

Quarterly

Nov - Jan 2025

ISHRAQ

United States

It is a clear fact that a person's sincerity does not necessarily validate the correctness of their actions. A person might be utterly sincere in their intent, yet their actions could be entirely wrong. Consider a mother's love—a most unquestionable sentiment. Whatever she does for her child is driven solely by maternal fervor, yet this very sincerity often endangers the lives of many children. This demonstrates that sincerity alone is not sufficient; knowledge is also an essential condition.

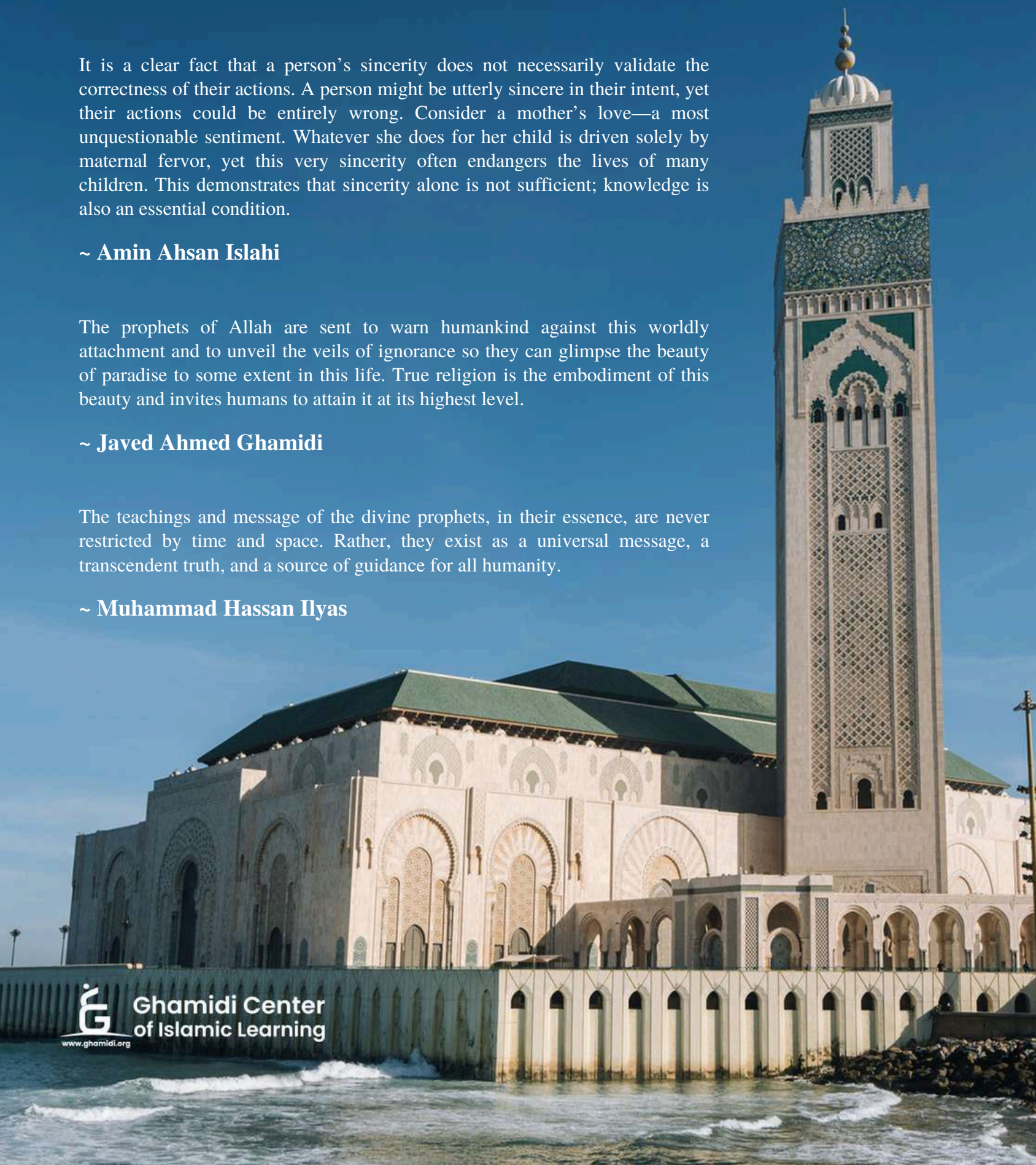
~ **Amin Ahsan Islahi**

The prophets of Allah are sent to warn humankind against this worldly attachment and to unveil the veils of ignorance so they can glimpse the beauty of paradise to some extent in this life. True religion is the embodiment of this beauty and invites humans to attain it at its highest level.

~ **Javed Ahmed Ghamidi**

The teachings and message of the divine prophets, in their essence, are never restricted by time and space. Rather, they exist as a universal message, a transcendent truth, and a source of guidance for all humanity.

~ **Muhammad Hassan Ilyas**



UNDER GUIDANCE OF
JAVED AHMAD GHAMIDI

EDITOR: ABID MAHMOOD HASHMI

HONORARY EDITORIAL BOARD

MUKARAM AZIZ
AJAZ-UL-HAQUE
MEHMOOD-UR-RASHID
MALIK ELLAHI
MUHAMMAD AMMAR MALIK

DISCLAIMER:

GHAMIDI CENTER OF ISLAMIC LEARNING IS AN ACADEMIC PLATFORM THAT EMBRACES DIVERSE SCHOLARLY DISCUSSIONS. WHILE WELCOMING ALL FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISCOURSE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED HERE MAY NOT NECESSARILY ALIGN WITH THE CENTER'S OFFICIAL STANCE. THE PLATFORM ENCOURAGES RESPECTFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE FOR INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGE AND EXPLORATION.



Table of Contents

SINCERITY	03
THE RELIGION OF NATURE	06
FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE & REASONING IN RELIGION	08
THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS	11
THE DIVINE SCHEME OF CREATION IN PAIRS	13
ZAKAT IN MODERN ECONOMY	15
CONSULTATION AND MONARCHY	21
REKINDLING THE FLAME OF PROGRESS	25
SPLITTING OF THE MOON (XI)	27
THE PROPHETIC MISSION OF MUHAMMAD (PBUH)	32
THE UNIVERSAL CALL OF ISLAM	38
JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI: A PROGRESSIVE VOICE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS	41
HAYAT-E-AMIN (IX)	44
THE NARRATIVE OF AHARON AND THE GOLDEN CALF: HARMONIZING TANAKH & QURANIC PERSPECTIVES (II)	49
THE PROPHET'S CASE IN THE DIVINE COURT	55
THE SENSITIVITY OF SCHOLARS ON THE BLASPHEMY LAW	57
THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY	60
THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION	62
THE PALESTINE ISSUE & THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP	68
LET US PROMISE...	73
THE CALAMITY I: A TEST OF FAITH	74
NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2025	76





SINCERITY

Amin Ahsan Islahi

(Excerpted from the monthly *Sadaq*,
Lucknow, November 1941)

The words *khulus*, *ikhlas*, and *mukhlis* are frequently used in our language. When we are pleased with someone's actions and wish to praise them, we often employ one of these words in their commendation. Generally, this usage seems somewhat excessive or even wasteful, but sometimes it is justified—for instance, when people endure all kinds of hardships for collective endeavors. They go to prison, endure police beatings, face the risk of confiscation of property, and apparently seek no personal gain for themselves or their dependents as a reward for these efforts.

Some open schools or colleges, beg from door to door for their funding, work for their development, and leave behind nothing—not even enough for a burial shroud. Some write books without any commercial intentions. Such individuals are indeed deserving of being called *mukhlis* (sincere) if no apparent signs of self-promotion or a desire for fame are present in their work.

However, a significant challenge arises: when a person is deemed *mukhlis*, people often associate their sincerity with the validity of their actions and demand that you accept and support their deeds as well. This demand seems unreasonable. While acknowledging the sincerity of their intent might not be difficult, accepting the correctness of their actions could be quite burdensome for those who understand the true meaning of *ikhlas*.

SINCERITY



It is a clear fact that a person's sincerity does not necessarily validate the correctness of their actions. A person might be utterly sincere in their intent, yet their actions could be entirely wrong. Consider a mother's love—a most unquestionable sentiment. Whatever she does for her child is driven solely by maternal fervor, yet this very sincerity often endangers the lives of many children. This demonstrates that sincerity alone is not sufficient; knowledge is also an essential condition.

For example, if you are not a doctor but start treating patients, or if you are unfamiliar with religion but begin issuing fatwas, or if you lack a basic understanding of Arabic but decide to write a commentary on the Quran, or if you are not an engineer but take on the responsibility of constructing a bridge, or if you are not a driver but begin operating a car—then regardless of how sincere your intentions may be, your actions will not be correct. If they turn out right, it will only be by coincidence, and such coincidental correctness does not absolve you of the responsibility for a reckless endeavor. You may well deserve to be sent to a psychiatric institution.

This interpretation aligns with the conventional meaning of *ikhlas* as it has become popularly known. However, we assert with full responsibility that this understanding of *ikhlas* is un-Islamic. A deed done purely for Allah is considered an act of *ikhlas*, and one who performs it is a *mukhlis*. The essence of this word is monotheism (*tawhid*). For example, Surah Al-Ikhlās is named as such because it is devoted entirely to the oneness of Allah. Although citing all the relevant verses here would be lengthy, we present a few examples:

- And they made their religion sincere for Allah alone (وَإِخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ)
(Surah Al-Nisa 4:146)
- So worship Allah, being sincere to Him in religion (فَاعْبُدِ اللَّهَ مُخْلِصًا لَهُ الدِّينَ)
(Surah Al-Zumar 39:2)
- And we are sincere to Him in devotion (وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ)
(Surah Al-Baqara 2:139)

Thus, a work done solely for Allah, free from any other motives, is an act of *ikhlas*. A *mukhlis* is someone whose every action—be it as small as feeding their children or as significant as leading nations—is motivated purely by the desire for Allah's pleasure, devoid of any doubts or misgivings.

This truth is expressed in the most captivating words in the hadith. Shah Waliullah, in his commentary on the *Muwatta*, and Ibn Qayyim, in his writings, have articulated such insights that they provide spiritual refreshment and nourishment for faith. However, detailing these subtleties is beyond the scope of this brief and straightforward article.

In any case, the Quranic understanding of this term reveals that for a deed to be considered sincere (*mukhlis*) or for a person to be deemed *mukhlis*, it is not sufficient that the act is free of selfish motives. Undoubtedly, a person who acts solely for their own benefit, whose every effort revolves around their self-interest, has not stepped out of the realm of animalistic instincts. By contrast, a person who transcends their narrow self-interest and extends their concerns to their family, nation, country, or homeland occupies a different position.

SINCERITY



However, when evaluated through the lens of the Quran's concept of *ikhlas*, a comparison between these two individuals would be a comparison of two evils, not two virtues. It could be said that the latter is better than the former, but the Quran does not merely demand that one cease worshipping themselves; it requires that there remain no other motive for a person's actions except seeking Allah's pleasure. A person must live and die solely for Allah, and remain tirelessly active in seeking His pleasure at all times. If this is not the case, then not only is the individual far from being *mukhlis*, but all their actions are worthless in Allah's sight.

Some may find this concept hard to understand, but it is entirely clear. The truth is that if a motive other than Allah's essence and attributes is accepted as valid for human actions, it would not only strip away all spiritual greatness but also transform a virtuous individual from being Allah's vicegerent on earth to becoming Satan's agent. Those who have abandoned God often tie themselves to various idols, from self-interest to the nation and state. But can a connection to any of these idols purify a person's deeds or make them righteous?

You might respond by citing nation or homeland as examples. Indeed, these are the most exalted deities of this age. If a person is devoted to their nation and acts solely for its benefit, we sing their praises, but we overlook the fact that a friend of one nation is often an enemy of another.

Plato and Aristotle were great philosophers and intellectuals, yet their philosophies—Plato's democracy and Aristotle's politics—demonstrate that even these thinkers could not treat others justly beyond their own nations. There is no need to enumerate these ancient philosophers. Look at Hitler, Mussolini, and other leaders of Europe and America. Who could doubt their sincerity to their nations? Each of them was a devout servant of their nation and motivated by national and patriotic interests. Yet observe the chaos their national and patriotic fervor has unleashed upon the world. Consider this deeply, and you will find that the more devoted they are to their nations, the greater a calamity they become for the world. If they had been devoted to Allah instead of their nations, neither the world would have suffered such calamities nor would their own nations have been afflicted by these disasters.

Sincerity towards Allah is not just a matter of sanctity but also a practical necessity. Without it, every step a person takes will be misguided. It is only through a connection with Allah that a person's mind is illuminated, enabling them to discern their true interests and those of the world. Without this connection, no matter how great a philosopher or ascetic one may be, they are bound to stumble—whether into the ditch outside their home or the city's main drain, but stumble they will.

Thus, the nations of the world may label anyone *mukhlis* as they please, but a Muslim can only call someone *mukhlis* if their lifelong pursuit has been to discern Allah's will. It is possible that such a person may have made grave mistakes in their decisions and actions, but these would be errors of judgment (*ijtihad*), not errors of intent, and would not nullify their reward. However, those who do not consider Allah's will in their endeavors, even if they sacrifice their lives in the fervor of national service, may be called national heroes, patriotic leaders, or countless other titles, but the *ikhlas* taught by the Quran carries a unique connection. Without this connection, the term *ikhlas* cannot be rightly applied to any deed or person.



THE RELIGION OF NATURE

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

The inherent qualities with which Allah has created each creature are its nature. In human beings, the manifestation of these qualities appears as natural instincts, emotions, feelings, and intuitive knowledge. The most significant motivator for these qualities is the awareness of beauty and ugliness within human beings, both outwardly and inwardly. Once awakened, this awareness begins to judge both things and actions. The Creator instilled this judgment in human beings at birth. Thus, it is part of what we call intuitive knowledge. The capacity for speech and expression subsequently provides words to express this judgment. This innate understanding primarily judges three things concerning the human self:

1. The beauty of the body, resulting in an awareness of the distinction between purity and impurity.
2. The beauty of food and drink, leading to an awareness of the distinction between what is wholesome (pure) and what is unwholesome (impure).
3. The beauty of intention, will, and actions, resulting in an awareness of the distinction between right (good) and wrong (evil).

Human beings are captivated by beauty, and the ultimate manifestation of all these aspects of beauty lies in the paradisiacal abode. Thus, paradise is also humanity's ultimate goal, and humans are created with extraordinary emotions of love for it and a strong desire to attain it.

Consequently, the objective of all human endeavors in this world is often to transform it, in some

THE RELIGION OF NATURE



form, into a personal paradise. People live for this purpose, die for it, shape leaders as idols, worship them, offer sacrifices for the realization of their visions, and wait, sometimes for mythic saviors and sometimes for the promises of science. Moreover, they develop philosophies to justify this endeavor.

The prophets of Allah are sent to warn humankind against this worldly attachment and to unveil the veils of ignorance so they can glimpse the beauty of paradise to some extent in this life. True religion is the embodiment of this beauty and invites humans to attain it at its highest level. Before entering paradise, to harmonize with its environment, religion instructs people to adopt three fundamental practices:

1. Purification of the Body
2. Purification of Food and Drink
3. Purification of Relationships and Conduct—with both the Creator and creation, which can be briefly described as moral purification.

Allah has said:

“God does not wish to burden you; He certainly seeks to purify you. [Thus He makes it mandatory on you to do wuḍū and take the ceremonial bath] and wants to perfect His favor upon you. [Thus in compelling circumstances allows you to do dry ablution] so that you are grateful to Him.” (Al-Ma'idah 5:6)

Similarly, He has stated:

“[for those who [today]] will follow this messenger, this unlettered prophet whose mention they see written in the Torah and the Gospel. He directs them to do good, forbids them from evil, regards pure things as lawful to them and impure things as unlawful to them and lifts their burdens and undoes the shackles which have remained with them until now.” (Al-A'raf 7:157)

The law and wisdom that Allah has revealed as the true religion through His prophets are essentially the details and requirements of these three aspects (purification of the body, food, and conduct). This is why we refer to it as the "Religion of Nature." Allah says:

“So, [now that these facts have become evident,] following one God continue to point your face [like your father Abraham] towards his religion. Follow the nature created by God [O Prophet!] on which He has created people. This nature created by God cannot be changed. This only is the straight path but most people know not.” (Ar-Rum 30:30)





FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE & REASONING IN RELIGION

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

In all discussions concerning religion, two principles hold fundamental importance for knowledge and reasoning. These are the foundational elements of rationality and tradition, without which it is impossible to attain a proper understanding of religion and Shariah. They are as follows:

1. In religion, the Quran holds the status of being the criterion and the balance (Mizan)(Furqan)¹

This means that the Quran is the decisive authority in all matters related to religion. Consequently, every statement, tradition, or opinion found in the hadith, historical accounts, biographies, jurisprudence, and exegesis must be weighed and scrutinized against the Quran's standards. Only those elements will be accepted which the Quran endorses; anything it rejects will not be acknowledged as part of the religion or its interpretation and explanation.

To adhere to this principle, it is essential to understand hadith in the light of the Quran. Any



content in the hadith that contradicts the Quran and Sunnah must be rejected. It is stated in Mizan:

"...The Quran holds the position of being the criterion and the balance in religion. It oversees everything and has been revealed as the ultimate arbiter between truth and falsehood. Therefore, it does not require further reasoning to assert that anything opposing the Quran must necessarily be rejected... The Quran is also the definitive source of the Prophet's actions in his capacity as a prophet and messenger. Hence, most of the content in the hadith pertains to the Quran in the same way that a branch relates to its root, or an explanation to its text. Without referring to the original text and its root, understanding its explanation and branch is evidently not possible. A close examination of the errors made in interpreting hadith makes this fact evident. The events of stoning during the prophetic era, the assassination of Kaab ibn Ashraf, narrations of the punishment in the grave, intercession, the rulings such as 'I have been commanded to fight the people' (Umirtu an uqatil an-naas)² and 'Whoever changes their religion, kill them' (Man baddala deenahu faqtuluhu),³ have caused confusion because efforts were not made to understand them by relating them to their origins in the Quran." (pp. 63–65)

2. The Quran was revealed in a clear and comprehensible Arabic language

Quran's words and styles contain no complexity, ambiguity, irregularity, or unfamiliarity. It conveys its message with absolute clarity, posing no difficulty for scholars to understand.

The author of Mizan states:

The Quran was revealed not only in Arabic but in a clear and comprehensible Arabic (Arabi Mubeen). This means a language of utmost clarity, free from any complexities, where every word is explicit, and every style is familiar to its audience. The Quran declares:

نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ - عَلِي قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ - بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ -

'The trustworthy spirit (Gabriel) has descended with it upon your heart, so that you may be among the warners, in clear Arabic speech.' (Ash-Shu'ara, 26:193-195)

قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ لَّعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ -

'It is a Quran in Arabic, free from any crookedness, so that they may attain piety.'
(Al-Zumar, 39:28)

This clarity of the Quran is an undeniable reality. Accepting this leads to the conclusion that no word or style in the Quran can carry an obscure meaning. The Quran was revealed to its audience in familiar and well-known words and styles, with no element of unfamiliarity in its language.



Therefore, every interpretation and translation of the Quran must consider its well-known meanings. Any interpretation deviating from these cannot be accepted under any circumstances." (pp. 20–21)

In our view, most misunderstandings in traditional schools of thought stem from neglecting these principles of reason and tradition. As a result, the definitive and unequivocal texts of the Quran are treated as secondary, while the speculative and less definitive texts of the Hadith are regarded as primary. Instead of interpreting Hadith in the light of the Quran, attempts are made to reinterpret the Quran in the light of Hadith. The same issue arises with the recognized words and styles of the Arabic language; they are taken away from their common meanings and interpreted using rare and unfamiliar connotations.

This erroneous approach to knowledge and the reversed methodology of reasoning and interpretation undermines the Quran's status as the criterion and standard. It disregards the established conventions of language and expression, and at times, produces interpretations that conflict with the intended perspectives of both the Quran and Hadith in certain aspects.



REFERENCES:

[1] Q 42:13, 25:1

[2] Bukhari: 25 and Muslim: 129

[3] Bukhari: 3017



THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

1. Abu Hawrah Sa'di narrates:

I asked Hasan ibn Ali (may Allah be pleased with him), "Do you remember anything from the sayings of the Prophet (PBUH)?" He replied, "Once, the Prophet took me to the room where the charity goods were kept. I remember picking up a date from there and putting it in my mouth. The Prophet took it out, along with the saliva, and placed it back with the other dates. A man who witnessed this remarked, 'What would have happened if he had eaten that one date?' The Prophet said, 'We do not consume charity goods.' Hasan stated that the Prophet used to say, 'Avoid doubtful matters and adhere to what is undoubtedly permissible, for truth brings tranquility and falsehood only causes unease and agitation.'" (Musnad Ahmad, Hadith No. 1723)

2. Umm Kulthum bint 'Uqbah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) say, "The one who reconciles between people and speaks good or enhances good words is not a liar." (Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 1857)

3. Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates:

The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said, "Adhere to truthfulness, for truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. (Remember), a person continues

THE TREASURE OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS



to speak the truth until they are recorded as a truthful person (Siddiq) in the sight of Allah. And avoid lying, for lying leads to sinfulness, and sinfulness leads to Hellfire. (Remember), a person continues to lie until they are recorded as a liar (kadhdhab) in the sight of Allah." (Muslim, Hadith No. 4727)





THE DIVINE SCHEME OF CREATION IN PAIRS

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

This is not just about men and women, who have been created in pairs as spouses. The Quran explicitly states that everything in this world has been created in a similar paired form. Thus, everything exists in pairs, except for those things that have been created as a complement or completion to one of these pairs. If a person reflects deeply, they can observe this principle of pairing in every aspect of creation: whether it is soul and matter, plants and animals, humanity, or even the chapters of the Quran. This principle of pairing is evident throughout God's creations.

Even in the basic composition of matter, the relationship and system of positive and negative electrical energy is what proves to be consequential. And it doesn't stop there. Moving further, one observes that individuals are linked with society, labor is connected with capital, causes are paired with their effects, forces with their tools, natures with intentions, and even souls are paired with their bodies in this way. Hence, it has been said:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ، لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ۔

And We have created everything in pairs so that you may receive a reminder; (Al-Dharyyat 51:59)

The point is that when everything in this world exists in pairs and expresses its significance in this paired state, then the world itself also requires a counterpart that makes it a purposeful and meaningful entity. The Quran, which proclaims the reality of the Hereafter, presents this as an argument for its necessity. There is no doubt that the Quran has drawn attention to this truth with

THE DIVINE SCHEME OF CREATION IN PAIRS



this very purpose in mind. However, if one reflects further, another reality naturally becomes evident: that even in their worldly life, the aim of all human endeavors should be to identify the pairs of everything—every thought, every action, every idea—and then to discern in what sense they form pairs, what aspects of contradiction or harmony exist between them, and how they align with one another to give rise to new pairs.

In the mutual relationship between men and women that gives rise to society, understanding this principle of pairing is essential. The politics that emerge from the relationship between the individual and society also demand this understanding. Similarly, the economy that results from the interplay of labor and capital depends on grasping this principle.

This is not a dialectical process as some philosophers have claimed to have discovered. Rather, it is the inherent demand within a pair for its complement, which compels them to form a union as pairs. In this process, contradictions lead to harmony, and harmony gives rise to new contradictions, thereby continually creating new pairs.

This is the very nature of the world. Without understanding this principle, any attempt to formulate a theory of knowledge or action will inevitably result in extremism. Socialism, Communism, Fascism, and now Feminism are all examples of this. A study of various schools of philosophy reveals the same tendency. From this, it becomes clear that the beauty of life lies in balance, and this balance is achieved only when we view things not as isolated entities but as parts of pairs. We must then comprehend the nature of the relationship between these pairs and strive to interact with them accordingly.

This is true knowledge, which leads humanity to success and prosperity in both this world and the Hereafter. God's Shariah has been revealed with this very knowledge. Accordingly, it has been stated that when your Lord created this universe, He established balance (mīzān) within it so that people too may uphold balance within their sphere of responsibility.

The command for believers to establish justice (qiyām bil-qist), which the Quran regards as an essential requirement of faith, is a practical expression of this guidance:

وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ،
أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ،
وَأَقِيمُوا الْوَزْنَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُخْسِرُوا الْمِيزَانَ-

And He raised high the sky and placed the balance in it so that you too [in your circle of authority] should not transgress that balance. And weigh justly, and do not measure less. (Al-Rahman 7-9)



ZAKAT IN MODERN ECONOMY

Salman Ahmed Shaikh

In ancient times, the primary forms of storable wealth were property, livestock such as goats, sheep, cows, and camels, and commodities like gold, silver, diamonds, and precious stones. In modern economies, new forms of storable wealth have emerged, such as fiat currency notes, financial investments, foreign exchange, and intangible assets like trademarks, patents, and licenses.

Furthermore, significant changes have also occurred in the modes of production. In ancient times, primitive agriculture and the trade of labor-intensive manufactured goods were common. Nowadays, industrial manufacturing and the services sector have eclipsed agricultural production in almost every economy, regardless of their state of development.

When the Islamic jurisprudence of Zakat was developed in the period soon after Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), contemporary investments, modes of production, and organizational forms such as limited liability corporations were not present. Naturally, Islamic jurisprudence could not take the current context into account. Now, if we aim to institutionalize Zakat at the governmental level more formally, it is important to extend the rules to encompass new forms of wealth and production to avoid anomalies and discrepancies.



This article outlines at least six challenges in institutionalizing Zakat and discusses potential solutions.

1. Multiple Nisab on Different Forms of Wealth

The existence of multiple Nisab thresholds for different forms of wealth presents a significant challenge. For example, if a person has a diversified wealth base but the wealth in each form is less than the value of Nisab, this might result in Zakat exemption despite the person holding a sizable aggregate value of wealth. For instance, if someone possesses 500 grams of silver, 4 camels, 29 cows, and 39 sheep and goats, they would still be exempted from Zakat because their wealth in each category is below the respective Nisab. However, the aggregate value of the wealth held by that person could be quite significant.

Even within liquid wealth, multiple Nisab thresholds exist in the classical view—one for silver and another for gold. In the case of silver, the Nisab value is approximately 612.36 grams, while for gold, it is around 85 grams. In some countries, such as Malaysia, the gold Nisab is used, while in others, such as Pakistan, the silver Nisab is applied.

The conversion rate between silver and gold has changed drastically over the last 1,400 years. If the silver Nisab is used, it represents only 10% of the value of the gold Nisab. Thus, the Nisab in gold is almost ten times the value of the Nisab in silver. These vastly different thresholds lead to differing numbers of Zakat payers and recipients. If the silver exemption limit is applied, individuals with relatively lower wealth are obligated to pay Zakat. Conversely, if the gold exemption limit is applied, only relatively wealthier individuals are required to pay Zakat.

2. Exemptions May Result in Avoidance and Inconsistent Impact

Certain exemptions in Zakat rules may lead to deliberate avoidance or inconsistent application. For instance, Zakat at a rate of 2.5% applies to the value of gold and silver, even if they are not held for trade. However, the classical view exempts other minerals, like diamonds, from Zakat if they are not held for trade. Therefore, just before the Zakat due date, a person could convert cash or gold into diamonds, significantly reducing their Zakat liability. As there is no Zakat on diamonds and other precious stones not held for trade, regardless of their value, these exemptions create inconsistencies.

Furthermore, under the traditional understanding, assets held for trade—including real estate—are subject to Zakat only if the following two conditions are met:

- i) There is a definite intention to sell the asset at the time of purchase, without any ambiguity.
- ii) This intention remains intact from the time of purchase until the Zakat due date arises, without any uncertainty.

This opinion leaves the determination to the Zakat payer's discretion. Their intention, which is invisible to others, becomes the deciding factor for whether the asset is subject to Zakat. If the payer changes their intention to sell at any point from the time of purchase to the Zakat due date



or even expresses uncertainty about whether to use the asset or sell it, the asset would not be considered subject to Zakat.

3. High Value-Added Production Exempted from Production Levy

In classical Islamic jurisprudence, production from agriculture was subject to Zakat at rates of 5% or 10%, depending on the nature of the production process. However, agriculture is no longer the dominant mode of production in terms of value-added activities. In comparison, there is significantly greater value-added production in the manufacturing and services sectors. The list of top corporations and billionaires illustrates that they are primarily engaged in the IT sector or industrial manufacturing.

Profit margins in agriculture are very low due to the competitive nature of the market. Agricultural markets are among the closest to purely competitive markets, with a large number of buyers and sellers trading in undifferentiated goods.

Agricultural produce is subject to *Ushr* (a 10% fixed-rate levy) or half-*Ushr* (a 5% fixed-rate levy) on its value. But what about value-creating activities in the industrial and services sectors? In these sectors, there is more value addition and significantly higher profit margins. A major portion of invested capital in the economy lies within manufacturing and services, and much of the business profits also stem from these two sectors.

The agriculture sector remains the primary source of employment for poor farmers in developing countries. If that sector is subject to a 10% or 5% flat production levy on output, why should the same treatment not apply to industrial and services sector outputs and other value-creating activities?

Under the current understanding in mainstream Islamic jurisprudence, industrial output is subject only to wealth Zakat of 2.5%, provided the industrial output is held for trade on a specific date in a year. However, on that specific date, the stock of inventory could either be very high or very low, depending on various circumstances. Moreover, if a person is aware of the date in advance, they could liquidate the asset and convert it into one that is exempt from Zakat under the classical view.

4. Inconsistency in Incidence Based on Different Nature of Business

There is also inconsistency in the incidence of the Zakat levy based on the different nature of businesses. In typical production processes 1,400 years ago, supply chains were simple. Now, we have global value chains. A single finished good is produced through different stages of production completed in various regions. Finally, when the product is ready for the retail market, it becomes part of the finished goods inventory. If only the retailer is required to pay wealth Zakat on their inventory, what about those involved earlier in the supply chain? Their profit margins are usually higher than those of retailers who operate in a more competitive retail segment.

Expensive consumer durables and specialized capital goods for firms often have lower inventory



turnover ratios. Manufacturers with streamlined, efficient, and short production processes may adopt just-in-time inventory systems, resulting in high turnover ratios. In contrast, businesses in the services sector may not have inventory at all, as they do not sell tangible goods. Consequently, the level of tradable inventory varies across businesses, and the intensity of Zakat payments depends more on the nature of the business rather than its size (invested capital in production infrastructure) or net profits. Capital-intensive businesses will face a greater incidence of Zakat on tradable inventory if they are unable to adopt just-in-time inventory systems due to high production costs and customization requirements.

Businesses that are more profitable will typically have higher sales and inventory turnover ratios. Struggling businesses, on the other hand, will experience lower sales and inventory turnover ratios. While the former category of businesses might have earned higher profits and thus possess a greater capacity to pay Zakat, the latter category, with unsold inventory, will comparatively bear a higher Zakat burden. These businesses are required to pay Zakat on the entire value of their inventory, regardless of whether their eventual net income is positive or negative.

5. Treatment of Debt for Zakat on Businesses

Hanafi jurists allow all debts to be deducted against the Zakatable value of assets. Considering the balance sheet of a typical manufacturing entity, the asset side consists of current assets and fixed assets. Generally, the value of fixed assets exceeds the value of current assets. If all debts are allowed to be deducted from the Zakatable current assets, most corporations will end up with a negative net Zakatable base, as current assets minus total liabilities will likely result in a negative number for many corporations. In such cases, there would be no Zakat chargeable on shares.

Given that almost 75% of all invested wealth is held by corporations and that most bank financing is directed toward them, allowing all debts to be deductible from Zakatable assets would effectively exclude 75% of invested wealth from the Zakat net.

In contrast, Shafi'i jurists have a different perspective. They do not allow debts to be deducted against the Zakatable value of assets, leading to a different outcome. These juristic differences create challenges in standardizing the institutionalized system of Zakat. They also affect the potential for Zakat collection and its socioeconomic impact.

Some Hanafi jurists, such as Maulana Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, have proposed that not all debts should be deductible against the value of Zakatable assets. Only those debts that have been taken to purchase Zakatable assets should be deductible.

6. Condition of Strict Tamlik Limits Usage beyond Asset Transfer

The condition of Tamlik (ownership) implies that the receiver of Zakat must become the owner of the value of Zakat, enabling them to use it as they desire, with full financial autonomy. This condition has a positive aspect, ensuring financial independence and preventing misuse or



exploitation. Nonetheless, the requirement of “ownership transfer” to an individual in Zakat limits the usage of Zakat funds for providing indirect benefits.

Indirect benefits include building schools, hospitals, water filtration plants, communication infrastructure, and transport systems, which benefit not just individuals but entire communities or societies. If we take the position that Zakat funds cannot be used to provide public goods or build institutional infrastructure benefiting the poor indirectly, it may introduce rigidity in how Zakat funds are utilized for broader social welfare.

Reassessing Zakat Administration in Modern Economies

The challenges discussed above necessitate revisiting Zakat administration in the context of modern economies. If we have guidance from the Nusus—i.e., the Quran and Sunnah, including Hadith—these should serve as our primary sources when redesigning the system of Zakat administration in contemporary economies.

In some cases, *Ijtihad bil Qiyas* (reasoning by analogy) from the Nusus is possible and has been employed in Islamic jurisprudence. For instance, horses were initially exempted from Zakat but were later included. Similarly, forest production was not part of the initial Zakat administration but was subsequently brought into the Zakat net.

Initially, the state was responsible for complete Zakat collection. However, due to administrative difficulties, it was decided that only *Amwal-e-Zahira*—forms of wealth easily discoverable, monitored, and collected—would be subject to state collection. Meanwhile, for *Amwal-e-Batina*—forms of wealth not easily discoverable—individuals were allowed to pay Zakat privately. These decisions were based on the administrative convenience of that time. With advancements in technology and improved documentation of the economy, some exclusions or exemptions may no longer be necessary.

From an economic perspective, there is a need to revisit contemporary forms of wealth, business organizations, modes of finance, and institutional operations to develop consistent rulings for Zakat on new forms of wealth, production, and income-generating activities.

Extending Zakat to New Forms of Wealth and Income

Zakat is intended to purify wealth, as stated in the Quran (9:103). In his magnum opus, *Fiqh-uz-Zakat*, Yusuf al-Qaradawi references the Nusus and juristic opinions to emphasize the need for consistent extensions of Zakat to new forms of wealth. From an economic perspective, any asset (real or financial) that serves as a store of value beyond regular personal use can be classified as wealth subject to Zakat. The divisibility of investments, securitization, and financialization of assets allow wealth to grow (نمو) directly or through exchange. This framework can guide the institutionalization of wealth Zakat.

For value-creating activities, the principle of *Ushr* (10% levy) and half-*Ushr* (5%) applied to agricultural produce can be extended to contemporary industries. In most economies today, manufacturing and services sectors constitute approximately 80% of GDP. Unlike agriculture,



value-creating activities in the services sector do not result in tradable inventory, requiring a reevaluation of how Zakat applies.

The essence of Ushr—Zakat on value-creating activities resulting in production or income—can be extended to manufacturing and service industries. For instance:

- **Zakat on Shares:** From an investor's perspective, income from stock investments arises from the employment of capital, not labor. Thus, stock investment income could be subject to Ushr rules rather than wealth Zakat. Ushr is applied to agricultural production where water is not provided by the producer, imposing a 10% rate when fewer factors of production are involved. A similar principle could apply to investment income. For administrative convenience, the Shafi'i view allowing Zakat payment at the corporate level can be adopted. This approach is already followed in countries like Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.
- **Income from Professionals:** Salaried professionals, royalty earners, and consultants should also fall under the Zakat net. It is important to assess whether they contribute labor alone or capital as well. Income from labor-only professions, such as doctors or consultants, could be treated under Ushr rules, with deductions made at the source.

The Issue of Tamlik

On the issue of Tamlik, Allama Yusuf al-Qaradawi argues in *Fiqh-uz-Zakat* that Shari'ah requires Zakat funds to benefit the *Mustaheqeen* (those eligible for Zakat). The funds can be spent on their welfare. Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi cites Ibn-e-Munir, who writes in *Al-Intisaf*, a footnote of *Kashaf*: "Only the view that Zakat shall be spent for the *Mustaheqeen* is consistent with the word 'fi' as well as 'laam' simultaneously in Chapter Tauba, Verse 60." Malaysia, Indonesia, and many other countries have already adopted this view, emphasizing beneficial ownership rather than absolute ownership.

Conclusion

It is crucial to ensure that Zakat administration has no loopholes and does not exempt significant amounts of wealth invested in certain activities while disproportionately taxing poor farmers in agriculture at the market value of production without adequate debt adjustment or exemptions. Extending Zakat principles to align with contemporary economic realities and ensuring equitable distribution of the Zakat burden are essential for its effective institutionalization and the socioeconomic welfare of society.





CONSULTATION AND MONARCHY

Dr. Irfan Shehzad

Collective order is a social necessity for humankind. Establishing an agreed-upon authority to define the limits of social interactions, laws, and resolve conflicts is essential. Without it, society faces anarchy, a state unacceptable to reason. The demand for collective order inherently establishes some individuals' authority over others, which must be rooted in the will and choice of the people. This is the essence of consultation (shura) or democracy, and it is this system that Allah has preferred for His servants.

The Quran states:

"And those who have responded to the invitation of their Lord and are diligent in the prayer, and their system is based on their mutual consultation and spend [for Our cause] from the sustenance We have blessed them with...." (Al-Shura, 42:38)

To bypass consultation or confine authority to a specific group or family is a transgression by those in power. This not only usurps the people's right to choose but also deprives talented individuals of opportunities to demonstrate their abilities. Such restrictions have historically led to conflicts among contenders for power. The history of ambitious struggles during monarchic eras stems from this very problem. Until constitutional governments emerged, rulers' appointments and dismissals lacked a consensual framework. The advent of elections provided a political solution to this issue.

CONSULTATION AND MONARCHY



However, Allah's advice to adopt consultation does not elevate it to the level of a binding religious command whose violation constitutes a breach of divine law justifying resistance. Even Shariah allows concessions under certain circumstances. Consultation in governance is not a Shariah-mandated injunction; for instance, Allah Himself sanctioned monarchy for the Israelites because their conditions necessitated it. Their tribal rivalries could not coalesce under a united leadership. They even objected to the divinely chosen leader, Saul (Talut). In their case, monarchy preserved collective order, which consultation could not have maintained. Hence, hereditary monarchy continued under the guidance of prophets.

When the choice is between consultation and monarchy, consultation is preferable. However, when the choice is between monarchy and anarchy, monarchy becomes unavoidable. Even in modern democracies, emergencies lead to the suspension of democratic values, allowing authorities to take extraordinary measures.

Whether the government is elected or monarchic, if it acts unjustly, it may be condemned and reformed only through verbal means. This is the domain of individual *jihad*, where speaking the truth is deemed the highest form of *jihad*. Losing one's life in this cause earns the rank of the greatest martyrdom. Beyond this, no further action is permitted, as it is unnecessary, disrupts collective order, fosters anarchy, and results in widespread corruption (*fasad fi al-ard*). Peaceful protest remains permissible only within these limits.

If a Muslim government is established, regardless of its form, and it is not oppressive, negligent of religious duties, or persistently engaged in blatant disbelief, no individual or group has the right to take up arms under the pretext of reforming or restoring an ideal system. Even widespread support for such action does not justify it, as endangering lives for a non-obligatory religious cause is impermissible. Such an endeavor constitutes a grave crime of spreading corruption on earth, regardless of the noble intentions behind it.

If a reformer or group lacks majority support, they should avoid assuming the role of self-proclaimed divine enforcers. The only viable method for reform or restoring ideal governance is through education and political efforts to create public opinion. Anything beyond this has no place in religion.

One cannot expect rulers to exhibit exemplary behavior. Misuse of authority is not unexpected. The argument for replacing a government based on claims of alternative leadership's integrity, piety, or immunity from transgressions is baseless. Without guarantees for such ideal leadership, conspiracies or armed uprisings against the existing government lack logical grounds.

The correct approach to bring reform in politics is to engage in constructive criticism with a spirit of goodwill and educate people about righteous principles. The guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) regarding Muslims' political behavior is reflected in the following narrations:



حدثنا أبو النعمان، حدثنا حماد بن زيد، عن الجعد أبي عثمان، حدثني أبو رجاء العطاردي، قال: سمعت ابن عباس رضي الله عنهما، عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: "من رأى من أميره شيئاً يكرهه فليصبر عليه، فإنه من فارق الجماعة شبراً فمات إماماً ميتة جاهلية" -

Narrated Abdullah ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Whoever sees something from their leader that they dislike should remain patient, for whoever separates from the community by even a hand span and dies in that state, dies the death of ignorance (Jahiliyyah)." (Bukhari, Hadith No. 7054)

حدثنا أحمد بن عبد الرحمن بن وهب بن مسلم، حدثنا عمي عبد الله بن وهب، حدثنا عمرو بن الحارث، حدثني بكير، عن بسر بن سعيد، عن جنادة بن أبي أمية، قال: دخلنا على عبادة بن الصامت وهو مريض، فقلنا حدثنا: أصلحك الله بحديث ينفع الله به، سمعته من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فقال: دعانا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، فبايعناه، فكان فيما أخذ علينا، أن بايعنا على السمع والطاعة في منشطنا ومكرهنا، وعسرنا ويسرنا، وأثرة علينا، وإن لآننازع الأمر أهله، قال: إلا أن تروا كفراً بواحد عندكم من الله فيه برهان -

Narrated Junadah ibn Abi Umayyah: We visited Ubadah ibn al-Samit (may Allah be pleased with him) when he was ill and said, "May Allah grant you well-being. Please share with us a hadith you heard from the Prophet (PBUH) that would benefit us." He said:

"The Prophet (PBUH) called us and we pledged allegiance to him. Among the pledges he took from us were to listen and obey in both ease and hardship, whether we like it or dislike it, and not to dispute with those in authority unless you see clear disbelief (kufr buwah) for which you have clear evidence from Allah. In such cases, disobedience in sinful matters is permitted, but no armed rebellion is allowed." (Muslim, Hadith No. 4471)

It is sometimes argued that stopping evil requires taking up arms or physical force, based on the narration:

فقال أبو سعيد: سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، يقول: "من رأى منكم منكراً فليغيره بيده، فإن لم يستطع فبلسانه، فإن لم يستطع فبقلبه، وذلك أضعف الإيمان" -

Narrated Abu Sa'id (may Allah be pleased with him):

"Whoever among you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand. If he cannot, then with his

CONSULTATION AND MONARCHY



tongue. If he cannot do that, then with his heart—and that is the weakest form of faith." (Muslim, Hadith No. 117)

This directive to prevent evil is contingent upon one's ability. It mandates addressing wrongs within one's sphere of influence and condemns negligence in doing so. However, no individual is tasked with actions beyond their capacity. If everyone or any group begins to take matters into their own hands, it could lead to civil war and chaos.

The Prophet (PBUH) explicitly forbade taking up arms during times of turmoil and discord.

Narrated Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet (PBUH) said:

“There will soon be times of trials. Know that in such times, the one sitting will be better than the one standing, and the one standing will be better than the one walking, and the one walking will be better than the one running. If such trials occur, those with camels should take refuge with their camels, those with sheep should take refuge with their sheep, and those with land should take refuge on their land.”

A man asked, “O Messenger of Allah, what if someone does not have camels, sheep, or land?” The Prophet (PBUH) replied:

“Then let him take his sword and strike its edge against a stone, breaking it. If he can escape, let him do so. O Allah, have I conveyed (the message)? O Allah, have I conveyed (the message)? O Allah, have I conveyed (the message)?”

Another man asked, “O Messenger of Allah, what if I am forced and taken to one of the factions, and someone strikes me with a sword or an arrow and kills me?” The Prophet replied:

“Then he will bear the burden of his sin and yours, and he will be among the inhabitants of the Fire.” (Muslim, Hadith No. 7250)





REKINDLING THE FLAME OF PROGRESS

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi

اٹھ کہ یہ سلسلہ شام و سحر تازہ کریں
عالم نو ہے، ترے قلب و نظر تازہ کریں

Arise, and renew the cycle of dusk and dawn,
A new world awaits—refresh your heart and vision.

اس زمانے کو بھی دیں اور زمانہ کوئی
پھر اٹھیں ولولہ علم و ہنر تازہ کریں

To this age, let us bring a time yet unknown,
Once more, let the zeal for knowledge be shown.



تیری تدبیر سے نومید ہوئی ہے فطرت
راستے اور بھی ہیں، رختِ سفر تازہ کریں

Nature despairs at your plans, so confined,
There are paths untrodden, journeys to find.

شعلہ طور اٹھے آتشِ فاراں ہو کر
پھر تری خاک میں پوشیدہ شہ تازہ کریں

Let the flame of Sinai rise, as Mount Paran's fire,
Ignite the spark in your dust, a hidden desire.

حرف و آہنگ نہ ہوں سوزِ دروں سے خالی
ہر رگِ ساز میں اب خونِ جگر تازہ کریں

Let words and melodies not lack inner flame,
In every string, let passion's blood reclaim.





SPLITTING OF THE MOON (XI)

Syed Manzoor ul Hassan

The Incident of Splitting of the Moon — In the Light of the Quran

The incident of the splitting of the moon is mentioned in the opening verses of Surah Al-Qamar (54) in the Quran. To understand its nature, reality, purpose, and objectives, it is necessary to comprehend the meanings and implications of these verses. It states:

اِقْتَرَبَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَاَنْشَقَّ الْقَمَرُ ﴿١﴾ وَاِنْ يَرَوْا آيَةً يُعْرِضُوا وَيَقُولُوا سِحْرٌ
مُّسْتَمِرٌّ ﴿٢﴾ وَكَذَّبُوا وَاتَّبَعُوا اَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَكُلُّ امْرٍ مُسْتَقَرٌّ ﴿٣﴾

“The hour which they are being warned of is about to arrive and the moon is cleft asunder. [But they will not profess faith,] and whatever sign they see, they will only evade it and remark: “This is a magic that is being handed down from the past.” [Thus, this is what has happened] and they have denied even now and followed their fancies, and [We did not seize them immediately because with Us] every matter has an appointed time..” (Al-Qamar 54:1-3)

When these verses are studied in the light of the overall message and structure of the Quran, the following points become evident:

SPLITTING OF THE MOON (XI)



1. From the content of the Surah, it is apparent that it was revealed in Umm al-Qura (Makkah) during the stage of public warning (Inzar-e-Aam) in the prophetic mission of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). The theme of the Surah is to establish the Day of Judgment and provide warnings and glad tidings in its context. It draws arguments from the manifestation of God's judgment.
2. The content of the Surah also makes it clear that it is addressing the Quraysh of Makkah, who were demanding a sign as proof of impending punishment. This is further clarified by the words in the above verses: "and whatever sign they see, they will only evade it and remark: "This is a magic that is being handed down from the past." (Al-Qamar 54:2).
3. The Surah references the histories of the people of Noah, Aad, Thamud, Lot, and Pharaoh. It highlights that Allah sent messengers to them along with signs, yet they persisted in denial till the end. Consequently, Allah's punishment descended upon them. The case of the Quraysh of Makkah is no different. Hence, they will face the same fate as the wrongdoers of previous nations. This has been stated as a definitive prophecy. The words of verse 45 are: "[Listen clearly!] This group of theirs shall soon be routed, and turning their backs they will be fleeing away." (Al-Qamar 54:45)

Regarding this prophecy of punishment, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi writes: "This is a clear prophecy made years before migration, which was fulfilled exactly as foretold. The first manifestation of this occurred during the Battle of Badr. After the conclusive proof against the Quraysh, their forces could no longer stand firm against God's mighty army in any battle, until Makkah was conquered, and everywhere, people witnessed them fleeing in retreat." (Al-Bayan, 5/91)

4. The Surah begins with the words "The Hour has drawn near" (Iqtarabat al-Sa'ah). According to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, the term "al-Sa'ah" here refers to the Hour of Judgment, which begins with the punishment that inevitably descends upon those who persist in denying a messenger. Their ultimate judgment is enforced in this world, and their punishment starts here. They face worldly punishment first, then the torment of the grave, and finally become fuel for Hell. The disbelievers of Quraysh are warned that if they persist in their path of denial and rejection, this will also be their fate. Their judgment will soon be decreed, and their punishment will commence.
5. The words "and the moon has split" (wan-shaqqal-qamar) clearly refer to the moon splitting or being torn apart. The verb "inshaqqa" is in the past tense, indicating that the action has occurred and been completed. The next verse confirms that this is not a future event yet to occur, but an event that has already taken place. The next verse states: "And whatever sign they see, they will only evade it and remark: "This is a magic that is being handed down from the past." (Al-Qamar 54:2)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi explains: "The statement: 'and whatever sign they see, they will only evade it and remark: "This is a magic that is being handed down from the past,' is a clear proof that the incident of the splitting of the moon is not a future event but one that occurred during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The Quran used this as evidence for the coming punishment and the Day of Judgment. If the phrase 'the moon has split' were interpreted as referring to a future event, the subsequent sentence would become entirely disconnected." (Al-Bayan, 5/83)



6. Similarly, this incident cannot be attributed to a time before the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Verse 2 makes it clear that the audience of this event is the Quraysh, about whom Allah has already stated that they would dismiss such signs as magic and continue their rejection.

The Nature of the Splitting of the Moon

The Quran refers to the splitting of the moon as an *ayah* (sign). The meanings, connotations, and applications of this term have been discussed in detail in the previous chapter. This discussion serves as a prelude to understanding the subsequent arguments, as it provides the foundational basis for analysis and reasoning. The summary of this discussion is as follows:

- *Ayah* is a well-known Arabic word meaning "sign" or "symbol."
- When this term is used concerning Allah, it refers to the signs in the universe and human existence that direct attention to His various attributes.
- The Quran employs these signs to draw people's attention to Allah's attributes, serving as a basis for reminders, encouragements, warnings, and admonitions.
- In this technical sense, the word *ayah* is used in the Quran for four different applications:

1. For the signs of Allah that are regularly manifested in the universe and human existence—these are apparent and visible in the universe and are related to Allah's established natural laws. For example, Allah creating man from clay, binding the sun and moon to a specific system, or bringing down water from the sky to bring life to the dead earth are examples of such signs.

2. For the signs of Allah that appear in the universe and human existence contrary to regular patterns—these are supernatural and extraordinary and occur by Allah's direct command or through the agency of the forces of fate. Examples include the descent of manna and salwa upon the Israelites during the prophethood of Moses (PBUH), the continuous shade of clouds over them in the Sinai Desert, the birth of Jesus (PBUH) without a father, and his speaking from the cradle.

3. For the signs of Allah that appear as miracles through the prophets in extraordinary circumstances—these are supernatural and extraordinary and are manifested by Allah's command through His prophets. In religious terminology, these are called "miracles" (*mu'jizat*). Examples include Moses' staff turning into a serpent, twelve springs gushing forth from the rock upon his strike, Jesus raising the dead, and the divine speech flowing from the blessed tongue of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

4. For the Quranic verses that recount or describe the signs of Allah in both regular and extraordinary manifestations—these are recorded between the covers of the Quran and recited as the phrases of its Surahs.

In light of these points, the question now arises: In Surah Al-Qamar, to which of these four applications does the term *ayah* pertain?

If we interpret it as a verse or phrase of the Quran, it is evident that this interpretation is not viable. The phrase "And if they see a sign, they turn away and say: This is magic, "continuous"

SPLITTING OF THE MOON (XI)



is indeed a verse of the Quran, but the word ayah used within this phrase does not refer to a Quranic verse. This is because the word is employed to describe the event of the splitting of the moon, not any statement or verse of the Quran.

Similarly, if it is applied to signs regularly manifested in the universe, this too would be incorrect, because this is not a regular event. In the recorded history of mankind, this incident occurred only once. The rising and setting of the moon, its waxing and waning phases, its partial or total eclipses, its reddish, white, or dark appearances, the determination of months and years based on its orbit, the tidal effects due to its gravitational pull, its captivating light, and the guidance it provides to nighttime travelers—these are all signs of Allah and great manifestations of His might. However, these are daily and regular phenomena, occurring continuously and repeatedly. Humans are familiar with and connected to these phenomena. These are part of the ongoing natural order, not extraordinary occurrences.

In contrast, the splitting of the moon is an extraordinary and supernatural event; hence, this meaning of ayah cannot apply to it either.

As for the category of signs that are manifested as miracles through the prophets, this event cannot be included in that category either. This is because the mediation of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was not employed in this instance. Neither did he issue a command verbally, nor did he use his blessed hand to direct the moon to split, nor did he throw anything toward it. Had any of these actions occurred, this event would undoubtedly have been classified among the signs that are manifested through prophets by Allah's command.

The only remaining possibility is that this event falls into the category of Allah's signs that are supernatural but directly manifested by Him.

Thus, the correct interpretation is that this event is an extraordinary sign directly manifested by Allah's command without involving the mediation of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It belongs to the same category of signs that were shown during the times of the Israelite prophets.

During the era of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it was decided to show similar signs. This decision of Allah is mentioned in Surah Ha Mim Sajdah and Surah Al-Naml. In Surah Ha Mim Sajdah, Allah states:

سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۗ

“[Rest assured O Prophet! and they should also be warned that] soon We shall also show them Our signs in the world around them and within them as well until it will become evident to them that this Qur'ān is the absolute truth....” (41:53)

And in Surah Al-Naml:



وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ سَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ فَتَعْرِفُونَهَا وَمَا رَبُّكَ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ-

“And say: Gratitude is for God alone. Soon He will show His signs to you and you will recognize them and your Lord is not unaware of whatever you are doing.” (27:93)

Imam Amin Ahsan Islahi described the declaration in Surah Ha Mim Sajdah as “a reassurance for the Prophet (PBUH) and a warning and threat for the rejecters of the Quran.” Explaining this, he writes:

“The meaning is that if these people are unwilling to accept the Quran based on its arguments and instead insist on seeing signs to confirm its truth, then the time is soon approaching when such signs will appear in the surroundings of Makkah and within Makkah itself, and among the Quraysh, that they will exclaim: Indeed, the Quran is absolutely true.”

“By Ayah, it is meant the signs of the triumph of truth and the defeat of falsehood, as foretold by the Quran. This prophecy is also discussed earlier in this Surah in light of historical evidence. Initially, the leaders of Quraysh dismissed these predictions as arrogance and mocked them. However, as Islam began to take root in Madinah, within Makkah, and even among the better individuals of Quraysh, they and their supporters were forced to reflect. Ultimately, following the migration, the dominance of Islam manifested itself in such events that not only Quraysh but also Rome and Persia were rendered incapable of standing against it.” (Tadabbur-e-Quran, 7/128-129)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, while discussing the aforementioned verse from Surah Al-Naml, writes: “This means that you will come to know that these are the very signs about which I had forewarned you. It is evident that after the migration, all these signs manifested, and people saw with their own eyes how truthful the Prophet of God was in his proclamations.” (Al-Bayan 3/581)

The splitting of the moon was, in fact, an expression of the very decree that had been previously announced. It was an extraordinary and magnificent sign manifested in the horizons. Its wonder, grandeur, awe, and majesty established it as a great sign of Allah. In terms of its nature, it falls under the category of those signs that were directly manifested by Allah and did not involve the mediation of prophets.

Thus, it belongs to the same category of signs as those shown during the times of the Israelite prophets. Examples include the descent of manna and salwa, the continuous shade of clouds, the suspension of Mount Sinai, and the miraculous creation of Jesus (PBUH) without a father.

[To Be Continued]



THE PROPHETIC MISSION OF MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

The teachings of the Prophets are limited to their respective nations, and their guidance is specific to their particular times and contexts. This claim has been presented by certain individuals in our era. According to them, all Prophets were sent to their own nations, and their teachings were tailored to those nations. Consequently, the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was also directed at the Arab nation, and his message was in accordance with the conditions, language, and cultural background of the Arabs. Therefore, this message is specific to the Arabs. Furthermore, they argue that the Quran, in its address, confines this message to the Arabs and does not obligate its initial addressees to spread it worldwide.

However, contrary to this view, the general stance of Muslims is that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was sent for all humanity and that the Quran's message is universal, meant for all times and all nations. In this article, we will present evidence from the Quran supporting this perspective.

According to the Quran, the guidance brought by the Prophets is always uniform in its essence, universal in its message, and transcendent in its impact. No Prophet brings a new message. Allah states:



شَرَعَ لَكُم مِّنَ الدِّينِ مَا وَصَّى بِهِ نُوحًا وَالَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ وَمَا
وَصَّيْنَا بِهِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى وَعِيسَى أَنْ أَقِيمُوا الدِّينَ وَلَا تَتَفَرَّقُوا
فِيهِ كَبُرَ عَلَى الْمُشْرِكِينَ مَا تَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَيْهِ اللَّهُ يَجْتَبِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ
يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ يُنِيبُ-

"He has prescribed the same religion for you to which He guided Noah and whose revelation [O Prophet!] We have sent to you and whose directive We gave to Abraham, Moses, Jesus: "Adhere to this religion [in your lives] and do not create difference in it." What you are calling these Idolaters to [that they should believe in one God] is weighing down heavily on them. God chooses whomsoever He intends to come towards Him but He shows the way that leads towards Him to only those who turn to Him." (Al-Shura, 42:13)

This clarifies that all Prophets brought the same religion in essence. However, the presentation of this guidance varied according to the audience because the nations to whom the Prophets were sent had different histories, languages, characters, and customs. Similarly, the nature of their deviations varied. Nevertheless, the contents of the Prophets' message, despite this specific context, serve as a beacon of knowledge and guidance for humanity in their essence and meaning.

This can be understood by observing that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) purified the global center of monotheism from the defilements of polytheism. Undoubtedly, the Quraysh were the ones who had nurtured this deviation, as they were historically the custodians of the Sacred Sanctuary (Haram). The Arab nation had its unique language, culture, and specific manifestations of polytheism. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) addressed his nation in consideration of their historical context and refuted their false beliefs and ideologies. However, the message he conveyed to them was that associating partners with Allah was a misguidance and an evil. This claim of the Prophet (PBUH) was, in its essence, a universal truth and an established moral reality, not confined to the Arabs.

Therefore, the teachings and message of the Prophets, in their essence, are never restricted by time and space. Rather, they exist as a universal message, a transcendent truth, and a source of guidance for all humanity.

When a Prophet is sent to a nation with guidance, their first task is to awaken the innate divine awareness within human nature that enables individuals to distinguish between good and evil. However, certain matters arise where human instinct is insufficient, or challenges are encountered in understanding details and practical application. In such instances, Prophets guide humanity through laws and commandments. These laws consist of three types of injunctions:

The first type includes commandments based on underlying causes (*'illat*), meaning they are founded on a specific rationale. When that rationale exists, the command applies, and when it does not, the command ceases to apply.

For example, the law of inheritance prescribes giving sons double the share of daughters, based



on the differing societal and practical responsibilities they bear. As long as this rationale remains valid, the law will remain applicable. Similarly, the rationale behind the waiting period (*'iddah*) is to ensure the clarity of the womb (*istibra-e-rahm*).

At times, these rationales also serve as preventive measures (*sadd-e-zariya*).

For instance, requiring two female witnesses alongside one male in financial transactions aims to prevent potential disputes. If an alternative method is adopted to achieve this goal, the intent of the Shariah is fulfilled, and adhering to the original directive becomes unnecessary.

The second type includes injunctions based on God's selection for worship and obedience, such as prayer, fasting, and pilgrimage. These practices are determined solely by God's will, outlining how He wishes to be worshipped and obeyed. Since these are God's demands, He has also established principles of leniency if people face difficulties in adhering to them.

The third type consists of commandments specific to the chosen nations of the Prophets, such as the Israelites and the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH). These nations were given certain commands due to their special roles and responsibilities.

For instance, the punishment for rejecting the Prophet's message after the completion of proof (*itmam-e-hujjat*). These commandments were issued exclusively to these nations to fulfill specific missions assigned to them. The Quran itself provides the reasons for these distinct religious injunctions. Individuals outside these nations are neither addressed by these commands nor obligated to follow them.

This outlines the guidance brought by Prophets. Now we turn to the question of what instructions the Quran provided to the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) and his nation regarding the dissemination of this message.

When Allah sent the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) to the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), the first instruction was:

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ-

"And warn your near ones of kin of it also." (Al-Shu'ara, 26:214)

It should be noted that it was the family of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) that held custodianship of the Kaaba. This point is further clarified by Allah in another verse:

وَهَذَا كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ مُصَدِّقُ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَلِتُنذِرَ أُمَّ الْقُرَى وَمَنْ حَوْلَهَا-

"[Like that very Book,] this is a Book We have revealed, imbued with great blessings, confirming what came before it so that you may give glad tidings to people through it and that you may warn those who live in the mother city and around it." (Al-An'am, 6:92)



There is no doubt that the primary audience of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), and he was tasked with delivering the message to them. He came as a judge for them. But was the message conveyed through the Quran meant solely for the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH)? Addressing this, the Quran states:

وَأُوْحِي إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَ كُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ-

“And this Qur’ān has been revealed to me that I may warn you through it and those also whom it may reach.” (Al-An‘am, 6:19)

This means that in addition to the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), anyone to whom this message reaches is a recipient of its guidance. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, commenting on this verse, writes:

“This is the same concept expressed in Surah Al-Furqan (25:1) with the words ‘so that he may be a warner to the worlds.’ This clarifies that the Quran will serve as a means of warning until the Day of Judgment. Scholars who rise to carry its message must rely on it as the sole means of warning rather than introducing their own ideas. For understanding God and awakening a sense of the Hereafter, nothing surpasses the Quran in its ability to enlighten people.” (Al-Bayan, Vol. 2, p. 20)

After this, Allah also obligated the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH) to convey the guidance delivered to them by the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) to the rest of the world. This responsibility is articulated in the Quran as follows:

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَيَّ
النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا-

“[We have done precisely this] and [just as We made the Sacred Mosque your qiblah,] in a similar manner, We have also made you an intermediate community so that you may bear witness [to the truth] before all the people of the world and the Messenger of God may bear this witness before you.” (Al-Baqarah 2:143)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, in his commentary on this verse, explains:

"The word 'wasat' is used here. Like 'walad,' it is employed for masculine, feminine, singular, and plural alike. It means 'middle' or 'moderate,' and in this verse, it refers to the Prophet's nation, the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH). The words 'He has chosen you' in Surah Al-Hajj (22:78) provide evidence that they were chosen by Allah for this testimony of faith, in the same way He chooses some eminent individuals from the progeny of Adam for prophethood and messengership. It is on this basis that the Quran designates them as a middle nation ('ummah wasat') in this verse of Surah Al-Baqarah. They are the community positioned between Allah and His Messenger on one side and all other nations of the world on the other, charged with bearing witness to the truth over them. The word 'testimony' here signifies the establishment of evidence through which the truth is so clearly presented that no room for evasion or denial remains.

THE PROPHETIC MISSION OF MUHAMMAD (PBUH)



This testimony is established when Allah selects an individual or a community for the manifestation of His justice, bringing about a 'lesser Day of Judgment' through them in this world before the actual Day of Judgment. They are informed that if they uphold their covenant with Allah, they will be rewarded, and if they deviate, they will face punishment in this very world. As a result, their existence becomes a sign of God for humanity, as if people see God walking and dispensing justice on earth through them. Simultaneously, they are commanded to convey the truth they have witnessed with absolute clarity and completeness to others. This is testimony (shahadah), and once established, it becomes the basis for divine judgment in both this world and the hereafter." (Al-Bayan 1/142–143)

The Quran appointed its initial audience, the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), as a nation tasked with delivering the message of Allah to all corners of the world. The objective was to ensure that the ultimate distinction between truth and falsehood was made and that Allah's guidance was universally disseminated.

The companions of the Prophet (PBUH) initiated this great responsibility by conveying this message to the Jews, Christians, and surrounding nations of their time. The early chapters of the Quran recount the history of this mission, which gradually spread across the world. After the companions, the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH) continued to fulfill this responsibility within their means and resources, and this mission persists to this day.

When this message reached non-descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), and they recognized that the Quran and the Sunnah represented the true guidance of Allah, they also accepted it in faith and began studying it.

As soon as we study the Quran and the Sunnah, the invitation and law of the Prophet (PBUH) become as clear to us as they were to the companions and the original audience. Thus, this guidance becomes equally binding and significant for us as it was for the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH), for this message is not limited to any single nation. Anyone who sincerely accepts this guidance becomes connected to it.

This can be understood through an example: When Allah instructed the Prophet's audience to perform prayer, He said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ-

“[Why do you ruin yourselves by following them?] O People! Serve your Lord Who has created you and those before you too so that you may be secure [from His punishment.” (Al-Baqarah 2:21)

Although this verse was directed toward the Prophet's immediate audience, the worship demanded of the servant (*abd*) is equally incumbent upon us after believing in God. By becoming servants (*abd*), we too are obligated to follow our Lord's guidance.



Allah has stated:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ-

“[Leave these rebellious people to themselves now.] I have created the jinn and men only for My worship [and this is what is required of them as well].” (Al-Dhariyat 51:56)

Thus, the commandments of faith, ethics, and law that were obligatory upon the descendants of Ishmael (PBUH) as human beings are equally binding upon us. We too need a relationship with Allah and a detailed understanding of innate guidance, just as they did.

We are equally bound by the divine law, the Shariah, just as they were. Hence, the Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was, in this sense, for all creation. The Quran explicitly states:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ-

“[If they do not listen, We shall make others Our addressees.] We have [O Prophet] only sent you as a deliverer of glad tidings and warnings to all mankind, but [alas!] most people do not know.” (Saba 34:28)

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, explaining this verse, writes:

"The Quran states at multiple places that, unlike other Messengers, the Prophet (PBUH) was not sent solely to his own people but to all creation. Observing the stubbornness and obstinacy of his own people, the Prophet (PBUH) therefore invited the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, and later the People of the Book and surrounding rulers. The people who believed were instrumental in facilitating the global establishment of proof (itmam-e-hujjat), culminating in the finality of Prophethood and Messengership forever. Now, it is the responsibility of this Ummah, which exists across generations as followers of those early helpers and their successors, to carry forward this mission. Allah also granted the Prophet's own people the privilege that a large majority of them eventually accepted faith and became willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the testimony (shahadah) entrusted to them, which the Quran identifies as the role of the progeny of Abraham (PBUH)." (Al-Bayan 4/196)

Thus, every aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) invitation and the guidance of the Prophets becomes as relevant to us as it was to the earlier nations. Consequently, the invitation and guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are not confined to any single nation or era. The Quran makes it clear that all Prophets brought the same religion, and the message of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is meant for all of humanity.



the followers of Islam would ever permanently settle in these regions. This selection of the progeny of Abraham is referenced in the Quran where it has been stated:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

No doubt, God, whilst giving preference to Adam and Noah, Abraham's family and 'Imrān's family over all the nations chose them [to guide these nations] (Aale Imran 3:33)

After this selection, over approximately five centuries, the descendants of Ishmael and Isaac grew into two major Muslim nations in human history for the first time. Consequently, Allah gradually restricted prophethood to their lineage and commanded them that the truth testified to by Allah's messengers would now be their responsibility to bear witness to before the rest of the world. This arrangement was made by the Lord of the universe as a means for spreading Islam globally, replacing the earlier system of sending separate messengers to each nation.

The first of these nations—the descendants of Ishmael—lived within a tribal society. Therefore, when divine law (*Shari'ah*) was revealed to them, it was limited to personal matters. However, the descendants of Isaac were in a different situation. They had been raised within the urban civilization of Egypt, under a large state, and later settled in the fertile lands of figs and olives, including Jerusalem and its surroundings. For this reason, they were given the Torah, in which Allah laid down commands related to collective organization and governance. As a result, the framework of Islam became complete in every respect.

The responsibility of bearing witness to the truth before the nations of the world was carried by the descendants of Isaac for approximately fifteen centuries, serving as the vanguard under the leadership of prophets. However, when they ultimately killed a prophet as noble as John (PBUH) and then conspired to kill Prophet Jesus (PBUH), they were removed from this great responsibility. Allah declared that the position they previously held would now be transferred to the descendants of Ishmael.

Thus, in the sixth century CE, Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), was sent with this purpose, initiating the third and final phase of Islam's global mission. This phase is ongoing. The scheme chosen by Allah for this purpose is as follows:

Firstly, the Quran was revealed. Unlike the previous scriptures given to the descendants of Isaac, such as the Torah, which primarily consisted of laws, and the Gospel (*Injil*), which focused on wisdom, or the Psalms (*Zabur*), which is universally recognized as a hymn of praise to the Lord of the universe, the Quran is distinct in its nature. It is not only a comprehensive source of law and wisdom but also a scripture of warning (*Inzar*) and glad tidings (*Basharat*).

Accordingly, Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was instructed to warn his immediate audience through it. Moreover, the rest of the world was informed that he is 'a warner to all the world' (*lil-'alameen nadhiran*).¹ Thus, the Quran serves as both the book of guidance and the messenger. After its revelation, there is no longer any need for the sending of another prophet.



وَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَيَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ لِأُنذِرَ كُمْ بِهِ وَمَنْ بَلَغَ

And this Qur'ān has been revealed to me that I may warn you through it and those also whom it may reach. (Al-Anam 6:19)

Secondly, it is not only the Quran; Allah also appointed the descendants of Ishmael as the successors of the prophets. Thus, it has been declared that they are a 'middle nation' (*ummat-e-wasat*)² between God's final messenger and the other nations of the world.

Therefore, the testimony that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) has borne to them, they are now responsible for bearing to all humanity. They must convey God's guidance to the people with complete integrity and absolute clarity until the Day of Judgment arrives and everyone is summoned to accountability before Allah:

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ، هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ
مِنْ حَرَجٍ، مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا،
لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ -

And [moreover, to discharge the responsibilities of your status,] strive in the way of God in the most befitting way. He has selected you and not placed any constraint on you in [the] *sharī'ah* [He has given you]. He has chosen the community of your father – Abraham – for you. It was he who had earlier named you Muslim and in this [Qur'ān] also [your name is Muslim]; chosen you so that the messenger bears witness [to this religion] before you and you bear witness [to it] before all the people of the world. (Al-Hajj 22-78)

This is Allah's scheme for the propagation of Islam. Those who, despite this, express amazement at the concept of the finality of prophethood or consider the prophethood and messengership of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) to be restricted to a specific nation, region, or era, can only be described in the following way:

Therefore, the testimony that Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) has borne to them, they are now responsible for bearing to all humanity. They must convey God's guidance to the people with complete integrity and absolute clarity until the Day of Judgment arrives and everyone is summoned to accountability before Allah:

Choon nadeedand haqeeqat, rah afsānah zadand.

(When they failed to perceive the truth, they resorted to fabricating tales.)

REFERENCES:

[1] Surah Al-Furqan 25:1

[2] Surah Al-Baqarah 2:143



JAVED AHMED GHAMIDI: A PROGRESSIVE VOICE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Dr. Muhammad Ghitreef

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (born in 1952), a distinguished contemporary intellectual and renowned Islamic scholar, is celebrated for his progressive views on various religious matters, particularly regarding women's rights and their role in Islam. His critics—both traditional scholars and proponents of political Islam—often portray him negatively, branding him as a liberal theologian and free thinker. His interpretations are frequently labeled as a secular perspective on Islam.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has extensively written and spoken about women's rights in Islam. Below, we highlight some of his key perspectives on this subject.

Equality in Marriage

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi views marriage as a partnership between two equals, where both spouses share responsibilities and enjoy equal rights. He stresses that an Islamic marriage must be built on love, trust, and mutual respect. In his opinion, divorce should be considered only as a last resort when all reconciliation efforts have failed. He advocates for implementing arbitration and consultation processes to address marital disputes and family problems effectively.



Modesty and the Hijab

On the issue of the hijab, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi asserts that while women should dress modestly, Islam does not prescribe a specific dress code for them, as is commonly believed and promoted by Muslim clergy. He highlights that the Quran calls for both men and women to maintain modesty and dignity in their attire and behavior.

He also argues that the hijab can take various forms, making the insistence on a stereotypical niqab unnecessary. Observing the hijab should be a personal choice for women, and they should never be forced to do so. Additionally, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi notes that face covering has historically been a matter of debate among Muslim jurists, further reinforcing its optional nature.

Women's Empowerment

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi is a strong advocate for women's empowerment, emphasizing their right to participate in all areas of social development, including political and leadership roles. He points out that Islamic history provides numerous examples of women playing vital roles in governance, education, and religious scholarship.

For instance, Umme Warqa was appointed as a market observer in Madina by Umar the Great (RA), the second caliph of the Rashidun era. Moreover, many women during that time contributed to the teaching of Hadith and Fiqh. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi notes that Hanafi jurisprudence even allows qualified women to serve as judges (قاضي). He believes these historical roles must be revived in the modern world to ensure gender equality.

Co-Education and Public Life

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi holds a positive view of co-education, contrasting with the stance of most traditional clerics. He asserts that co-education is not against Islamic values and is not forbidden. He argues that the segregation of men and women is not a religious requirement but rather a cultural tradition among elite Muslims.

He advocates for equal educational opportunities for both genders, free from prejudice or bias. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi also maintains that Islam permits women to take on leadership roles and actively participate in public life, as the Quran and Hadith recognize their rights, capabilities, and contributions.

Views on Polygamy

On polygamy, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi diverges from the traditional stance of Muslim clergy and scholars. He believes that a second marriage should only be considered in specific, conditional circumstances. Polygamy, in his view, must be governed by essential rules, such as ensuring equal treatment of all wives. He also supports the idea that governments can establish regulations to manage this matter appropriately.



Modern Appeal of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Views

While Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's views are often rejected by traditional scholars and clergy, they are gaining traction among the younger generation. His critics frequently rely on the fiqhi principle of sadd-e-zari'a (سدّ ذريعة), or preventive measures, to oppose greater freedoms for women. However, they often struggle to counter his arguments, which are deeply rooted in Islamic scripture and reasoning.

Despite being a vocal proponent of gender equality, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi avoids being labeled a Muslim feminist. His views offer a progressive and nuanced perspective on women's rights, presenting a modern approach grounded in the core values of Islam.



REFERENCES:

- [1] Javed Ahmed Ghamidi. Rights and obligations of spouses”ghamdi.com/audios/rithts-and-obligations-of spouses 1044
- [2] Javed Ahmed Ghamidi-Rights of women in Islam.Facebook,11 February 2020,/videos/545392513879 locale 2+eu
- [3] Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (@javedahmedghamidi), Twitter, April 21, 2020, <http://twitter.com/javedahmadghmidi/videos/545392519513879/locale 2+eu>
- [4] Al Mawrid hind,” Equality of men and women in Islam/Javed Ahmad Ghamdi” YouTube videos posted on 2 May 2020 <http://www.youtube.com/wath?v=qk8jn-D2hxA>.



HAYAT-E-AMIN (IX)

Naeem Ahmad Baloch

Imam Hamiduddin Farahi authored several guiding works. However, there were numerous other works that remained incomplete when he passed away. These unfinished works were in the form of notes and were stored in a special trunk in his study. One night, the trunk was stolen from the school.

Dr. Sharfuddin Islahi writes that neither Maulana Islahi nor Maulana Akhtar Ahsan Islahi was present at the school on the night of the theft. The thieves must have assumed that the trunk contained something valuable. The locked trunk would naturally give such an impression. They carried it away.

The thieves, having moved some distance from the building, attempted to retrieve the "treasure" in a field. They broke the lock, but what emerged from the trunk was indeed a treasure for Imam Farahi and the school, though to the thieves, it was nothing more than wastepaper. It was winter, and the thieves took out some bundles of papers, set them on fire, and enjoyed the warmth without realizing the havoc they were wreaking. Astonishingly, they did not burn all the manuscripts and left the trunk at the scene before fleeing.

In the morning, someone spotted the "mysterious" trunk. Meanwhile, news of the theft of the teacher's trunk must have caused panic at the school. Upon hearing that an abandoned trunk had been found in the fields, the students rushed to the site. The first sight must have been deeply



distressing for them: torn and burnt manuscripts, scattered papers, and a broken trunk. This was the scene that left everyone shaken.

The process of gathering what was left of the "treasure" began. Everything was collected and taken back to the school to assess the extent of the loss and what remained. Maulana Akhtar Islahi had already arrived upon hearing the news of the incident. Upon examining the manuscripts, the students and teachers were surprised to discover that the unpublished manuscripts were virtually unharmed. Even those that were burned caused minimal damage. By the special grace of Allah, almost everything was preserved. However, Dr. Sharfuddin writes: "It is said that the manuscripts were not damaged, but only someone who knows every detail could claim this. The thieves were certainly not educated enough to distinguish valuable manuscripts from wastepaper." (Zikr-e-Farahi, p. 514)

Dr. Sharfuddin's assumption is questionable, as he himself writes that upon receiving news of the theft, Maulana Akhtar Ahsan immediately arrived at the school and took control of the situation because his home was nearby. It is evident that he must have reported the extent of the damage. Furthermore, none of the books published after this incident were said to have missing sections due to the burning of manuscripts. Nor is there any indication that Imam Farahi wrote on a particular subject that was lost to the fire. Therefore, it is reasonable to accept the account that minimal damage occurred due to Allah's special blessing.

The Establishment of Da'ira Hamidiyah

It is evident that from the very beginning, efforts were made at Madrasa-tul-Islah to convey Imam Farahi's scholarly discoveries to the academic community. Thus, in 1935, Da'ira Hamidiyah was established for this purpose. This subsidiary institution of Madrasa-tul-Islah was formed under the presidency of Dr. Hafizullah (whose detailed introduction has been previously provided). Abdul Ghani, a senior government official, was appointed vice president. The institution had three primary objectives:

1. Launch a monthly magazine titled *Al-Islah* to publish Imam Farahi's works and other scholarly articles.
2. Translate Imam Farahi's books into Urdu.
3. Arrange for the systematic publication of Imam Farahi's works.

It was also decided that Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi would oversee all these activities. He would serve as the editor of *Al-Islah* and select collaborators to achieve the institution's goals.

In January 1936, under Maulana Islahi's editorship, the first issue of *Al-Islah* was published. It consisted of 64 pages. On the title page, the magazine's name *Al-Islah* was inscribed in *Naskh* script, while beneath it, in *Nastaliq* script, the phrase "A Monthly Scholarly and Religious Magazine of Da'ira Hamidiyah" was written by the calligrapher. Below this, instead of the term "Editor," the word "Compiled by" appeared in bold letters, followed by the name "Amin Ahsan Islahi." No other text was present on the entire page.

It is noteworthy that Amin Ahsan never used the title "Maulana" before his name. Throughout



his life, he signed his books simply as “Amin Ahsan Islahi.” This does not mean that he disliked the term "Maulana." Instead, he believed that one should not attribute titles or accolades to oneself. However, when his students addressed or referred to him as Maulana, he did not object. The monthly Al-Islah continued publication for four years. During this time, Imam Farahi’s works were translated and published. In addition, whatever writings of Imam Farahi existed in Urdu were also published, regardless of their condition. Alongside this, Maulana Islahi’s own research, critical, and missionary articles were published. These early writings of Maulana will be detailed later.

Additionally, the journal published articles by the faculty of Madrasa-tul-Islah and external scholars, provided they met the journal’s rigorous scholarly standards. The most intriguing and significant writings were the editorials written by the “young Islahi” himself. These provided brief yet incisive commentary on national and community issues.

The first issue received an enthusiastic response from scholars. In his editorial for the February 1936 issue, Maulana Islahi wrote:

“We published the first issue of Al-Islah with some trepidation. The standard and vision of debate we had in mind were such that we doubted whether contemporary trends and preferences would accept them. Whenever we presented the outline of its sections and topics to our friends, they disagreed, arguing that there was no market for such a magazine. However, thanks be to Allah, the doubts did not deter us. We only hoped that if the path was challenging and the goal distant, our companions would not neglect preparation. By Allah’s grace, sufficient provision has been made. If His guidance and support remain with us, the difficulties ahead will not be insurmountable...”

“Nonetheless, the opinions about the journal received so far have been highly encouraging. Its external presentation and intellectual quality have earned a place in the eyes of scholars, and we have not been deprived of due recognition. Among the admirers of the journal are not only common scholars but also such luminaries of knowledge and literature and prominent figures of authorship whose opinions are rightfully a source of pride. This demonstrates that, despite the widespread epidemic of poor taste, the natural entitlement of truth and reality has not yet been entirely lost. There is still a void for it in hearts. The only requirement is to make efforts to reform circumstances with courage and resolve, instead of succumbing to the general epidemic. Human nature is inherently inclined towards goodness, not evil. Falsehood exists only because truth is absent. If truth manifests itself in its full splendor and beauty, it will undoubtedly secure its rightful place in hearts because the human heart is created to be its dwelling. Undoubtedly, serving the truth is no easy task, but why should we consider engaging in it impossible?”

Regarding the content of the journal, Maulana mentions a complaint:

“Some well-wishers and subscribers have expressed dissatisfaction regarding the journal's complexity. This complaint was already addressed in the first issue, and there is no need for repetition. Indeed, some sections of the journal are intended solely for scholars, which naturally makes them less accessible to the general public. However, there is also content prepared with general aptitude in mind. If there is any difficulty, it stems not from the writing style or academic



terminology but from the loftiness of the topics and objectives, which appear elevated due to our general intellectual decline and lack of reasoning capacity. The remedy for this is to focus on training our intellectual and reasoning abilities and making our minds capable of engaging with serious discussions.

We do not accept the distinction between scholars and the general public when it comes to Islam's teachings. The general aptitude of every Muslim should be sufficient to understand Islamic education. However, our general aptitude should be significantly higher, and the way to achieve this is by cultivating the habit of studying serious topics.

It is unfortunate that the general awareness of Islam among Muslims is limited to trivial tales and a few secondary issues. Yet, our true strength lies in understanding Islam. However, we are not neglectful of making *Al-Islah* simpler. The suggestions shared in the previous issue are being considered, and we are exploring possibilities to implement them soon. There was an intention to immediately add some necessary and useful sections, but due to space constraints, this plan could not materialize. It is now imperative to increase the pages, but we shall see when circumstances become favorable for this. These additional pages will be dedicated to general education and reform.”

Regarding the publication of Imam Farahi's works, an announcement was made under the title: “The First Work of Da'ira Hamidiyah”

“There was an intention to publish *Jamhara-tul-Balagha* among the writings of Imam Hamiduddin Farahi. The editing and compilation of its manuscript had reached a certain stage. Scholars' enthusiasm and demand for it are significant, but the current circumstances demand otherwise, necessitating a change in the plan.”

Following this, methods to address the doubts and suspicions prevalent among the educated class of that time were discussed. In this context, criticism was directed—without naming Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and like-minded scholars—and the stance was explained as follows:

“The spread of Western sciences and ideologies has caused severe intellectual chaos among the educated Muslim class of this time. A significant group has separated itself from the general fold and established an independent front, launching a barrage of objections against religion. This group harbors the misconception that the commonly accepted version of religion is contrary to reason, and any religion that contradicts reason is unacceptable. As a result, they present religion in a new framework and claim that this is the true and original form of religion.

There can be many reasons for this misconception. It is possible that fascination with Western sciences and ideologies, combined with the false arrogance of reason and knowledge, as well as undue self-assertion, plays a role. However, in our view, the fundamental reason is simply that Islam is not presented to people in its complete and integrated form. They see only its fragments, separated from its system and structure, and naturally, there is a difference between a flourishing tree and a severed branch. If someone looks at a severed limb of a human body, what beauty will they find in it?

HAYAT-E-AMIN (IX)



For philosophical reflection and contemplation on any subject, it is essential to view the parts in conjunction with the whole. Unfortunately, Islam has rarely been considered in this comprehensive manner. In this modern era, Allah has blessed only Imam Hamiduddin Farahi with the special favor and fortune of this holistic understanding among Islamic scholars. Although this spirit of truth is evident in all his writings, his two monumental works—*Mulhutullah* and *Kitab-ul-Hikmah*—are particularly dedicated to elucidating divine laws and the system of Islam. We believe that if these two books are published, the broken link between reason and religion can be restored.

For this reason, we have decided to prioritize the publication of *Mulhutullah* as soon as possible. Our respected colleague, Maulvi Akhtar Ahsan Islahi, has begun editing and compiling this work. A related article by him will also be presented to the readers. Alongside this, the Urdu translations of the exegeses of *Surah Al-Lahab* and *Surah Al-Kawthar* will also be published soon."

[To Be Continued...]





THE NARRATIVE OF AHARON AND THE GOLDEN CALF: HARMONIZING TANAKH & QURANIC PERSPECTIVES (II)

(Isabel) Ayesha Khalid

The episode of the golden calf, as documented in the Quran and the Bible, has been a subject of theological and exegetical inquiry for centuries. Traditional interpretations often implicate Harun (Aaron) in idolatry. However, a closer examination of scriptural evidence and theological principles reveals inconsistencies in this perspective, casting Harun as a figure of innocence and integrity who upheld his prophetic duties.

Silence as Testimony to Harun's Innocence

The Quran and the Bible agree on the severe punishment meted out to those who participated in the idolatry (Al-Baqarah 2:51–54; Exodus 32:27–28). However, the absence of accusations against Harun during the executions by the Levites is significant. Human nature suggests that in moments of judgment, the accused might deflect blame to seek leniency. Yet, no one pointed to Harun as responsible for leading them astray. This silence is a resounding testament to Harun's innocence and to his active opposition to idolatry, as noted in Surah Taha 20:90. Javed Ahmed



Ghamidi, in *Al-Bayan*, reinforces this view, asserting that Harun's exoneration is evident. Unlike the sinners who were punished, Harun was elevated alongside his progeny to a leadership role among the Levites, further confirming his righteousness.

Prophetic Integrity and Musa's Confrontation

Musa (Moses), renowned for his unwavering commitment to divine justice, immediately confronted Harun upon his return, as documented in Exodus 32:21 and Quran 7:150. Suggesting that Musa's plea for Harun was influenced by familial affection contradicts his prophetic character. The Quran (4:135) underscores Musa's impartiality in judgment, which aligns with his actions. Harun's innocence is further substantiated by the absence of any divine rebuke or punishment, which would be unthinkable under the justice of Allah, the *Qa'im bil-Qist* (Establisher of Justice, Quran 3:18).

Theological Foundations of Divine Justice

Belief in Allah's justice is central to Islamic theology. Amin Ahsan Islahi, in *Tadabbur-ul-Quran*, describes it as foundational to the covenant between man and God. To suggest that Allah pardoned Harun without accountability undermines this divine attribute. The Quran consistently emphasizes that leadership and favor are reserved for the righteous, while transgressors face divine retribution (Quran 2:124; Deuteronomy 28:15,45). Harun's continued elevation within Israel's religious hierarchy, instead of punishment, reaffirms his innocence and Allah's justice.

The Symbolism of the Tablets: A Calculated Act of Leadership

Musa's breaking of the tablets upon witnessing idolatry (Exodus 32:19) has often been interpreted as an impulsive act of fury. However, this act was symbolic, reflecting the Israelites' breach of their covenant with Allah. Rabbinical traditions in the Talmud and Mishnah describe the tablets as sapphire, emphasizing their sanctity. Musa's deliberate act underscores his resolute leadership and intolerance for idolatry, not instability. His actions reaffirm his unparalleled role as a Torah-giver and exemplify prophetic wisdom.

Reconciling Contradictions: Revisiting Harun's Role

The prevailing interpretation implicating Harun in idolatry raises several theological and logical issues:

- 1. Disputed Authenticity:** Divergent interpretations across traditions highlight the uncertainty surrounding the conventional narrative.
- 2. Human Nature:** The absence of accusations against Harun contradicts the expected human response during judgment.
- 3. Scriptural Congruence:** The Quran, Bible, and associated texts consistently portray Allah's justice as infallible and unwavering.
- 4. Divine Law:** The laws of Allah, as depicted in scripture, affirm that leadership and divine favor are incompatible with transgression.



The Quran further elucidates the conditions of Allah’s covenant with the Israelites. Surah Al-Isra warns, “If you return [to sin], We will return [to punishment]” (Quran 17:8). Deuteronomy 28 complements this with promises of blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. Harun’s elevation aligns with his adherence to divine commands and the principles of righteousness.

Covenant of Abraham: A Model of Divine Consistency

The covenant of Abraham exemplifies Allah’s unwavering standards. Quran 2:124 declares, “My covenant does not include the wrongdoers.” This is echoed in Genesis 22:15–18, where Abraham’s lineage inherits leadership based on steadfast obedience. Harun’s role as a prophet aligns with these values, and his absolution upholds the consistent application of divine justice.

Conclusion: Harun’s Legacy and the Essence of Prophetic Integrity

The narrative of Harun’s involvement in the golden calf episode, as traditionally interpreted, contradicts the principles of divine justice, prophetic integrity, and human nature. The Quran and Biblical texts repeatedly highlight the sanctity of Allah’s laws and the accountability of His chosen messengers. Harun’s exoneration aligns with these principles, as evidenced by his unblemished record and the absence of any divine or human reproach.

Revisiting this narrative is essential for ensuring theological coherence and reinforcing trust in Allah’s justice. The portrayal of Harun as a figure of innocence and integrity not only upholds scriptural integrity but also strengthens the believer’s understanding of divine law and the responsibilities of prophetic leadership. This reexamination serves as a reminder of the unchanging principles of justice that govern the covenant between Allah and humanity.

A Linguistic and Contextual Reexamination

The True Story: The Real Demand of the Israelites

Musa (Moses), revered as both a prophet and leader of the Israelites, was tasked with guiding them through the wilderness after their liberation from Egypt. Renowned for his calculated and deliberate speech, Musa declared his return after forty days, beginning from the night of his departure. However, the Israelites, unfamiliar with this chronological calculation, misunderstood the timeline, resulting in confusion and unrest.

The Hebrew text in Exodus 32:1 captures the root of this conflict:

וַיִּרְא הָעָם כִּי־בִשְׁשׁ מִשָּׁה לָּבֹדֶת מֶן־הָהָר וַיִּקְהֵל הָעָם עַל־אַהֲרֹן...

“And when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves around Aaron.”

The key phrase כִּי־בִשְׁשׁ מִשָּׁה (ki-bosheh Moshe, “because Moses delayed”) highlights that the perceived delay was the catalyst for the unrest. Questions arose: Was Musa dead? Had God



abandoned them? Should they return to Egypt or wait? These doubts mirrored the natural human response to the loss of a leader. The Israelites did not request a new deity to replace God; rather, their concern was how to maintain their connection to Him in Musa's absence.

Contextualizing Their Demand

The Israelites' plea must be understood in light of their history and belief. As the People of God (אֱלֹהֵיכֶם לַיהוָה אֱתֶם, בְּנִים), they were aware of God's constant presence. This is affirmed in Joshua 1:9, where God assures them:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

Their words in Exodus 32:23 further clarify their intent:

כִּי־זֶה | מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מַה־הָיָה לוֹ:

“For this man, Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

Their demand centered around Musa's absence (כִּי־זֶה | מֹשֶׁה, “for this man, Moses”), as they sought reassurance in his role as their intermediary. The text provides no indication of a desire for a new deity, nor does it suggest a loss of faith in God.

Key Questions for Analysis

Three critical questions arise from the Israelites' demand:

1. If the Israelites sought a substitute for Musa, why did they request a “god”?
2. Were the Israelites the primary instigators, or was someone else responsible?
3. Was their request truly for a deity, or was there an underlying motive?

These questions demand careful linguistic and contextual analysis, challenging traditional interpretations and revealing a nuanced perspective.

Understanding the Text

The Israelites' plea reflects their reliance on Musa as a leader, not a rejection of God. This distinction is supported by their identity as God's people long before Musa's leadership. Additionally, their phrasing, as seen in מֹשֶׁה | כִּי־זֶה and לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מַה־הָיָה לוֹ, keeps the focus on Musa's absence, not on a theological void.

Furthermore, **Exodus 32:1** introduces the term **הָעָם** (*ha-am*, “the people”), a term distinct from *Bnei Yisrael* (Children of Israel). This linguistic choice suggests a shift in tone, indicating that the unrest may have been influenced by a mixed multitude (*erev rav*) accompanying the Israelites (Exodus 12:38).



The Broader Implications

The Israelites' uncertainty during Musa's absence mirrors the human condition in moments of crisis. Their demand, while often misinterpreted, was a reflection of their need for stability and connection to God. By examining the Hebrew text, their plea is revealed as a practical response to leadership absence rather than a theological rebellion.

Were it the Israelites themselves who petitioned for a new god, or was it someone else among them?

This inquiry shifts the perspective of the historical event, reframing the blame of the culprit and exploring the potential presence of other individuals, nations, or perhaps communities among the Israelites. To achieve this, the article employs the following methodology: examining the internal community through shifts in tone and the manner of proposal in speech. Throughout the Tanakh, we observe that when the Israelites refer to one another within the collective identity, there is a distinct sense of intimacy and unity that is consistently expressed and vividly present throughout the scripture. This sense of unity and affection is similarly reflected in their relationship with their God, the God of Israel, as seen in passages such as Exodus 4:22-23, Deuteronomy 14:1-2, Jeremiah 31:9, Hosea 11:1, and Isaiah 63:16. In contrast, there is a noticeable sense of alienation and distinction from gentile nations woven throughout the text (Joshua 24:16-18, Nehemiah 9:2, Nehemiah 10:28-29, Nehemiah 13:3, Ezra 6:22, Ezra 10:11).

Heeding the context, the deep analysis of the verses from Exodus is given below:

**כִּי־זָה | מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הֶעֱלֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לֹא יָדַעְנוּ מִה־הָיָה לוֹ:
וַיֵּרֶא הָעָם כִּי־בָשַׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לָרֶדֶת מִן־הָהָר וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עַל־אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמְרוּ
אֵלָיו קוּמ | עֲשֵׂה־לָנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לִפְנֵינוּ**

When the people saw, that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, the people gathered against Aaron and those people said to him, ‘Come, make us Elohim, who shall go before us, for that fellow Moses—the man who brought us from the land of Egypt—we do not know what has happened to him. (Exodus 32:1)

a. וַיֵּרֶא הָעָם כִּי־בָשַׁשׁ מֹשֶׁה לָרֶדֶת מִן־הָהָר וַיִּקְהַל הָעָם עַל־אַהֲרֹן

In this verse, a sense of stranger element can be easily spotted throughout the text, a deeper look provokes the idea of a specific group or community mentioned, instead of an indication made in general, (הָעָם) hA’ (הָ), the article under English to be observed as ‘the’ and ‘am (אֲמַ), ‘people’ refers to a proper noun, part of speech or a gentilic noun, part of speech.

In, when ‘the’ people saw, the article identifies the presence of a specified nation/community/folk, just as in English language we see the variation in speech by an addition of this article (the), e.g. find me the book and book.

THE NARRATIVE OF AHARON AND THE GOLDEN CALF



Drifting to the tone, if it were truly the Israelites who were the addressors in this story, should the discussed fragment verse not sound like this instead,

When people/Israelites saw, that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered against Aaron and said to him...

Why is this constant shift to the second person?

For example, if someone conveys the inquiry of his sibling, towards a missing member, would it be made in a same tone? (Note: Referring the Jew as a tribal ethnicity) For example,

When the people saw, that our mother was so long in coming home from the market, the people gathered against me and those people said to me

Or should it sound, instead like this,

When we/our siblings saw, that our mother was so long in coming home from the market, they gathered against me and said to me...

If we fit any speech e.g. nationality in this template, the results would mutually convey the fact that either the speaker has no proper command over the basic sense of his language, or there is a shift in the plot.





THE PROPHET'S CASE IN THE DIVINE COURT

Muhammad Zakwan Nadvi

When those who neglected and abandoned the Quran mourn their misfortune in the Hereafter, the Messenger of Allah himself will bear witness to their crime and lodge a complaint before Allah. This complaint concerns Muslims turning the Quran into a “forsaken book.” The Quran mentions this event in the following words:

“And the messenger will say: “Lord! The people of my nation had totally ignored this Quran.”
(Al-Furqan, 25:30)

Historical evidence indicates that this was the same crime committed by the past “Muslims” (Jews and Christians), and it remains the crime of today’s Muslims. Despite claiming belief in the divine scriptures, the Jews and Christians practically cast the Book of Allah behind their backs (fa nabadhuhu waraa’ zuhoorihim), relegating it from being the ultimate standard for words and deeds to a secondary position.

Likewise, many contemporary religious and non-religious Muslims have adopted a similar approach toward the Book of Allah. While the Quran is considered a national scripture in belief, in practice it no longer retains its original status as the “Book of Guidance” in our lives. It has been reduced to a secondary source and a sacred text within our schools, mosques, Islamic colleges, khanqahs, academies, universities, and institutions. It is read and taught as a revered

THE PROPHET'S CASE IN THE DIVINE COURT



syllabus but not upheld as the primary guide and central focus of our educational and practical lives.

Consequently, the Quran has become an adornment for our pulpits and prayer niches but has not been established as the primary source of guidance among us. Positions like Sheikh al-Tafseer and Sheikh al-Mashayikh have been institutionalized, yet the Quran itself has never been accorded such a status. Religious institutions like Darul Qaza and Darul Ifta have been established for resolving religious matters, along with the appointments of muftis and qadis. However, the Quran has never been practically declared the ultimate arbiter in these matters.

In our institutions, the Quran has been included in curricula as an added religious attraction and a means of gaining popularity and trade. Yet, it has not been given the role of the ultimate governing principle within our educational system. The Quran has become a ceremonial part of our gatherings, serving as a transient opening grace, but it has not been adopted as the permanent starting point of our lives.

The Quran has been used as the heading for sermons, exhortations, scholarly and religious research, and religious literature. However, it has never been given the status of an absolute criterion in these fields. In our religious and educational systems, the Quran has become akin to a foundational reader (Qaidah Baghdadi), but it has yet to attain the status of the fundamental principle and cornerstone of these systems.

This is what it means to make the Quran a “forsaken book” among us. And this is the crime for which, on the Day of Judgment, the Messenger of the Last Era (PBUH) will present a case against us in the Divine Court of the Almighty.

Is there anyone among us who can defend themselves in this case before Allah? Can we refute the charges that the Prophet himself will bring against us by relying on the things we have devoted all our time and energy to, instead of the Book of Allah?





THE SENSITIVITY OF SCHOLARS ON THE BLASPHEMY LAW

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

The issue of the punishment for blasphemy is not a new one. It has been a topic of discussion among scholars throughout the intellectual history of the Muslim community. Its foundational basis is undoubtedly theological, such as the determination of punishment for this crime through certain verses of the Quran, the encouragement to enforce this punishment in some Prophetic traditions, or the reasoning derived from the actions of the Companions in dealing with such offenders. On all three counts, respected teacher Mr. Javed Ahmed Ghamidi has clarified the errors in the primary theological arguments that scholars commonly present in his article, “The Issue of Blasphemy.”

No serious scholarly response has yet been provided to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's critique, which could establish the validity of the theological stance taken by the scholars. However, in our opinion, the sensitivity regarding the blasphemy law in the subcontinent also includes certain social factors in addition to theological arguments. The most significant among these is the emergence of Ahmed Raza Khan's school of thought in this region. This school attempted to present the mystical concepts that were previously not defended in an intellectual framework in the light of theological arguments while adhering to classical juristic traditions.



Ahmed Raza Khan Barelvi developed a theology that highlighted the transcendent and eternal dimensions of the personality of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to substantiate these mystical and supra-rational claims. While these dimensions were discussed sporadically in theological discourses throughout Islamic history, presenting the Prophet's personality as an invincible force through this methodology is undoubtedly the contribution of the Barelvi school of thought.

In this methodology, religion, law, and mysticism are all tied to the superhuman personality of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), from which every command emanates. Therefore, any doubt, objection, or alternative interpretation shakes this entire framework. This is the reason for the extraordinary sensitivity and emotional fervor concerning the personality of the Prophet (PBUH) within this school of thought.

Thus, analyzing Ahmed Raza Khan's foundational arguments reveals, in simple terms, that since the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is placed at such an exalted station that all the knowledge of what was and will be until the Day of Judgment is within his grasp, he is omnipresent and a supporter and helper of his lovers, then miraculous occurrences by saints like Ghous Azam are naturally outcomes of this same relationship of love. The discourse reached a point where the internal mystical insights were made public from the pulpit without fear of contradiction.

This blend of mysticism and jurisprudence was a far more confident stance compared to the past. Consequently, Ahmed Raza Khan outrightly refused to compromise on this foundation. His book "Husam al-Haramayn" clearly illustrates his psychology, as he launched a campaign to publicly disown the leading religious figures of his time who could obstruct the acceptance of this new methodology.

Prominent Deobandi figures such as Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi, Maulana Qasim Nanotvi, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, and Maulana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri were declared guilty of blasphemy and apostasy without mincing words, merely because they denied the status of the Prophet's personality that Ahmed Raza Khan had defined. This act was considered equivalent to disrespect and blasphemy against the Prophet. Thus, it can be observed that the first organized fatwa of blasphemy in the subcontinent was issued against the "senior leadership of Deoband."

Although the Deobandi scholars initially responded strongly to this uproar and cleared their name both locally and internationally through writings like "Al-Muhannad ala Al-Mufannad," the stance of later Deobandi scholars reveals that they soon realized that such intellectual disagreements could neither be presented at the public level nor gain acceptance. Since the disputes revolve around the personal stature of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Barelvis were unwilling to compromise, presenting the issue as an emotional public matter, the Deobandi scholars preferred to tread cautiously.

In contrast, the Barelvi school's public engagement focused on fulfilling the psychological and cultural needs of the masses, such as the observance of commemorations like Qul, Barahween, and Eid Milad-un-Nabi. This allowed them to establish a strong connection with the public, which gave them far greater influence compared to the scholarly acceptance of Deoband's intellectual movement rooted in the continuity of work by exegetes, hadith scholars, and jurists.



Ultimately, the compromising attitude of Deobandi leadership on one side and the aggressive actions of Barelvi scholars on the other led to a situation where the Deobandi school was gradually forced to wash away the stigma of diminishing or disrespecting the Prophet's stature. This public acceptance in the subcontinent compelled them to adopt the Barelvi stance, albeit reluctantly.

Following the partition, the Deobandi leadership in Pakistan continued this compromise with the Barelvi scholars. When the agitation for legislation on the punishment for blasphemy arose, the Deobandi leadership sought to assure their loyalty and profound love for the Prophet, thus avoiding becoming a target again. In doing so, they not only abandoned their previous scholarly stance and the position of the majority of scholars but also adopted the Barelvi stance entirely. This included aligning with the contemporary Barelvi interpretation of Hanafi jurisprudence on the punishment for blasphemy, which left no room for repentance, made no distinction between men and women, or Muslims and non-Muslims.

In our view, this intellectual defeat of Deobandism is due to the social impact of Barelvi thought, which Ahmed Raza Khan Barelvi presented with unwavering determination and forced public acceptance. This is why today's Deobandi scholars are part of the same movement of declaring individuals blasphemers and seeking their execution, a movement that once declared their ancestors guilty of blasphemy, compelling them to defend their faith.

In our opinion, this is now a "point of no return" for the Deobandi school of thought. While there is a growing awareness of this compromise among young Deobandi scholars, returning from this position will exact a heavy price, as even their followers may no longer value their scholarly opinions on this issue.

This is precisely the same situation as when the Deobandi school of thought actively participated in the Afghan conflict, declaring it as "jihad" during the global political tussle, but later attempted to retreat. The Deobandi leadership realized that their students and the very Mujahideen they had nurtured did not accept the idea of ending the conflict and turned against their own mentors, even thirsting for their blood. This exacted a heavy price.

Similarly, regarding the blasphemy law, the Deobandi scholars must reflect on the humiliation they faced by associating themselves with a borrowed stance. Today, even if they wish to backtrack, God forbid their followers might refuse to accept their repentance or retraction.

Recently, when we brought the issue of Section 295-C and repentance to the attention of Deobandi scholars, the prominent intellectuals of this school expressed their inability to take action, acknowledging that the matter is no longer in their control. At most, they can highlight the disagreements among jurists to convey the message that this law was based on a singular opinion, but they cannot bear the burden of amending or adding to it.



THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

Rehan Ahmad Yousufi

Slavery has become an unimaginable concept in the modern era. However, throughout recorded human history, it remained an integral part of human societies. When a modern, educated individual encounters references to slavery in the Quran, they are often filled with astonishment and dismay. For many, this becomes a reason to doubt the truth of Islam.

Even those who do not go to such extremes often grapple with numerous questions on the subject. One such question is: Why did the Quran not explicitly declare slavery prohibited, just as it gradually prohibited alcohol and usury? What harm would there have been in doing so?

This is a very reasonable question. In our understanding, the primary reason Allah did not do this was that slavery had not only become a necessity of human society but had also been deeply embedded in its norms, gaining intellectual justification.

Slavery originated in history when humanity transitioned into the agricultural age. Prisoners of war, who were otherwise killed, were kept alive to work on agricultural lands and in households. This allowed captives the right to life and gave victors the benefit of their labor. Thus, slavery began as a less severe form of oppression. Over time, it gained intellectual and moral justification.

Gradually, male and female slaves became indispensable for society. This led to the rise of the slave trade. During the tribal era, individuals separated from their tribes or members of weaker

THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY



tribes were captured and sold in major cities. Without the support of their tribes, it was unthinkable for slaves to live freely again. Even if they somehow gained freedom, they lacked protection and the economic opportunities to imagine living independently. Their master was their sole provider and protector, regardless of the treatment they received.

In addition to the slave trade, personal freedom was also seized as ransom for unpaid debts, as compensation for murder, or as punishment for certain crimes. In this way, society fully embraced slavery from every angle.

To completely abolish slavery, three fundamental changes were required in the social, economic, and intellectual structures of human societies:

1. Recognizing freedom as the greatest human right and ensuring its protection at all costs.
2. Guaranteeing that society would secure employment opportunities for every individual.
3. Transitioning from tribal civilizations to an era of international agreements, where a global law could be established.

Without these three changes, if all slaves had been freed by a single decree, most would have refused liberation. This was especially true in an Islamic society, where kind treatment of slaves was a religious obligation. To slaves, serving a wealthy master and securing food, clothing, and shelter was far more important than the idea of freedom. If they were freed, they would struggle to find work and might even be re-enslaved in other regions.

For this reason, Islam adopted a natural approach, granting slaves the right to purchase their freedom. While the implementation of this solution saw some practical shortcomings due to the moral decline of Muslims, issuing a blanket order for abolition without addressing these three prerequisites would have been futile.

In the modern era, the scientific and industrial revolution of the West transformed society in all three aspects. Freedom became the most cherished human value. This intellectual shift is why the mere mention of slavery causes discomfort today. In ancient times, however, it was fully justified morally and legally. Against this backdrop, the world began to view slavery as the greatest injustice.

Additionally, the industrial revolution created widespread employment opportunities, allowing every freed slave to manage their livelihood in some way. International treaties gradually compelled the entire world to abolish slavery within their territories.

Therefore, raising objections against Islam and the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH) on this matter demonstrates not only ignorance of the Quran but also a lack of understanding of how human societies function and the principles that govern them.



THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION

Syed Sulaiman Nadvi

After a long time, the scholars of Bareilly, who gained prominence among Muslims due to the conspiracy of apostasy, have once again taken to their age-old, rusted weapon—declaring fellow Muslims infidels (*takfir*). What can we say when, according to them, we have inherited this status from our predecessors? Those most injured by their venomous attacks are the scholars of Nadwah. Even the scholars of Deoband are behind us in this regard.

It is said that approximately 96 treatises have been written by them to declare Nadwah scholars as infidels and wrongdoers, with titles like *Hadsah-e-JanKah Bar Molvi Lutfullah* and *Takfir Ulama al-Haramain, Ahl al-Nadwah Dhu al-Sin wa al-Sheen* ("The Scholars of the Haram Declaring the Deceitful, Wretched Nadwah Scholars as Infidels"). And all this, for what crime? Simply because Nadwah advocated that no Muslim who faces the Qiblah (*ahl al-Qiblah*) should be declared a disbeliever and that Islamic scholars should practice mutual tolerance and unite against the enemies of Islam, despite theological differences.

This call led to thousands of fatwas of *takfir* being issued by the Dar al-Ifta of Bareilly. In response to their absurdities, the scholars of Nadwah have always maintained a dignified silence, refraining from retaliating by labeling their accusers as infidels, thereby upholding their scholarly decorum. Instead, they have defended their stance with abundant evidence from the Quran, authentic hadiths, historical accounts, and the practices of the righteous predecessors. These treatises are still available and can be obtained from the Nadwah office.

The opponents of Bareilly's scholars have historically remained composed and serious, except

THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION



for a few responses by Maulana Murtaza Hasan, who followed the principle of "Requital for evil is an evil equal to it". The scholars of Deoband have also adhered to this principle. However, the Bareilly scholars' zeal for excommunication grew to such an extent that even their own benefactor, from whom they inherited religious knowledge, was accused of heresy over a minor jurisprudential issue. This wound's depth can be best understood by our friend Maulana Abdul Majid Qadri Badauni.

Recently, these adherents of a specific doctrine antagonized a few eccentric individuals in Punjab, leading to the principle of "he who throws clods of dirt receives stones in return." They have now realized that declaring a Muslim an infidel is not as simple as they had imagined. By Allah, their actions have not only brought disrespect to knowledge and scholars but have also subjected Islam itself to humiliation. Moreover, their universal *takfir*—"Whoever does not consider those declared infidels by us to be infidels is also an infidel"—is unprecedented. Is there even a single example of such a general fatwa in the records of the righteous predecessors (salaf saliheen)?

What is most astonishing is that this fatwa is issued in the name of the Hanafi school, whose imams have unanimously stated:

"We do not declare any ahl al-Qiblah (those who face the Qiblah) as infidels."
(Wala nukaffir ahadan min ahl al-Qiblah.)

ببین تفاوتِ رہ از کجا است تا بکجا

Observe the stark difference between their path and ours.

If a Muslim is declared an infidel based on their rejection of explicit beliefs and commandments of Islam and the Quran, it might be justified. However, these individuals issue *takfir* over matters they themselves have concocted or which are products of their intellectual reasoning.

Contrary to this, the people of ahl al-sunnah—and particularly the Hanafi school—hold another fundamental principle: "We do not declare those who engage in interpretation (ahl al-ta'wil) as infidels."

A third principle is that if someone's statement implies heresy but they deny it or refute the interpretation that leads to such heresy, they cannot be forcibly labeled an infidel. Even if their statement constitutes heresy, their denial or repentance suffices as atonement.

These principles are clearly outlined in our theological texts and are derived from the Quran, prophetic teachings, and the practices of the predecessors. The Quran commands:

And do not say to those who say salām to you: 'You are not Muslims.' (Al-Nisa 4:94)

Our situation today is that while we affirm our faith, we are told, "You are not believers." Not because we associate partners with Allah, deny the Prophet, or attribute divine qualities to

THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION



humans, but simply because we do not interpret some issues as they do or fail to view everything through their lens.

Do these revered scholars recall the Prophet's (PBUH) statement when a Bedouin prayed, "O Allah, forgive me and Muhammad, and do not forgive anyone else?" The Prophet (PBUH) responded:

"You have restricted the vast mercy of Allah."

In another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) is reported to have said:

"Is the man more ignorant or his camel?"

In the renowned hadith from Sahih Bukhari, during a battle, the beloved companion Usamah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him) raised his sword against a disbeliever. The man instantly proclaimed *La ilaha illallah* (There is no god but Allah). Believing it to be a ploy, Usamah struck and killed him.

When the incident reached the Prophet (PBUH), he rebuked Usamah severely. Usamah explained, "O Messenger of Allah, he only said it to save his life." The Prophet repeated:

"What will you do with La ilaha illallah on the Day of Judgment?"

According to another narration, the Prophet (PBUH) added:

"Did you open his heart to see if he was sincere?"

Usamah later confessed:

"I wished I had embraced Islam only that day, so such a mistake would not have occurred."

According to another narration from Sahih Bukhari, the Prophet (PBUH) sent Khalid ibn al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) to confront the Banu Jadhimah tribe. The tribe, unfamiliar with Islamic terminology, declared *Sabuna, Sabuna* ("We have abandoned our ancestral religion"), instead of the usual *Aslamna* ("We have embraced Islam"). Taking this as apostasy, Khalid ordered their execution.

Some Companions refused, arguing that this command was against Islamic principles. When the incident was reported to the Prophet (PBUH), he raised his hands and repeatedly declared:

"O Allah, I disassociate myself from Khalid's actions."

Miqdad RA once sought guidance from the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), asking: "O Messenger of Allah, if in battle I am confronted by an enemy who severs one of my hands with his sword, and then, when he comes under my control, he declares, 'I accept Islam,' can I kill him?"

THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION



The Prophet (PBUH) replied: “No, you may not kill him now.” Miqdad (RA) reiterated, “O Messenger of Allah, he severed one of my hands and then uttered the testimony of faith.” The Prophet (PBUH) again replied: “No, now you cannot kill him, for by proclaiming the testimony, he has attained the same rank as you. If you kill him now, you will descend to the level he was at before he uttered the testimony.”

Allahu Akbar! Killing a Muslim is itself an act of disbelief.

Who does not know that there existed in Medina a group of hypocrites who were not Muslims at heart but outwardly professed Islam? The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was fully aware of each of their identities. The Muslims suffered harm from them and faced threats from their betrayal in battles. Loyal Companions often sought permission to kill these hypocrites, but the Prophet (PBUH) always refused.

In Sahih Bukhari, it is recorded that once a Companion asked about Malik ibn Dukhshum and was told, “He is a hypocrite who does not love Allah and His Messenger.” The Prophet (PBUH) prohibited such statements, saying: “Do not say that. Do you not see that he sincerely says La ilaha illallah?” The Companion confirmed that Malik did say it. The Prophet (PBUH) then said: “No one who proclaims it will bring it forth on the Day of Judgment without Allah making Hellfire forbidden for them.”

This refers to those whose actions do not align with their declarations of faith.

During preparations for the conquest of Mecca, a Badr veteran informed the Quraysh of the Prophet’s plans. When the Prophet (PBUH) learned of this act, the letter was intercepted. Umar (RA) declared him a hypocrite, but the Prophet (PBUH) said, “O Umar, do not say that. What do you know? Allah may have said regarding the people of Badr, ‘I have forgiven you for your deeds.’”

Mu'adh (RA) once led the prayer and recited long chapters, including Surah Al-Baqarah. A laborer in the congregation, unable to endure the lengthy prayer, completed his own shorter prayer and left. Upon learning this, Mu'adh (RA) accused the man of hypocrisy. The man, distressed, approached the Prophet (PBUH) and explained: “O Messenger of Allah, we are laborers; we draw water for our camels and work hard. Yesterday, Mu'adh led the prayer and recited Surah Al-Baqarah, so I prayed briefly and left. He then accused me of hypocrisy.” The Prophet (PBUH) addressed Mu'adh (RA): “O Mu'adh, do you intend to cause hardship for people? Do you intend to cause hardship for people? Do you intend to cause hardship for people? Recite *Wal-shams* or *Sabbih isma Rabbika al-A'la* instead.”

Declaring a Muslim an infidel is no simple matter. In an authentic hadith narrated by Abdullah ibn Umar (RA) and Abu Hurairah (RA), the Prophet (PBUH) said:

“Whoever says to his brother, ‘You are a disbeliever,’ the label will revert to one of them.”
(Sahih Bukhari Hadith 6103)

Meaning, if the accused is not truly a disbeliever, then the accuser’s act of declaring them as such amounts to disbelief.

THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION



Thabit ibn Dhahak RA narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said:

“Cursing a believer is akin to killing him, and accusing a believer of disbelief is like killing him.” (Sahih Bukhari Hadith 6105)

The Khawarij sect emerged during the time of the Companions and the early righteous predecessors (*salaf saliheen*). Despite battles and bloodshed with them, they were never declared infidels. Their wives were not considered divorced, nor were their properties deemed permissible to seize. When asked whether they were disbelievers, Ali (RA) replied, “They fled from disbelief (according to their understanding).”

The later scholars' statements also support this view. The author of *Kitab al-Rawdah*, as mentioned in *Fath al-Bari*, has recorded the opinion of most Sunni scholars of principles (*Ahl al-Usul*), stating that due to their proclamation of the two testimonies (*Shahadatayn*) and their adherence to the pillars of Islam, they cannot be declared disbelievers.

When someone asked Imam al-Haramayn for a ruling, he responded: “Including a disbeliever among Muslims or excluding a Muslim from Islam is a grave matter.” Imam Abu Bakr al-Baqillani hesitated to declare them disbelievers and remarked: “The community has not explicitly ruled on their excommunication.”

Imam Khattabi stated: “All Islamic scholars unanimously agree that the Khawarij, despite their misguidance, are still considered one of the sects within Islam. Marriage ties with them and consuming their slaughtered animals are permissible. As long as they adhere to the fundamental principles of Islam, they cannot be declared disbelievers.”

Imam Ghazali writes in *Al-Tafriqah bayn al-Islam wa al-Zandaqah*:

“Avoid declaring someone an infidel as long as possible. For deeming the blood of praying, monotheistic Muslims lawful is a grave error. It is better to mistakenly spare the lives of a thousand disbelievers than to erroneously shed the blood of a single Muslim.”

For the staunch followers of al-Ahnaf, the unanimous rulings of the Hanafi Imams will undoubtedly carry significant weight. The Hanafi Imams state:

“Know that no fatwa of disbelief (kufr) should be issued against a Muslim if their words can be interpreted in a positive manner, or if there is disagreement among jurists regarding their disbelief, even if that disagreement is based on a weak narration. If a particular issue contains multiple interpretations that could necessitate disbelief, but there exists even a single interpretation that negates disbelief, then it is obligatory for the jurist to incline toward the interpretation that negates disbelief.” (Shami, Chapter on the Rulings of Apostasy).

This demonstrates that when a Muslim’s statement could bear interpretations leading to disbelief but also allows for a non-disbelieving interpretation, it should be interpreted in the latter way—especially if the individual continues to pray, expresses love for the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and serves Islam. Thus, the triviality of such fatwas becomes even more evident and apparent. This particular detail is also mentioned in the books of *Fatawa*.

THE OBSESSION WITH EXCOMMUNICATION



Imam Muhammad, a cornerstone of Hanafi jurisprudence, narrates in *Athar al-Muhammad* that someone once asked Ibn Umar (RA): “Those who steal our belongings and violate our property—are they disbelievers?” He replied, “No.” When asked further about those who reinterpret the Quran and deem them disbelievers, he again said, “No, as long as they do not associate partners with Allah.”

This was the approach of the Hanafi Imams, and this is the ruling of their followers today.





THE PALESTINE ISSUE & THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Muhammad Hassan Ilyas

The issue of Palestine was fundamentally a political and geographical conflict, which over time has become a foundation for religious and emotional attachment among Muslims. In this context, religious leadership has played a prominent role over the past several decades by presenting this issue from a specific perspective. This narrative reshaped political conflicts within a religious framework, resulting in severe challenges for the Muslim world, including bloodshed, political instability, and economic difficulties.

The impact of this narrative also strained the Muslim world's relations with global powers and created the impression of a "clash of civilizations." Consequently, global powers refrained from trusting Muslim religious leadership, viewing them as a potential threat to global peace. Furthermore, time has proven that whatever resources Muslims had were squandered on ineffective strategies and emotional rhetoric. This situation reflects the complete failure of the religious leadership's narrative.

Therefore, it is imperative to conduct a realistic analysis of the attitudes of religious leadership. These attitudes are based on the misunderstanding of three fundamental points, which have affected not only the Palestinian struggle but also the overall identity of the Muslim world from every angle.



These three attitudes are as follows:

1. Viewing Political Conflicts Through a Religious Lens

Muslim religious leadership framed the Palestine issue within a purely religious context, turning it into a religious war.

2. Dealing with Global Powers Based on Idealism

Practical realities of global politics were ignored, and the Palestine issue was presented solely based on history and pure principles of justice.

3. Reviving Past Glory and Denial of Decline

Under the dream of restoring the Islamic caliphate and becoming a global power, ground realities were completely disregarded.

Presenting Political Conflicts as Religious Struggles

Religious leadership has consistently framed the Palestinian conflict as a sacred struggle, emphasizing the religious significance of Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque to garner public support. By referencing historical agreements, such as those made during the era of Caliph Umar RA, and other instances from Islamic history, the issue was presented as a religious duty, playing a key role in mobilizing the masses.

The most significant drawback of this narrative is its neglect of other critical dimensions of the conflict, such as human rights and social justice. The purely religious framing has undermined political leadership's efforts to position the issue on the international stage as a human rights matter. According to renowned historian Bernard Lewis, confining political conflicts within a religious framework transforms them from global humanitarian issues into regional religious disputes.

Furthermore, the religious narrative lacks support from Western civilization, which has evolved within the backdrop of humanism. Edward Said, in his book, argued that presenting the Palestinian cause as a human rights issue could have created opportunities to connect diverse cultures and nations with the issue. However, due to its religious framing, the conflict became irrelevant to a large segment of the international community.

In the same vein, Karen Armstrong offers a deep psychological and sociological perspective on this matter. She observes that when a conflict takes on a religious identity, it gains extraordinary intensity and complexity. This is primarily because both sides in a religious conflict view their stance as a battle between "truth and falsehood." Such a mindset eliminates the possibility of compromise and reconciliation, prolonging and exacerbating the conflict.

Considering the historical background of the land of Palestine, it is evident that the Jewish connection to this land is as ancient and profound as that of Muslims. However, the establishment of Israel was not the result of a religious conquest but a consequence of decisions made by global powers. When viewed objectively, the borders of most nations around the world were determined not based on principles of justice or history but on political expediency. The decision to settle Jews in Palestine was similarly made by the global powers ruling this region at the time. This decision was accepted by the international community, turning it into a political reality.



The conflict essentially involved two primary parties: on one side was the religious leadership of Palestine, and on the other, global political powers supported by the international community. Unfortunately, the Palestinian religious leadership failed to correctly identify these opposing forces. Consequently, the adversary envisioned as one nation or a border-bound entity turned out to be a vast global system and power structure that governs the world.

This situation underscores the importance of viewing conflicts through a pragmatic and political lens rather than a religious one. In political conflicts, involving religion not only hinders reconciliation and understanding but also makes the issues more complex and intractable.

Dealing with Global Powers Based on Idealism

A significant issue with Palestinian leadership has been its unrealistic and idealistic expectations from global powers. Religious leadership and Palestinian leaders presented their stance based on justice, morality, and historical rights, which, although principled, did not align with the realities of international politics.

In international relations, power and interests play a fundamental role, which are not easily swayed by moral arguments alone. For instance, after the 1948 war, Israel secured the support of the Western world, particularly the United States and Europe, which viewed it as a strategic ally. This was part of a strategy to enhance Western influence in the Middle East through Israel to protect their interests in the region.

In contrast, Palestinian leadership relied on principled arguments rather than strengthening diplomatic relations. Noam Chomsky criticized this approach, pointing out that Palestinian leadership needed to take practical steps to establish better relationships with global powers. Instead, their strategy remained confined to accusations of injustice, which international powerhouses largely ignored.

It is also noteworthy that Palestinian leadership appeared completely unable to comprehend the balance of power in global politics. As a result, they failed to gain complete and unconditional support from other powerful states such as China, Russia, and non-Western nations. Prominent Palestinian scholar Rashid Khalidi has highlighted this critical point in his writings, suggesting that Palestinian leadership should have drawn lessons from South Africa's freedom movement. South African leaders, understanding the complexities of global diplomatic relations, mobilized international support for their cause and adopted a balanced diplomatic strategy. Khalidi emphasizes that the Palestinian movement focused predominantly on reactions and aid from the Western world, with little effort made to persuade other global powers to support their stance. This oversight significantly limited the Palestinian movement's influence in the diplomatic arena.

Had Palestinian leadership better organized diverse international support, it could have built a stronger and more effective diplomatic front for their rights. Countries that have endured colonial oppression, such as China and African nations, could have proven to be more reliable allies for the Palestinian cause. However, instead of strengthening these relationships, religious leadership pursued the dream of change through armed struggle. Consequently, the Palestinian leadership's efforts were not as effective on the global stage as South Africa's movement.



Revival of Past Glory and Denial of Decline

The defeats in the wars of 1948, 1967, and 1973 at the hands of Israel clearly demonstrated that the existing strategies of resistance were incapable of altering the balance of power. Despite this, Palestinian religious leadership continued to rely on armed struggle as their primary strategy, even though the ground realities consistently showed that the balance of power was always in Israel's favor. This resistance not only inflicted immense human and material losses on the Palestinian people but also provided Israel with justification for its actions.

During this time, Israel achieved remarkable progress in fields such as science, technology, defense, and agriculture. Its economy, often referred to as a "startup nation," has cemented its place globally, demonstrating its technological superiority and robust economic foundation. According to the renowned philosopher Yuval Noah Harari, modern wars and power dynamics are shaped by advancements in technology and artificial intelligence, areas where the Muslim world lags significantly behind other nations.

For a long time, Palestinian religious leadership held onto the dream that if all Muslim countries united, they could defeat Israel. This leadership continued to assure the Palestinian people that the collective strength of the Muslim Ummah could overpower Israel, just as Muslims had defeated various nations in the past. However, the ground realities painted a starkly different picture. The Muslim world is not only weak in global politics but also lags far behind the Western world and Israel in economic, scientific, and military domains. Acting on this dream proved not only unrealistic but also deprived Muslims of an understanding of their current standing and genuine challenges.

Today, Israel's per capita GDP surpasses that of many Muslim countries, and its economy is deeply intertwined with major global powers. On the other hand, the Muslim world collectively plays a limited role in the global economy and remains dependent on major powers, which steadfastly support Israel. Ignoring this reality, the religious leadership propagated the notion that armed struggle was the only path to success. However, given the current circumstances, recognizing the global balance of power and strengthening resources through scientific and economic progress was far more essential for advancing the Palestinian cause.

Furthermore, the armed struggle led by Palestinian leadership provided Israel with a new justification for its objectives. Under the guise of securing its existence, Israel not only pursued territorial expansion but also garnered international support for it. Following World War II, the global powers shaped the current international order and made Israel's survival one of their primary responsibilities. Consequently, these powers used all available resources to block every avenue of Palestinian resistance, further compounding the challenges faced by the Palestinian people.

The emotional rhetoric of Palestinian religious leadership and the dream of reviving past glory proved to be not only unrealistic but also obstructed the Palestinian people from adopting effective strategies aligned with global realities.

In our view, the tragedy of the Palestinian issue is not merely a conflict over land and power but

THE PALESTINE ISSUE



also the story of the destruction of generations and their dreams. The attitudes of religious leadership have brought the situation to a point where even the two-state solution has become a distant dream. Palestinian leadership's unrealistic strategies inadvertently provided global justification for all of Israel's expansionist actions. The recent actions of Hamas have further exacerbated the situation. As a result, Palestine has faced severe and destructive attacks, and Israel has nearly eradicated its practical standing.

Traditional allies like Iran, Lebanon, and Syria have also withdrawn their active support for religious leadership, leaving Palestinians more isolated. This genocide is a tragic reality, the greatest lesson of which is that Muslims sacrificed what they had achieved on the altar of flawed strategies, illusions of grandeur, and ineffective armed resistance.

Now, even the dream of a two-state solution seems to have lost its relevance, and the prospects for peace have narrowed to a single-state solution. It is time to abandon emotional slogans and unrealistic dreams and adopt a strategy that ensures the survival, dignity, and future of the Palestinian people. This is not merely a battle over land but a fight for humanity, demanding a new path forged with wisdom and pragmatism. Otherwise, the struggle of the Palestinian people will be recorded in the annals of history as yet another tragic tale.



REFERENCES

- [1] Said, E. W. (1979). *The question of Palestine*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- [2] Lewis, B. (2003). *The crisis of Islam: Holy war and unholy terror*. New York, NY: Modern Library.
- [3] Chomsky, N. (1999). *Fateful triangle: The United States, Israel, and the Palestinians* (Updated ed.). Boston, MA: South End Press.
- [4] Khalidi, R. (2006). *The iron cage: The story of the Palestinian struggle for statehood*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- [5] Harari, Y. N. (2014). *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*. London, England: Harvill Secker.



LET US PROMISE...

Dr. Shehzad Saleem

The truth we shall always speak
And boldly help all the weak

And try to do what is right
With all our force; all our might

Fight we shall when the going gets tough
When winds rage and the seas are rough

Humble we will strive to be
And hold fast to modesty

In God we will put our trust
And battle alone if we must

He will be our saviour
When we falter, when we err

Admit we will if we are wrong
God O God! Make us strong

Strive we will to do our best
And leave to God all the rest!



THE CALAMITY I: A TEST OF FAITH

Kulsoom Saqib

We live “in the life,” or perhaps it’s more accurate to say we live in “a bubble” called life. This bubble is made up of routines, norms, and a sense of “normal” that we define for ourselves or inherit from society. Most of us prefer to stay safely within the boundaries of this “normal.” But what happens when something or someone disrupts that fragile equilibrium? Panic—our instinctive reaction.

But is panic the way we are designed to respond? Is it how we are meant to behave? I don’t think so. As human beings, God has placed us in this world as a test—a test that shapes and reveals our true capabilities. The trials we face prepare us to stand before God on the Day of Judgment, clearly and honestly recognizing whether we succeeded or failed.

It’s similar to a chemistry lab. Chemicals don’t exist to stay bottled up—they’re meant to react, to be tested. Likewise, it’s absurd for humans to wish for a perpetually smooth, unchallenged existence. Life is not meant to be stagnant; it’s a place for growth, struggle, and transformation.

Facing My Test

I thought I understood this concept. I believed that life’s trials were inevitable and necessary. I even wondered why others around me panicked when faced with hardships, asking myself,



“Don’t they realize life is a test?” But when my own test arrived, I panicked just as much as anyone else.

In October 2018, my mother’s scan results came back. The nurse, without hesitation or tact, informed us, “There are spots in her liver, lungs, and pancreas. It seems like the cancer has spread everywhere.” A doctor confirmed the diagnosis and said, “It cannot be cured. We might buy a little more time with chemotherapy, but there is no cure. She may have up to a year with medication.”

It wasn’t a dream. It wasn’t a movie. It was real. I was paralyzed. My mind refused to accept what I had just heard. I held the doctor’s hand, begging for answers, as if she could undo what had already happened. I asked questions I never thought I would: Why now? Why so early? I wasn’t ready. I wanted more time. I wanted my mother to stay in the bubble of our "normal."

Turning to Faith

Despite my panic, I couldn’t allow my mother to see my fear. She was already carrying the burden of this news, and I couldn’t add to her pain. Inside, I was falling apart, but I knew I had to find a way to be strong for her.

My faith became my anchor. I turned to God, not with my own words, but with prayers from the Quran. I recited the supplication of Prophet Ayub (AS): ““I am in distress and you are the Most Merciful among all the merciful.” (Al-Anbiyah, 21:83). When I recited it aloud, my mother cried and said, “I don’t have the perseverance of Ayub; don’t ask for it.”

From that moment, I committed to reading the Quran daily, searching for solace and understanding. The verses I read didn’t offer false hope. Instead, they reminded me of life’s ultimate truths: “In reality, each soul has to taste death. And [they should not show pride on their status;] We are trying you people through good and bad circumstances as a test and [one day] you shall be returned to Us alone (Al-Anbiyah, 21:35).” These words were difficult to read, but they grounded me. They prepared me for what was to come.





NEWSLETTER AL-MAWRID US

January 2025

Annual Meeting of Al-Mawrid US

Last month, the annual meeting of the members of Al-Mawrid US was held in Dallas. This meeting lasted for two days, and all General Body members attended. The secretary of Al-Mawrid America, Mr. Ali Farooq, invited the Chairman of the Al-Mawrid board, Mr. Mukaram Aziz, to deliver the inaugural speech at the central session. He welcomed the participants on behalf of the board and expressed his and the board's commitment to diligently work for the growth and development of the institution. Mr. Mukaram Aziz also presented a detailed report on the financial affairs of the year 2024.

Mr. Farhan Saiyed, the Executive Director and CEO of Al-Mawrid US, presented the institution's annual performance report, followed by a detailed explanation of the activities related to Ghamidi GPT, online educational courses, AI dubbing, English content, and book publishing and sales. The participants appreciated the performance and noted that achieving such extraordinary results with a limited team is commendable.

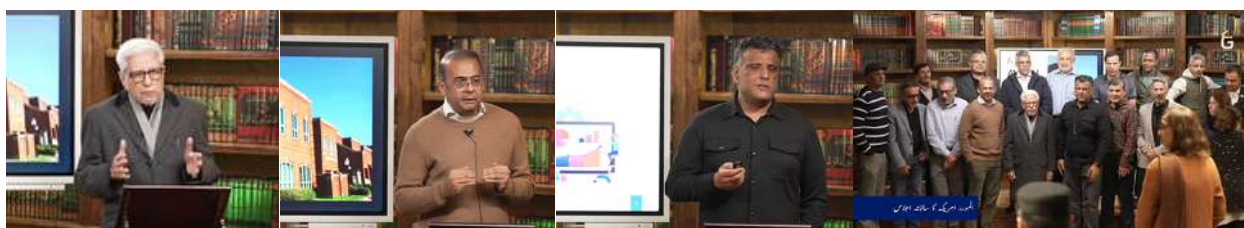
Subsequently, Mr. Atif Sajid, a member of the Education Committee, presented the annual educational performance report regarding Sunday School. Mr. Umair Ajmal provided details about IT-related matters.

Mr. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas, the Director of Research and Communication of the Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, elaborated on the institution's goals, objectives, and plans. He emphasized that they strive to repeatedly remind people that their organization does not promote religion globally from any specific sectarian, factional, or narrow perspective to form a religious faction. Instead, their core identity is the same as that of general Muslims worldwide, and the institution stands in continuity with the scholarly tradition of the Muslim Ummah. Additionally, he detailed the past year's activities concerning digital content, social media, audiobooks, documentaries, journals, and the preparation and recording of programs and books in Urdu, English, and Arabic.

Javed Ahmed Ghamidi commended the work of those affiliated with Al-Mawrid US and prayed for their success. While mentioning his recent and future academic and literary projects, he stated that today's young generation is significantly influenced by atheism.



Therefore, there is a need for a series on atheism, similar to the 23 Objections Series. Hence, after completing the 23 Objections Video Series, he plans to record a dedicated video series on atheism.



Javed Ahmed Ghamidi Visits Bahrain

Last month, on his return from Pakistan, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi stayed in Bahrain for two days. Mr. Muhammad Hassan Ilyas, the Director of Research and Communication of the Ghamidi Center, accompanied him. During his stay in Bahrain, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi attended various gatherings where people asked questions related to religious and social topics, particularly concerning the thoughts and teachings of Maulana Maududi. Furthermore, discussions on Sufi and Salafi interpretations also took place.



Online Session with Friends of Al-Mawrid India

In December 2024, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi and Muhammad Hassan Ilyas participated in an online session with the friends of Al-Mawrid India. It was a Q&A session in which some associates of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind also participated. Participants asked Javed Ahmed Ghamidi and Hassan Ilyas various academic and intellectual questions. This session lasted for approximately one and a half hours.

Voice of Research

The Ghamidi Center has initiated an online seminar series titled Voice of Research to foster a research-oriented and scholarly environment. Researchers and scholars can present their studies in this seminar. The aim is to cultivate a research culture through a critical thinking approach and dialogue. Last month, Dr. Ammar Khan Nasir delivered an academic and intellectual discussion on the topic of ‘the Issue of Blasphemy’ and answered questions posed by the audience. These seminars are conducted on an online app, Zoom, and interested individuals can join live to ask questions.

Voice of Research
ONLINE SEMINAR SERIES

- Amplifying Ideas
- Connecting Scholars
- Inspiring Progress

An Initiative by GCIL to foster collaboration in research.

What: Online seminar series featuring researchers and scholars from diverse fields.

Why: Share insights, present findings, and engage in meaningful discussions.

Aim: Amplify ideas, inspire academic progress, and nurture a thriving research community.

Interested in Presenting Your Research?
CONTACT: faraz@almawridus.org
+92 310 7737765

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION



Mr. Arshad Mahmood Visits Ghamidi Center

The Ghamidi Center wishes to dispel the religious sensitivities prevalent in society regarding the fine arts. In pursuit of this objective, Mr. Arshad Mahmood, the well-known Pakistani artist and musician, was invited to the Ghamidi Center. On this occasion, he recorded a program with Mr. Hassan Ilyas discussing various aspects of fine arts, as well as his personal life. Moreover, he expressed his views on Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's academic and intellectual contributions. The recording of this program can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Participation of Al-Mawrid India in the Educational Expo, Aurangabad

In December 2024, Al-Mawrid India set up a bookstall at the Educational Expo in Aurangabad, India. Along with the publications of Al-Mawrid India, the books of the Ghamidi Center were also displayed at this bookstall. A large number of people visited the stall and purchased books.



Ten-Day Khanqah Program at the Ghamidi Center

In December 2024, the Ghamidi Center organized a ten-day Khanqah program. Mr. Moiz Amjad served as an instructor for this program. Critical topics such as “Controlling Anger and Reactions,” “Proper Time Management,” “Child Training,” “Balancing Home and Job,” and “Searching for the Purpose of Life” were discussed. This program ran from December 21, 2024, to December 30, 2024, and many people participated with their children.

Fundamental Principles of Knowledge and Reasoning in Religion

In this essay, Syed Manzoor ul Hassan has articulated two fundamental principles of knowledge and reasoning in religion, which serve as the foundations of reason and transmission and without which access to a correct understanding of religion and Shariah is impossible. Discussing the first principle, he writes that in religion, the Quran holds the status of the criterion (Furqan) and the scale (Mizan). Therefore, every statement, narration, and opinion of Hadiths, historical accounts, and Tafsir will be evaluated against this criterion. Secondly, the Quran has been revealed in plain and clear Arabic. It presents its message with complete clarity, leaving no difficulty for scholars to understand. He has attributed most of the misconceptions in traditional schools of thought to the neglect of these principles. This essay can be read in the December 2024 issue of Ishraq America.

Tafheem al-Athar Series

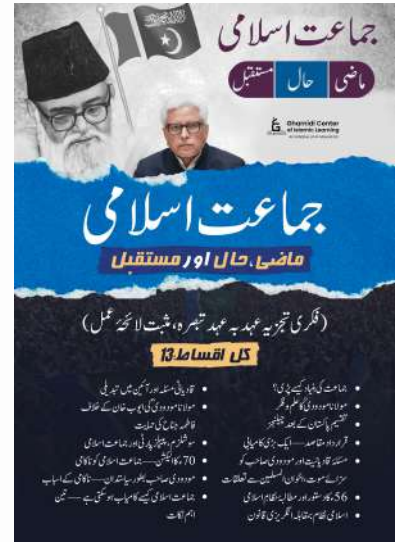
Under the auspices of the Ghamidi Center, the Tafheem al-Athar series focused on the study of traditions regarding the recitation of the Quran in last month's programs. Discussions included



key points such as “How long should it take to complete the recitation of the Quran?” “Responding to verses during recitation,” “Reciting certain verses repeatedly during recitation,” and “Arranging prayers upon completing the recitation of the Quran.” Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Jamaat-e-Islami: Past, Present, and Future

This topic has been a focus of the weekly live Q&A sessions held under the auspices of the Ghamidi Center. A comprehensive discussion on the past, present, and future of Jamaat-e-Islami and various aspects of Maulana Maududi's life has recently been concluded, spanning 13 sessions. Key topics such as “The History and Challenges of Jamaat-e-Islami,” “Objectives Resolution as Jamaat's Major Achievement,” and “The Death Sentence of Maulana Maududi” were discussed. Recordings of these sessions can be viewed on the institution's YouTube channel.



Islam Study Circle

In December 2024, Dr. Shehzad Saleem addressed several topics in the “Islam Study Circle” program, including “Attaining Nearness to Allah,” “Wealth as a Test,” and “Helping Others.” At the end of the session, there was a discussion on “Confronting Hatred,” along with a Q&A related to the topics covered. The recording of this session is available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Reasons for Criticism of Jamaat-e-Islami

In the latest episode of Hayat-e-Amin, published last month, Mr. Naeem Ahmad Baloch initially outlined the reasons for criticism of Jamaat-e-Islami, citing opinions from various scholars. He writes that a major reason for criticism was that Maulana Maududi was the first to declare the establishment of an Islamic government as a religious obligation. Building on this viewpoint, Maududi authored his book *Tajdeed-o-Ahyaye Din*, asserting that previous efforts at religious revival were either oblivious to this obligation or did not give it the importance it warranted. This article can be read in the December 2024 issue of *Ishraq America*.

Capital Punishment

In the ongoing “23 Objections” video series by the Ghamidi Center, a new topic titled "Capital Punishment" has been introduced. In last month's sessions, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi presented arguments supporting his stance that in Islam, the death penalty is permissible only for murder and corruption on earth. He also discussed the context and audience of the verse supporting this position and addressed objections raised by scholars. Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.



Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Weekly Q&A Sessions

Weekly live Q&A sessions are held by the Ghamidi Center, where Mr. Hassan Ilyas presents various questions received by the Center to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi, who provides detailed answers. In December 2024, these sessions covered topics such as "The Recent Rebellion in Syria," "Islam's Perspective on Governments Established by Coercion," "Who Were the Kharijites," "Does the Punishment for Corruption on Earth Apply to Rebels in a Democratic Government?" and "Under What Circumstances Can Rebellion Be Justified?" Recordings of these sessions can be accessed on the institution's YouTube channel.

Audio Recording of Mutala-e-Seerat

This book, authored by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, has been narrated by Dr. Khalid Zaheer, and its audio recording is being serially published on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel. Fifteen episodes have been released so far, which can be viewed on the channel.

Teaching *Al-Bayan* in English

Last month, Dr. Shehzad Saleem delivered lectures in English on verses 23–59 of Surah Al-Nisa from Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's exegesis *Al-Bayan*. Recordings of these sessions are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Weekly Quran and Hadith Study Sessions

In December 2024, Javed Ahmed Ghamidi conducted live Quran and Hadith study sessions, covering verses 37–88 of Surah Maryam. During the Hadith study sessions, he discussed significant topics such as "The Trial of Gog and Magog," "The Emergence of Gog and Magog," "The Day of Judgment and the Descent of Jesus," "Ten Major Signs of the End Times," and "The Context of the Emergence of Dajjal." Recordings of these sessions are available on the YouTube channel.

Asl al-Usul Lectures

In December 2024, Dr. Shehzad Saleem recorded two lectures in English on "Asl al-Usul" as part of the Meezan Lecture Series. These lectures can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Ghamidi Center's Online Educational Courses

In December 2024, the Ghamidi Center launched two courses in English on its online learning platforms Udemy and Teachable. The courses, titled *Principles of Understanding the Quran and Morals & Morality*, are now available. The first course, recorded by Dr. Shehzad Saleem, is accessible on both platforms, while the second, featuring AI-generated audio, is available exclusively on Teachable. To enhance the appeal of these courses, the videos have been edited in



Dietary Shariah and Islamic Customs



Rituals of Hajj and Umrah: Training Course



Islamic Directives About Core Family & Marriage Related...

a modern style. These courses are offered at affordable prices on the Ghamidi Center's Teachable website and Udeemy.

Online Private Consultation Sessions with Dr. Shehzad Saleem

Every month, Dr. Shehzad Saleem conducts online private consultation sessions where individuals seek his advice on various personal and family-related issues. Last month, over 20 such sessions were held. During these sessions, participants consulted him regarding challenges faced by parents and solutions to adolescent problems.

Ilm o Hikmat: Javed Ahmed Ghamidi Kay Saath

The topics of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's weekly program "Ilm o Hikmat: Javed Ahmed Ghamidi Kay Saath (Knowledge and Wisdom: With Javed Ahmed Ghamidi) broadcasted on Dunya News last month included "Addressing Objections to Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's Concept of Sunnah," "Philosophical Influences of Plato on Muslims," and "Rights of Minorities in Islam." Key questions discussed in these programs included:

- Is it appropriate to interpret and explain Islam using science or philosophy?
- How is something classified as innovation (bid'ah)?
- Should Hadith or Fiqh serve as the criterion for verifying Sunnah?
- Why is prayer not included in the list of Sunnah?

Recordings of these programs are available on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

Ask Dr. Shehzad Saleem

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

Issuance of Fatwas Based on Religious Opinions

The Ghamidi Center of Islamic Learning, USA, is often contacted for legal applications of Shariah, such as matters related to marriage and divorce, inheritance, and other economic and social issues. Last month, five fatwas were issued for such needs. These were prepared by Hassan Ilyas in light of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi's thought.



Recorded Lectures by Dr. Shehzad Saleem on Various Topics

Shehzad Saleem regularly records lectures in English on religious, ethical, and social topics. In December 2024, he recorded lectures on the topics:

- How to Excel as a Human Being?
- Humanity

These lectures can be viewed on the Ghamidi Center's YouTube channel.

