in the Arabic literature. Furthermore, even if someone as knowledgeable of the Arabic literature as 'Ayesha, could have missed-out on such deviations, it is unlikely that even all the Arabs who heard 'Ayesha's (ra) cited statements would be so ignorant of their own language that they did not correct her.

- The third 'error', mentioned in 'Ayesha's (ra) narrative, is in 4: 162. The verse reads thus:

*"Laakinir-Raasi-khuuna fil-'ilmi minhum wal-Mu'-minuuna yu'-minuuna bi-maaa 'unzila 'ilayka wa maaa 'unzila min-qablika wal-muqiimiin as-Salaata wal mu'-tuunaz-Zakaata wal-Mu'-minuuna billaahi wal-Yawmil-'Aakhir: 'ulaaa 'ika sanu'-tii-him 'ajran 'aziimaa."*

The author, explaining the mistake in this verse, states:

The word *muqiimiin* should be *muqiimuun*. The word should be declined by the "*raf'a* sign" like the other nouns in the sentence. Indeed the two nouns before it (*Raasi-khuun* and *Mu'-minuun*), and the noun after it (*mu'-tuun*) are declined correctly. Some have argued that this word was declined as such to distinguish and praise the act of praying, but the scholar *Ibn al-Khatib* says that this is a sick reasoning. (*Al-Furqan* by Mohammad M. 'abd al-Latif Ibn al-Katib, *Dar al-Kutub al-'elmiyah, Beirut*, p.43). Such reasoning defies logic. Why would one distinguish prayer, which is a branch of religion, and not faith, which is the fundamental and root of religion? Besides can this logic apply to the error of declension in the previous verse? Do we conclude that the *Saabi'iin* are more distinguished than those who believe, and the People of the Book? And why do they get distinguished in one verse and not the other as we have seen? God is much higher than this sick logic. This again is an obvious grammatical error.

It seems from the above statement that the author is in agreement with *Ibn al-Khatib* in his refusal to accept the explanation given by various grammarians. Even so, it must be clearly understood that this particular deviation, whether the explanation (of distinction) is accepted or

held to be "sick", is an established deviation, and every person who has knowledge of even only the basics of the Arabic language is well aware of it (I am sure the author would not even question this point...). The only question that could be asked or the only objection that could be levied on this verse is that the meaning added by this deviation from the general rules is not clear or not logical. Such an objection, as should be clear on the readers, cannot and should not be termed as a "Grammatical Error".

Under these circumstances, it is obvious that ascribing the cited narrative to 'Ayesha (ra), is highly questionable.

With the stated problems, it seems quite obvious that on the basis of a narrative reported by a few people, which themselves do not stand up to the test of acceptability, the infallibility of the Qur'an which has always been and still is accepted by the vast Arab population as the epitome of the purest, the most fluent and the most eloquent Arabic language cannot be challenged.

### **A Final Word**

To summarize, the language and the style of the Qur'an, because of the general acceptance it has received from the classical, as well as the modern, Arabs is above all kinds of linguistic criticism. Any one who is seriously interested in challenging this position of the Qur'an can do so, only after establishing:

1. The Qur'an was not accepted by the classical Arabs to be a piece of unmatched Arabic literature. Evidence of this point must also include an acceptable answer to the question: With the existence of such grammatical and other linguistic errors, why did the Arabs - classical as well as modern - accept the Qur'an to be of a divine origin?
2. The linguists of the Arabic language did not hold the Qur'an to be a source material for their work.
3. The most recognized and acknowledged grammarians of the Arabic language have refused to substantiate their linguistic findings on the basis of any verses of the Qur'an.

Only after these points are established, the grammatical objections levied by the author of "Grammatical Errors in the Qur'an" need to be dealt with seriously and answered. Till such time, these objections do not even come up to the standard of being considerable.





**REFERENCES:**

[1]. The original article may be seen at the following internet address:

<http://members.aol.com/AlHaqq4U/grammar.html>

[2]. Encyclopedia Britannica, Linguistics, Greek and Roman antiquity.

[3]. This, incidentally is also what the author of the referred article stated, in response to one of my questions: "What were the sources which were relied upon for the purpose of the development of Arabic Grammar?" His answer was: "So the source of the Arabic grammar is the Arabic language itself."

[4]. Encyclopedia Britannica, Linguistics, The role of analogy

[5]. For details, see "Grammar", *Ibn Khuldoon's "Muqaddamah"*.

[6]. "*Khazanatul-Adab*" (Arabic), *Abd al-Qadir Ibn `Omar al-Baghdadi*, Volume I, *Dar Sadir*, Beirut, (First Edition) Pgs. 3 - 5.

[7]. For details, see "A Grammar of the Classical Arabic Language", Howell, Mortimer Sloper, Allahabad, 1883, pages xxxiv, xxxv - xxxvi (Preface).

[8]. Page 432

[9]. "*Tahzib ul-Tahzib*" (Arabic), *Ibn Hajar*, Dar Ihya al-Islami, First Edition, 1326 Hijrah, Volume 9, page 138, 139

[10]. "*Meezan ul ai`tidal*", *Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Uthman al-Zahbi*, *Al-Maktabatul-Athriyyah*, Sheikhpura, Pakistan, Volume 4, Page 575.



# NEED FOR A WELL-DIRECTED MUSLIM RESPONSE

Salman Ahmed Shaikh

Some of the non-Muslim contemporaries of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to tease him (PBUH) during his life. The Qur'an mentions that people who did not believe in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) called upon the Prophet (PBUH) in words which had dual meanings and their hearts implied the meanings which tease (2:104). God forbid, they used to call Prophet (PBUH) a poet, fore-teller and magician (69:41-42). God forbid, they even called him (PBUH) as mad (15:6) and Muftari, i.e. forger or liar (16:101).

The Qur'an denies these claims and mentions that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was on an exalted standard of character (68:4) and sent as blessing for all worlds (21: 107). The Qur'an also guides towards the right response. "God knows all that is in their hearts; so ignore what they say, admonish them and speak to them in such terms as will address their minds." (4:63). The Quran says: "Invite to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching." (16:125). The Qur'an says: "So remind them, you are only a one who reminds. You are not a warden over them." (88:21-22). The Qur'an also says: "Don't insult those whom they worship besides Allah... (6:108)."

A few years ago, Muslims shared some information on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) using [#WhoIsMuhammad](#) hash tag. Many hundreds of non-Muslims also shared the messages on social media platforms and they were amazed to know such information. We must recognize that their most often instance of engagement with Islam is not through the Qur'an, but through

meeting Muslims. We need to educate ourselves on the right mindset required from us. The Qur'an says that there is no compulsion in religion (2:256), preach with wisdom (16:125), be just even with enemies (5:8) and know that killing a human is like killing humanity (5:32). Tolerance will come in our society if right education is received.

In Pakistan, the current blasphemy law was introduced during the regime of Zia-ul-Haq in 1986. Initially, it did not suggest capital punishment as the only punishment for blasphemy. In 1991, Federal Shariat Court, an institution established during the regime of Zia-ul-Haq, made amendments in the law which resulted in capital punishment as the only unpardonable punishment for blasphemy. Before 1986, there were hardly any cases of blasphemy in the last one century prior to 1986. In most of that period, Muslims lived as minority in united India and even then, the blasphemy cases were almost non-existent. Since 1986, there have been thousands of blasphemy cases registered in the country when the minority population is less than 3%. When Muslims represented only a quarter of the population in united India, the blasphemy cases were almost non-existent. When Muslims constituted more than 97% of the population in the country and where the constitution has several pro-Islamic laws and favourable standpoint on Islamic legislation, we have seen thousands of blasphemy cases and accusations. It has resulted in several unjust incidents against minorities.

The Qur'an mentions that capital punishment can be given in the case of murder or in the case of Fasad-e-fil-Ard (5:54). Fasad-e-Fil-Ard refers to mischievous activities which harm people's lives, wealth, honour and rule of law in society. The punishments pronounced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as head of state to some individuals belonged to one of these categories. Kab ibn Ashraf was punished not instantly when he started blasphemy, but when he indulged in high treason against the state. Likewise, Abdullah ibn Khatal killed his sub-ordinate. Islamic laws prescribe capital punishment for murder of a human being. Abdullah Bin Ubai, who was a hypocrite, but who did not indulge in murder or Fasad-e-Fil-Ard, was not prosecuted and punished.

Maulana Zahid Ur Rashidi in Al-Shariah journal (Oct, 2011) explains how Abdullah Ibn-e-Abbas (rta) and Hanafi jurists like Imam Abu Yousuf, Imam Tahawi and Ibn-e-Abidin viewed blasphemy. As per them, capital punishment does not apply to non-Muslims and even when it is applied to Muslims, it is pardonable upon repentance.

The Qur'an credits Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as having best morals. his (PBUH) life explains that. He (PBUH) pardoned and forgave those who plotted plans to harm and kill him [God Forbid], those who tortured him (PBUH) emotionally, physically and financially, those who banished him (PBUH) and those who misbehaved and harmed his (PBUH) family members including wife (rta) and daughters (rta).

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "A Muslim should speak the truth when he says anything, and fulfil his trust when he is in position of trust." He (PBUH) said: "He is not one of us who dies without having shown kindness to our young ones and respect to our older ones."

He (PBUH) defined a Muslim as: “One from whose tongue and hands, others are safe.” Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) looked at Ka’aba and said: “You are sacred, but the life of a human being is more sacred than you.”

Even if some law has to be implemented if merited by evidence, it is only the prerogative of the court of law to make a judicial decision. It is regrettable that the distinction of which teachings are for individuals to uphold and establish and which are for state is not well understood. Rather than explaining this distinction, sometimes, the individuals taking law enforcement in their hands are praised, appreciated and even idealized. Rather than making more space for the propagation of Islam, this can potentially bring more state control and intervention, which is not a healthy state of affairs in the long run.

Silence is also a conscious stance. We will be judged for our actions, intentions, mindset and conscious efforts in understanding the true message. As per the Qur’an, on Judgement Day, not even blood relations will share each others’ burden, let alone any thought leaders. The contemporaries who did not believe in Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) practiced political correctness. Their fate and the Qur’an’s verdict on them shows us that there is no benefit in political correctness when the need is to be clear and decisive. Spare a thought to understand what it means to be a Muslim in the words of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). He said: “A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands, others are safe”.





# SPLITTING OF THE MOON IX

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

**Javed Ahmad Ghamidi's Stance**

[Derived from an interactive session with Muhammad Hassan Ilyas ]

## 2. Miracles of Jesus (Peace be upon him)

The mention of the miracles of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) is found in Surah Al Imran and Surah Al Maidah of the Quran. In these passages, four prominent miracles are described. In Surah Al Imran, it is mentioned that when Allah informed Mary (peace be upon her) about the birth of Jesus, she asked how it could be possible since no man had touched her. Allah replied that it would happen just as He decreed, for when Allah decides a matter, He merely says to it "Be," and it is. After this, Allah informed Prophet Jesus about his mission and revealed that he would be sent as a messenger to the Children of Israel. In continuation, the mention is made of four miracles of Prophet Jesus: creating a bird from clay, healing the blind and the leper, and resurrecting the dead. It is explicitly stated that all these miracles were manifested by the command of Allah alone<sup>1</sup>. The verses read:

قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ  
مَا يَشَاءُ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُن فَيَكُونُ -  
وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ. وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي  
إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ -

أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَانْفُخْ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ  
الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخِرُونَ فِي  
بُيُوتِكُمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ۔

She said: “Lord! How can I bear a child when no man has even touched me?” He replied: “In this manner, God creates what He wants.” When He decrees a matter, He need only say to it: “Be,” and it is. [Consequently, it will happen thus] and God will instruct him in law and in wisdom i.e. teach him the Torah and the Gospel, and send him forth as a Messenger to the Israelites. [Consequently, this is what happened and he called upon the Israelites saying:] “I have come to you with a sign from your Lord: from clay I make for you the likeness of a bird, then I breathe into it; then by God’s directive it actually becomes a bird. And I heal the born-blind and the leper, and by God’s directive raise the dead to life. And I can tell you what you eat and what you stock in your houses. Surely in it is a great sign for you, if you are ones who believe.

(Quran 3:47-49)

### 3. The Miracles of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

The greatest miracle granted to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is indeed the Quran. Allah Almighty bestowed His blessed words upon him as the eloquent spokesperson. Its words, sentences, styles, themes, news, commands, all belong to Allah, the Lord of all worlds. Therefore, it is a unique, unparalleled, perfect, and eternal miracle in its essence, nature, manifestation, and perpetuity.

Undoubtedly, it is extraordinary because in human history, it is the only book whose text contains no contradictions, discrepancies, or changes. Its language and literature are beyond comparison in eloquence, rhetoric, sweetness, and charm. It embodies spiritual perfection, profound insight, and vast vision. It is the statement of the seen and the unseen worlds, hence it is a revelation that is unique to the earth but is aware of both the seen and unseen realms.

Reading it, lost truths of the past are unveiled, and unknown events of the future are revealed. Therefore, every rational person, whether willingly or unwillingly, is compelled to acknowledge it as the quilt of knowledge and spirituality, the treasury of religion and morality, and the collection of law and wisdom. For the guidance, enlightenment, success, and salvation of humanity, there is no better guide available on earth.

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, while explaining its miracles, writes:

"The miracle given to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in this regard is the Quran. Those who are familiar with the literary styles of the Arabic language, as well as the tradition of knowledge and literature, when they read it, they can clearly perceive that it cannot be the speech of any human being. Therefore, in more than one instance, he himself challenged his audience that if they truly believe that it is not the word of God but rather something Muhammad is presenting on his own behalf, then they should bring forth a single verse like it, matching its eloquence. If any individual from

their nation can produce such a work without any knowledge or literary background, then they should have no difficulty in doing so."

This claim of the Quran was a remarkable claim. It meant that the Quran is such a discourse that creating anything similar to it is impossible for the human mind. It was a claim of the Quran's extraordinary uniqueness in terms of eloquence, rhetoric, and beautiful expression. It was a claim that someone should bring forth something which, like the Quran, appears to be speaking from God, which clarifies those truths that are the most essential for humanity to understand, and which have never been clarified by any human speech, which guides in matters where no other guidance is readily available. Such a discourse would provide testimony to conscience, be affirmed by knowledge and reason, intoxicate desolate hearts as rain intoxicates barren land, and possess the same majesty and impact that a reader of the Quran feels when familiar with its language, sensing its every word.

History tells us that none of the contemporaries of the Quran were able to muster the courage to confront this challenge. The Almighty says:

[This is what this Book calls to. Accept it] and if you are in doubt about what We have revealed to Our servant, then [go and] produce a single sūrah like it. And, [for this purpose,] also call your leaders besides God, if you are truthful [in this claim of yours].

وَأِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا  
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ. فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا  
النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ۔

Then if you are not able to do it, and surely you cannot, then fear the Fire whose fuel is those people also who do not believe and those stones of theirs too which they worship. It has been prepared for these very disbelievers. (Quran 2:23-4)

The divine book is still with us even after more than fourteen centuries have passed. During this time, the world has undergone immense transformations. Humanity has crafted and then shattered countless theories and ideologies. There have been significant changes in human perceptions of themselves and the cosmos, and numerous stages of acceptance and rejection have been traversed. The paths taken and the eventual destinations reached by humanity are numerous. However, this book, which contains many things that have remained the subject of scientific inquiry and research in the past two centuries, is the only book in all of world literature that remains as steadfast and firm today as it was fourteen hundred years ago. Just as in the past, when knowledge and reason were compelled to acknowledge their limitations in its presence, they are compelled to do so today as well. Each of its statements still holds its position with full dignity. Despite the world's astonishing scientific discoveries, there is no room for any modification or alteration within it.

وَبِالْحَقِّ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ وَبِالْحَقِّ نَزَلَ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا مُبَشِّرًا وَ  
نَذِيرًا-

We have revealed this Qur'ān with the truth and it is revealed with the truth, and [O Prophet!] We have sent you only to give glad tidings [to those who believe] and to warn [those who do not believe]. Quran 17:105) (Meezan 136-138).

In addition to the magnificent miracle of the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was granted various miracles in accordance with the circumstances, time, and need. It should be clear that the personality of the Messenger of Allah himself is a great miracle. Allah speaks to him directly, the trustworthy angel Gabriel delivers Allah's messages to him, he communicates with the angels, and Allah's words are revealed through his tongue. He informs people of unseen matters by receiving news from the heavens, and blessings and favors emanate from his existence.

Perhaps there may come a day when a sign or miracle of Allah does not originate from his surroundings or his being. Such types of signs are mentioned in the Quran and in some books of Hadith and Seerah<sup>2</sup>. For example, two of these miracles are mentioned below.

One of these miracles is the Miracle of the Battle of Badr. When the Prophet (PBUH) threw a handful of dust towards the army of the disbelievers, it turned into a stormy cloud of dust, entering the eyes of the deniers. This miracle is mentioned in the Quran as well as in various narrations with some detailed accounts. Allah Almighty says in Surah al-Anfal:

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَ  
لِيُبَيِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَاءً حَسَنًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ - (8:17)

Believers! Why should you show reluctance when God fights from your side? So, in reality, you did not slay them [in this battle]; it is, in fact, God Who has slain them, and [O Prophet!] When you threw [dust] on them, it was not you but God Who has thrown it to show various aspects of His majesty to the disbelievers and to grant a goodly favor from Himself to the Muslims. Indeed, God sees and hears all (Quran 8:17).

Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi has titled this context as "Dast-e-Ghaib ke Karnamay" (Miracles of the Unseen Hand), and under this heading, he writes:

"The address in 'فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ' (So you did not kill them) is general and directed towards Muslims, while in 'وَمَا رَمَيْتَ' (And you did not throw), it is directly addressing the Prophet (peace be upon him). Because of this, there is a difference between the plural and singular in both. 'رمى' (throwing) can refer to shooting arrows, throwing stones, tossing dust and sand, it applies to all. It is narrated that when the armies of disbelievers faced each other, the Prophet (peace be upon him) picked up a handful of



dust from the ground and threw it towards the disbelievers, saying 'شاهت الوجوه' (May their faces be humiliated). 'شاهت الوجوه' is an Arabic phrase of curse, and throwing dirt on someone has been a method of cursing since ancient times. This is also mentioned in the Torah and can be inferred from Arab traditions.

Maulana Farahi has referred to this in his commentary on Surah Al-Fil. It should be noted here that sometimes negation of an action doesn't necessarily mean the negation of the action itself but rather negation of the glorious consequences associated with that action, which are manifested in the context of that action. The handful of dust thrown by the Muslims turned into a stormy cloud of dust, cutting through the ranks of the Quraysh's iron-hearted army like carrots and turnips, or the pinch of dust thrown by the Prophet (peace be upon him) turning into a storm that filled the eyes of all the disbelievers, these were not the deeds of Muslim swords sheathed in chests or the Prophet's 'rami', but rather the miracles of the unseen hand hidden within the Muslims and the Prophet of the world." (Tadabbur-e-Quran 3/451)

A prime example of the miracles of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the divine revelations predicting events that were to occur, which were announced through your blessed tongue. Some of these are mentioned in the Quran-e-Majeed, while others are transmitted through narrations. Long before the significant and unexpected events of your victory in the conquest of Mecca, the mother of cities, and the entry of people into the fold of Islam, you had already informed about them. Similarly, the prediction of the defeat of the Romans after being overcome by the Persians also transcended mere speculation and conjecture, reaching the realm of hope and possibility. The Quran-e-Majeed articulates this as follows:

غَلَبَتِ الرُّومُ . فِى أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِّنْ بَعْدِ غَلَبِهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ . بِضْعِ سِنِينَ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ بَعْدُ وَيَوْمَئِذٍ يَفْرَحُ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ .  
بِنَصْرِ اللَّهِ يَنْصُرُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ . وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَأُخْلِفَ  
اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ .

The Romans have been defeated in the nearby land but after this defeat of theirs they shall soon be victorious in the next few years. Whatever happened before this happened at God's behest also and whatever will happen in future will also happen at God's behest and the believers will rejoice on that day because of God's help. God helps whomsoever He pleases and He is Powerful and very Merciful. God's promise is certain and God does not go back on His promise, but most people know not. (Quran 30:1-6)

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi has described the event in the following words:

The actual words are: أَدْنَى الْأَرْضِ. Here they refer to Syria and Palestine which were situated immediately adjacent to Arabia. At the birth of Muhammad (sws), there existed two great empires: the Christian Roman Empire and the Magian Persian

Empire. Both were persistent adversaries of one another. In 603 AD, the Persians attacked the Romans on the lame pretext of stifling a rebellion. After this, the Romans suffered one defeat after another until in 616 AD a greater part of the Eastern Roman Empire including Jerusalem was subdued by the Persians. This was the sixth or seventh year of Muhammad's prophethood. This prediction has been made by the Qur'ān somewhere between 617 and 620 AD. Gibbon says that "No prophecy could be more distant from its accomplishment, since the first twelve years of Heraclius announced the approaching dissolution of the empire<sup>3</sup>." The Qur'ān has stressed that by the latest this prediction would be fulfilled in the next decade (يَضَعُ سِنِينَ). Thus, it was fulfilled precisely according to this announcement and in March 628 AD the Roman emperor returned to Constantinople with such splendor that four elephants were pulling his chariot and numerous people stood outside the city with lanterns and branches of olive to welcome back their hero.

It was in such an explicit nature and certain style that this prediction was made as an argument in favor of Muhammad's prophethood. It is evident from historical narratives that because of their religious proximity with the Christians and the latter's attitude towards them and with the message of the Qur'ān, in particular in Abyssinia, Muslims naturally held sympathy for them. The Qur'ān has assured them that they should not be aggrieved; their brethren of the People of the Book will soon become dominant. Moreover, this prediction will become a great proof of the prophethood in which they have professed faith. This is because none except God can give such news of the future in such an absolute and certain manner (al-Bayan, 4/43-44).

To be continued.....

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- [1]. Indeed, the mention of the second and third miracles is also found in the Gospel. The difference lies in the fact that in the Quran, it is explicitly stated with each miracle that it occurred by the permission of Allah, whereas such a statement is not present in the Gospel. It is inferred that when the concept of divinity for Prophet Jesus emerged, such expressions were likely removed from consideration without being associated with that concept.
- [2]. Some researchers have thoroughly investigated these miracles and, under the titles of "Dala'il al-Nubuwwah" (Proofs of Prophethood) and "Mu'jizat al-Nabi" (Miracles of the Prophet), have authored complete books.
- [3]. ((Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. 2 (New York: The Modern Library, n.d.), 788).



# COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

There is no doubt that Allah has created humans on a certain nature which repeatedly violate by misusing their intentions and becoming enslaved by their desires. Whether it's the temptation of wealth, power, or superiority in gender, humans fall prey to them and get easily dominated. The expression of all these inclinations should be restricted to their rightful place. Even though the Creator has made adequate provisions in the world for them, if human nature becomes corrupted, individuals fulfill these demands through means that may cause harm to others and lead to their exploitation and abuse.

To sexually harass someone is indeed a despicable act. The heinousness of this action increases even more when the path to registering such complaints in society is also closed off. The study of human history shows that both men and women have accepted this slavery to the dictates and desires of society. Just as an innocent woman has to endure pain after sexual assault, similarly, a man also has to suffer from this torment, like Joseph, who also endured the advances of a woman like Zuleikha.

The organization of society, freedom of expression, and the establishment of state institutions have not only made the prevention of such injustices a part of societal norms, but also heightened people's awareness of safeguarding their dignity. However, in this era of social media, where news spreads to millions of people in moments, those affected by sexual harassment also have

some legal and moral responsibilities, which must be considered to protect their rights.

In recent years, the way sexual harassment cases are dealt with has evolved. When an individual affected by sexual harassment accuses someone, whether it be through media or by law enforcement agencies, the accused's image and identity are publicly exposed. In our view, this approach is completely wrong.

Accusing someone of sexual harassment is synonymous with diminishing their societal status. The individual, their family, and their acquaintances are all viewed as criminals in society's eyes. Thus, the case is tried in the court of public opinion, where there are no rules or laws. First, clothes are stripped away, then character assassination begins. One group and its supporters label the other without any conclusive evidence, while the other group and its affiliates keep the accusers at arm's length, branding them as liars and blackmailers. This unethical practice perpetuates falsehoods, lies, and accusations to the next generations. With time, these lies become historical truths within their circles. Consequently, not only families, institutions, and countries, but entire nations become resentful towards each other.

After the advent of the internet and Facebook, people have gained the courage to speak out against and discuss the heinous act of sexual harassment. However, it is felt that along with societal upbringing, there should also be regular legislation in this regard, and instead of presenting allegations in public courts, they should be brought to relevant forums until logical conclusions are reached.

In our opinion, the following aspects should be considered in societal upbringing and legislation:

1. Accusing someone of sexual harassment should be considered a punishable offense if it is not done in a relevant department. Until the complainant or the accused is proven guilty, no one should speak about any party. The complainant should be convinced and encouraged to discuss the matter on the appropriate forum. Ordinary people should neither spread such allegations nor publicize them.
2. Instead of ordinary courts, specialized departments should be established for such allegations, and the department should not be allowed to make the name of the accused public until the crime is fully proven. The same rule should be applied regarding identity of the accuser.
3. Media and newspapers should feel their social responsibility and refrain from releasing news on such matters through their channels.
4. For proving the crime, instead of searching for eyewitnesses, psychological analysis should be done based on past records and circumstantial evidence to reach the depth of the matter. Online complaint systems should be established to register cases and protect the complainant from maltreatment.

5. Efforts should be made to ensure that if any wrongdoing or violation has occurred, the case should not be made public until a thorough investigation is conducted. Besides legal experts, reputable individuals from society should also be involved in the process to ensure transparent investigations of such sensitive incidents and to clarify the nature of the crime.
6. Once someone is proven guilty, the complainant or the authorities should announce their identity immediately so that others can be warned, but their friends, family, and relatives should be protected. In the Western world, the record of such people is included into the system so that every institution and authority dealing with the individual know the case.
7. If an accusation is proven false, then the accuser should face punishment or penalty. The accused should also have the right to announce that someone falsely accused them, which could not be proven.
8. After the accusation is proven, along with giving physical punishment to the criminal, psychological treatment should also be provided to address their illness so that their condition can be treated, and they can play a positive role in their family and society in the future.

These recommendations are merely presented as a sample. Experts in this field can further deliberate on this matter.

Incidents of sexual harassment on social media are often heard, and they usually involve well-known figures in society. These incidents capture the interest of the general public, and the entire issue is discussed in a particular emotional atmosphere. These are sensitive and delicate matters that affect people's lives, so we must prove our responsibility and seek refuge in God, lest one day we become targets of such accusations ourselves and then spend our entire lives justifying our innocence in the court of public and facing their hatred and anger. Therefore, what we desire for ourselves tomorrow, let us start thinking about it for others from today.





# DABISTAN-E-SHIBLI

Javed Ahmad Ghamidi

حلقہ گرد من زنی دے پیکر ان آب و گل  
آتشے در سینہ دارم از نیاگان شما

“In circles we dance, oh figures of grace,  
Water and flowers, our steps embrace.  
A fire within, it holds its place,  
Lit by the spark of your radiant face.”

I sit at my study table late into the night. The warmth of the heater has been pushed out of the room by the lair conditioner, but the fire in my chest still rages, its embers glowing for ages. I've often wished to sprinkle some cooling grains upon those smoldering ashes, perhaps finding solace, but would that diminish the intensity of the flame?

غزلے زدم کہ شاید بنوا قرارم آید  
تپ شعلہ کم نہ گردوز گسستن شراره

“I composed verses, hoping my plight to mend,  
Mayhap from chaos, my heart shall ascend.

Yet the flame, undimmed, refuses to bend,  
Sparks still flying, my soul it does tend.”.

Yet tonight, these sparks themselves are restless to reveal the source of this fire to others:

می کشد شعلہ سرے از دل صد پارہ ما  
جوش آتش بود امروز بہ فوارہ ما

“The flame rises high from our hearts' profound,  
Today, its fervor in full, all around.”

1857 is the year in our history when the sun of our glory set in the western horizon, but another sun rose upon the horizon of the Muslim world in that year. It is the year of birth of Maulana Shibli. According to Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, he emerged in the turmoil of the East and departed from the world in the turmoil of the West in 1914. It was the era in which our first acquaintance with Western civilization happened, and as a result, this nation was divided into two groups. One group believed that neither is it necessary to prioritize the principles and fundamentals of our school of thought and the opinions of our elders above religion, nor is it appropriate for Western civilization and its sciences to impose themselves on the views of the people of religion from any aspect. Prominent figures in this group include Qasim Nanotvi, Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, Mahmood al-Hasan Deobandi, Anwar Shah Kashmiri, Husain Ahmad Madani, Ashraf Ali Thanvi, and Shabbir Ahmad Usmani. The other group consisted of those whose standard of right and wrong was this civilization and its sciences. Their leader was the same old man of whom Shibli himself said:

پیری سے کمر میں اک ذرا خم  
توقیر کی صورت مجسم

"A little bent in humility,  
A sculpture of respect in form."

Shibli emerged as the founder of a third group in contrast to these two. The fundamental principles of this group were twofold: firstly, that progress for us lies in continually advancing, to the extent that we reach the era when the Quran was revealed and when God's last Prophet himself addressed humanity. And secondly, that it is necessary for us to remain familiar with the modern just as we are with the ancient, just as our knowledge is of the ancient. Syed Sulaiman Nadwi, Allama Iqbal, Abul Ala Maududi, Hamiduddin Farahi, Amin Ahsan Islahi, all these are the elders of this group. I call it "Dabistan-e-Shibli." Iqbal also remained mostly associated with this school. His voice was the most beautiful voice of that era. His poetry attained the status of literary excellence. However, due to his interest in philosophy and mysticism, his situation remained the same as we have previously seen in our history, for example, with Al-Ghazali. He became captivated by a deer for which he kept an arrow in his bow. But when he shot the arrow, he found the arrow tearing apart someone else's chest, as if

خدنگ جعبه توفیق امشب در کمانم بود  
غزالم در نظر بسیار خوب آمد خطا کردم

“Tonight, the face of fortune's favor was in my bow's embrace,  
The deer of my desire appeared so fair, I made a mistake in chase.”

Though Syed Sulaiman Nadwi was considered as Shibli's successor, the truth is that he was associated with the first group. Consequently, he practically proved this fact by pledging allegiance to Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi. It is also presumed that Abdul Majid Daryabadi was a member of this same group, but the story of his life tells us that he emerged from the institution of atheism and ended up in the Sufi lodge of Thana Bhoon. Abul Kalam was a genius of this era; his writing and oratory influenced an entire generation. When he appeared, it seemed as if the vastness of deserts had contracted and the force of rivers had shattered before him, but the luster of his knowledge and action itself got lost in its own dust. Abu Al-Ala Al-Maududi was also there, and he had a style of writing as well. His good nature was evident in his demeanor. After him, he followed this path with such dignity that everyone thought he would not stop before reaching his destination. No doubt he went far ahead, but still, how far he lagged behind, one can understand if someone looks at Farahi's research and interpretation of the verse "Then your hearts became hardened." I saw him closely in his final years. His respect in my heart kept me silent. Otherwise, I wished many times to tell him that:

بال بکشا و صغیر از شجر طوبی زین  
حیف باشد چو تو مرغی که اسیر نفسی

“From the tree of Tuba, the breeze and the flute sound,  
It's a pity, like birds, that you are captive in a cage.”

In this school, the only person who should be called the Imam of the Era is Hamiduddin Farahi alone. He was one of God's signs on this earth. Syed Sulaiman Nadwi writes about his demise:

"The prayer for the interpreter of the Quran (the commentator of the Quran's funeral prayer), is the voice that was raised more than six hundred years ago, from Egypt and Syria to the walls of China, for the funeral prayer of Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him. The truth is that this voice should rise again today and spread from India to Egypt and Syria at least, so that on this day, for the Ibn Taymiyyah of the current era, who departed from this world on November 11, 1930 (19 Jamadi al-Akhir 1349 AH), whose excellence and perfection, considering the contemporary Islamic world, seems beyond expectation in the near future. He was a miracle of the Eastern and Western universality of the era. An expert in Arabic and a graduate in English, an image of asceticism and piety, a statue of virtue and perfection, the nightingale of Shiraz in Persian, the market of Okazin Arabic, a unique personality but a world of knowledge. He was a



world of knowledge and recognition, a secluded individual equipped with multitude of perfection, an unmatched sovereign of art, a specialist of literary works, a treasure of Arabian sciences, a critic of rational sciences, an expert of religious teachings, a knower of secrets of Quranic teachings, indifferent to the rejection and praise of people, dedicated to the knowledge's threshold, and the king of his own world. He was a person who for thirty years remained immersed in studying, learning, teaching, and researching the Quran, completely unaware of everything else, paying no attention to any form of entertainment. It is regrettable that his knowledge could not be transferred from his heart to the paper. He left a plethora of his writings, but alas, where is the mind to publish and organize them? The few journals that have been published are in Arabic, which are neither understood by the public nor recognized by the scholars. His life was a source of confidence for us and his existence was a support for Darul Musannifeen. It is regrettable that this confidence and support kept dwindling, and only the confidence and support of God remained, which is the last resort. More regrettable is that he came and went, but the world could not recognize his worth and remained unfamiliar with his excellence and perfection:

تو نظیری ز فلک آمدہ بودی چو مسیح  
باز پس رفتی و کس قدر تو نشناخت درین

"You came like a Messiah to this world,  
You departed again, and how little you were known, alas!"

Only Farahi could earn this honor because when he started his journey, he never looked back. Therefore, among the travelers of this path, only he found the destination. Amin Ahsan Islahi is the successor of this unique era. If he did not surpass his teacher, he also did not lag behind. His entire life passed in elucidating its mysteries and secrets of the position Hamiduddin reached. His Tadabbure-e-Quran (commentary on the Quran) is an unparalleled treasure trove of knowledge and research. His pen recounted the stories of fifty years of struggle. In the words of Arfi:

رخ او گوید اگر جنگ و گر صلح کہ من  
بہ کشادگرہ جہہ خاقان رفتم

"The spear may say, 'Whether in war or peace,  
When I went to the high forehead of the king.'"

Only a few among the people with whom he spent his entire life recognized his excellence and perfection. I have witnessed disentangling of centuries old knots in moments in his gatherings and have confessed many times that:

طے می شود ایں رہ بدر خشنیدن برتے  
ما بے خبراں منتظر شمع و چراغ غم

"The path of shining brightening may be cleared,  
We, ignorant, await the light and illumination."

Now see, the era of the first group has come to an end. Its example now is like that dilapidated building which will remain deserted since the time of reconstruction. The second group, although now holding onto the reins of honor and power, but the decision of history is that like the instances of old transgressions, this transgression too will be restricted to its pages after some time. The leadership for the coming era is destined for "Dabistan-i-Shibli". Now, preparations for its emergence are being made on the canvas of history.

عالم نو ہے ابھی پردہ تقدیر میں  
میری نگاہوں میں ہے اُس کی سحر بے حجاب

"In the curtain of fate, he is a new world,  
His magic is unveiled in my eyes."

But in what state is it at the moment? Abu al-Hasan Ali is the successor of Syed Sulaiman Nadwi. But, like Sulaiman Nadvi, he is more inclined toward Deoband than Nadvah. Abu al-Kalam has departed from this world alone. As for Abul Ala, the people he left behind include those who claim to be his successors as well as those who claim to take allegiance from people in his successorship. Many things from Abu al-Ala's legacy are available to both of them, but nothing of his knowledge, literature, and good nature could not regrettably be conferred upon them. Therefore, for these helpless people, the only option is to repeatedly extend their hands at the door of the first group and be rebuked, to the extent that they compensate for every "mistake" of "Dabistan-i-Shibli". In this group, undoubtedly there are some people other than them who someone can say have some education, but the reality is that their status is no more than being the commentators of Abu al-Ala's text. Arfi perhaps said for them centuries ago:

قدم بروں منہ از جہل یا فلاطوں شو  
کہ در میانہ گزینی سراب و تشنہ لبی ست

"Step forward with shame or gracelessness,  
That in the midst, we are in suspense, like candle and lantern."

The last sign of "Dabistan-i-Shibli" is now only Amin Ahsan. How many of his disciples and

companions are aware of this fact? I see that for the past ten years, this fire of awareness has been burning within me. Its remnants are buried in its own ashes, but they do not extinguish:

کہ آتشے کہ نہ میرد ہمیشہ درد دل ماست

"That the fire, if it does not die, is always in our hearts,"

Sometimes I wish to say to Amin Ahsan's successors:

دست ہر نا اہل بہارت کند  
سوئے مادر آ کہ تیمارت کند

"Every incapable hand creates illness,  
Except for the mother, who creates healing."

Sometimes I wish to say this to the addressees of Amin Ahsan:

آں نیست کہ من ہم نفساں را بگذارم  
با آبلہ پایاں چہ کنم قافلہ تیز است

"That is not it, that I should leave my own self unattended,  
With bare feet, how should I hurry up the journey?"

See, the ink of the pen has dried. This incident has not happened to me for the first time. Whenever I started telling this story, it ended here. Sometimes I fell short of words, sometimes the relationship of meaning got entangled, sometimes the listeners fell asleep, and today—the pen has broken down. Perhaps, for me, this is a reminder of this fact:

سخن از تاب و تب شعلہ بہ خس نتواں گفت

"The speech cried out of pain and fever,  
[1987 AD]"



# TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

1. Hazrat Zaid bin Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said to his companions:  
"Seek refuge with Allah from the trial of the Dajjal." The companions said: "We seek refuge with Allah from the trial of the Dajjal." (Musannaf Ibn Abi Shaybah, Hadith 29121)
2. Hazrat Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said:  
"Be aware, I am telling you something about the Dajjal which no prophet has told his people before. He is certainly blind in one eye and will bring with him places that resemble Paradise and Hell. So what he will call a garden will actually be fire. I have warned you about him just as Noah (peace be upon him) warned his people about him." (Sahih Muslim, Hadith 2936)
3. Hazrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:  
"No prophet was sent except that he warned his people about the one-eyed false Messiah, Dajjal. So be fully aware of him. Know that he is blind in one eye, with a thick covering over it. And your Lord, blessed and exalted be His Being, is not one-eyed. Written between Dajjal's eyes is the word 'Kafir' (disbeliever). Every believer will be able to read it, whether literate or illiterate." (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith 7131)



# THE BEHAVIOR OF POLITICAL, SOCIAL, AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

How should religious and political leaders behave towards their colleagues and assistants? This question has always been important, but in the present times, the trend of organizational development has significantly increased its importance. State institutions, political parties, religious organizations, and welfare associations now operate within a collective framework. As a result, two components emerge: leaders and their assistants and supporters, who work together in a joint effort. Leaders call upon people, and people respond to their call and stand with them. The motivation behind this support is often a noble ideal or a good cause. Hence, they relate to the leaders with complete sincerity, offering sacrifices in various forms—financially, verbally, and through actions.

As a result of this commitment and sacrifice, a natural expectation arises within them that the leaders will pay attention to them, encourage them, recognize their value, and treat them with kindness and affection. If they do not receive this behavior, they become disheartened and withdraw, and in some cases, may even reach the point of opposition and hostility. This is a common human trait. People of all times, regions, and nations follow this pattern. There is no difference among them in this regard.

The reality of this matter demands that leaders develop a habit of winning hearts. If they wish to keep their followers engaged and make them their allies and supporters, there is no escaping this. They need to cultivate a disposition of kindness and benevolence. This means they should speak to their followers with gentleness and love, approach every matter with a pleasant demeanor,

listen to their advice attentively, encourage them, overlook their mistakes, value their emotions, and most importantly, respect their dignity. This attitude serves as the essential provision for every leader and caravan chief. As the Poet of the East rightly said:

نگہ بلند، سخن دل نواز، جاں پر سوز  
یہی ہے رخت سفر میر کارواں کے لیے

"High vision, heartwarming speech, a soul full of passion  
These are the provisions for the journey of the caravan leader"

The Quran has made this point extremely clear. It presents the behavior and exemplary conduct of the perfect leader, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as an absolute principle, stating that the conduct desired by the Lord from leaders is exemplified by His Messenger. It is said:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ  
عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ -

"So, it is by the mercy of Allah that you were gentle with them (O Prophet). If you had been harsh and hard-hearted, they would have dispersed from around you. So, pardon them, seek forgiveness for them, and consult them in matters." (Quran 3:159)

This is the praise from the Lord of the worlds for the being who is Allah's Prophet, upon whom prophethood was concluded, and who is the sole source of religion on this earth until the Day of Judgment, the one who holds the status of "The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves<sup>1</sup>" — meaning his right over Muslims is greater than their own rights over themselves — whose obedience is the obedience of Allah and whose disobedience is the disobedience of Allah, the Sultan of sultans, the leader of leaders, and the king of kings, before whom heads bow, necks bend, and hearts become humble pathways. It is said about this exalted personality that if you had not been gentle and kind-hearted, these people would have dispersed from around you. In other words, it is clearly stated that gentleness and winning hearts are essential even for a being as obligatory to obey as the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). History bears witness that Allah bestowed this quality upon the Prophet abundantly, and by His grace, he elevated it to such a level that the world proclaimed:

سلام اُس پر کہ اسرارِ محبت جس نے سکھلائے  
سلام اُس پر کہ جس نے زخم کھا کر پھول برسائے  
سلام اُس پر کہ جس نے خوں کے پیاسوں کو قبائیں دیں  
سلام اُس پر کہ جس نے گالیاں کھا کر دعائیں دیں

“Peace be upon him who taught the secrets of love,  
Peace be upon him who endured wounds and showered flowers,  
Peace be upon him who gave cloaks to the bloodthirsty,  
Peace be upon him who received curses and offered prayers.”

It becomes clear that the indispensable trait for leadership is the art of winning hearts. This is the behavior desired by Allah, and this was the conduct of His Messenger. If a leader lacks this trait, no matter how many other qualities they possess, they cannot lead people effectively. Leaders must understand that when people follow them, they do not do so out of fear of authority. This is a bond of brotherhood and love that binds them together.

It is a great misconception to think that harsh criticism, constantly pointing out mistakes, fault-finding, sarcasm, harshness, strictness, and accountability will create a good system. This is a complete fallacy. Not only will such an approach fail to create a good system, but it may also endanger the very existence of the system. If such people are placed in leadership positions, they destroy institutions, organizations, and groups instead of running them effectively. This is because people who come voluntarily or join for a noble cause do not accept ingratitude, disrespect, coercion, blame, or harshness. They cannot be kept standing by causing them grief and tears. The only way to keep them with you is through kindness and generosity.

Leadership should value their love and respond with even more love. If they walk ten steps with you, be grateful; if they take even two steps, thank them. Accept whatever cooperation they offer with a smile, and do not demand more, putting them in difficulty. If they make a mistake, point it out like a kind teacher or a well-wishing friend.

In summary, it is essential for leadership to possess the quality of winning hearts. If by chance someone who does not have this quality is placed in a leadership position, they should strive to develop it. If they succeed, they should remain in their role; otherwise, they should step aside for someone who speaks sweetly, has a tender heart, and embodies love. If they do not do this, it should be understood that the situation will result in:

کوئی کارواں سے ٹوٹا، کوئی بدگماں حرم سے  
کہ امیر کارواں میں نہیں خوے دل نوازی

"Some will break away from the caravan, some will become disillusioned with the sanctuary, For the leader of the caravan lacks the art of winning hearts."

#### REFERENCE:

[1]. Al-Ahzab 33:6



# WE WILL NOT LET AMMAR SPEAK

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

Psychology is the study of human behaviors. Psychologists believe that education, family, economic conditions, and social circumstances are factors that influence human behavior, thoughts, and actions.

When we examine the overall behavior of our religious scholars, two prominent traits stand out: one is an authoritative attitude to enforce their views, and the other is a tendency to judge and pass verdicts on people.

Historically, this may be due to the period during Caliph Mansur's reign when scholars were appointed to positions in the judiciary and lawmaking, thereby becoming indirectly involved in state power. This led to the development of a dominant attitude over people's thoughts and actions. As a result, they began to consider their every opinion as final, every statement as decisive, and every decision as the ultimate word. If anyone disagreed with their viewpoint, they were deemed rebellious, misguided, and deviant. Suppressing such a person's voice, discrediting them in public, and making them an example of warning became seen as essential to upholding truth and religious zeal.

This mindset and behavior, which emerged from a backdrop of power over nearly a thousand years, has become an inseparable part of the psychology of scholars.

However, time is a great assessor, and the tragedy is that the environment which had driven them



to adopt this attitude disappeared abruptly with the fall of the Ottomans and the Mughals. The era of global powers began. After that, the esteemed scholars were neither the chief judges nor the special advisors to the royal courts. The harsh realities of life awaited them. Faced with these facts, the scholars had the opportunity to reflect on what responsibilities religion imposed on them and realize that their role was nothing more than that of a counselor. They were preachers, not judges.

But the royal disposition is hard to shed. They decided to go against the current and resolved to spend their remaining days in the pursuit of their lost glory. By keeping alive the memory of the status they had lost, they found psychological solace.

Ultimately, they were left with three weapons that could restore their lost status. Thus, they decided to wield these three weapons.

The first weapon is "takfir", the right to declare others disbelievers. Our scholars believe that the power to judge people's faith and declare them strangers in society is unmatched. This is a demonstration of their power. Though they may not participate in the state administration, they can challenge the faith of even the head of the state. Therefore, they should be acknowledged and dealt with accordingly.

The second weapon is the authority over what is permissible (halal) and forbidden (haram). From food and drink to clothing and accessories, their pen will decide what is halal and haram. They believe that although they have lost the opportunity to make these decisions in courts, people still feel compelled to present themselves respectfully at their madrasas' dominions to get approval for their potatoes and perfumes and to receive certification of their beliefs and faith.

The third weapon is the measurement of people's piety, determining their religious status, and defining their orthodoxy and religious identity. Scholars believe they can challenge people's religious understanding and faith, making them realize that they are weak Muslims, thus undermining their correct statements. Whether it's investigating the correct hand position in prayer, pointing out errors in Quranic recitation, measuring beards, accusing someone of blasphemy, or taunting someone for being influenced by Western thought, these are the weapons that maintain their dominance over society.

Recently, in a case involving an Ahmadi defendant in the Supreme Court, when it came time for individual opinions to be heard, the Chief Justice called for the opinions of those who were listed, asking if Ammar Khan Nasser was present. Ammar was in the courtroom, but before he could speak, several scholars in attendance gathered and demanded that no individual be allowed to express their opinion, and only representatives of institutions should be given the opportunity to speak. This led to a considerable debate. The Chief Justice repeatedly stated that they wanted to hear everyone that day, but the religious representatives and some lawyers argued that doing so would make the decision controversial. Ultimately, the Chief Justice asked if they all agreed

that no individual opinions should be heard. The scholars responded affirmatively and insisted that no one else should be heard, especially not Ammar Nasser. Consequently, this was what transpired.

Hearing this account, I felt a deep sense of pity for this group. It's disheartening to see what one becomes when they live in search of their lost glory. They fear facing arguments because reason holds no value in their thought system. Additionally, it became clear to me that issues like Ahmadiyya, blasphemy, and the respect of the Prophet have transcended and become a struggle for survival.

The scholars have a profound realization that if they are to preserve their existence, they must hold onto these three weapons. If these are lost, they are lost. If anyone has any doubts about our analysis, they should look to the West and ask the people of the "church." It will become evident that they too reached their decline by passing through these very stages.





# PAKISTAN, AMERICA, AND THE RENAISSANCE OF MUSLIMS

(An Interview with Mr.  
Muhammad Hassan Ilyas)

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**Interviewer:** Najam Suhrawardi

**Editing and Arrangement:** Rana Muazzam Safdar

[Director of Research and Communication at "Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, USA" and Editor of "Ishraq America" (Audio), Mr. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas, recently visited Pakistan. During his visit, the host of the "Off the School" podcast, Najam Suhrawardi, conducted an in-depth interview with him. In this interview, various issues faced by Pakistan and Muslims were discussed. Mr. Hassan Ilyas provided clear and detailed responses, presenting his stance on these matters. This interview can be viewed on the YouTube channel of the Ghamidi Center. After necessary editing and additions, it is being published for the readers of "Ishraq America."]

## Introduction

**Najam Suhrawardi:**

Today, we have Mr. Hassan Ilyas with us. He is a prominent student of Mr. Javed Ahmad

Ghamidi and the Director of the "Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, USA." One of his great qualities is that despite strong disagreements, he can engage in dialogue with patience and politeness. In today's times, when our society is plagued by intolerance, this quality is nothing short of a great blessing. When contentious topics are discussed with patience, respect, and propriety, there is much to learn, and it fosters an environment of dialogue in society.

Mr. Hassan, thank you for joining us.

Today, we will discuss some important questions on academic, intellectual, political, and social topics. But before we begin, I would like you to introduce yourself and tell us a bit about your early life and educational journey.

**Muhammad Hassan Ilyas:**

Thank you very much, brother. I am grateful for your kind words.

I was born in 1988 in Karachi. I lived in Pakistan from 1988 until 2010, spending most of my time in Karachi. I received my school education here, studying up to the age of twelve or thirteen. After that, I lived in Islamabad for a while. Then I returned to Karachi and started my religious education, completing the Dars-e-Nizami curriculum. In 2011, I went to Malaysia to study under Javed Ahmad Ghamidi. I spent the next eight years in Malaysia under his guidance, learning and understanding the sciences of the Quran, Sunnah, and Hadith directly from him. In 2019, I moved to the USA. For the past five years, I have been residing in the USA, working day and night with Ghamidi Sahib on research, writing, and scholarly projects.

**The Difference Between the Education Systems of Pakistan and the USA**

**Question:**

Mr. Hassan, you have received education in both schools and madrasas in Pakistan. You have also seen the education systems of Malaysia and the USA. This means you have had the opportunity to directly understand the modern educational institutions and traditional religious madrasas in Pakistan, as well as the most advanced education system in the USA. In this context, can you explain the differences between the education systems of Pakistan and the USA?

**Answer:**

Look, the education system of any society reflects its conditions. It is not an abstract or separate entity from the society. The national temperament, ideas, ideals, and objectives of a society shape its education system.

Now, if we talk about the education system of Pakistan, we need to consider several aspects to understand it. We know that for the past two hundred years, this region has been experiencing a cultural crisis. This crisis is why we see a struggle and conflict in cultural matters. Here, there is talk of reviving the past glory of Muslims; movements for the revival of the caliphate arise; Pakistan is considered a fortress of Islamic countries. Then there is the sense of success in

gaining independence from British rule. There is a tussle between civil and military relations. Moreover, this region is the center of interest for global imperial powers, and their interventions are also evident. From this brief overview, it can be well understood what kind of cultural crisis Pakistan is facing. This cultural crisis shapes our attitudes. It forms our national temperament, which is then reflected in our education system.

From another perspective, our education system is essentially designed by the elite of a certain era, where the purpose of education was to elevate a few people to high positions. Selection was made based on competition to lead people to these high positions. Hence, our education system directs students towards the goal of attaining positions and securing jobs. In reality, education has nothing to do with this entire concept.

Education is the cultivation of the soul. Education enhances the abilities bestowed by Allah upon a person. I often say that sometimes difficult situations teach us life's most important lessons that even great philosophers cannot teach. To clarify my point, let me give an example. My twins were born, and I was concerned that being twins, they might be weak. So, I started reading various studies on the internet and consulted different doctors. When I asked one doctor about the weight of my three-month-old children compared to the standard weight of three-month-old children worldwide, he told me that this is a completely wrong perspective. A child's weight is never measured against other children in the world; it is measured against their birth weight to see where they have reached. Education works similarly. The abilities Allah has given me, which I was born with, need to be cultivated. This detail illustrates that Pakistan's education system reflects our national crisis.

Regarding the American society, its foundation is based on the social and political thoughts of scholars like John Locke and others. It values humanism, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, and freedom as basic values.

America has its religious background and a history of political struggle. They have faced oppression, domination, and injustice. As a result, certain social values have emerged there. The rule of law is a value, self-determination is a value, freedom of expression is a value, democracy is a value. Furthermore, there is complete freedom of movement for people. These factors and values have shaped its national temperament, which is reflected in their education system.

Thus, the concept of education in America is entirely different from what we find in Pakistan. Being educated there does not mean holding high degrees. If we look at the statistics in America, very few people pursue higher education or university-level education, and it should be that way. In a society, the number of people specializing in specific fields is around ten to twelve percent, but this does not mean that the rest are considered uneducated. Other people improve their awareness and livelihood by gaining expertise in their areas of interest, such as learning languages or different skills. You can see that they work hard to learn basic skills as diligently as someone pursuing a high degree works for their education. This is why a skilled worker is respected just as much as a Ph.D. scholar, if not more.

## **Difference Between the Economic Systems of Pakistan and the United States**

### **Question:**

In developed societies like the United States, people do not consider professions such as taxi driving or skilled trades like electricians and plumbers to be demeaning. In fact, they earn enough from such jobs to easily buy houses in affluent areas. On the contrary, in our society, such professions are considered inferior. Everyone aspires to obtain a high degree, and even after becoming doctors or engineers, earning enough to buy a house in a city like Karachi is not easy. What do you think is the reason for this?

### **Answer:**

There are two aspects to this. Firstly, in our society, professions are categorized as respectable or contemptible from a very young age. Parents often tell their children things like, "If you don't study, what will you do in life, sell vegetables?" Such remarks instill disdain for certain professions in their minds. Education is viewed merely as a means to employment rather than a path to awareness, and selling vegetables is presented as a lowly job. In contrast, the same profession of selling vegetables is termed a startup in developed countries like the US and is seen as entrepreneurship. There, the profession and the person doing it are not looked down upon. To rectify this situation, we need to promote the idea in our society that all professions, when earned through hard work and legitimate means, are respectable.

Secondly, there is the issue of competition and comparison. In our society, career choices are not based on one's abilities, preferences, and available opportunities but on an unnecessary race with others. This attitude is essentially rooted in hostility and the desire to outdo others. People in developed countries do not engage in such a mindset, and it is crucial to address this in our society as well.

### **Question:**

What methods have developed societies like the US adopted that we can also implement to bring improvement and progress? Do you recommend studying these societies?

### **Answer:**

Studying a society can be done from the outside, through books, films, and travelogues, or by going there and observing directly. There is a significant difference between the two. However, efforts to improve through such studies can certainly be beneficial. But in my view, real improvement can only come if we develop enough tolerance to openly discuss the changes happening in the world and prepare our nation for the necessary transformations. Unfortunately, intolerance has increased so much that we want to eliminate anyone who holds different views. The example of Javed Ahmad Ghamidi and myself is before you; we faced persecution for our beliefs and were forced to move to Malaysia due to lack of freedom to work in our country.

As an aside, I would like to mention Malaysia. It is an Islamic country and is considered a developed nation. Religion is a tradition and a cultural value system there. The fundamental

values that religion instills are reflected in their societal values. People there have good ethics and a spirit of craftsmanship. The world knows that Malaysia was not like this from the beginning; it was Mahathir Mohamad who founded modern Malaysia. Once, during a meeting with him, I asked about the secret of their progress. I wanted to know this secret because we Pakistanis also take pride in Islam and aspire to progress. He told me that his formula for the development of his nation was to train the 10-12% intellectuals among them to make the remaining 90% work. Thus, the 10-12% taught the rest to work, and the nation moved in a direction.

If we look at our country, there are many challenges in moving in one direction. For example, we see states within the state. There is a state of 'unknown people' and a state of 'religious people.' Due to these factors, instead of moving in one direction, the society is embroiled in internal conflicts.

Another significant challenge in our society is instability. The situation has become such that there is no stability from home to society and from shop to state institutions. Where there is confrontation instead of stability, people never think collectively. They only think about themselves. Let me give you an example from everyday life. On the streets of Karachi, every car and motorcycle rider tries to get ahead regardless of causing traffic jams, just to get through somehow, even if others are stuck for hours. This attitude and psychology have become our national temperament. We strive to get ahead in every matter without caring for our nation and people. For our reform, it is essential to rise above self-interest and think as a nation, just like the people of Malaysia recognized themselves as a nation and moved in one direction.

As for the United States, it has traveled a long way and reached a certain level in the matter of national development and prosperity. Here, every individual is progressing by utilizing their abilities, and the state's sole purpose is to provide security to its citizens. They provide shelter and protection not only to their citizens but also to those who cannot stay in their own countries due to their religious or political beliefs. For religious people like us, when it becomes impossible to stay in our own country, it is the US where we find a place. People should think about why there is such intolerance and insecurity in our country, while the criticism is that we have embraced the lap of Jews and Christians.

**Question:**

When we talk about the economic system of the United States, the concept of capitalism comes to mind. It is criticized both from a religious perspective and socially and economically. Since you are now residing there and observing things directly, how do you view the American capitalist system?

**Answer:**

My process of understanding any matter begins with studying the factors of nature that Allah has placed in human nature. Regarding the criticisms of capitalism, to be honest, I never understood them. I remember a time when we used to visit the Department of Composition and Compilation

at Karachi University. There was a wonderful gathering there. Entering there felt like entering another world, as there were discussions on new systems and ideas. Philosophers who spoke against capitalism and its evils also sat there. Once, someone told me that this system creates a psychology of greed and lust among people. It shows them new things to lure them into buying them, and then people, after purchasing these things, fall into the psychology of pride. This system is a whole organized effort to extract the last penny from a person's pocket by exploiting this pride. Their conversation was ongoing when we saw a person driving a new car vigorously through the window. He said, "This is the evil of capitalism. First, they showed advertisements of the car to arouse greed in him, now he has bought the car and is proudly driving it on Karachi University's roads." I replied, "This pride can also be felt by buying a horse. If I have a new horse and ride it on the street, I will have this psychology because the feeling of superiority is ingrained in human nature. Do you say that this instinct should not be there in me? Shouldn't I feel happy with new things? Similarly, if Allah has given me a talent, should I not use it to attract people to it? I do this every day, and I understand that it is our instinct. If an economy has embraced this instinct, how can it be considered against human nature as a system? I never understood this approach.

On the other hand, those who oppose private ownership and support the system of collective ownership, before delving into the philosophies, I look at my nature. In my nature, there is a concept of ownership. I feel an attachment with ownership. Just like we have ownership of the soil. For example, whenever I come from America to Karachi, I feel a sense of gratitude. If someone asks me why, my answer will be that since I have benefited from here and have a connection with this soil, I have these feelings. Are the feelings of ownership wrong and unnatural that should be eradicated?

The capitalist system or any system created by humans can have evils. We should look at the benefits and see if there are possibilities for improvement. Before that, view the system with the concepts of harmony with our nature.

While negating capitalism, some people propose the Islamic economic system as an alternative. This is actually a specific era's jurisprudence developed in the Arab society twelve to fourteen hundred years ago, although people call it Islam and present it as a system. When this system is discussed, it will also have many objections.

In the context of the American capitalist system, I want to tell you that there, the state wants to take its citizens to a certain standard of living, where every citizen has access to education and basic health facilities. After that, they test the citizens' skills. Understand that just as Allah sends you into the world with the awareness of free will to test you, capitalism also tests you. In this test, those who are weak fall behind. Those who fall behind say that this system has left them behind.

**Question:**

So, would it be fair to call it 'Survival of the fittest'?



**Answer:**

Absolutely! That's how it is. The world operates on this principle. You see, in your school too, the law of 'Survival of the fittest' prevails. A teacher comes and performs, if the performance is acceptable to you, he survives, otherwise, you replace him. The world system runs according to this principle. People talk about the evils of capitalism, but we have seen that when humans are left to their internal awareness in a free market economy, many things improve. This is because things are scrutinized. This scrutiny also happened in America itself. You see, the system based on Karl Marx's theories—when the evils, oppression, and tyranny emerged from it—was opposed, scrutinized, and improvements were made. The current laws like labor laws and human rights are the result of this scrutiny. Hence, dismissing a system because of its evils without considering its benefits is not wise. Instead, we should look at the possibilities of improvement and eliminate the evils.

[to be continued.....]





# THE WEST AND TODAY'S CHALLENGE

Rehan Ahmad Yusufi

Mirza Ghalib (1797-1869) is considered the greatest poet of the Urdu language. His greatness lies not only in the beauty of his poetry and the excellence of his expression but also in his profound understanding of life's realities and human psychology, which he conveys to common people with great simplicity. Ghalib was born in a turbulent era where he witnessed the downfall of a great Muslim empire and the rise of the British to power. This backdrop likely deepened his perspective and broadened his thinking.

However, very few people are aware that Ghalib provided guidance to Muslims in a way that, had they adopted it, they would be among the world's greatest powers today. Unfortunately, people appreciated his poetic prowess and his contributions to prose, but they ignored his guidance on national matters. The greatest tragedy is that this was done by a person who later became a significant leader of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, namely Sir Syed Ahmed Khan.

In 1855, Sir Syed corrected and republished the famous manuscript from Akbar the Great's era, "Ain-e-Akbari." Ghalib wrote a poetic introduction (taqriz) in Persian for it, advising Sir Syed that "murdah parwaran mubarak kar nist," meaning that idolizing the past is not beneficial. Instead, he suggested learning from the British how they harnessed the forces of nature and

advanced far beyond their ancestors. Throughout this introduction, Ghalib did not praise British culture but pointed out their scientific discoveries as the secret to their progress.

Unfortunately, Sir Syed did not grasp this advice. Although he was influenced by the British, their progress in science and technology did not become his ideal. Instead, he considered the British language, their social practices, and their social sciences as perfect models for Muslims. He encouraged Muslims to pursue these and initiated a significant educational movement for this purpose. This had the benefit of enabling Muslims to understand the British political system and ultimately gain independence. However, culturally and socially, this had detrimental effects. The Muslim elite developed a psychology of being impressed by the British language, attire, culture, lifestyle, and values. Unfortunately, this mentality persists among our educated and wealthy classes to this day. Consequently, positive aspects of Western civilization, such as the rule of law, social justice, and freedom of expression, have not taken root in our society, while the English language and lifestyle are seen as marks of prestige.

Our religious leadership has further exacerbated this situation. From the beginning, they adopted a mindset contrary to Sir Syed's, exhibiting intense aversion to every aspect of the British and their culture. During the Cold War, this attitude improved somewhat due to political circumstances, but following the events of 9/11, this mentality has resurfaced vigorously.

The correct path for Muslims at this time is to avoid extremes and adopt a middle course. They should neither be enamored with the West nor harbor hatred towards it. Currently, the West rules the world, and their civilization is dominant. They are leaders in science and technology. Due to their significance, it is essential to deal with them with great wisdom. We believe this approach has three aspects:

**1. Embracing Scientific Progress:**

We should fully embrace their advancements in scientific knowledge and civilizational development as our goal.

**2. Protecting Our Core Values:**

We must prevent aspects of their culture that contradict our fundamental values from infiltrating our society. For instance, our civilization is built on the three pillars of belief in the afterlife, modesty, and respect for hierarchy. We cannot compromise on these.

**3. Making Practical Compromises:**

We have to make compromises on cultural elements, such as language, out of necessity.

Without adopting this strategy, we cannot effectively face the challenges we encounter today.



# THE FLOOD OF MACHINE CULTURE

Muhammad Zakwan Nadvi

The current era's machine culture has, for the most part, transformed modern humans into 'non-humans' by giving them 'progress.' Except for a 'small group<sup>1</sup>' steadfast in faith and ethics, the majority of people<sup>2</sup> have succumbed to this widespread corruption. As a result, neither divinity nor humanity remains within them. This grave aspect of the machine revolution was recognized early on by Iqbal, the 'knower of secrets.' He aptly said:

ہے دل کے لیے موت، مشینوں کی حکومت  
احساسِ مروت کو کچل دیتے ہیں، آلات!

"Machines' rule is death for the heart,  
Instruments crush the sense of compassion!"

Often, I recite one of Iqbal's verses with a subtle modification:

کیا ہے تجھ کو 'مشینوں' نے کورزوق اتنا  
صبا سے بھی نہ ملا، تجھ کو بوے گل کا سراغ

"What have machines made you so dull-witted,  
That even the breeze couldn't bring you the scent of flowers?"

With respect to modern conditions, the positive use of technology is one thing, and the overwhelming flood of machine culture is quite another. Our principle regarding modern technology should be to use technology, not let technology use us.

However, the crisis of the present age is that this machine culture has entirely turned humans into mechanical animals. Consequently, the modern person is generally no longer human but has become a 'non-human,' devoid of all human qualities and divine feelings, reduced to a soulless human robot.

While discussing 'artificial intelligence' (AI) with a Muslim expert from the IT sector, I once said that first, these tyrants made humans into machines, and now that humans have fully become machines, they are struggling, through artificial intelligence, to make machines into humans.

Events indicate that in such a state, not only will the number of 'non-humans' practically increase for a mere 'trivial pride<sup>3</sup>,' but the divine masterpiece known as humans will become mere obedient clerks, working as slaves to machines, deprived of all human abilities, as is now evident in 'every developed' and 'civilized' place.

Famous scientist Stephen Hawking<sup>4</sup> expressed this danger in a statement, saying that the infinite development of artificial intelligence could itself be at the cost of the end of the human race: "The development of full artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race." [The Economic Times, March 14, 2018]

Stephen Hawking further elaborated in his statement, indicating that we have reached a point of no return in this matter, leading us towards self-destruction: "I believe we have reached the point of no return... and we are in danger of self-destructing."

Poet of reality, Dr. Allama Iqbal, foresaw this scenario a century ago in 'Bang-e-Dra' (1905) and correctly predicted:

تمھاری تہذیب اپنے خنجر سے آپ خود کشی کرے گی  
جو شاخِ نازک پہ آشیانہ بنے گا، ناپائیدار ہوگا!

"Your civilization will commit suicide with its own dagger,  
The nest built on a delicate branch will not be stable!"

Famous scientist Albert Einstein<sup>5</sup> shed light on this reality, expressing his fear that one day modern technology would eventually dominate the human world, and our world would become merely a dwelling place for fools: "I fear the day when technology overlaps with our humanity. The world will only have a generation of idiots." [Albert Einstein]

Similarly, famous American author Eric Holdman stated that reliance on technology to this extent is depriving the new generation of human skills such as good writing and human connections: "The generation of young people now entering the workplace don't know how to communicate. They are poor writers, and their coordination and collaboration skills are lacking. Some of this would have to be a direct result of being wedded to their 'digital assistants'." [govtech.com]

Undoubtedly, this flood of machine culture is a highly lethal phenomenon for humanity. Machines should have been kept at the level of machines, and humans at the level of humans. God made humans 'human,' and in accordance with this divine scheme, they should remain 'human' at all costs, regardless of how much this rapid flood of 'progress' tries to extinguish their divine light.

In the current era, despite the light of electricity, such 'darkness' is rapidly spreading in almost all 'developed' places. Akbar Allahabadi<sup>6</sup> commented on this phenomenon in his unique style:

برق کے لیمپ سے آنکھوں کو بچائے رکھنا  
روشنی آتی ہے، اور نور چلا جاتا ہے!

"Shield your eyes from the lamp of electricity,  
Light comes, but the illumination goes away!"

However, undoubtedly, it will be a severe and irreparable loss for humanity if, in the storm of progress, the light of human nature and the bright lamp of the heart is extinguished because it is the life and sensitivity of the heart that is called life and faith. Without this life, vitality, compassion, and sensitivity of the heart, humans are not humans. Khwaja Mir Dard Dehlvi (died 1758) rightly said:

مجھے یہ ڈر ہے، دلِ زندہ تو نہ مر جائے  
کہ زندگانی عبارت ہے، تیرے جینے سے!

I fear that this living heart might die,  
For life itself is defined by your existence!

Nowadays, there is widespread talk everywhere about the virtues and blessings of this machine culture. Everywhere, this thought and this culture dominate. Both religious and non-religious people sing its praises, considering it a 'supreme good' (summum bonum).

While conversing with a few individuals about these modern 'blessings,' I once remarked that the

state of these 'blessings' is such that we are now incapable of reading in the light of electricity and digital ink what was written in the light of a lamp.

The truth is that mere material glitter and technical prowess can never be the criterion for something being a 'supreme good.' This materialistic mindset and purely materialistic view of life are the same myopic and blind approach referred to in a saying of the Prophet as the 'one-eyed<sup>7</sup>' nature of the great fitna (trial) of Dajjal, meaning lack of insight and blindness.

The reality is that a phenomenon can only attain the status of a 'supreme good' when it guarantees faith and ethics and is filled with devotion to God and human compassion. In such a state, the main thing to see is whether in this flood of material progress, humans have attained the primary position or have they merely become secondary beings? Has their inner peace and spiritual tranquility increased, or are they now engulfed in a kind of mental 'confusion<sup>8</sup>' and intellectual decline? Do they have time left for themselves or not?

In such a state, we must pause and reflect on whether the benefits gained from these modern advancements have come at the cost of our humanity? Are the values that constitute the essence of humanity alive, or have they perished? Akbar Allahabadi correctly said:

نقشوں کو تم نہ جانچو، لوگوں سے مل کے دیکھو  
کیا چیز جی رہی ہے، کیا چیز مر رہی ہے!

"Do not judge the pictures, meet the people and see,  
What is living, and what is dying!"

From a factual perspective, the answer to all these questions will almost be in the negative. If a person sees with the eyes of insight, all this has become a written message on the wall, which can now be seen everywhere with the eyes of the head. Even a common person is experiencing these soul-wrenching realities with extreme intensity.

Experiences testify that the general spirit of humanity is not only gradually diminishing but also becoming extinct. Soulless religious rituals have replaced heartfelt worship, and the formal displays of rituals and manners have now become ethics. Generally, these rituals are now considered the essence of religion and humanity, and the importance of faith and ethics is completely forgotten. Soulless digital and professional etiquettes are equated with the living Islamic and divine ethics characterized by the fear of God, good morals, and genuine human compassion.

The crisis of the coronavirus has now turned even the remaining humans into 'non-humans,' establishing them in an ideal manner, full of enchantment and commercial cunning, online and digitally. The human being of today is no longer the same as before the coronavirus but now appears entirely changed in terms of human emotions and human relationships.

Hence, the greatest tragedy of the time is that good people are not only gradually becoming fewer, but due to the continuous 'non-human' experiences of insensitive people, the good and

compassionate individuals are also changing and becoming 'salt in a salt mine.' Many such individuals are now forced to withdraw and remain silent under the influence of the environment. This is no simple matter but a horrifying phenomenon of the approaching apocalypse.

## Summary

In such a state, it is necessary that the few remaining 'humans' in this vast crowd of pseudo-humans must not be disheartened. Instead, according to the situation, they should strive to stay close to nature at every level of life. They should use the remembrance of God as their support in this dark period of humanity. They should continuously kindle the divine light of faith and ethics with the help of God's true servants. They should sincerely continue selfless service to humanity, guiding and supporting them as much as possible.

In these conditions, our state should be like that of the humble man whom Iqbal described:

ہوا ہے گو تند و تیز، مگر چراغ اپنا جلا رہا ہے  
وہ مرد درویش جس کو خدا نے دیے ہیں، اندازِ خسروانہ

"Though the wind is fierce and strong, his lamp still burns,  
That humble man whom God has given kingly ways."

The duration of falsehood is very short. Its end is nothing but destruction and downfall, "Indeed, falsehood is bound to perish." On the contrary, permanence and eternity are destined only for truth and honesty. Therefore, the people of truth need not fear or despair: "Do not lose heart, and do not grieve, for you will be superior if you are [true] believers." (Aal-e-Imran 3:139)

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- [3]. Al-Hadeed 57:20
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# NEWSLETTER AL-MAWRID AMERICA

May - July 2024

## Launch of "Salehat"

Under the supervision of Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, a quarterly magazine named "Salehat" has been launched specifically for the education and training of women. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas is overseeing it, while Naem Ahmed Baloch is serving as the editor, and Yasmeen Farrukh is the assistant editor. This initiative by the Ghamidi Center has been highly appreciated by women. Readers can access this magazine on the Ghamidi Center's website.



## Purpose of the Ghamidi Center

Last month, the Director of Research and Academics at "Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, USA," Mr. Hassan Ilyas, gave an interview to Saqib Islam, a representative of Voice of America. In the interview, he explained the purpose of establishing the Ghamidi Center in America. He stated that the purpose of establishing the Ghamidi Center is to develop the ability in Muslim youth to study religion consciously. Furthermore, he described the Ghamidi Center as a foundation for people of all schools of thought and religions, emphasizing that they want to convey the message to the world to understand Islam through the lens of knowledge and to accept the opinions of all scholars based on reasoning, not blind following. The recording of this interview can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## Launch of Online Khanqah

The Ghamidi Center has initiated an online Khanqah. This is primarily a program related to self-purification, where Mr. Moiz Amjad discusses self-improvement and training and answers related questions posed by people. A session of this program is broadcast weekly on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## "Tafheem al-Athar" Project

Under the auspices of Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, USA, a program titled "Tafheem al-Athar" has been launched. This program includes explanations and interpretations of the sayings of the Companions and their followers, along with Q&A sessions based on selected sayings. Dr. Syed Mutiur Rahman hosts this program, with Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir participating as a guest. In June 2024, two programs were recorded, discussing topics like the distinctive status of the Companions in religious knowledge and practice, the significance given to the understanding and practice of the Companions and their followers in religious tradition, the nature and scholarly objectives of the Tafheem al-Athar project, and which Companions' sayings will be included in this collection. These programs can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.



## Behavior of Political, Social, and Religious Leaders

In his article, Syed Manzoor ul Hassan, editor of "Ishraq, USA," discusses how political, social, and religious leaders should behave with their colleagues and associates. Citing verses from the Quran and the example of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), he writes that it is essential for leaders to speak kindly and lovingly with their colleagues, listen attentively to their advice, overlook their mistakes, and, most importantly, respect their dignity. If people do not receive such behavior, they become disheartened and may withdraw or even turn to opposition and hostility. This article can be read in the June 2024 issue of "Ishraq, USA."

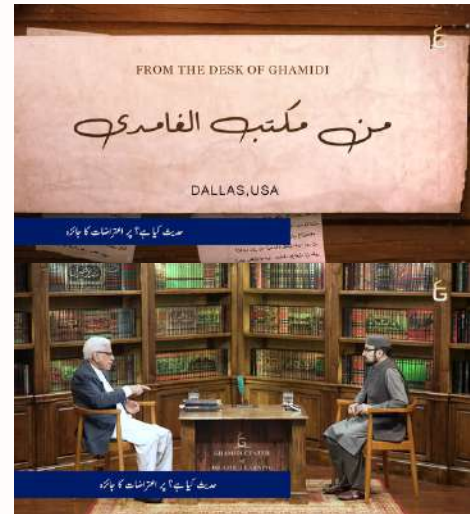
## Weekly Q&A Sessions with Javed Ahmad Ghamidi

The Ghamidi Center holds weekly live Q&A sessions, where Mr. Hassan Ilyas presents various questions received by the Ghamidi Center to Mr. Ghamidi, who then answers them. Important questions asked in these sessions last month include "The Term 'Sufi' and 'Prophet'" and "Is a Human Milk Bank Permissible?" The recordings of these Q&A sessions can be viewed on the institution's YouTube channel.



## Review of Objections on "What is Hadith?"

For several months, the Ghamidi Center has been discussing the topic "What is Hadith?" in a video series addressing 23 objections. After covering all the fundamental discussions on this topic, the objections and questions raised by viewers during the previous sessions are now being addressed. Three sessions of this series were held last month. The recordings of these sessions can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.



## Ammar Khan Nasir Will Not Be Allowed to Speak

This article was recently written in the context of the proceedings of a case involving an Ahmadi defendant in the Supreme Court of Pakistan. During the proceedings, religious scholars, after much debate with the Chief Justice, prevented Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir from presenting his individual opinion in this case, arguing that it would make the decision controversial. Criticizing this behavior of the religious scholars, Mr. Hassan writes that religious scholars adopt a domineering attitude to enforce their views and seek to establish control over people's thoughts and actions. They consider their opinion as final, their statements as decisive, and anyone who disagrees with them as rebellious, misguided, and deviant. This article can be read in the previous month's issue of "Ishraq, USA."

## Documentary on Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The Ghamidi Center has begun producing a documentary on the life of contemporary renowned scholar Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. This documentary will cover all aspects of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan's scholarly, intellectual, research, and missionary journey, from his family background to his final efforts in da'wah (Islamic propagation). It will soon be broadcast serially on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## Patience: The Path to Success in This World and the Hereafter

In his article, Mr. Rehan Ahmed Yousufi explains the importance and virtues of patience (sabr) in the light of the Quran and Hadith. He also explores its various meanings and implications. Addressing some common misconceptions about patience, he writes that it is often seen as a passive response, done out of compulsion and helplessness, limited to sorrow and hardships, and viewed as a sign of cowardice and weakness. Consequently, patience has not found its true place in our religious thought. Moreover, he describes patience as the key to success in this world and a means to thwart the plots and schemes of enemies. This article can be read in the June 2024 issue.

## **Ghamidi Center's Online Educational Courses**

Last month, Mr. Shehzad Saleem developed three educational courses in English for the Ghamidi Center's online learning platform. The courses are titled "Divorce Laws," "Dietary Shariah and Islamic Customs," and "Jihad in Islam." The course "Dietary Shariah and Islamic Customs" has been published on the Ghamidi Center's website, and the other two will be published soon.

## **Issuance of Fatwas Based on Religious Opinions**

People frequently contact the Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning for legal applications of Shariah, seeking guidance on issues like marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other economic and social aspects. Last month, three fatwas were issued to address various needs under the guidance of Mr. Javed Ahmad Ghamidi and issued by Mr. Hassan Ilyas.

## **Teaching "Meezan" in English**

Last month, Dr. Shehzad Saleem recorded lectures in English on various topics from "Meezan." These topics include "The Philosophy of Hajj," "Punishment for Theft," "Punishment for Qadhf (False Accusation)," "Humanity," and "Fundamental Factors of a Happy Married Life." These lectures can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## **"Ilm-o-Hikmat: With Ghamidi"**

In the program "Ilm-o-Hikmat: With Ghamidi," broadcast on Dunya News channel in June 2024, the topics discussed were "Ten Questions about Atheism," "The Importance of Eid al-Adha and Sacrifice," "Characteristics of Conversation," "The Humanity of the Prophet," and "Q&A." Recordings of these programs are available on the institution's YouTube channel.

## **"Al-Bayan" Quran Translation Audiobook**

Under the Ghamidi Center's Tazkir Bil-Quran project, last month saw the presentation of recitations and translations of Surah Al-Kahf and Surah An-Nur. The Quran translation is by Mr. Shah Nawaz, and the recitation of the Quran is by Mishary Rashid Alafasy. Recordings can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## **Ask Dr. Shehzad Saleem**

This is a live monthly Q&A session where Dr. Shehzad Saleem answers various questions related to religious, ethical, and social topics. Participants can ask questions in both Urdu and English.

## **"Islam Study Circle"**

In this session by Dr. Shehzad Saleem, various religious, ethical, and social topics are discussed in the light of the Quran and Hadith. This session consists of three parts: in the first part, a topic is selected from the Quranic verses and explained; in the second part, selected Hadith are discussed; and in the third part, an excerpt from the Bible is analyzed. At the end of the program, questions related to the topic are answered. Last month's session discussed topics like "Beliefs of Faith," "The Vanity of the World," and "The Guidance of Jesus Christ for Humanity." This session is conducted in English and can be viewed on the institution's YouTube channel.

## **Weekly Lessons on the Quran and Hadith**

In June 2024, live sessions of Quran and Hadith lessons were held under the Ghamidi Center, where Javed Ahmad Ghamidi taught verses 6 to 26 of Surah Al-Kahf in the Quran sessions, and the Hadith sessions discussed "The Punishment of the Grave." Recordings of these lessons can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## **Shehzad Saleem's Online Private Consultation Sessions**

Every month, Mr. Shehzad Saleem holds online private consultation sessions where people seek his advice on various personal and family-related issues. Last month, over 30 sessions were conducted, during which people consulted Mr. Shehzad Saleem on problems faced by parents and issues related to adolescence and marriage.

## **"Maqamat" Audiobook**

The Ghamidi Center has released an audiobook of Mr. Javed Ahmad Ghamidi's book "Maqamat." This book is a collection of Mr. Ghamidi's diverse writings, divided into three parts: the first part contains his emotions, feelings, and events; the second part presents his explanations and opinions on ijthadi (interpretive) issues of religion; and the third part is dedicated to critical essays. This book is being serially published in audio format on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## **Teaching "Al-Bayan" in English**

Mr. Shehzad Saleem is teaching Javed Ahmad Ghamidi's Quranic exegesis "Al-Bayan" in English. Last month, Dr. Shehzad Saleem recorded two lectures covering verses 1 to 44 of Surah Al-Imran. These recordings are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

## **"Safar Dar Safar"**

This program is based on the intellectual journey of Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir, hosted by Mr. Naeem Baloch. In this program, Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir answers Mr. Naeem Baloch's questions

about his intellectual journey. Last month, two sessions were recorded, in which Dr. Ammar discussed his family background, educational stages, and some important aspects of his intellectual journey. Recordings of these sessions are available on the institution's YouTube channel.

### **Blasphemy Law: Who is Responsible?**

"Who is responsible for the trend of killing people over blasphemy in Pakistan?" Mr. Hassan Ilyas raised this question in the context of a recent blasphemy incident in Swat. In his discussion, he strongly condemned the incident and identified those responsible for such occurrences. He stated that such incidents are increasing day by day in our society, and unfortunately, it is all happening in the name of religion. Moreover, he presented some useful solutions to prevent such incidents. The recording of this discussion is available on the institution's YouTube channel.

### **Summary of the Video Series on 23 Objections in English**

In this video series, objections and criticisms from traditional religious thought on Javed Ahmad Ghamidi's ideas are discussed. Dr. Shehzad Saleem is summarizing all the topics discussed so far in English. Last month, Dr. Shehzad Saleem summarized the topic "The Second Coming of Jesus" from the 23 Objections series. Recordings of these programs can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.



### **"New Era, New Challenges"**

Mr. Hassan Ilyas recorded a podcast titled "New Era, New Challenges." This podcast discusses modern challenges facing religion, the thought of traditional scholars, and Mr. Ghamidi's thought. In response to a final question by host Mr. Ali, he stated that the thought of a great person like Javed Ahmad Ghamidi is not the heritage of any individual but a trust of nations. The legacy of such a person's thought is transferred to those who fully understand and can convey it to others. The recording of this program can be viewed on the institution's YouTube channel.

### **Explanation of "Meezan" and "Furqan"**

Some time ago, Dr. Shehzad Saleem recorded an English summary of the topics "Meezan" and "Furqan" discussed in the 23 Objections video series. This recording has been published on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.