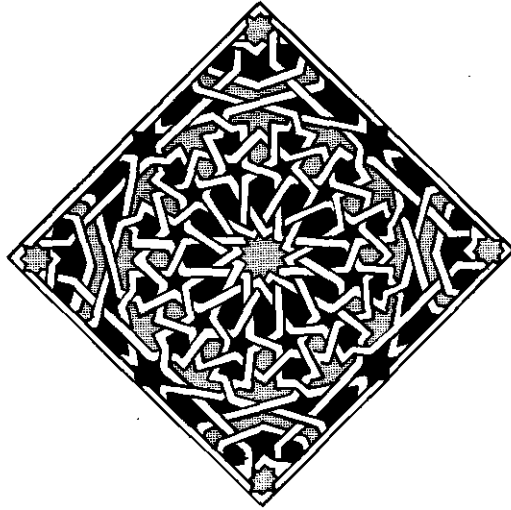


# **Is the Qur'an Infallible?**

'Abdallah 'Abd al-Fadi

**LIGHT OF LIFE • VILLACH • AUSTRIA**



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## Preface

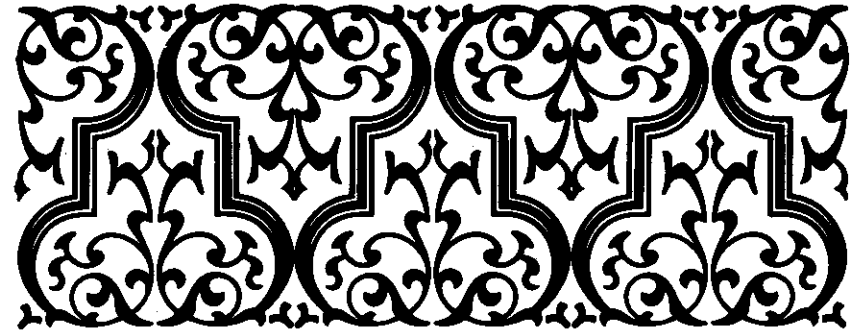
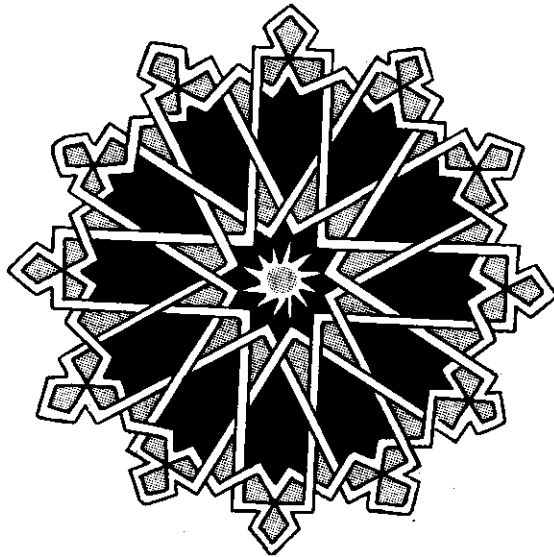
Since I was a child I have had a desire to perform fruitful and lasting service to humanity. Yet I am unable to discover a new land like Columbus, or to invent the wireless telegraph like Marconi, or to utilise electricity like Edison, or to analyse the atom like Einstein. For all these feats do not pertain to my field of specialisation. But as a minister of Christ, I decided to find out if the Qur'an, the Muslim holy book, is really infallible, as is claimed.

It was because of my belief in only one God and one holy Scripture, which was confirmed by the coming of Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, that I set out to write this book. For He said that whoever adds to the Scripture, God will add to him the plagues mentioned in it. And since the Qur'an claims for itself that it is the revelation of God, I deemed it my duty, by means of logic and reason, to furnish proofs for my belief that it is not infallible. This cannot be done except by examining and scrutinising the Qur'an to arrive at a conclusion about its contents.

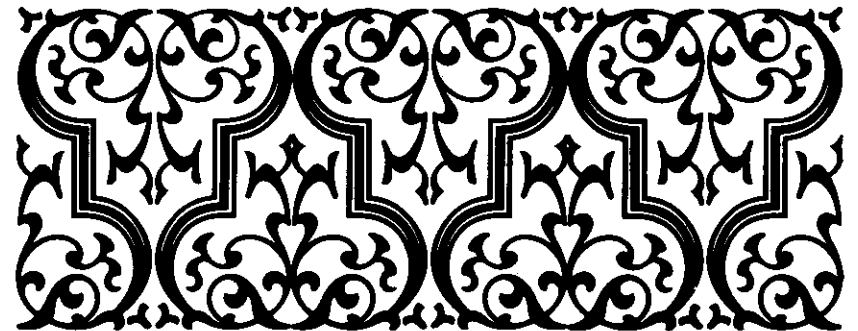
Therefore, I took it upon myself to make a close study of the Qur'an, along with its commentaries, until I became acquainted with its many errors. These errors range from geographical, historical and scientific ones to ethical, social, theological, legal and linguistic ones – not to mention of course the moral defects in the life of its author. I listed these errors in the form of 242 questions, so that the truth may be known and the intelligent may

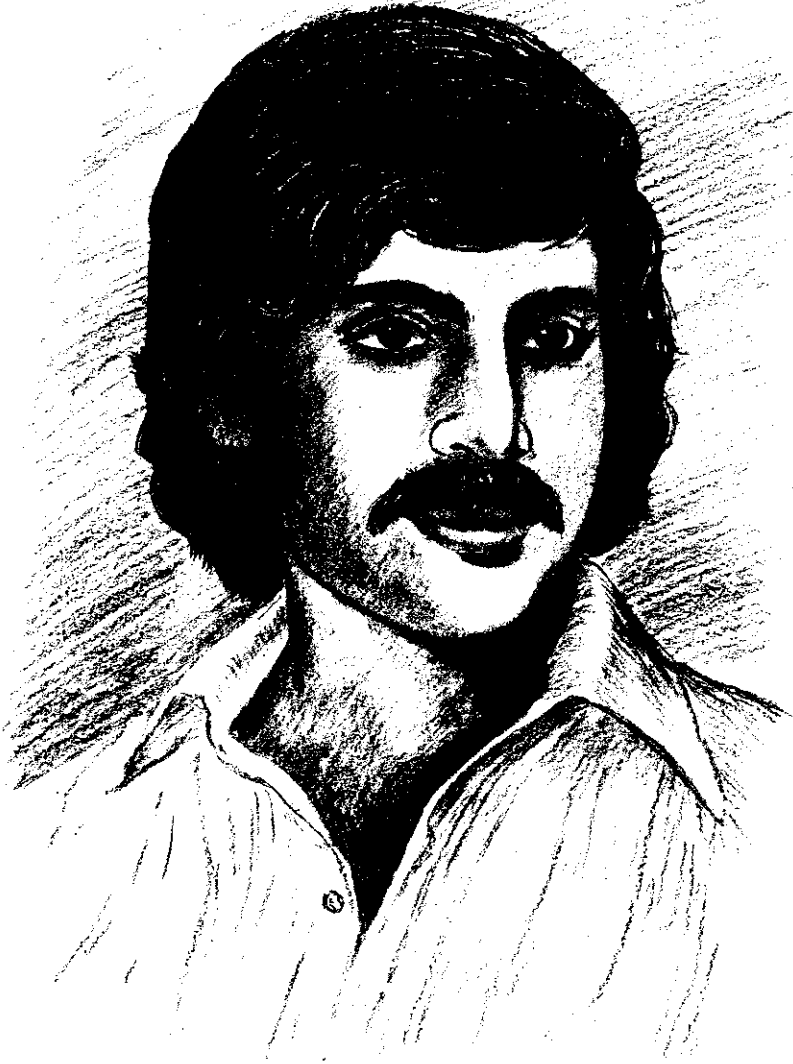
*Preface*

be enlightened, and I took for my motto the words of the apostle Paul: "I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise" (Romans 1:14). We Christians feel indebted to present to all mankind the gospel of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, so that they can share in the joy of salvation and receive eternal life. Thus the promise of God will be fulfilled: "And all flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6).



*Part One*  
*Geographical Questions*





## 1. The Sun Sets in a Spring

**Question 1:** We read in Sura al-Kahf 18:83-86: "They will question thee concerning Dhu al-Qamain. Say: 'I will recite to you a mention of him.' We established him in the land, and We gave him a way to every thing; and he followed a way until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring, and he found nearby a people.'

سورة الكهف ١٨:٨٣-٨٦ «وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا إِنَّا مَكِّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَآيَاتِنَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَابِقًا فَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلًا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا».

Al-Baidawi in his commentary *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil* says the following with regard to these verses:

The Jews asked Muhammad about Dhu al-Qamain (Alexander the Great), and he said to them that God established him in the land so that he could reach the place where the sun sets. He found that it set in a muddy spring, and all around the spring were idolatrous people! He also walked to the place where the sun rises and discovered that people lived there who went about naked, with no homes to shelter them from the sun. After that he walked to a site that lies to the north, between the place where the sun rises and sets, which he found to be between two mountains. He poured on these two mountains a mixture of iron and molten brass, thereby setting up an impassable

barrier which only God can reach on the Day of Resurrection.

Al-Baidawi added that “Ibn ‘Abbas heard Mu‘awiya read *‘aynin hamiya* [‘hot spring’], so he told him it was *hami’a* [‘muddy’]. Therefore, Mu‘awiya sent to Ka‘b al-Ahbar, asking, ‘Where do you think the sun sets?’ He said to him, ‘In water and mud.’”

We ask: As the sun is many times larger than the earth, how then could Dhu al-Qamain see it set in a spring filled with water and mud, surrounded by people?

## 2. The Earth Is Stationary

**Question 2:** We read the following in the Qur’an:

“He created the heavens without pillars you can see, and He cast on the earth firm mountains, lest it shake with you” (Sura Luqman 31:10).

سورة لقمان ٣١:١٠ «خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ،

“It is He who stretched out the earth and set therein firm mountains” (Sura al-Ra‘d 13:3).

سورة الرعد ٣:١٣ «وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ،

“And the earth – We stretched it forth, and cast on it firm mountains, and We caused to grow therein every thing justly weighed” (Sura al-Hijr 15:19).

سورة الحجر ١٥:١٩ «وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَزْرُوعٍ».

“And He cast on the earth firm mountains lest it shake with you, and rivers and ways; so haply you will be guided” (Sura al-Nahl 16:15).

سورة النحل ١٦:١٥ «وَأَلْقَى فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ وَأَنْهَاراً وَسُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ».

And We set in the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with them” (Sura al-Anbiya’ 21:31).

سورة الأنبياء ٢١:٣١ «وَجَعَلْنَا فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوَاسِيَ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِهِمْ وَجَعَلْنَا فِيهَا فِجَاجًا سُبُلًا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَهْتَدُونَ».

Al-Baidawi explains the verse in Sura al-Ra‘d as follows: “ ‘Stretched out the earth’ means it was flattened in width and length so that feet may be steady on it and animals may roll on it.” He explained these verses in his commentary on Sura al-Nahl 16:15 as follows:

“And He cast on the earth firm mountains lest it should shake with you,” or lest it should turn aside and be thrown out of balance. For before the mountains were created on it, the earth had been a light-weight sphere of simple substance. It floated about freely in orbit like the planets, and would advance with the slightest movement. Its sides varied in dimension when the mountains were created on its surface, and they centred it, thus serving as wedges to keep it from moving. It was also said that, when God

created the earth it started to sway and swing, so that the angels said, "None can have a resting place on its surface." So it was made stationary by the mountains.

We ask: How could the earth be stretched out, flattened and motionless? How can anyone say that the mountains keep the earth from moving when it is evident that it rotates on its axis once every 24 hours, causing the cycle of day and night? It also revolves around the sun once a year, effecting the changing of the seasons.

### 3. Stars Are for Stoning the Satans

**Question 3:** We read in Sura al-Mulk 67:5: "And We adomed the lower heaven with lamps, and made them things to stone Satans; and We have prepared for them the chastisement of the Blaze."

سورة الملك ٥:٦٧ «وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحٍ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ».

Al-Baidawi explained this verse, saying:

"And We adomed the lower heaven" means the nearer heavens. "With lamps" refers to the luminous stars that light the night as lamps. This does not contradict the fact that some stars are stationed in higher heavens, for the adorning of the lower heaven means they are made manifest in it. "And made them things to stone Satans" means they were made for another reason, which is the stoning of enemies. *Rujum* ["things to stone"] is the plural of *rajam*, which is anything used for stoning that has flames

issuing from it. Another opinion says, "We made them mediums of clairvoyance and augury [which is another definition of the root verb *rajama*] for the Satans among men, who are the soothsayers."

We read in Sura al-Saffat 37:6-10: "We have adomed the lower heaven with the adomment of the stars and to preserve against every rebel Satan; they listen not to the High Council. For they are pelted from every side, rejected, and theirs is an everlasting chastisement, except such as snatches a fragment, and he is pursued by a piercing flame."

سورة الصافات ٦:٣٧-١٠ «إِنَّا زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِرَبِيَّةٍ الْكَوَاكِبِ وَحِفْظًا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ مَارِدٍ لَا يَسْمَعُونَ إِلَى الْمَلَأِ الْأَعْلَى وَيُقَذَّفُونَ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ دُخُورًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ وَاصِبٌ إِلَّا مَنْ خَطِفَ الْخَطْفَةَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ ثَاقِبٌ».

We read in Sura al-Hijr 15:16-18: "We have set in heaven constellations and decked them out fair to the beholders, and guarded them from every accursed Satan excepting such as listens by stealth – and he is pursued by a manifest flame."

سورة الحجر ١٥:١٦-١٨ «وَلَقَدْ جَعَلْنَا فِي السَّمَاءِ بُرُوجًا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا لِلنَّاظِرِينَ وَحَفِظْنَاهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْطَانٍ رَجِيمٍ إِلَّا مَنْ أَسْرَقَ أَلْسَمِعَ فَأَتْبَعَهُ شِهَابٌ مُبِينٌ».

Al-Baidawi explains this verse as follows: " 'And guarded them from every accursed Satan' means that one cannot go up to heaven, tempt its inhabitants, be aware of its location, or subdue it. 'Excepting such as listens by stealth' refers to every demon. 'Listening by stealth' means overhearing or eaves-

dropping. It is compared to snatching a fragment from the dwellers of heaven owing to the similarity of their substance, or by deduction from the positions and movements of the stars.”

Ibn ‘Abbas reported that:

They [the fallen angels] had not been kept away from the heavens. But when Jesus was born they were kept away for three years, and when Muhammad was born they were all kept away from them by means of the flames [meteors]. This is not to be rejected owing to the fact that the meteors had been formed before the angels’ birth, for it is possible that they were created for other purposes. Another opinion is that the exception is withheld, meaning that anyone who listens by stealth will be pursued by a flame visible to those able to see. *Shihab* [“flame”] is a blazing brand of fire. It can also refer to a star [meteor] or a flaming dart, owing to the brilliance of either.

We ask: How are we to imagine an angel the size of a man holding the stars like pieces of rock with which to pelt Satan, keeping him from listening to the voices of the inhabitants of heaven? Have these heavenly bodies been created to serve as ammunition or war material for the stoning of Satan? It is a matter of fact that every star is like an enormous galaxy, and therefore the universe contains millions of enormous galaxies floating at huge distances in limitless space. Also, how can the angels throw the stars without plunging the universe into utter chaos, since by their actions they would upset its equilibrium?

#### 4. Seven Heavens and Seven Earths

**Question 4:** We read the following verses in the Qur’an:

“It is God who created seven heavens, and of earth their like” (Sura al-Talaq 65:12).

سورة الطلاق ١٢:٦٥ ، اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ.

“It is He who created for you all that is in the earth, then he lifted himself to heaven and levelled them seven heavens; and he has knowledge of everything” (Sura al-Baqara 2:29).

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٩ ، هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعاً ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ.

“So he determined them seven heavens in two days, and revealed its commandment in every heaven. And We adomed the lower heaven with lamps, and to preserve; that is the ordaining of the All-mighty, the All-knowing” (Sura Fussilat 41:12).

سورة فصلت ٤١:١٢ ، فَصَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ أَمْرَهَا وَزَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحٍ وَحِفْظًا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ.

“We set up the heaven as a roof well-protected; yet still from Our signs they are turning away” (Sura al-Anbiya’ 21:32).

سورة الأنبياء ٢١:٣٢ ، وَجَعَلْنَا السَّمَاءَ سَقْفًا مَحْفُوظًا وَهُمْ عَنْ آيَاتِهَا مُعْرِضُونَ.

“Hast thou not seen how that God... holds back heaven



lest it fall upon the earth, save by His leave? Surely God is All-gentle to men, All-compassionate” (Sura al-Hajj 22:65).

سورة الحج ٢٢:٦٥ «وَيُمِسُّكَ السَّمَاءُ أَنْ تَقَعَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ».

“What, have they not beheld heaven above them, how We have built it, and decked it out fair, and it has no cracks?” (Sura Qaf 50:6).

سورة ق ٥٠:٦ «أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ».

Al-Baidawi said the “roof well-preserved” in Sura al-Anbiya’ 21 is kept from falling by the command of God. He also explained the “cracks” in Sura Qaf 50 as ruptures, and said that God created the heavens smooth and closely fitting, one on top of the other. It clearly follows from al-Baidawi’s exegesis that God created heaven as a vast, smooth roof above us, with six other heavens as roofs, one on top of the other. He also created our earth together with six other earths like it. The sum total of heavens and earths is thus fourteen.

We ask: How could it be that the limitless space above us is a smooth roof capable of caving in, or that there are seven roofs of this kind? How could it be that the millions of stars floating in limitless space are lamps fixed in an imaginary roof? How can the claim be justified that there are seven earths like our earth, which is unique among millions of planets, moons and suns?

## 5. The Postponed Month Is Unbelief

**Question 5:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:36,37: “The number of the months, with God, is twelve in the Book of God, the day that He created the heavens and the earth; four of them are sacred. That is the right religion. So wrong not one another during them. And fight the unbelievers totally even as they fight you totally; and know that God is with the god-fearing. The month postponed is an increase of unbelief whereby the unbelievers go astray; one year they make it profane, and hallow it another, to agree with the number that God has hallowed, and so profane what God has hallowed. Decked out fair to them are their evil deeds; and God guides not the people of the unbelievers.”

سورة التوبة ٣٦:٩ و ٣٧ «إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرْمٌ ذَلِكَ الْدِينُ الْقَائِمُ فَلَا تَظْلِمُوا فِيهِنَّ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَقَاتِلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ كَافَّةً كَمَا يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ كَافَّةً وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِنَّمَا التَّيْسُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي الْكُفْرِ يُضَلُّ بِهِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُحَلِّونَهُ عَامًا وَيُحَرِّمُونَهُ عَامًا لِيُوَاطِّئُوا عِدَّةَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ فَيَحَلُّوا مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ زَيْنٌ لَهُمْ سُوءٌ أَعْمَالِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ».

The question is: Is this really unbelief? Scientists determine dates by the solar calendar, which is different from the lunar calendar by roughly one month, so how can a natural astronomical calculation be considered unbelief?

## 6. Egypt Is Irrigated by Rain

**Question 6:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:49: “Then thereafter

there shall come a year wherein the people will be succoured [yughathu] and press in season.”

سورة يوسف ١٢:٤٩ «ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يُغْصِرُونَ».

Here a reference is made to the drought that Egypt suffered for seven continual years during the time of Joseph, and to the surplus that would replace this barrenness. It says that in the year of plenty they will have rain [the word *succoured* in Arabic means ‘to be relieved by rain’]; as if Egypt’s fertility is based on rain. This contradicts reality, for rain is very scarce in Egypt, and it plays no role in that country’s irrigation, which is obtained solely from the annual flooding of the Nile. How then can the fertility of Egypt be attributed to rain?

### 7. Thunder Is an Angel

**Question 7:** We read in Sura al-Ra’d 13:13: “The thunder proclaims His praise, and the angels, in awe of Him. He looses the thunderbolts, and smites with them whosoever He will; yet they dispute about God, who is mighty in power.”

سورة الرعد ١٣:١٣ «وَيُسَبِّحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ وَيُرْسِلُ الصَّوَاعِقَ فَيُصِيبُ بِهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُمْ يُجَادِلُونَ فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ شَدِيدُ الْحَجَالِ».

Al-Baidawi said, “Ibn ‘Abbas reported that the Prophet was asked about the thunder. He answered, ‘It is an angel entrusted with the clouds. He has entwined shreds of fire with which he drives the clouds and the angels, in awe of God.’ Another opinion says that the pronoun *him* refers to the thunder itself.”

Al-Tirmidhi brought out, quoting Ibn ‘Abbas, that “the Jews came to Muhammad and said, ‘Tell us about the thunder. What is it?’ He said, ‘One of the angels who is entrusted with the clouds. He has entwined shreds of fire with which he drives the clouds wherever God wills.’ They asked, ‘What is this sound, then, which is heard?’ He said, ‘It is his rebuke to the clouds, that they should stop where they have been commanded.’ They said, ‘You have spoken the truth!’”

We ask: Why does the Qur’an say that thunder is an angel, when primitive peoples regarded it as a god? In reality it is the electricity generated by the collision of positively and negatively charged ions in the clouds.

### 8. The Valley of Towa

**Question 8:** We read in Sura Ta Ha 20:12: “I am thy Lord; put off thy shoes; thou art in the holy valley, Towa.”

سورة طه ٢٠:١٢ «إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَأَخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى».

Muslim scholars agree unanimously that the valley where God first appeared to Moses is Towa. But the Bible teaches us that, when Moses was grazing the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, he drove the sheep out of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. And he beheld the bush burning with fire without being consumed. Then the Lord called to him, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground” (Exodus 3:1-5). So this happened to Moses in Horeb, the mountain of God. Where did the Qur’an find

the name "Towa", when in fact Horeb was a well-known mountain on the Sinai Peninsula?

### 9. Olives on Mount Sinai

**Question 9:** We read in Sura al-Mu'minun 23:19,20: "Then We produced for you therewith gardens of palms and vines wherein are many fruits for you, and of them you eat, and a tree issuing from the Mount of Sinai that bears oil and seasoning for all to eat."

سورة المؤمنون ٢٣:١٩ و ٢٠ وَأَنْشَأْنَا لَكُمْ بِهِ جَنَّاتٍ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ لَكُمْ فِيهَا فَوَاكِهُ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمِنْهَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَشَجَرَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ طُورِ سَيْنَاءَ تَنْبُثُ بِالذُّهْنِ وَصَنِغٍ لِللَّكْلِينَ.

Commentators said that the tree refers to olives, and the seasoning refers to the food eaten with the bread (al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan* 18:13).

We ask: Wouldn't it have been more appropriate to refer to Canaan, which is known for olives, and not Sinai, where God had to provide manna for the Israelites, owing to the barrenness of the land? In other words, the Sinai Desert is not known for its olives.

### 10. The Sun Runs to a Resting Place

**Question 10:** We read in Sura Ya Sin 36:38: "And the sun – it runs to a fixed resting-place; that is the ordaining of the All-mighty, the All-knowing."

سورة يس ٣٦:٣٨ (وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ).

Al-Baidawi said:

"The sun – it runs to a fixed resting-place" refers to a certain limit at which its cycle comes to an end. It is compared to the resting place of a traveller after his journey, or to the centre of the sky where it moves slower, so that one thinks it has come to a halt. [The poet says, "The sun is gone astray and revolves in the sky."] It can also mean a settled and certain course, or an appointed end for each day from the east to the west. For it has a cycle of three hundred and sixty sunrises and sunsets; it rises every morning from a rising place and sets in a setting place, only to return to them the following year. This could also be a reference to the destruction of the world when it ceases to rotate. Another reading is: "with no resting-place to it"; namely, it does not rest, but moves all the time.

We ask: How can the Qur'an say that the sun runs, or that it has a resting place to which it is bound to go? The sun is a stationary star that does not move anywhere. Rather, it is the earth that revolves around the sun.

As for the claim that a variant reading of the Qur'an points to the sun running and not stopping, this only proves that the Qur'an has widely different interpretations which change the meaning. Thus the commentator himself contests the alleged soundness and accuracy of the Qur'an.

### 11. The Moon Is Like a Palm Frond

**Question 11:** We read in Sura Ya Sin 36:39,40: "And the moon – We determined it by stations, till it runs like an aged palm-

bough. It behoves not the sun to overtake the moon, neither does the night outstrip the day, each swimming in the sky.”

سورة يس ٣٩:٣٦ و ٤٠ وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَرْنَا مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ  
الْقَدِيمِ. لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ وَكُلٌّ  
فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said:

“And the moon – we determined” means its course is determined by stations. These stations are [twenty-seven]. They are as follows: *Saratan* [‘Cancer’], *Batin* [‘the Ventricle’], *Thurayya* [‘the Pleiades’], *al-Dabaran*, *al-Mihqama*, *al-Hata’a*, *Dhira’* [‘the Arm’], *al-Natra*, *Taraf* [‘the End’], *Jaiha* [‘the Countenance’], *Zabra* [‘the Lion’s Shoulder’], *Sarfa* [‘the Lion’s Heart’], *‘Uwa’* [‘the Lion’s Thigh’], *al-Samalik*, *al-Zayana*, *Ikliil* [‘the Wreath’], *Qalb* [‘the Heart’], *Shauka* [‘the Thom’], *al-Ta’a’im*, *Balda* [‘the Town’], *Sa’d al-Dhabih* [‘Sa’d of the Sacrifices’], *Sa’d Bala’*, *Sa’d al-Su’ud*, *Sa’d al-Ahbiya*, *Fargh al-Dilw al-Muqaddam* [‘the advanced Aquarius’], *Fargh al-Dilw al-Mu’akhhkar* [‘the delayed Aquarius’], and *Risha* [‘the Whale’s Belly’]. Every night the moon rests at a station, never exceeding it, and never late to it. When it is at its last station, which precedes the meeting, it tapers and turns into a crescent, “till it runs like an aged palm-bough” or an old palm frond, or a year-old palm frond. “It behoves not the sun” means it does not fit the sun “to overtake the moon” in speed. “Neither does the night outstrip the day” means it does not run before it and leave it lagging behind.

“Each” refers to the suns and the moons. “Swimming in a sky” means they glide easily in it.

## 12. Mount Qaf Encompasses All the Earth

Question 12: We read in Sura Qaf 50:1: “Qaf by the glorious Qur’an.”

سورة ق ١:٥٠ ق وَالْقُرْآنِ أَحْمَدِ.

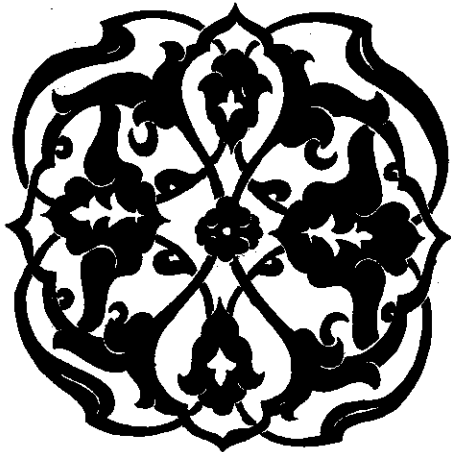
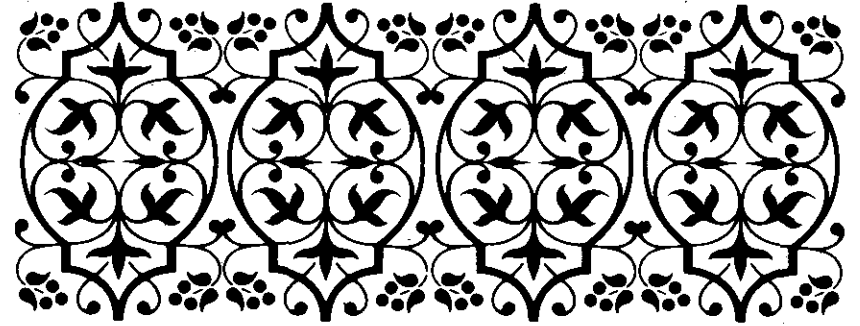
In *Ara’is al-Majalis* (pp. 7,8) Tha’labi says, “God, highly exalted, created a great mountain of a green chrysolite, to which the sky owes its greenness. It is called Mount Qaf, and it encompasses all the earth. It is by this mountain that God swore when He said, ‘Qaf by the glorious Qur’an.’” In a book entitled *Qisas al-Anbiya* (p. 5) it is written that “‘Abdallah Ibn Salam inquired of Muhammad, saying, ‘What is the highest peak in the world?’ Muhammad said, ‘It is Mount Qaf.’ He asked, ‘And what is it?’ Muhammad said, ‘It is of green chrysolite, to which the sky owes its greenness.’ He said, ‘You have spoken the truth, Messenger of God. And what is the height of Mount Qaf?’ Muhammad answered, ‘It is a journey of five hundred years!’ He asked him further, ‘How long does it take a man to cover its circumference?’ He answered, ‘It is a journey of two thousand years.’”

This story of Mount Qaf owes its origin to the Jewish book, *Hagiga*. In chapter 11, section 1 of this book, the author tries to explain the rarely used Hebrew word *tohu* [“emptiness or formlessness”], which occurs in Genesis 1:2. The said book reads: “*Tohu* is the green line encompassing the entire world, from which darkness issues.” The Hebrew word translated as

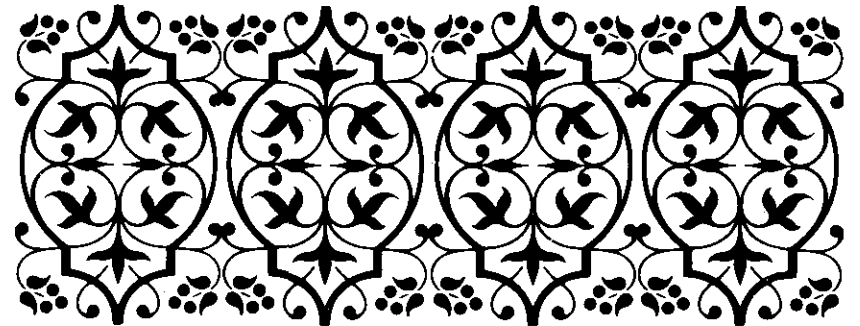
*Part One*

"line" in this book is *qav*. On hearing the word, the Companions did not know it meant a line, but fancied it to be a majestic mountain chain called Qaf! (There is no letter *v* in Arabic.)

Now if the Qur'an was revealed by God, as Muslims claim, how could it allege that the horizon, which is an imaginary line, is a mountain?



*Part Two*  
*Historical Questions*



## 1. Haman Is Pharaoh's Minister

**Question 13:** We read in Sura al-Qasas 28:8,38: "Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, were sinners.... And Pharaoh said, 'Council, I know not that you have any god but me. Kindle me, Haman, a fire upon the clay, and make me a tower, that I may mount up to Moses' god; for I think that he is one of the liars.'"

سورة القصص ٢٨:٨ و ٣٨ «إِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا كَانُوا خَاطِبِينَ... وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَيَّ الْآتِينَ فَاجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَى إِلَهِ مُوسَى وَإِنِّي لِأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ».

We read in Sura Ghafir 40:36 that Pharaoh said, "Haman, build for me a tower, that haply so I may reach the cords."

سورة غافر ٤٠:٣٦ «وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا هَامَانَ ابْنِ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَبْلُغُ الْأَسْبَابَ».

The Qur'an says that Haman was Pharaoh's minister, while history attests that Haman was the minister of King Ahasuerus, and that there is a thousand years' difference between them! Besides, Pharaoh was king of Egypt, while Haman served in the Persian Empire! Being so separated from one another by distance and time, how could Haman have been a minister to Pharaoh? The book of Esther in the Old Testament says that Haman was a minister of Ahasuerus, king of Persia, who is called Xerxes I by the Greeks.

## 2. Qarun and Haman are Egyptians

**Question 14:** We read in Sura al-Ankabut 29:39: "And Korah [Arabic: Qarun] and Pharaoh, and Haman; Moses came to them with the clear signs, but they waxed proud in the earth, yet they outstripped (us) not."

سورة العنكبوت ٢٩:٣٩ «وَقَارُونَ وَفِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَهُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا كَانُوا سَابِقِينَ».

We read in Sura Ghafir 40:23-25: "We also sent Moses with Our signs and a clear authority, to Pharaoh, Haman and Korah [Arabic: Qarun]; they said, 'A lying sorcerer!' And when he brought them the truth from Us, they said, 'Slay the sons of those who believe with him, and spare their women.' But the guile of the unbelievers is ever in error."

سورة غافر ٤٠:٢٣-٢٥ «وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا مُوسَىٰ بِآيَاتِنَا وَسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَقَارُونَ فَقَالُوا سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ عِنْدِنَا قَالُوا اقْتُلُوا أَبْنَاءَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ وَاسْتَحْيُوا نِسَاءَهُمْ وَمَا كَيْدُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ».

As soon as one reads these verses one assumes that Korah (or Qarun) and Haman were Egyptian and in Pharaoh's retinue, and that they, together with him, opposed Moses in Egypt. This is wrong because Korah was an Israelite, not an Egyptian. Even the Qur'an itself attests to this in Sura al-Qasas 28:76: "Korah was of the people of Moses; he became insolent to them."

With regard to the Arabic Qarun, one could say that the Qur'an missed the point completely, since in fact Qarun is none

other than King Croesus of Lydia (ca. 560-546 B.C.), who symbolises wealth among the Arabs and among other peoples.

## 3. The Golden Calf Was Made by a Samaritan

**Question 15:** We read in Sura Ta Ha 20:85-88: "He said, 'We have tempted thy people since thou didst leave them. The Samaritan has led them into error.' Then Moses returned very angry and sorrowful to his people, saying, 'My people did your Lord not promise a fair promise to you? Did the time of the covenant seem so long to you, or did you desire that anger should alight on you from your Lord, so that you failed in your trust with me?' 'We have not failed in our trust with thee,' they said, 'of our volition; but we were loaded with fardels, even the ornaments of the people, and we cast them, as the Samaritan also threw them, into the fire.' (Then he brought out for them a Calf, a mere body that lowed; and they said, 'This is your god, and the god of Moses, whom he has forgotten.')"

سورة طه ٨٥:٢٠-٨٨ «قَالَ فَإِنَّا قَدْ فَتَنَّا قَوْمَكَ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ وَأَضَلَّهُمُ السَّامِرِيُّ فَرَجَعَ مُوسَىٰ إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ غَضْبَانَ أَسِفًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ أَلَمْ يَعِدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ وَعَدًّا حَسَنًا أَفَطَالَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْعَهْدُ أَمْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ يَحُلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَضَبٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَأَخْلَفْتُمْ مَوْعِدِي قَالُوا مَا أَخْلَفْنَا مَوْعِدَكَ بَلْ كُنَّا ضَالِّينَ أَوْ رَارًا مِنْ رَبِّنَا أَلْقَوْهُمُ فَقَدَفْنَاهَا فَكَذَلِكَ أَلْقَى السَّامِرِيُّ فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ خَوَازٍ فَقَالُوا هَذَا إِلَهُكُمْ وَإِلَهُ مُوسَىٰ قَتْسِي».

We ask: How could a Samaritan have made a golden calf for the Israelites? The city of Samaria did not exist when the Israelites came out of Egypt and travelled through Sinai. Moreover, it was Aaron who made the calf for them as they

wanted. How then can we imagine a Samaritan making them the calf?

#### 4. Azar Is Abraham's Father

**Question 16:** We read in Sura al-An'am 6:74: "When Abraham said to his father Azar, 'Takest thou idols for gods? I see thee, and thy people in manifest error.'"

سورة الأنعام ٦:٧٤ «وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ لِأَبِيهِ آزَرَ أَتَّخِذُ أَصْنَامًا آلِهَةً إِنِّي أَرَاكَ وَقَوْمَكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ».

The truth, as declared by the Bible, our only historical authority on this era of history, is that Abraham's father's name was Terah (Genesis 11:27).

#### 5. Aaron's Sister and Amram's Daughter?

**Question 17:** We read in Sura al-Tahrim 66:12: "And Mary, Imran's daughter, who guarded her virginity, so We breathed into her of Our Spirit, and she confirmed the Words of her Lord and His Books, and became one of the obedient."

سورة التحريم ٦٦:١٢ «وَمَرْيَمَ ابْنَةَ عِمْرَانَ الَّتِي أَحْصَنَتْ فَرْجَهَا فَنفَخْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِنَا وَصَدَّقَتْ بِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّهَا وَكُنْتِ مِنَ الْقَائِمِينَ».

We also read in Sura Maryam 19:27,28: "Then she brought the child to her folk carrying him; and they said, 'Mary, thou hast surely committed a monstrous thing! Sister of Aaron, thy father was not a wicked man, nor was your mother a woman unchaste.'"

سورة مريم ٢٧:١٩ و ٢٨ «فَأْتَتْ بِهِ قَوْمَهَا تَحْمِلَةً قَالُوا يَا مَرْيَمُ لَقَدْ جِئْتِ شَيْئًا فَرِيًّا. يَا أُخْتَ هَارُونَ مَا كَانَ أَبُوكَ امْرَأَ سَوْءٍ وَمَا كَانَتْ أُمُّكَ بَغِيًّا».

We ask: The Bible says that the Virgin Mary was the daughter of Heli (Luke 3:23). How come the Qur'an says she was the daughter of Amram [Arabic: *Imran*], the father of the prophet Moses, and that she was the sister of Aaron, Moses' brother? [See Exodus 6:20.] In fact, the difference between Mary and Amram, Moses, and Aaron is roughly 1,400 years!

#### 6. Joseph's Intended Adultery

**Question 18:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:24: "For she desired him; and he would have taken her."

سورة يوسف ١٢:٢٤ «وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا».

The verse says that Potiphar's wife intended (Arabic: *hammat*) to have sex with Joseph, and that he intended (*hamma*) to have sex with her. The Arabic verb *hamma* means: "to have in mind, be resolved, to intend". It is the root verb for the word *hammam*, which is used to describe a person who carries out all that he intends. This accusation against Joseph contradicts biblical history, which tells us that, when Potiphar's wife asked Joseph to commit this abomination with her, he answered, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Even when she caught him by his garment, he left it in her hand and fled (Genesis 39:12)!



## 7. Noah Led the People into Error

**Question 19:** We read in Sura Nuh 71:24 that Noah said to God, "Increase thou not the evildoers save in error!"

سورة نوح ٧١:٢٤ «وَلَا تَزِدِ الظَّالِمِينَ إِلَّا ضَلَالًا»

How could it be that Noah, being a prophet, would ask God to increase the people in error? Neither did Noah love error, nor is God the source of error. Biblical history testifies that "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations" (Genesis 6:9), and that he was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5).

## 8. Pharaoh Was Delivered from Drowning

**Question 20:** We read in Sura Yunis 10:90-92: "And We brought the Children of Israel over the sea; and Pharaoh and his hosts followed them insolently and impetuously till, when the drowning overtook him, he said, 'I believe that there is no God but He in whom the Children of Israel believe; I am of those that surrender.' 'Now? And before thou didst rebel, being of those that did corruption. So today We shall deliver thee with thy body, that thou mayest be a sign to those after thee. Surely many men are heedless of Our signs.'"

سورة يونس ١٠:٩٠-٩٢ «وَجَاوَزْنَا بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْبَحْرَ فَأَتْبَعَهُمْ فِرْعَوْنُ وَجُنُودُهُ بَغْيًا وَعَدُوًّا حَتَّى إِذَا أَدْرَكَهُ الْغَرَقُ قَالَ آمَنْتُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا الَّذِي آمَنْتُ بِهِ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ وَأَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْآنَ وَقَدْ عَصَيْتَ قَبْلُ وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ فَالْيَوْمَ نَجِّيكَ بِبَدَنِكَ لِتَكُونَ لِمَنْ خَلَقَكَ آيَةً وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ عَنْ آيَاتِنَا لَغَافِلُونَ»

This verse says that Pharaoh was delivered from drowning. But in contrast to this, the Qur'an says in Sura al-Qasas 28:38-40: "And Pharaoh said, 'Council, I know not that you have any god but me.' ... And he waxed proud in the land, he and his hosts, wrongfully; and they thought they should not be returned to Us. Therefore We seized him and his hosts, and cast them into the sea; so behold how was the end of the evil-doers!"

The Qur'an contradicts both itself and the Bible, for even David says in the Psalms: "But [the Lord] overthrew Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea" (Psalms 136:15).

## 9. Zechariah Took Charge of the Virgin Mary

**Question 21:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:35-37: "When the wife of Imran said, 'Lord, I have vowed to Thee, in dedication, what is within my womb. Receive Thou this from me; Thou hearest, and knowest.' And when she gave birth to her she said, 'Lord, I gave given birth to her, a female.' (And God knew very well what she has given birth to; the male is not as the female.) 'And I have named her Mary, and commend her to Thee with her seed, to protect them from the accursed Satan.' Her Lord received the child with gracious favour, and by his goodness she grew up comely, Zechariah taking charge of her. Whenever Zechariah went in to her in the Sanctuary, her found her provisioned. 'Mary,' he said, 'how comes this to thee?' 'From God,' she said. Truly God provides for whosoever He will without reckoning."

سورة آل عمران ٣:٣٥-٣٧ «إِذْ قَالَتِ امْرَأَةُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَدَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ. فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتَهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي

سَمِّيَهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ. فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا أَخْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا قَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكِ هَذَا قَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ.

This account is inconsistent with history, since the Bible does not say that Miriam, Amram's daughter, ever married or gave birth to any children. She was Aaron's sister, and her mother's name was Jochebed. The only woman recorded in Scripture who made a vow concerning the child within her womb was Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel. Besides, Zechariah did not dwell in the temple in Jerusalem, so he could not have taken charge of her there. He was chosen by lot to serve in Jerusalem as priest in the temple (Luke 1:5-40) for a specific time only! No one, under any circumstances, could live in the Holy of Holies; only the high priest was admitted to it once a year on the great Day of Atonement, with the blood of a sacrifice to atone for the sins of the people (1 Kings 8:6,8,9; Leviticus 16:2,32,33; Hebrews 9:7)! Zechariah did not take charge of Mary, because she was of the tribe of Judah and he was of the tribe of Levi (Hebrews 7:14). Moreover, Zechariah lived in Judea, whereas Mary lived in Nazareth!

## 10. Mary's Withdrawal

**Question 22:** We read in Sura Maryam 19:16-21: "And mention in the Book Mary when she withdrew from her people to an eastern place, and she took a veil apart from them; then We sent to her Our Spirit that presented himself to her a man without fault. She said, 'I take refuge in the All-merciful from thee! If thou

fearest God.'... He said, 'I am but a messenger come from thy Lord, to give thee a boy most pure.' 'How shall I have a son whom no mortal has touched, neither have I been unchaste?' He said, 'Even so thy Lord has said: "Easy is that for Me; and that We may appoint him a sign unto men and a mercy from Us; it is a thing decreed."'"

سورة مريم ١٩:١٦-٢١ «وَأَذْكُرُ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَرْيَمَ إِذِ اتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا مَكَانًا شَرْقِيًّا فَاتَّخَذَتْ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ حِجَابًا فَأَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهَا رُوحَنَا فَتَمَثَّلَ لَهَا بَشَرًا سَوِيًّا قَالَتْ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِالرَّحْمَانِ مِنْكَ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَقِيًّا قَالَ إِنَّمَا أَنَا رَسُولُ رَبِّكِ لِأَهَبَ لَكِ غُلَامًا زَكِيًّا قَالَتْ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَلَمْ يَمْسَسْنِي بَشَرٌ وَلَمْ أَكُ بَغِيًّا قَالَ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ رَبُّكَ هُوَ عَلَيَّ هَيِّنٌ وَلِنَجْعَلَهُ آيَةً لِلنَّاسِ وَرَحْمَةً مِنَّا وَكَانَ أَمْرًا مَقْضِيًّا».

The Qur'an does not give us any clue as to why the Virgin Mary had withdrawn from her people to an eastern place and taken a veil apart from them, before she received the good news of Christ. Was she, perhaps, involved in a quarrel with her people? And why would a virgin live by herself, away from her people, bearing in mind that the Qur'an claims she lived in the Sanctuary under the care of Zechariah? It is an established biblical fact, however, that Mary lived in Nazareth and was betrothed to Joseph the carpenter (Luke 1:26-36).

## 11. A Wilderness Delivery and a Talking Baby

**Question 23:** We read in Sura Maryam 19:22-26: "So she conceived him and withdrew with him to a distant place. And the birth pains surprised her by the trunk of the palm-tree. She said, 'Would I had died ere this, and become a thing forgotten!' But the

one that was below her called to her, 'Nay, do not sorrow; see, thy Lord has set before thee a rivulet. Shake also to thee the palm-trunk, and there shall come tumbling upon thee dates fresh and ripe. Eat therefore, and drink, and be comforted; and if you should see any mortal, say, "I have vowed to the All-merciful a fast, and today I will not speak to any man."'" "

سورة مريم ١٩: ٢٢-٢٦ وَحَمَلَتْهُ فَانْتَبَذَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا فَأَجَاءَهَا انْحِاضٌ إِلَى جِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَّا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا حَبِيًّا فَكَلِمِي وَأَشْرِبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرِينِ مِنَ الْبَشَرِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَانِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا.

Mary gave birth to Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. This was foretold by the prophets in the Torah hundreds of years before He was born, and it did not occur by the trunk of a palm tree either! Mary gave birth to her baby and laid him in a manger (Luke 2:1-20). It is indeed very strange that the Qur'an claims her baby spoke to her from below her and told her to shake the trunk of a palm tree, eat the dates, and drink from the stream, and say, "I have vowed to the All-merciful a fast, and today I will not speak to any man," if someone were to pass by her. How could she claim she was fasting when in fact she ate and spoke?

## 12. Every Nation Has Its Native Messenger

**Question 24:** We read in Sura Yunis 10:47: "Every nation has its Messenger; then, when their Messenger comes, justly the issue is decided between them, and they are not wronged."

سورة يونس ٤٧: ١٠ «وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قَضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ».

We also read in Sura al-Nahl 16:36,89: "Indeed, We sent forth among every nation a Messenger, saying: 'Serve you God, and eschew idols.' Then some of them God guided, and some were justly disposed to error.... And the day We shall raise up from every nation a witness, then to the unbelievers no leave shall be given."

سورة النحل ٣٦: ١٦ و ٨٩ «وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَأَجْتَبُوا الطَّاعُونَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ... وَيَوْمَ نَبْعَثُ فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ».

These two Meccan suras claim that God sent to every nation a prophet from among its own people. The Bible says, however, that the prophets and messengers were from the Children of Israel exclusively, being sent first to them and then to all the world. If the assertion of the Qur'an is true, why then did no prophets arise and preach in Africa, Europe, America, Australia and Asia? Muhammad possibly came up with this claim in order to strengthen his own weak situation. For if these nations had had their own prophets, Muhammad may have argued, then why not let the Arabs have their own?!

## 13. Adam and the Idols

**Question 25:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:189,190: "It is He who created you of one living soul, and made of him his spouse that

he might rest in her. Then, when he covered her, she bore a light burden and passed by with it, but when it became heavy they cried to God their Lord, 'If Thou givest us a righteous son, we indeed shall be thankful.' Thereafter, when He gave them a righteous son, they assigned Him associates in that He had given them; but God is high exalted above that they associate."

سورة الأعراف ٧: ١٨٩ و ١٩٠ «هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيْفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ فِيمَا آتَاهُمَا فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ».

Muslim expositors said that when Adam and Eve came down to the earth, lust was cast into Adam's heart, so that he lay with Eve, who conceived immediately. When her burden (pregnancy) became heavier, the Devil came to her in the form of a man, and said, "How do you know what is in your womb? Maybe it is a beast or a dog or a pig! And do you know where it will come out – from your rectum or your mouth? It may rend your abdomen apart and kill you!" Eve became afraid and told Adam, so that they both grew despondent. The Devil came to her once again and said, "I stand high in God's favour. If I call upon God to make him [the foetus] a shapely creature like you, and ease his birth for you, you must name him 'Abd al-Harith, [i.e. 'the slave of al-Harith' (the Devil's name among the angels was Harith)]." Eve told this to Adam, and the Devil came to them again and talked her into naming him 'Abd al-Harith. Eve bore a child, and they named him 'Abd al-Harith.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'They assigned Him associates' means

that they made their children associates in that which brought their children, so they called them 'Abd al-'Uzza and 'Abd al-Manat. 'God is high exalted above that they associate. What do they associate that which creates nothing and themselves are created?' refers to the idols" (al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan* 9:145).

We ask: Where did this story come from? What have al-'Uzza and Manat to do with Adam in the garden? How could Adam have taken the idols of the Arabs as gods and named his sons after them?

#### 14. Noah's Son Drowns

**Question 26:** We read in Sura Hud 11:42,43: "And Noah called to his son who was standing apart, 'Embark with us, my son, and be thou not with the unbelievers!' He said, 'I will take refuge in a mountain, that shall defend me from the water.' He said, 'Today there is no defender from God's command but for him on whom He has mercy.' And the waves came between them, and he was among the drowned."

سورة هود ١١: ٤٢ و ٤٣ «وَنَادَى نُوحٌ ابْنَهُ وَكَانَ فِي مَعْرَلٍ يَا بَنِيَّ أَزْكَبَ مَعَنَا وَلَا تَكُنْ مَعَ الْكَافِرِينَ قَالَ سَأُوِي إِلَى جَبَلٍ يَعْصِمُنِي مِنَ الْمَاءِ قَالَ لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ وَخَالَ بَيْنَهُمَا الْمَوْجُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْمَغْرُقِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said, in effect, that Canaan was Noah's son who refused to embark with him onto the ark, and thus drowned. Actually, Noah had three sons only: Shem, Ham and Japheth, each of whom had a wife. This makes those who were delivered in the ark eight in number: Noah and his wife, and his three sons

and their wives. Moreover, Canaan was not even born when the Flood took place. He was not Noah's son, but Ham's son, who was born to him after the Flood! (Genesis 10:1,6,15).

### 15. Job is Isaac's Grandson

**Question 27:** We read in Sura al-An'am 6:84: "And Noah We guided before; and of his seed David and Solomon, Job and Joseph, Moses and Aaron – even so We recompense the good-doers."

سورة الأنعام ٦: ٨٤ «وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا  
مِن قَبْلُ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ  
وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "Job is the son of Amoz, of the tribe of Is, the son of Isaac."

We ask: What has Job got to do with Isaac, the father of Jacob? There is absolutely no conclusive historical or biblical evidence that he was a contemporary or even a relative of Isaac.

### 16. Moses and al-Khidr

**Question 28:** We read in Sura al-Kahf 18:65: "Then they found one of Our servants unto whom We had given mercy from Us, and We had taught him knowledge proceeding from Us."

سورة الكهف ١٨: ٦٥ «فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبَادِنَا آتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِنْ عِنْدِنَا  
وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا».

Al-Baidawi explained this verse as follows:

The prophet Moses travelled with his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, until they arrived at a rock, having with them a roasted whale. Joshua performed the ritual ablution at the rock, and when he did that, a drop of the ablution water fell on the roasted whale, which came back to life and scurried to the water! Moses wanted to eat the whale, so he searched for it. When he did not find it, he went back to the site of the rock and saw al-Khidr [the prophet Elijah]. They walked together toward a ship, into which al-Khidr bored a hole; there he found a lad, whom he killed. They marched on to a wall that was about to crumble, so al-Khidr reinforced it. When Moses asked al-Khidr about his motives for doing what he did, he said, "The ship belonged to some poor men; I damaged it so that the despotic king would not be able to seize it by force. As for the lad, he was the son of believing parents; I killed him so that he would not eventually impose unbelief on his parents. The wall belonged to two orphans; I set it up so that when they grow up, they will find underneath it a treasure of gold in which some proverbs are written, such as 'There is no God but Allah; Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah.'" This took place during the time of Alexander the Great (Compare with Bukhari, Muslim, *Sunan al-Nasa'i* and al-Tirmidhi).

We ask: What is the correlation between Moses, who lived in Egypt in 1300 B.C., Elijah, who lived in Israel in 900 B.C. and Alexander the Great, who lived in Greece in 333 B.C.? There are 400 years between Moses and Elijah, 1,000 between him and Alexander the Great, and 2,000 between him and the coming of

Muhammad! How is it feasible for those people, who came from separate kingdoms and lived in different centuries, to meet in the same generation and on common ground? How can we accept the witness of Muhammad, who lived in the seventh century A.D., regarding those people who lived centuries before Christ?

### 17. Confusion of Names

**Question 29:** We read in Sura al-An'am 6:84-86: "And We gave him Isaac and Jacob – each one We guided, and Noah We guided before; and of his seed David and Solomon, Job and Joseph, Moses and Aaron – even so We recompense the good-doers – Zechariah and John, Jesus and Elias; each was of the righteous; Ishmael and Elisha, Jonah and Lot – each one We preferred above all beings."

سورة الأنعام ٦: ٨٤-٨٦ «وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ كُلًّا هَدَيْنَا وَنُوحًا هَدَيْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِهِ دَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُوسُفَ وَمُوسَى وَهَارُونَ وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ وَزَكَرِيَّا وَيَحْيَى وَعِيسَى وَإِلْيَاسَ كُلٌّ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيُوسُفَ وَلُوطًا كُلًّا أَفْضَلْنَا عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ»

We ask: How can these names be arranged with such a disregard for chronological order, being so jumbled together that one cannot help getting confused when reading them? Why are David and Solomon mentioned before Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron? Why are Zechariah, John and Jesus mentioned before Elias? Why is Ishmael mentioned after Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Zechariah, John, Jesus and Elias? Why are Elisha and Jonah mentioned before Lot?

The true chronological ordering of these men's lives was known hundreds of years before the coming of the Qur'an. Abraham, his nephew Lot, his two grandsons Ishmael and Isaac, his great grandson Jacob and his great great grandson Joseph lived around 2000 B.C. Moses and Aaron lived around 1300 B.C. David and his son Solomon came after them. Elias (or Elijah) and his disciple Elisha lived during the era of the Kingdom of Israel (between 1004-926 B.C.). Jonah is the last Old Testament prophet mentioned in the Qur'anic verse, when, in fact, Zechariah, John the Baptist and Jesus followed him as prophets in the New Testament era.

### 18. Enoch, not Idris

**Question 30:** We read in Sura Maryam 19:56,57: "And mention in the Book Idris; he was a true man, a Prophet. We raised him up to a high place."

سورة مريم ١٩: ٥٦ و ٥٧ «وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِدْرِيسَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا وَرَفَعْنَاهُ مَكَانًا عَلِيًّا»

Al-Baidawi said, "Idris is Noah's grandfather, and his name is Enoch. The name *Idris* [Arabic: 'one who studies much'] is derived from the fact that he studied many books. It is reported that God revealed to him 30 scrolls. He was the first to write with a pen, and the first to watch the stars and use mathematics. 'We raised him up to a high place' refers to the exalted nature of prophethood and the favour [he had] with God. Another opinion says it refers to paradise, or the sixth or fourth heaven [to which he was raised up]."

The Old Testament says: "Enoch lived 65 years and begot

**Methuselah.** After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years, and begot sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were 365 years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Genesis 5:21-24). As for the New Testament, it says in Hebrews 11:5 that "by faith Enoch was translated so that he did not see death, 'and was not found because God had translated him.'"

We ask: Where did the Qur'an come up with the name Idris when the true name is Enoch?

### 19. Noah Was Not Followed by the Vilest

**Question 31:** We read in Sura Hud 11:25-27: "And We sent Noah to his people: 'I am sent to warn you, and to bring good tidings: Serve you none but God. I fear for you the chastisement of a painful day.' Said the Council of the unbelievers of his people, 'We see thee not other than a mortal like ourselves, and we see only the vilest of us following thee inconsiderately. We do not see that you have any superiority over us; no, rather we think you are liars.'"

سورة هود ١١: ٢٥-٢٧ «وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ إِنِّي لَكُمْ نَذِيرٌ مُّبِينٌ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا اللَّهَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمِ أَلِيمٍ فَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن قَوْمِهِ مَا نَرَاكَ إِلَّا بَشَرًا مِّثْلَنَا وَمَا نَرَاكَ أَتْبَعَكَ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ هُمْ أَرَادُوا بِآدَائِي الرَّأْيِ وَمَا نَرَىٰ لَكُمْ عَلَيْنَا مِن فَضْلٍ بَلْ نَظُنُّكُمْ كَاذِبِينَ».

The question is: Where are the vilest among the council of unbelievers who followed Noah and believed him? The Old and New Testaments say clearly that no one believed the preaching of Noah. The only ones who entered with him into the ark were

his wife, his sons, and his sons' wives, who were not vile people. Moreover, the Qur'an even contradicts these verses in Sura al-Saffat 37:77, where it says about Noah: "And We made his seed the survivors."

### 20. Exaggerations Regarding the Tower of Babel

**Question 32:** We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:26: "Those that were before them contrived; then God came upon their buildings from the foundations, and the roof fell down on them from over them, and the chastisement came upon them from whence they were not aware."

سورة النحل ١٦: ٢٦ «قَدْ مَكَرَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَأَتَىٰ اللَّهُ بُنْيَانَهُم مِّنَ الْقَوَاعِدِ فَخَرَّ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّقْفُ مِن فَوْقِهِمْ وَأَتَاهُمُ الْعَذَابُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "It is said that Nimrod, the son of Canaan, is alluded to here. It is he who built the Tower of Babel, which was five thousand cubits thick, to observe the sky. God caused a wind to blow on it, and it fell down on him and his people, so that they all perished."

The question is: How did al-Baidawi know that Nimrod was the son of Canaan? Nimrod was the son of Cush, the son of Ham, the son of Noah (Genesis 10:6-8). After the Flood, people began to build a city with a high tower in order to immortalise their name. God punished them for this by confusing their language; thus they could not communicate with one another and stopped building. Therefore the city was called Babel, because God confused (Hebrew: *balbel*) their language (Genesis 11:1-9).

## 21. The Ka'ba Is the House of Saturn

**Question 33:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:125-127: "And when We appointed the House to be a place of visitation for the people, and a sanctuary, and: 'Take to yourselves Abraham's station for a place of prayer.' And We made covenant with Abraham and Ishmael: 'Purify My House for those that shall go about it and those that cleave to it, to those who bow and prostrate themselves.' And when Abraham said, 'My Lord, make this a land secure, and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in God and the Last Day.' He said, 'And whoso disbelieves, to him I shall give enjoyment for a little, then I shall compel him to the chastisement of the Fire – how evil a homecoming!' And Abraham, and Ishmael with him, raised up the foundation of the House: 'Our Lord, receive this from us; Thou art the All-hearing, the All-knowing.'"

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٢٥-١٢٧ «وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَاً وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ».

In contrast to the Qur'anic account, the Bible teaches us that Abraham was called from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan, where he built an altar to the Lord. The Bible never mentions that he went to the land of Arabia or built the Ka'ba with his son Ishmael. Rather, he went to the land of Canaan which God had promised him and his offspring.

The question is: How could the Ka'ba be the house of God, a place of visitation and a sanctuary, if it was constructed, like many other Ka'bas, as a house for idol worship? Being built originally for the worship of the planet Saturn, every subsequent conqueror used the Ka'ba as a place for practising the rites of his own religion, and compelled the people to worship his gods. During the time of Muhammad, there were 360 idols in the Ka'ba; every tribal community in Arabia had its own idol there. The feet of these idols were fastened down with lead. Muhammad came to the Ka'ba one day, struck each idol with a rod of iron, and the idols fell to the ground, while he said, "The truth has come, and falsehood has vanished away; surely falsehood is ever certain to vanish." After he seized the shrine, Muhammad preserved most of the pagan rituals, such as the pilgrimage (*hajj*), the circumambulation round the Ka'ba (*tawaf*), the ritual consecration (*ihram*), the minor pilgrimage (*'umra*), the throwing of rocks (*rajm*), kissing the black stone (*taqbil*), and making sacrifices (*nahr*).

## 22. What Has Abraham to Do with Nimrod?

**Question 34:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:258: "Hast thou not regarded him who disputed with Abraham, concerning his Lord, that God has given him the kingship? When Abraham said, 'My Lord is He who gives life, and makes to die,' he said, 'I give life and make to die.' Said Abraham, 'God brings the sun from the east; so bring thou it from the west.' Then the unbeliever was confounded. God guides not the people of the evil-doers."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٥٨ «أَلَمْ تَرَ إِنِّي الَّذِي حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ قَالَ



إِبْرَاهِيمَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ.

Al-Baidawi said, “Hast thou not regarded him who disputed with Abraham, concerning his Lord’ is an expression of wonder at the dispute of Nimrod and his folly.”

The question is: How could this dispute have taken place when Nimrod preceded Abraham by 300 years? There are, in fact, twelve generations between Noah and Abraham (Luke 3:34-36) and four generations between Noah and Nimrod (Genesis 10:1-8).

### 23. Is Ishmael Also among the Prophets?

**Question 35:** We read in Sura Maryam 19:54: “And mention in the Book Ishmael; he was true to his promise, and he was a Messenger, a Prophet.”

سورة مريم ١٩: ٥٤ «وَأَذْكُرْ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صَادِقَ الْوَعْدِ وَكَانَ رَسُولًا نَبِيًّا».

The question is: How could Ishmael be a prophet when the Old Testament describes him in Genesis 16:12 as being “a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man’s hand against him”?

### 24. Jacob’s Sons Asked Permission?

**Question 36:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:11-13: “‘Father, what ails thee, that thou trustest us not with Joseph? Surely we are his sincere well-wishers. Send him forth with us tomorrow, to frolic

and play; surely we shall be watching over him.’ He said, ‘It grieves me that you should go with him, and I fear the wolf may eat him, while you are heedless of him.’”

سورة يوسف ١٢: ١١-١٣ «قَالُوا يَا أَبَانَا مَا لَكَ لَا تَأْمَنَّا عَلَى يُوسُفَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَنَاصِحُونَ أَرْسِلْهُ مَعَنَا غَدًا يَزْتَعِ وَيَلْعَبَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ قَالَ إِنِّي لَيَحْزُنُنِي أَنْ تَذْهَبُوا بِهِ وَأَخَافُ أَنْ يَأْكُلَهُ الذُّبَابُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ غَافِلُونَ».

The question is: Where did the Qur’an get this information? The Bible does not say Joseph’s brothers asked their father to let him go with them to play, neither did Jacob accuse his sons of heedlessness toward Joseph. The truth is that Jacob sent Joseph to inquire after his brothers’ safety. As soon as they saw him, they said, “Look, this dreamer is coming! Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, ‘Some wild beast has devoured him.’ We shall see what will become of his dreams” (Genesis 37:19-20). They sold him to the Ishmaelites, took his tunic, smeared it with the blood of a male goat and brought it to their father to give him the impression that a wild beast had eaten him.

### 25. The Invention of a Witness-Bearing Baby

**Question 37:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:25-29: “They raced to the door; and she tore his shirt from behind. They encountered her master by the door. She said, ‘What is the recompense of him who purposes evil against thy folk, but that he should be imprisoned, or given a painful chastisement?’ Said he, ‘It was she that solicited me’, and a witness of her folk bore witness, ‘If his shirt has been torn from before then she has spoken truly, and he is one of the liars; but if it be that his shirt has been torn

from behind, then she has lied, and he is one of the truthful.' When he saw that his shirt was torn from behind he said, 'This is of your women's guile; surely your guile is great. Joseph, turn away from this; and thou, woman, ask forgiveness for thy crime; surely thou art one of the sinners.'"

سورة يوسف ١٢: ٢٥-٢٩ «وَأَسْتَجِبَا أَلْيَابَ وَقَدَّتْ قَمِيصَهُ مِنْ دُبُرٍ وَأَلْفَيَا سَيِّدَهَا لَدَى أَلْيَابٍ قَالَتْ مَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِأَهْلِكَ سُوءًا إِلَّا أَنْ يُسْجَنَ أَوْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ قَالَتْ هِيَ رَاوَدْتَنِي عَنْ نَفْسِي وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ كَانَ قَمِيصُهُ قُدَّ مِنْ قُبُلٍ فَصَدَقَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ وَإِنْ كَانَ قَمِيصُهُ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ فَكَذَبَتْ وَهُوَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ فَلَمَّا رَأَى قَمِيصَهُ قُدَّ مِنْ دُبُرٍ قَالَ إِنَّهُ مِنْ كَيْدِكُنَّ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ يُوسُفُ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ هَذَا وَاسْتَغْفِرِي لِذَنبِكِ إِنَّكِ كُنتِ مِنَ الْخَاطِئِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said, " 'And a witness of her folk bore witness' – refers to the claim that it was a cousin of hers who was in the cradle [that bore witness]."

We ask: Where did this witness come from? The Bible says that Joseph and Potiphar's wife were in the house alone (Genesis 39:11). It also says that Joseph left his garment in Potiphar's wife's hand, after she had torn it from his body. So how can the Qur'an say she tore it and he ran with it? Also, how could Potiphar, her husband, declare the innocence of Joseph and the guilt of his wife, yet still keep them together in the same house, accepting such shame and humiliation? Further in this sura, we read that Potiphar's wife declared she solicited Joseph, but he refused. Then she threatened she would have him imprisoned unless he committed adultery with her. Would it make

sense for Potiphar to throw Joseph into prison, not for his wickedness but for his chastity?

## 26. An Imaginary Ladies' Meeting

**Question 38:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:30-33: "Certain women that were in the city said, 'The Governor's wife has been soliciting her page; he smote her heart with love; we see her in manifest error.' When she heard their sly whispers, she sent to them, and made ready for them a repast, then she gave to each one of them a knife. 'Come forth, attend to them,' she said. And when they saw him, they so admired him that they cut their hands, saying, 'God save us! This is no mortal; he is no other than a noble angel.' 'So now you see,' she said. 'This is he you blamed me for. Yes, I solicited him, but he abstained. Yet if he will not do what I command him, he shall be imprisoned, and be humbled.'"

سورة يوسف ١٢: ٣٠-٣٣ «وَقَالَ نِسْوَةٌ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ امْرَأَةٌ الْعَزِيزِ تُرَاوِدُ فَتَاهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ قَدْ شَغَفَهَا حُبًّا إِنَّا لَنَرَاهَا فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ فَلَمَّا سَمِعَتْ بِمَكْرِهِنَّ أَرْسَلَتْ إِلَيْهِنَّ وَأَعْتَدَتْ لَهُنَّ مُتَّكًا وَأَتَتْ كُلَّ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُنَّ سِكِّينًا وَقَالَتْ أَخْرِجْ عَلَيَّهِنَّ فَلَمَّا رَأَيْنَهُ أَكْبَرْنَهُ وَقَطَّعْنَ أَيْدِيَهُنَّ وَقُلْنَ حَاشَ لِلَّهِ مَا هَذَا بَشَرًا إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا مَلَكٌ كَرِيمٌ قَالَتْ فَذَلِكُنَّ الَّذِي لُمْتُنَّنِي فِيهِ وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدْتُهُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ وَلَئِن لَّمْ يَفْعَلْ مَا أَمَرَهُ لَيُسْجَنَنَّ وَلَيَكُونًا مِنَ الصَّاغِرِينَ».

We ask: Is it reasonable that the wife of such an influential officer would prepare a special banquet and invite the wives of the leading men of the city just to declare before them her passion and infatuation her slave? Would she be so brazen as to acknowledge her immorality before the other women and not be

afraid of the shame against her honour? Is it feasible that the other women would be so overcome by Joseph's physical beauty to the extent of cutting their hands with their knives, out of astonishment?

### 27. Is Seeking Help from Man a Denial of God?

**Question 39:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:42: "Then he said to the one he deemed should be saved of the two, 'Mention me in thy lord's presence.' But Satan caused him to forget to mention him to his master, so that he continued in the prison for certain years."

سورة يوسف ١٢:٤٢ «وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُ نَاجٍ مِنْهُمَا ادْكُرْنِي عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ فَأَنسَاهُ الشَّيْطَانُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِ فَلَبِثَ فِي السِّجْنِ بِضْعَ سِنِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "Muhammad said, 'May God show mercy to my brother Joseph; unless he said, "Mention me to thy lord," he would not have lingered in prison seven years after the [original] five.'"

We ask: Is it wrong for a man to seek help from his fellow-man in times of trouble? Joseph did not turn his back on his Lord when he asked the cup-bearer to make mention of him in Pharaoh's presence, so that he could be released from prison. In like manner, the apostle Paul did not forget his Lord when he sought help against the Jews and appealed to Caesar to judge his case (Acts 25:11). If these men are guilty of forsaking God, what can be said of Muhammad who camouflaged Ali in his own garment, in order to escape from the people of Quraish who sought to kill him? When Joseph made his request, he demonstrated his wisdom.

### 28. Benjamin Was Not Imprisoned

**Question 40:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:83,84: "'No!' he said. But your spirits tempted you to do somewhat. But come, sweet patience! Haply God will bring them all to me; He is the All-knowing, the All-wise.' And he turned away from them, and said, 'Ah, woe is me for Joseph!' And his eyes turned white because of the sorrow that he choked within him."

يوسف ١٢:٨٣ و٨٤ «قَالَ بَلْ سَوَّلَتْ لَكُمْ أَنفُسُكُمْ أَمْرًا فَصَبْرٌ جَمِيلٌ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَن يَأْتِيَنِي بِهِمْ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ وَتَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ وَقَالَ يَا أَسْفَى عَلَى يُوسُفَ وَأَبْيَضْتُ عَيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْحُزْنِ فَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, "'Haply God will bring them all to me' refers to Joseph, Benjamin and their brother who was apprehended in Egypt."

The Bible tells us that ten brothers of Joseph came to Egypt to buy wheat. Joseph recognised them and hid his identity from them. In order to learn about their affairs, he accused them of being spies. They said that they were brothers, all ten of them, and that one of them was missing, and that the youngest was with his father. Joseph kept Simeon as a hostage and had him bound, in order to compel the nine brothers to bring along their youngest brother, to prove they were not spies. (All this was not mentioned by the Qur'an.) Upon returning to their father, they took Benjamin and brought him to Egypt. Joseph's men placed Joseph's silver cup in Benjamin's sack and accused him of stealing. Benjamin's brothers defended him, and then Joseph revealed himself to them, sending them back to Canaan to bring their father to Egypt. So the brothers brought their father to

Egypt, and all of them stayed there. The Qur'an, however, says that Joseph imprisoned Benjamin, that Simeon remained in Egypt, and that Joseph's brothers returned to their father without these two. Thus the Qur'an says that Joseph's brothers came to Egypt four times instead of three, as we read in the Bible.

## 29. A Magical Shirt

**Question 41:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:93: "Go, take this shirt, and do you cast it on my father's face, and he shall recover his sight; then bring me your family all together."

سورة يوسف ١٢:٩٣ «اذْهَبُوا بِقَمِيصِي هَذَا فَأَلْقُوهُ عَلَىٰ وَجْهِ أَبِي يَأْتِ  
بَصِيرًا وَأْتُونِي بِأَهْلِكُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ».

Al-Suyuti, in his commentary *Al-Durr al-Manthur* (4:234, Beirut, no date) writes:

Gabriel enjoined Joseph to send his shirt, which had been Abraham's shirt. For when Abraham was stripped of his clothes and cast naked into the fire, Gabriel brought him a shirt woven of the silk of Paradise. The shirt was with Abraham from the time Gabriel had put it on him. When he died, Isaac inherited it, and when Isaac died Jacob inherited it. When Joseph grew up, Jacob put the shirt in a cylinder of silver, sealed up its top and put it on [or around] Joseph's neck, for Jacob feared that Joseph would otherwise be harmed by the evil eye. And when Joseph was cast naked into the well, Gabriel came and presented that shirt to him [took the shirt out] and put it on him. It came to pass that Gabriel came and ordered him to send this shirt to his father, because it had the scent of

Paradise. Whenever it touched anyone sick or afflicted, that person would recover instantly. So Joseph gave this shirt to his brothers and said, "Take this shirt of mine and lay it on my father's face." After doing so, his father's sight was restored.

But we ask: How can the physical inhabitants of the earth wear the spiritual clothes of the inhabitants of heaven? How can a shirt be accompanied by the working of miracles at the hands of those who inherited it, whoever they were and whatever they were like? Where is that shirt now? Don't we scoff at those who put amulets and charms on their children and beasts? How much more would we protest the suggestion that the prophets and honourable patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph had used amulets?

## 30. Pharaoh's Daughter or Pharaoh's Wife?

**Question 42:** We read in Sura al-Qasas 28:9: "Said Pharaoh's wife, 'He will be a comfort to me and thee. Slay him not; perchance he will profit us, or we will take him for a son.' And they were not aware."

سورة القصص ٢٨:٩ «وَقَالَتِ آفْرَاءُ فِرْعَوْنَ قُرَّةُ عَيْنٍ لِي وَلَكَ لَا تَقْتُلُوهُ  
عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنَا أَوْ نَتَّخِذَهُ وَلَدًا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ».

The Bible teaches us that it was Pharaoh's daughter, not his wife, who came down to the river to wash, for the Egyptians regarded the Nile as a god that could cleanse them of uncleanness. She saw the basket among the reeds, and found a baby in it crying. From that time on she adopted him as her son. So it was Pharaoh's daughter who adopted Moses, not

Pharaoh's wife. Moses said in Exodus 2:5-10 that it was Pharaoh's daughter, and he should know better than anyone else who had raised him!

### 31. Before Moses' Birth, Not After!

**Question 43:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:127: "Then said the Council of the people of Pharaoh, 'Wilt thou leave Moses and his people to work corruption in the land, and leave thee and thy gods?' Said he, 'We shall slaughter their sons and spare their women; surely we are triumphant over them!'"

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٢٧ «وَقَالَ الْمَلَأُ مِنْ قَوْمِ فِرْعَوْنَ أَتَدْرُؤُا مُوسَى وَقَوْمَهُ لِيُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَيَذُرَكَ وَالْهَتَكَ قَالَ سَنُقَتِّلُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَنَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّا فَوْقَهُمْ قَاهِرُونَ».

We also read in Sura al-Qasas 28:4-7: "Now Pharaoh had exalted himself in the land and had divided its inhabitants into sects, abasing one party of them, slaughtering their sons, and sparing their women; for he was of the workers of corruption. Yet We desired to be gracious to those that were abased in the land, and to make them leaders, and to make them the inheritors, and to establish them in the land, and to show Pharaoh and Haman, and their hosts, what they were dreading from them. So We revealed to Moses' mother, 'Suckle him, then, when thou fearest for him, cast him into the sea, and do not fear, neither sorrow, for We shall return him to thee, and shall appoint him one of the Envoys.'"

سورة القصص ٢٨:٤-٧ «إِن فِرْعَوْنَ عَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَجَعَلَ أَهْلَهَا شِيَعًا يَسْتَضِعُّ طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ يُذَبِّحُ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيِي نِسَاءَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ

الْمُفْسِدِينَ وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ وَنَمُكِّنْ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنُرِي فِرْعَوْنَ وَهَامَانَ وَجُنُودَهُمَا مِنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَحْذَرُونَ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَرْضِعِيهِ فَإِذَا خَفَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلَيْهِ فِي السَّيِّمِ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكِ وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ».

In Sura al-A'raf 7 we see that the Egyptians complained about Moses' behaviour, so Pharaoh commanded the Israelite children to be killed and their women to be spared. However, Sura al-Qasas 28 says that Pharaoh commanded the children to be slaughtered and the women to be spared before Moses was even born. But [according to the Bible] after Moses was born, his mother feared for him and hid him in a papyrus basket, which she placed among the reeds in the Nile. Then Pharaoh's daughter drew him out. It is obvious that the two Qur'anic verses are contradictory!

### 32. Moses' Dowry to His Wife

**Question 44:** We read in Sura al-Qasas 28:27: "He said, 'I desire to marry thee to one of these my two daughters, on condition that thou hirest thyself to me for eight years. If thou completest ten, that shall be of thy own accord; I do not desire to press hard upon thee. Thou shalt assuredly find me, if God wills, one of the righteous.'"

سورة القصص ٢٨:٢٧ «قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِي حَجَّاجٍ فَإِن كَمَّمْتَ كَمًّا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَمْسُقَ عَلَيْكَ سِتْرِي إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ».

It is a fact that Moses' father-in-law Jethro had seven

daughters, not two. He also gave one of his daughters to him in marriage without demanding of him eight or ten years of service. It is Jacob who served his father-in-law, though, for seven years only (Genesis 29:18).

### 33. Israel Did not Inherit Egypt!

**Question 45:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:128,129: "Said Moses to his people, 'Pray for succour to God, and be patient; surely the earth is God's and He bequeaths it to whom He will among His servants. The issue ultimate is to the godfearing.' They said, 'We have been hurt before thou camest to us, and after thou camest to us.' He said, 'Perchance your Lord will destroy your enemy, and will make you successors in the land, so that He may behold how you shall do.'"

سورة الأعراف ٧: ١٢٨ و١٢٩ «قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ اسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَصْبِرُوا  
إِنَّ الْأَرْضَ لِلَّهِ يُورِثُهَا مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ قَالُوا أَوْدَيْنَا مِنْ  
قَبْلِ أَنْ تَأْتِيَنَا وَمِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جِئْتَنَا قَالَ عَسَى رَبُّكُمْ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ عَدُوَّكُمْ  
وَيَسْتَخْلِفَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَيَنْظُرَ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "The issue ultimate is to the godfearing' is a promise of their victory and a reminder of His promise to destroy the Copts and give their houses to them as an inheritance. 'He said, "Perchance your Lord will destroy your enemy, and will make you successors in the land, so that He may behold how you shall do"' for, according to one interpretation, Egypt was one of the lands that was opened to them at the time of David, peace be upon him."

But we say: It is known by all that the Children of Israel inherited the land of Canaan, not the land of Egypt!

### 34. The Plagues of Egypt Were Ten, Not Nine!

**Question 46:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:101-104: "And We gave Moses nine signs, clear signs. Ask the Children of Israel when he came to them, and Pharaoh said to him, 'Moses, I think thou art bewitched.' He said, 'Indeed thou knowest that none sent these down, except the Lord of the heavens and the earth, as clear proofs; and, Pharaoh, I think thou art accursed,' He desired to startle them from the land; and We drowned him and those with him, all together. And We said to the Children of Israel after him, 'Dwell in the land.'"

سورة الإسراء ١٧: ١٠١-١٠٤ «وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى تِسْعَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ  
فَأَسْأَلَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ فَقَالَ لَهُ فِرْعَوْنُ إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَا مُوسَى  
مَسْحُورًا قَالَ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَا أَنْزَلَ هَؤُلَاءِ إِلَّا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ بِصَافِرٍ  
وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّكَ يَا فِرْعَوْنُ مَثْبُورًا فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَنْتَقِرَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ فَأَغْرَقْنَاهُ وَمَنْ  
مَعَهُ جَمِيعًا وَقُلْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ آسْكُنُوا الْأَرْضَ».

The Bible says that the plagues with which God inflicted the Egyptians were ten, not nine (Exodus 7-12). Moreover, contrary to the Qur'an's claim, the Children of Israel did not dwell in Egypt after the death of Pharaoh, but journeyed on their way to the land of Canaan. Pharaoh did not want them to leave Egypt at all but, in fact, wanted them to remain there as slaves.

### 35. A Rock Is Not a Well

**Question 47:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:60: "And when

Moses sought water for his people, so We said, 'Strike with thy staff the rock'; and there gushed forth from it twelve fountains; all the people knew now their drinking-place."

سورة البقرة ٢:٦٠ «وَإِذْ أَسْتَشْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ».

We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:160: "And We cut them up into twelve tribes, nations. And We revealed to Moses, when his people asked him for water: 'Strike with thy staff the rock'; and there gushed forth from it twelve fountains; all the people knew now their drinking-place."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٦٠ «وَقَطَعْنَا لَهُم مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِمْ اثْنَتَيْ عَشْرَةَ أَسْبَاطًا أُمَمًا وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ إِذِ اسْتَسْقَاهُ قَوْمُهُ أَنْ اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْبَجَسَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَّشْرِبَهُمْ».

The Holy Bible narrates clearly how the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness: "Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters. And they journeyed from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifth day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt" (Exodus 15:27-16:1). "Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, 'Give us water that we may drink.' And Moses said to them, 'Why do you

contend with me? Why do you tempt the Lord?' And the people thirsted there for water, and the people murmured against Moses, and said, 'Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried out to the Lord, saying, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!' And the Lord said to Moses, 'Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.' And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel" (Exodus 17:1-6).

As we see, there is a difference between the twelve wells of Elim and the rock of Horeb!

### 36. The Two Tablets of the Law

**Question 48:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:145: "And We wrote for him on the Tablets of everything an admonition, and a distinguishing [Arabic: particularisation] of everything."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٤٥ «وَكُتِبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَابِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَّوْعِظَةٌ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ».

It is common knowledge that Moses wrote only the summary of the Law on two tablets! On these two tablets were written the Ten Commandments only, not everything in detail as Muhammad thought (see Exodus 31:18).

### 37. Did They Ask to See God?

**Question 49:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:55,56: "And when you said, 'Moses, we will not believe thee till we see God openly'; and the thunderbolt took you while you were beholding. Then We raised you up after you were dead, that haply you should be thankful."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٥٥ و ٥٦ «وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَى لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى نَرَى اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ».

The same point is reiterated in Sura al-Nisa' 4:153: "The People of the Book will ask thee to bring down upon them a Book from heaven; and they asked Moses for greater than that, for they said, 'Show us God openly.' And the thunderbolt took them for their evildoing."

سورة النساء ٤: ١٥٣ «يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنْ السَّمَاءِ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ».

The Bible teaches us that, when the Children of Israel witnessed the thunder, lightening and the blast of the trumpet, they feared greatly and "said to Moses, 'You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die'" (Exodus 20:19). But the Qur'an reversed the order in this incident, claiming that the Children of Israel asked first to see God; then He killed them by a thunderbolt, after which He brought them back to life. Perhaps the motive for mentioning such an affair in

this specific manner was to intimidate the Arabs who asked Muhammad to bring down to them a Book from heaven!

### 38. Korah, Not Qarun!

**Question 50:** We read in Sura al-Qasas 28:76,81: "Now Korah [Arabic: *Qarun*] was of the people of Moses; he became insolent to them, for We had given him treasures such that the very keys of them were too heavy a burden for a company of men endowed with strength.... So We made the earth to swallow him and his dwelling and there was no host to help him, apart from God, and he was helpless."

سورة القصص ٢٨: ٧٦ و ٨١ «إِنَّ قَارُونَ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمِ مُوسَى فَبَغَى عَلَيْهِمْ... فَخَسَفْنَا بِهِ وَبِدَارِهِ الْأَرْضَ فَمَا كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ فِئَةٍ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُنتَصِرِينَ».

This Qarun of the Arabic Qur'an is none other than King Croesus of Lydia (ca. 560-546 B.C.), who symbolises wealth among the Arabs as well as among other peoples. This fact is evidenced by the somewhat elaborate, yet concise, description of his riches, and the mention of the word *host* (army) which only a king can resort to in the face of disaster. He is not to be confused with Korah of the Bible. In fact, the Qur'an confused these two men, and thus is mistaken in claiming that Croesus was swallowed up by the earth. The truth is that Korah, Dathan and Abiram (all of whom were Israelites) rebelled against Moses and nearly succeeded in overthrowing him. But the earth opened up and swallowed them (Numbers 16).



### 39. Solomon or Absalom?

**Question 51:** We read in Sura al-Anbiya' 21:78,79: "And David and Solomon – when they gave judgement concerning the tillage, when the sheep of the people strayed there, and We bore witness to their judgement; and We made Solomon to understand it, and unto each gave We judgement and knowledge. And with David We subjected the mountains to give glory, and the birds, and We were doers."

سورة الأنبياء ٢١:٧٨ و ٧٩ «وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَخْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ نَفِثَتْ فِيهِ عَنَمَ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ وَكَلَّمْنَا آتِينَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَسَخَّرْنَا مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ».

Ibn 'Abbas said:

Two men went to see David; one of them was a farmer, the other a shepherd. The shepherd said, "The sheep of this man entered my field by night, grazed on it, and utterly destroyed it so that nothing of it was left." So the shepherd gave the farmer the sheep in place of the grass. After going out, they passed by Solomon, who said, "How did he judge between you two?" They told him. So Solomon said, "Had I seen your case, I would have given a judgement other than this." [Some have it that he said, "A more lenient judgement to the two parties other than this".] David was told about it, so he called Solomon and inquired of him about the judgement that is more lenient to the two parties, to which Solomon answered, "I would have given the sheep to the farmer to make use of their milk, young, wool and other benefits; meanwhile the shepherd would till the

land for the farmer. So when the tillage would become as good as it was on the day it was eaten, it would be given back to its owner, and the owner of the sheep would take his sheep back." David said, "You have judged fairly." Solomon was eleven years old when he gave that judgement.

It is inconceivable that Solomon would have followed up his father's judgements – his father being a well-trained and experienced man. Besides, he was a man to whom God had given divine inspiration. How could it be that he would fall short in judging a case, and consent to changing his decision before his subjects? The Qur'an confused Solomon with Absalom. 2 Samuel 15:1-6 states that when Absalom was plotting an overthrow of his father's kingdom, he attracted the men of Israel by saying, "Oh, that I were made a judge in the land, and everyone who has any suit or cause would come to me; then I would give him justice." He would also kiss and flatter the two quarrelling parties. In this way he won the hearts of the people who rebelled against his father.

### 40. Hagar or the Virgin Mary?

**Question 52:** We read in Sura Maryam 19:22-26: "So she conceived him, and withdrew with him to a distant place. And the birth pains surprised her by the trunk of the palm-tree. She said, 'Would I had died ere this, and become a thing forgotten!' But the one that was below her called to her, 'Nay, do not sorrow; see, thy Lord has set before thee a rivulet. Shake also to thee the palm-trunk, and there shall come tumbling upon thee dates fresh and ripe. Eat therefore, and drink, and be comforted; and if thou

shouldst see any mortal, say, "I have vowed to the All-merciful a fast, and today I will not speak to any man."'''

سورة مريم ١٩: ٢٢-٢٦ ﴿فَحَمَلَتْهُ فَاتَّبَعَتْ بِهِ مَكَانًا قَصِيًّا فَأَجَاءَهَا أَنفَاصٌ إِلَى جَذَعِ النَّخْلَةِ قَالَتْ يَا لَيْتَنِي مِتُّ قَبْلَ هَذَا وَكُنْتُ نَسِيًّا فَنَادَاهَا مِنْ تَحْتِهَا أَلَا تَحْزَنِي قَدْ جَعَلَ رَبُّكِ تَحْتَكِ سَرِيًّا وَهُزِّي إِلَيْكِ بِجِذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رَطْبًا حَبِيًّا فَكُلِي وَاشْرَبِي وَقَرِّي عَيْنًا فَإِمَّا تَرِينُ مِنَ النَّبَشِ أَحَدًا فَقُولِي إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لِلرَّحْمَانِ صَوْمًا فَلَنْ أُكَلِّمَ الْيَوْمَ إِنْسِيًّا﴾.

The Qur'an here has apparently confused Hagar, Ishmael's mother, with the Virgin Mary. It was Hagar who escaped to the wilderness with Ishmael, and there God miraculously provided her with a spring of water to drink when she and her son were about to perish of thirst. As for the Virgin Mary, she neither escaped to the wilderness, nor was she in need of water to drink, nor was she by any palm tree!

#### 41. No Table Came Down from Heaven

**Question 53:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:112-115: "And when the Apostles said, 'O Jesus son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down on us a Table out of heaven?' He said, 'Fear you God, if you are believers.' They said, 'We desire that we should eat of it and our hearts be at rest; and that we may know that thou hast spoken true to us, and that we may be among its witnesses.' Said Jesus son of Mary, 'O God, our Lord, send down upon us a Table out of heaven, that shall be for us a festival, the first and last of us, and a sign from Thee. And provide for us; Thou art the best of providers.' God said, 'Verily I do send it down on you;

whoso of you hereafter disbelieves, verily I shall chastise him with a chastisement wherewith I chastise no other being.'"

سورة المائدة ٥: ١١٢-١١٥ ﴿إِذْ قَالَ الْخَوَارِجُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ وَارْزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنزِّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدَ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾.

The Bible does not say that the disciples of Christ asked Him for a sign from heaven, neither does it say that a table actually came down from heaven upon them! The fact is that, when the multitudes saw the dazzling miracles of Jesus, a great multitude followed Him to the sea of Galilee. There was a lad who had five barley loaves and two fish. So Jesus took them and gave thanks, and more than 5,000 people ate of it. When the disciples gathered the remaining fragments, they filled twelve baskets (John 6:1-15). Perhaps the Qur'anic story of the table brought down miraculously from heaven arose from a misunderstanding of other biblical writings. Among these are Matthew 26:20-29, Mark 14:17-25, Luke 22:14-30, and John 13:1-30, where the account of the Lord's Supper is given, which Christ instituted as a remembrance of His crucifixion. Also in Luke 22:30 there is reference to another table of Christ: "That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

## 42. The Inhabitants of the City

**Question 54:** We read in Sura Ya Sin 36:13-29: "Strike for them a similitude – the inhabitants of the city, when the Envoys came to it; when We sent unto them two men, but they cried them lies, so We sent a third as reinforcement. They said, 'We are assuredly Envoys unto you.'..." [read until verse 29].

سورة يس ٣٦:١٣-٢٩ وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا أَصْحَابَ الْقَرْيَةِ إِذْ جَاءَهَا الْمُرْسَلُونَ إِذْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمُ اثْنَيْنِ فَكَذَّبُوهُمَا فَعَزَّزْنَا بِثَالِثٍ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا إِلَيْكُم مُّرْسَلُونَ قَالُوا مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِثْلُنَا وَمَا أَنْزَلَ الرَّحْمَانُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا تَكْذِبُونَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا يَعْلَمُ إِنَّا إِلَيْكُم لَمُرْسَلُونَ وَمَا عَلَيْنَا مِنَ الْبَلَاغِ الْمُبِينِ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَطَّيْرُهَا بِكُمْ لَئِنْ لَمْ نَنْتَهُوا لَنَرْجُمَنَّكُمْ وَلَيَمَسَّنَّكُم مِّنَّا عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ قَالُوا طَائِفُكُمْ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ ذُكْرُكُمْ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ قَوْمٌ مُّسْرِفُونَ وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَقْصَى الْمَدِينَةِ رَجُلٌ يَسْعَى قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اتَّبِعُوا الْمُرْسَلِينَ اتَّبِعُوا مَن لَّا يَسْأَلْكُمْ أَجْرًا وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ أَأَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً إِنْ يُرِيدِ الْرَّحْمَانُ بِضُرٍّ لَّا تُغْنِي عَنِّي شَفَاعَتُهُمْ شَيْئاً وَلَا يُتَّقَدُونَ إِنِّي إِذَا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ إِنِّي آمَنْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ فَاسْمِعُونِ قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ قَالَ يَا لَيْتَ قَوْمِي يَعْلَمُونَ بِمَا غَفَرَ لِي رَبِّي وَجَعَلَنِي مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِينَ وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى قَوْمِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ مِنْ جُنْدٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا كُنَّا مُنْزِلِينَ إِنْ كَانَتْ إِلَّا صَيْحَةً وَاحِدَةً فَإِذَا هُمْ خَامِدُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said:

The city is Antioch. The envoys are the apostles of Jesus, peace be upon him. The two men were John [the Baptist] and Jonah, or others. The third one is Simeon. They were sent there, for the inhabitants of the city were

idol-worshippers. On approaching the city, they saw Habib the carpenter tending sheep. He asked them questions, and they answered him. So he said, 'Do you have a sign?' They said, 'We heal the sick, restore the sight to the blind, and cure the leper.' He had a sick child; they anointed him, and he recovered. Habib believed, and the news was spread abroad. Many were healed just by hearing it. Their story reached the king, who said, 'Is there another God other than our gods?' They said, 'The one who has brought you and your gods into existence.' He said, 'Tarry till I have considered your matter,' and put them in prison. Then Jesus sent Simeon, who disguised himself and mingled with the king's retinue, so that they enjoyed his company and brought him to the king, who liked his company also. Simeon said to the king one day, 'I learned that you imprisoned two men. Have you heard what they had to say?' The king said, 'No,' and called for them. Simeon asked them, 'Who has sent you?' They said, 'God who created everything.' He said, 'Describe Him for me briefly.' They said, 'He does whatever He wills and rules over whatever He wants to rule.' He said, 'What is your sign?' They said, 'Whatever the king wishes.' So he called for a boy born blind. They called unto God, and the boy began to see. They also took two hazelnuts, put them into his eye sockets, and they were turned into eye-balls. Simeon said [to the king], 'You see, if you ask your god to do [a miracle] such as this, both you and he will have honour.' The king said, 'I shall hide no secrets from you. Our god neither hears nor sees, neither harms nor profits. If your God can bring a dead man back to life, we will believe in Him.'

Therefore, they called for a lad who had died seven days before, and raised him from the dead, who [namely, the lad] said, 'I have been brought through six valleys of fire. I warn you of what you are at; believe!' And he also said, 'The gates of heaven were opened and I saw a beautiful youth interceding for these three men.' The king said, 'Which three?' He answered, 'Simeon and these two.' So when Simeon saw that his words affected the king, he began to admonish him, so that he confessed his belief in public. Those, as many as did not believe, were destroyed at the shout of Gabriel."

Al-Baidawi added, "The man who came from the further part of the city, running, [mentioned in v. 20] is Habib the carpenter, who used to carve their idols, and later believed in Muhammad, 600 years being between them. It was said that he was worshipping in a cave and went out to reveal his religion to the apostles when he heard of them."

As for Antioch, it was under Roman rule at the time, and had no national king, as the Qur'an claimed. Al-Baidawi says that Habib, who was a carpenter and idol-maker, believed in Muhammad. Is it logical at all that he should believe in someone who came 600 years after his time?

### 43. Hud and 'Ad?

**Question 55:** We read in Sura Hud 11:50-59: "And to 'Ad, [we sent] their brother Hud; he said, 'O my people, serve God! Ye have no god other than He; you are but forgers.' ... And when our command came, We delivered Hud and those who believed with

him by a mercy from Us, and delivered them from a harsh chastisement."

سورة هود ١١: ٥٠-٥٩ «وَالْيَ عَادِ (أرسلنا) أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ  
أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا مُفْتَرُونَ... وَمَا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا بِجِنَّتِنَا  
هُودًا وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنَّا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابٍ غَلِيظٍ».

We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:65-72: "And to 'Ad, [we sent] their brother Hud; he said, 'O my people, serve God! You have no god other than He; will you not be godfearing?' Said the Council of the unbelievers of his people, 'We see thee in folly, and we think that thou art one of the liars.' Said he, 'My people, there is no folly in me; but I am a Messenger from the Lord of all Being. I deliver to you the Messages of my Lord; I am your adviser sincere, faithful. What, do you wonder that a reminder from your Lord should come to you by the lips of a man from among you? That he may warn you; and remember when He appointed you as successors after the people of Noah, and increased you in stature broadly; remember God's bounties; haply you will prosper.'"

سورة الأعراف ٧: ٦٥-٧٢ «وَالْيَ عَادِ (أرسلنا) أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ  
أَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ قَالَ آلُ الْعَادِ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ  
إِنَّا لَنَرَاكَ فِي سَفَاهَةٍ وَإِنَّا لَنَظُنُّكَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ لَيْسَ بِي سَفَاهَةٌ  
وَلَكِنِّي رَسُولٌ مِنْ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَبْلَغُكُمْ رَسُولَاتِ رَبِّي وَأَنَا لَكُمْ نَاصِحٌ أَمِينٌ  
أَوْعَجِبْتُمْ أَنْ جَاءَكُمْ ذِكْرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَلَى رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ لِيُنذِرَكُمْ وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ  
جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَزَادَكُمْ فِي الْخَلْقِ بَسْطَةً فَاذْكُرُوا آيَةَ اللَّهِ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ قَالُوا أَجِئْتَنَا لِنَعْبُدَ اللَّهَ وَحْدَهُ وَنَذَرَ مَا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأْتِنَا بِمَا  
تَعِدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ قَالَ قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ رِجْسٌ وَغَضَبٌ

أَجَادِلُونِي فِي أَسْمَاءِ سَمَّيْتُمُوهَا أَنْتُمْ وَأَبَاؤُكُمْ مَا نَزَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهَا مِنْ سُلْطَانٍ  
فَانْتَظِرُوا إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُنْتَظِرِينَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنَّا وَقَطَعْنَا دَابِرَ  
الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا وَمَا كَانُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ.

Al-Baidawi said in explanation of the previous verses:

Hud is the son of 'Abdallah, the son of Rabah, the son of al-Khalud, the son of 'Ad, the son of 'Uss, the son of Iram, the son of Sam [Shem], the son of Nuh [Noah]. Others claim that he was Matusalah [Methuselah], the son of Arfakhshad [Arphaxad], the son of Sam, the cousin of 'Ad's father.... The people of 'Ad were worshipping idols until God sent them Hud, whom they disbelieved. They even became worse, for which God held back rain until they were very weary. Then God formed three clouds, white, red and black. And one called out from heaven to their leader Qutail Ibn 'Athr: "O Qutail, choose a cloud for yourself and your people." He chose the black one because it was filled with water. It came out to 'Ad on Mount Mughith, which cheered them up. They said, "This is to the detriment of the One who pours out the rain!" A harsh wind struck them dead, whereas Hud along with his fellow believers survived it. Finally they came to Mecca and worshipped God therein till they died.

We say: The Torah does not tell us about a prophet whom God raised during the time between Noah and Abraham, neither does it mention a man named 'Ad among the offspring of Noah. Actually the only time it mentions a three-year cessation of rain as punishment was in the days of the prophet Elijah.

#### 44. The Story of Dhu al-Kifl

**Question 56:** We read in Sura al-Anbiya' 21:85: "And Ishmael, Idris, Dhul Kifl – each was of the patient, and We admitted them into Our mercy; they were of the righteous."

سورة الأنبياء ٢١: ٨٥ «وآتيناهم... إسماعيلَ وإدريسَ وذَا الْكِفْلِ كُلِّ مِنْ  
الضَّالِّينَ».

We read in Sura Sad 38:48: "Remember also Our servants Ishmael, Elisha, and Dhu al-Kifl; each is among the excellent."

سورة ص ٣٨: ٤٨ «وَأَذْكُرْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَالْيَسَعَ وَذَا الْكِفْلِ وَكُلِّ مِنْ  
الْأَخْيَارِ».

Al-Baidawi said in explanation of Sura Sad 38: "Dhu al-Kifl is the cousin of Yasa' or Bishr, the son of Job. Opinions are not agreed as to whether he was a prophet, neither are they agreed as to his true title. Some claim that a hundred prophets of Israel fled from slaughter to him, and that he gave them residence and took charge of them [Arabic: *kafalahum*]. Others claim he took charge of a man who did good and prayed a hundred prayers every day."

Al-Baidawi said in explanation of the verse in Sura al-Anbiya': "Dhu al-Kifl is Elias, or, according to others, Joshua. Others claimed that he was Zechariah and that he was called thus on account of a privilege God gave him, or because he took charge of his people [*kafala*]."

In his commentary (on Sura al-Isra' 17:74) al-Tabari said that Dhu al-Kifl is identified as a prophet of Israel. His story goes after

this manner: God revealed to a certain king that he was going to die, and said to him, "Offer your kingship to the Children of Israel; whoever pledges to pray the whole night without ceasing, fast the whole day without breaking the fast, and judge among the people without growing angry, to him you shall give your kingdom. The king did as God said. A young man stood up and said, "I pledge to do this for you." The young man was as good as his word. God extolled him and made him a prophet, and he was named Dhu al-Kifl.

The Torah, however, does not make any reference, whether direct or indirect, to a person called Dhu al-Kifl. But it says that Obadiah, the minister of King Ahab, sustained a hundred prophets, and that he feared the Lord greatly. He hid these hundred prophets when Queen Jezebel sought to have the prophets of the Lord killed (1 Kings 18:1-16).

#### 45. The Men of Al-Rass

**Question 57:** We read in Sura al-Furqan 25:38: "And 'Ad, and Thamud, and the men of al-Rass, and between that generations a many."

سورة الفرقان ٣٨:٢٥ «وَعَادًا وَثَمُودَ وَأَصْحَابَ آلِ رَسٍّ وَقُرُونًا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرًا».

Al-Baidawi said:

The men of al-Rass were a group of people that worshipped idols. God sent Shu'aib to them, but they did not believe him. Then while they were gathered around al-Rass [*i.e.*, "the uncovered well"], it collapsed, and the ground swallowed them and their houses. It was also said

that al-Rass was a village in the direction of al-Yamama, in which lived the remainder of Thamud. A prophet was sent to them, but they killed him and perished for it. Others said it was the pit, which Zar'a Ibn Ka'b, a Jewish king of Yemen, had dug and filled with fire, and into which he threw all the Christians who did not convert to Judaism. And yet, others claimed it was a well in Antioch, in which Habib the carpenter was killed. Another opinion is that they are the men of Hanzala Ibn Safwan the prophet, whom God afflicted with a giant bird adomed with all colors. They called the bird al-'Anqa' [*i.e.*, "phoenix"]. It used to dwell in their mountain, which was called Fatakh or Damakh, and swoop down on their young men and carry them away when it was hungry. So it happened that Hanzala cursed it, and it was struck by a thunderbolt. The people, however, killed him and were utterly destroyed. Some said they were a group of people who disbelieved their prophet and buried him in the well.

But we ask: What is this al-Rass? In which country was it? At what time? Why didn't the Qur'an give us these details, if it really existed at all?

#### 46. Even Luqman Is a Prophet

**Question 58:** We read in Sura Luqman 31:12,13: "Indeed, We gave Luqman wisdom: 'Give thanks to God. Whosoever gives thanks only for his own soul's good, and whosoever is ungrateful – surely God is All-sufficient, All-laudable.' And when Luqman said to his son, admonishing him, 'O my son, do not associate

others with God; to associate others with God is a mighty wrong.’”

سورة لقمان ١٢:٣١ و١٣ «وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا لُقْمَانَ الْحِكْمَةَ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِلَّهِ وَمَنْ يَشْكُرْ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, “He is Luqman Ibn Ba’ura‘ of the children of Azar, Job’s nephew. He lived so long that he reached David, peace be upon him, and received knowledge from him. He gave judicial opinions to people before he was appointed a prophet.”

How can this Luqman be a prophet? How can al-Baidawi consider Luqman to be a contemporary of David when there are about 900 years between the two? What a great distance also it is between the land of Uz, where Job lived, and Israel, where David lived!

#### 47. Alexander the Great – a Prophet!

**Question 59:** We read in Sura al-Kahf 18:83-88: “They will question thee concerning Dhu al-Qarnain. Say: ‘I will recite to you a mention of him.’ We established him in the land, and We gave him a way to everything; and he followed a way until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring, and he found nearby a people. We said, ‘O Dhu al-Qarnain, either thou shalt chastise them, or thou shalt take towards them a way of kindness.’ He said, ‘As for the evildoer, him we shall chastise, then he shall be returned to his Lord and He shall chastise him with a horrible chastisement.’”

سورة الكهف ٨٣:١٨-٨٨ «وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنْ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا إِنَّا مَكْنُأُ لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَآتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبِيلاً فَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلًا حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَجْرِبُ فِي عَيْنِ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا قُلْنَا يَا ذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّا أَنْ تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نَعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَى رَبِّهِ فَيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُكَرًا».

Ibn Hisham said:

Dhu al-Qarnain is Alexander, the Greek, the king of Persia and Greece, or the king of the east and the west, for because of this he was called Dhu al-Qarnain [meaning, “owner of two horns”], or because he went about the two horns of the earth, east and west. Others claim that [he was thus called] because he had lived for two centuries or generations [Arabic: “horns”]. Yet others hold that he had two horns, meaning two plaits, or that his crown had two horns. Perhaps he was thus called by reason of his courage, since a courageous person is referred to as a ram, as if he butts his enemies. Opinions are not unanimous about his being a prophet, but all opinions are agreed on his being righteous and a believer.

But we ask: How could the Qur’an make of the pagan king, Alexander the Great, a prophet who spoke to God and received an oracle from Him? How could the Qur’an say that he visited a spring in which the sun set? If he really lived for two generations, as al-Baidawi said, the people of those times must have had short lives! All this, however, is baseless talk, since Alexander died at the age of thirty three in the city of Babylon in 323 B.C. How could he be a prophet or even a believer when in fact he was an idol-worshipper and, moreover, claimed he was the son

of Amon, the sun-god? Apart from this, if the sun sets in a spring, does it revolve round the earth or vice versa? As for the dam he built of iron and molten brass between two mountains – one of which was inhabited by a righteous nation, and the other by a savage one – we find no archaeological evidence to support this. (See our comments to Question 1.)

#### 48. The Ka'ba – the Station of Abraham?

**Question 60:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:96,97: “The first house established for the people was at Bakka [a variant of Mecca], a place holy, and a guidance to all beings. Therein are clear signs – the station of Abraham, and whosoever enters it is in security. It is the duty of all men towards God to come to the House a pilgrim, if he is able to make his way there.”

سورة آل عمران ٩٦:٣ و ٩٧ «إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ  
(مكة) مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ  
أَمِنًا وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا».

We know that the heathen built the Ka'ba for the worship of Saturn and other gods. The Arabs used it as a destination of pilgrimage to venerate their gods. Our proof for this fact is the idols which Muhammad had to smash when he overcame the people of Quraish. It is common knowledge that Abraham lived in the land of Canaan and did not set foot on the Arabian peninsula. It is a gross error to say that the Ka'ba was the house of God or the station of Abraham. How could the house of idols be identified as the house of God? What relationship is there between a Hebrew and the Arabs? How could a Hebrew who lived in Canaan be a resident of the Hijaz?

#### 49. Job's Wife

**Question 61:** We read in Sura Sad 38:44: “‘Take in thy hand a bundle of rushes, and strike therewith; and do not fail in thy oath.’ Surely we found him a steadfast man. How excellent a servant he was! He was a penitent.”

سورة ص ٤٤:٣٨ «وَاخُذْ بِيَدِكَ ضِغْتًا فَاضْرِبْ بِهِ وَلَا تَحْنُثْ إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ  
صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, “Leah, Job's wife, or according to others, Rahma, the daughter of Ephraim, the son of Joseph, went on an errand and was delayed; therefore Job took an oath to strike her a hundred lashes when he recovered. God expiated his oath by telling him to take a bundle of rushes with a hundred stalks and strike her once, so that he would not fail in his oath. This is a remaining sanction in legal Islamic punishment.”

But we ask: How could the pious and patient Job, who endured the loss of children, servants and cattle, get angry with his wife? Such would not be in line with what we know to be true about his character. The Bible bears witness to his kindness and forbearance, especially with his wife. Wasn't it he who said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?” (Job 2:10). How could it possibly befit Job to vow to beat his wife a hundred lashes for merely delaying? Would God really solve the dilemma of Job's failure to fulfil his oath by advising him to take a bundle of rushes with a hundred stalks and strike her once? How could Job marry Joseph's granddaughter? Job was a predecessor of both Joseph and Jacob. This story is one of the many Jewish fables told in the Qur'an as truth.



## 50. Pharaoh Built the Tower of Babel in Egypt?

**Question 62:** We read in Sura al-Qasas 28:38: "And Pharaoh said, 'Council, I know not that you have any god but me. Kindle me, Haman, a fire upon the clay, and make me a tower, that I mount up to Moses' god; for I think that he is one of the liars.'"

سورة القصص ٢٨:٣٨ «وَقَالَ فِرْعَوْنُ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ مَا عَلِمْتُ لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرِي فَأَوْقِدْ لِي يَا هَامَانَ عَلَى الطِّينِ فَأَجْعَلْ لِي صَرْحًا لَعَلِّي أَطَّلِعُ إِلَى إِلَهِ مُوسَى وَإِنِّي لَأَظُنُّهُ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ».

This tower that was built by the descendants of Adam, which was made of baked bricks, is the Tower of Babel in Chaldea. It was built after the Flood (Genesis 11:1-9). So it could not be that Pharaoh ordered the building of the tower! Apart from this, the tower was not built in Egypt. Another mistake is the confusion of Pharaoh's minister with the Persian minister Haman. The Tower of Babel was built many centuries before Moses and Pharaoh. This makes three chronological errors in one single passage!

## 51. A Flood upon the Egyptians?

**Question 63:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:133: "So We let loose upon them the flood and the locusts, the lice and the frogs, the blood, distinct signs; but they waxed proud and were a sinful people."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٣٣ «فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الطُّوفَانَ وَالْجَرَادَ وَالْقُمَّلَ وَالضَّفَادِعَ وَالْدَّمَ آيَاتٍ مُفْضَلَاتٍ فَاسْتَكْبَرُوا وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُجْرِمِينَ».

The plagues God sent upon Egypt were ten: blood (Exodus 7:20), frogs (Exodus 8:6), gnats (Exodus 8:17), flies (Exodus

7:24), death of livestock (Exodus 9:6), boils (Exodus 9:10), hail (Exodus 9:23), locusts (Exodus 10:14), darkness (Exodus 10:23), and death of the firstborn (Exodus 12:29,30).

As for the flood mentioned in Sura al-A'raf, there was no such event that happened in Egypt during the time of Pharaoh. What the Qur'an is confusing here is the global deluge that occurred during the days of Noah, as it is expressed in Sura al-A'raf 7:63,64 [see also Genesis 6-9].

## 52. King Saul or Gideon the Judge?

**Question 64:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:247-251: "Then their Prophet said to them, 'Verily God has raised up Saul [Arabic: *Taluf*] for you as king.' They said, 'How should he be king over us who have better right than he to kingship, seeing he has not been given amplitude of wealth?' He said, 'God has chosen him over you, and has increased him broadly in knowledge and body. God gives the kingship to whom He will; and God is All-embracing, All-knowing.'... And when Saul went forth with the hosts he said, 'God will try you with a river; whosoever drinks of it is not of me, and whoso tastes it not, he is of me, saving him who scoops up with his hand.' But they drank of it, except a few of them; and when he crossed it, and those who believed with him, they said, 'We have no power today against Goliath and his hosts.' Said those who reckoned they should meet God, 'How often a little company has overcome a numerous company, by God's leave! And God is with the patient.' So, when they went forth against Goliath and his hosts, they said, 'Our Lord, pour out upon us patience, and make firm our feet, and give us aid against the people of the unbelievers!' And they routed them, by the leave of

God, and David slew Goliath; and God gave him the kingship, and Wisdom, and He taught him such as He willed.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٤٧-٢٥١ «وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلِكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمَلِكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمَلِكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يَأْتِ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ آصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَلَكَةً مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ. وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَن شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَن لَّمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُم مُّلاَقَرُ اللَّهِ كَمْ مِنْ فَتَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فَتَةً كَبِيرَةً يَا ذَنِي اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ. وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ فَهَزَمُوهُمْ يَا ذَنِي اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُدُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ».

The true account of this incident is to be found in two different places in the Old Testament. The first is the book of 1 Samuel, where Samuel anoints Saul, whom the Qur'an calls Talut, as king over the Children of Israel. It was in his days that David fought Goliath and killed him. Thereby God granted victory to the Israelites. The other place is Judges 7, where we read about Gideon and the testing of his army when they were about to fight the Midianites. But due to lack of knowledge, the author of the Qur'an confused Saul with Gideon, as well as the circumstances of the two wars. Thus the Qur'an considered the war with the

Philistines the same as that with the Midianites, though the two events are far apart!

### 53. Jesus Speaks from the Cradle

**Question 65:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:46: “He shall speak to men in the cradle, and of [middle] age, and righteous he shall be.”

سورة آل عمران ٣: ٤٦ «وَنُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ».

We read also in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:110: “When God said, ‘Jesus son of Mary, remember My blessing upon thee and upon thy mother, when I confirmed thee with the Holy Spirit, to speak to men in the cradle, and of [middle] age.’”

سورة المائدة ٥: ١١٠ «إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ادْكُرِي بِعَمَّتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا».

Sura Maryam 19:29 says: “Mary pointed to the child then; but they said, ‘How shall we speak to one who is still in the cradle, a little child?’”

سورة مريم ١٩: ٢٩ «فَأَشَارَتْ إِلَيْهِ قَالُوا كَيْفَ نُكَلِّمُ مَنْ كَانَ فِي الْمَهْدِ صَبِيًّا؟».

The Bible says that when Jesus came in the flesh He matured naturally in body, intellect and thought. The Gospel according to Luke 2:52 asserts this fact: “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favour with God and men.” Christ never spoke from the cradle!

### 54. Jesus Makes Birds of Clay

**Question 66:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:110: "And when thou createst out of clay, by My leave, as the likeness of a bird, and thou breathest into it, and it is a bird, by my leave."

سورة المائدة ٥: ١١٠ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي.

The same is claimed in Sura Al Imran 3:49: "I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. I will create for you out of clay as the likeness of a bird; then I will breathe into it, and it will be a bird, by the leave of God."

سورة آل عمران ٣: ٤٩ «قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ».

Al-Tabari (7:127) says that Christ created birds out of clay when He was a child. Christians, on the other hand, believe He is the Word of God and that "all things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3). Yet, they believe that after He was born He waited 30 years before starting to preach and work miracles (Luke 3:23). The Bible affirms, definitely, that the first miracle He worked was at Cana in Galilee when He turned water into wine (John 2:11).

### 55. A Denial of the Crucifixion!

**Question 67:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:157-158: "And for their saying, 'We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God' – yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them. Those who are at

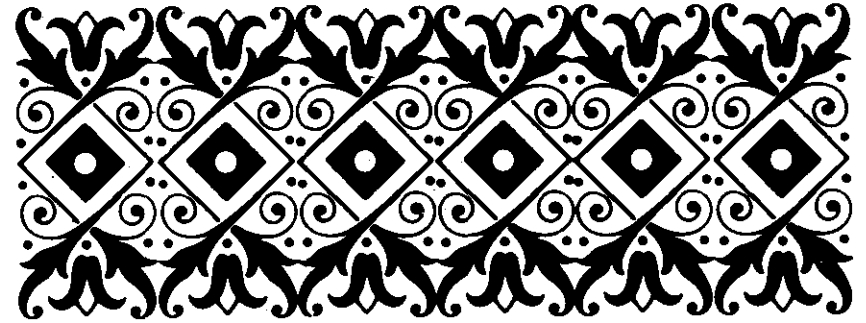
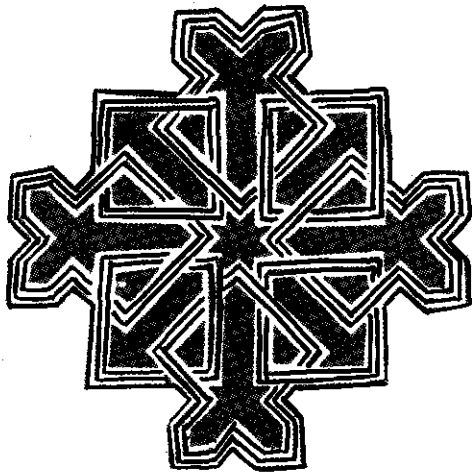
variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise; and they slew him not, of a certainty – no indeed; God raised him up to Him; God is All-mighty, All-wise."

سورة النساء ٤: ١٥٧-١٥٨ «وَقَوْلِهِمْ (اليهود) إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا».

Why does the Qur'an deny the crucifixion and death of Christ at the hands of the Jews, even though the Jews confess it and the Christians confirm it and rejoice in it? The Gospel is the good news of Christ's crucifixion and redemption of mankind. There are dozens of verses in the Qur'an signifying that the Qur'an came to confirm the Torah and the Injil of both Jews and Christians. Likewise, the Qur'an mentions Christ's death, resurrection and ascension to heaven in many other places; for example Sura Al Imran 3:55: "When God said, 'Jesus, I will take thee to Me [Arabic: *mutawaffika*, which means "cause you to die"]]' also Sura al-Ma'ida 5:117, where Christ says, "But when Thou didst take me to Thyself [Arabic: *tawaffaytani*, which means "caused me to die"], Thou wast Thyself the watcher over them." Christ also says in Sura Maryam 19:33, "Peace be upon me, the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised up alive!"

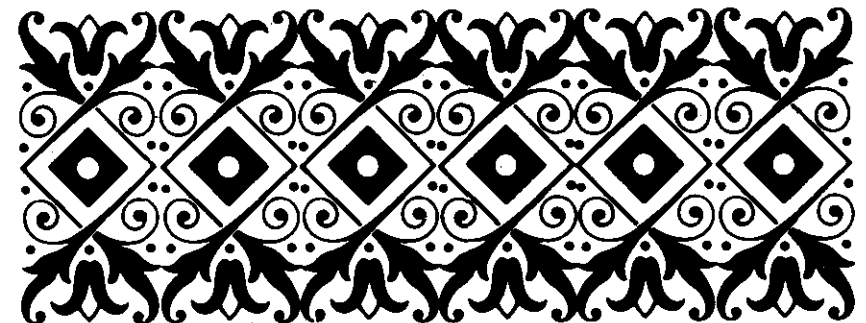
Isn't it strange that Christ's crucifixion would be denied by someone who lived 600 years after it occurred? The crucifixion of Christ is an historical fact recorded by Romans, Greeks, Jews

and Christians. At the Council of Nicaea, which was held in A.D. 325, the bishops of all Christendom made a creed confessing the crucifixion of Christ for our salvation. This creed is recited today by countless Christians throughout the world! Ancient artefacts of Christians from all over the world carry the sign of the cross. How then can anyone deny the historicity of Christ's crucifixion?



## *Part Three*

### *Ethical Questions*



## 1. Legalising the Denial of God

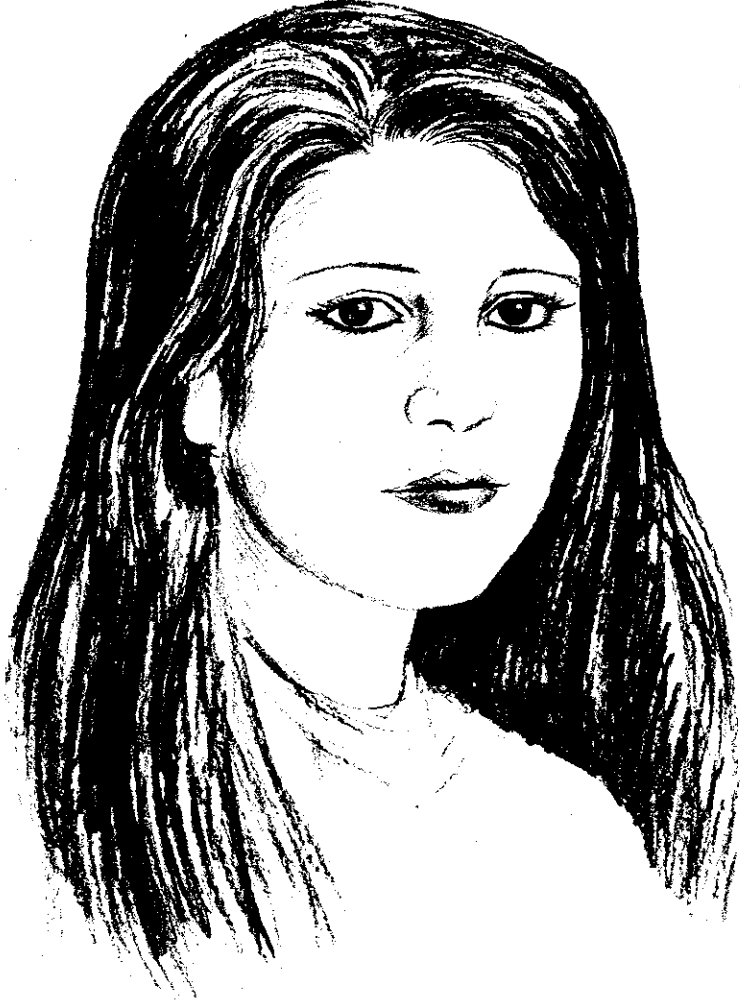
**Question 68:** We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:106: "Whoso disbelieves in God, after he has believed – excepting him who has been compelled, and his heart is still at rest in his belief – but whosoever's heart is expanded in unbelief, upon them shall rest anger from God, and there awaits them a mighty chastisement."

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠٦ «مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ».

Al-Tabari explained this verse as follows:

It has been reported that the Quraish compelled 'Ammar, his father Yasir, and his mother Sumayya to renounce Islam. So they tied Sumayya to two camels and pointed a spear to her heart, saying to her that she converted for the men, and killed her. Later they killed Yasir. Thus, these two were the first martyrs in Islam. As for 'Ammar, he told them, unwillingly, what they wanted to hear. So it was told to the Messenger of God that 'Ammar disbelieved. He said, "No, 'Ammar is full of faith from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet; belief has been mingled with his flesh and blood." 'Ammar came weeping to the Messenger of God. Therefore, the Messenger of God started to wipe his tears, and said, "If they come back to you, repeat to them what you said." This is an evidence for the admissibility of speaking unbelief under compulsion.

Our question is: Is it faithful to lie about one's conviction and



deny the living God for the sake of pleasing men? Christ said, "But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God" (Luke 12:9).

## 2. Legalising Perjury

**Question 69:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:225: "God will not take you to task for a slip in your oaths but He will take you to task for what your hearts have earned; and God is All-forgiving, All-clement."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٢٥ ﴿لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ﴾.

Al-Baidawi explained these verse by saying:

"A slip" is the trivial part of speech which we do not take into consideration. "A slip in oath" is that which is said without intention, but with the mouth only, or that which one utters being ignorant of its meaning. As an example of this, the Arabs say, "No, by God," or "Yes, by God," in order to emphasise what they say. "But He will take you to task for what your hearts have earned" means that God will not take you to task by punishment, penalty or atonement for that which was without intention. But he will take you to task by both or by either, for the oaths that you said with intention, in which your hearts were in unison with your mouths. Abu Hanifa said, "A slip in oath is to take an oath based on a wrong assumption. And the verse means that He will not take you to task for your wrong oaths, but will punish you for the oaths that you intentionally lied about."

This leads us to the question: Is it right to lie? Christ said, "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one" (Matthew 5:37; see also James 5:12).

## 3. Legalising Enticement with Money

**Question 70:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:60: "The freewill offerings are for the poor and needy, those who work to collect them, those whose hearts are brought together, the ransoming of slaves, debtors, in God's way, and the traveller; so God ordains; God is All-knowing, All-wise."

سورة التوبة ٩: ٦٠ ﴿إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَىٰ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ﴾.

Al-Baidawi explained this verse as follows:

Those whose hearts are brought together are a group of people who converted to Islam but had a weak intention to continue in it, whose hearts were brought together by the freewill offerings [that were given them]. Or they could be some of the nobility who would turn to Islam if they saw how their fellows were given both honour and money. The Messenger has indeed given [money to] 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn, al-'Aqra' Ibn Habis, and al-'Abbas Ibn Mirdas for that reason. It was said they were some of the nobility whose hearts Muhammad had united by giving them money; some also he promised to give money if they were ready to fight the unbelievers. It was said also that the portion of money allotted to making converts was for the purpose of

increasing the number of Muslims, so when God made him strong and increased his followers, that portion was cancelled.

But we ask: What kind of religion is it that authorises enticement with money as a means of attracting adherents? Is it appropriate to hire and bribe people to threaten and kill those who are not interested in such religion? What should we consider this money: *zakat* and freewill offering, or a bribe and corruption?

#### 4. Legalising Murder

**Question 71:** The following are some of the Qur'anic verses that exhort Muslims to kill whoever does not believe in Islam:

“O Prophet, urge on the believers to fight” (Sura al-Anfal 8:65).

سورة الأنفال ٦٥:٨ «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ».

“They will question thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say: ‘Fighting in it is a heinous [*lit.*: monumental] thing’” (Sura al-Baqara 2:217).

سورة البقرة ٢:٢١٧ «يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ».

“Go forth, light and heavy! Struggle in God's way with your possessions and your selves; that is better for you, did you know... O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers and hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them; their refuge is Gehenna – an evil homecoming” (Sura al-Tawba 9:41,73)

ورة التوبة ٩:٤١ و ٧٣ «انْفِرُوا خِفَافًا وَثِقَالًا وَجَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ... يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبئس الْمَصِيرُ».

“When you meet the unbelievers, smite their necks, then, when you have made wide slaughter among them, tie fast the bonds; then set them free, either by grace or ransom, till the war lays down its loads. So it shall be; and if God had willed, He would have avenged Himself upon them; but that He may try some of you by means of others. And those who are slain in the way of God, He will not send their works astray. He will guide them, and dispose their minds aright, and He will admit them to Paradise, that He has made known to them.... So do not faint and call for peace; you shall be the upper ones, and God is with you, and will not deprive you of your works” (Sura Muhammad 47:4-6,35).

سورة محمد ٤٧:٤-٦ و ٣٥ «فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبِ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّى إِذَا أَخَذْتُمُوهُمْ فَاسُدُّوا أَلْوِقَاءَهُمْ فَإِذَا مَتَّأَ بَعْدُ وَإِنَّمَا فِدَاءٌ حَتَّى تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَرْزَاقَهَا ذَلِكَ وَلَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ لَانتَصَرَ مِنْهُمْ وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَ بَعْضَكُمْ بِبَعْضٍ وَالَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَلَنْ يُضِلَّ أَعْمَالَهُمْ سَيَهْدِيهِمْ وَيُضِلِّحَ بِأَلْهَمٍ وَيُدْخِلُهُمْ الْجَنَّةَ عَرَّفَهَا لَهُمْ... فَلَا تَهِنُوا وَتَدْعُوا إِلَى السَّلْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ الْآخِلُونَ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَتْرُكَنَّ أَعْمَالَكُمْ».

“Prescribed for you is fighting, though it be hateful to you.... So fight in God's way, and know that God is All-hearing, All-knowing” (Sura al-Baqara 2:216,244).

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢١٦ و ٢٤٤ «كَيْبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهٌ لَكُمْ... وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ».

“Make ready for them whatever force and strings of horses you can, to terrify thereby the enemy of God and your enemy, and others besides them that you know not; God knows them. And whatsoever you expend in the way of God shall be repaid you in full; you will not be wronged” (Sura al-Anfal 8:60).

سورة الأنفال ٨: ٦٠ «وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ آخِيلٍ تُرَاهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَأَخْرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ».

“I shall cast into the unbeliever's hearts terror; so smite above the necks, and smite every finger of them! That, because they have made a breach with God and with His Messenger; and whosoever makes a breach with God and with His Messenger, surely God is terrible in retribution.... Fight them, till there is no persecution and the religion is God's entirely; then if they give over, surely God sees the things they do” (Sura al-Anfal 8:12,13,39).

سورة الأنفال ٨: ١٢ و ١٣ و ٣٩ «أَلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ فَاضْرِبُوا فَوْقَ الْأَعْنَاقِ وَاضْرِبُوا مِنْهُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ شَاقُوا اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ... وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُنْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ».

“Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and [who] do not forbid what God and His Messenger have

forbidden – such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book – until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled.... God has bought from the believers their selves and their possessions against the gift of Paradise; they fight in the way of God; they kill, and are killed” (Sura al-Tawba 9:29,111).

سورة التوبة ٩: ٢٩ و ١١١ «قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ... إِنَّ اللَّهَ اشْتَرَى مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ بِأَنْ لَهُمْ الْجَنَّةَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيَقْتُلُونَ وَيُقْتَلُونَ».

“When thou wentest forth from thy people [‘Aisha’s quarters] to lodge the believers in their pitches for the battle – God is All-hearing, All-knowing” (Sura Al Imran 3:121).

سورة آل عمران ٣: ١٢١ «وَإِذْ عَدَوْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ (أي من حجرة عائشة) بُيُوتِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ».

“So let them fight in the way of God who sell the present life for the world to come” (Sura al-Nisa’ 4:76).

سورة النساء ٤: ٧٦ «الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ».

“It is not for any Prophet to have prisoners until he make wide slaughter in the land. You desire the chance goods of the present world, and God desires the world to come; and God is All-mighty, All-wise” (Sura al-Anfal 8:67).



سورة الأنفال ٦٧:٨ «مَا كَانَ لِتَيْبِي أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أُسْرَى حَتَّى يَبْعَثَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ».

Now we ask: Is it under the threat of the sword that people are compelled to adopt a certain religion? If a religion permits killing for the sake of God, what else will be allowed? How can a prophet urge people to fight, desecrate the holy month, equip the tribes with war material and swords in order to kill and ravage, presumably in the way of God and religion? Is he a prophet who lures his followers with the material goods of this life, and with sensual indulgence in the life to come? In a hadith reported by Muslim, Muhammad said, "Invade in the name of God. Kill whoever disbelieves. Invade, but betray not. Do not mangle [a dead body] or kill a baby."

### 5. Legalising Ransacking

**Question 72:** We read in Sura al-Anfal 8:41,69: "Know that, whatever booty you take, the fifth of it is God's, and the Messenger's, and the near kinsman's, and the orphans', and for the needy, and the traveller, if you believe in God and that We sent down on Our servant on the day of salvation, the day the two hosts encountered; and God is powerful over everything.... Eat of what you have taken as booty, such as is lawful and good; and fear you God; surely God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate."

سورة الأنفال ٤١:٨ و ٦٩ «وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ التَّقَىٰ أَجْمَعِينَ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ... فَكُلُوا مِمَّا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ».

But we would like to ask: Does God command those who believe in Him to kill people, carry off their possessions and ransack their homes? How could the Qur'an say that such behaviour was "lawful and good" when the possessions belonging to others were taken from them by force?

### 6. Legalising Swearing

**Question 73:** The author of the Qur'an swears by different things. The following is a list of verses that contain such oaths:

"... By the dawn and ten nights, by the even and the odd, by the night when it journeys on! Is there in that an oath for a mindful man?" (Sura al-Fajr 89:1-5).

سورة الفجر ٨٩:١-٥ «وَالْفَجْرِ وَلَيَالٍ عَشِيرِ وَالشُّفْعِ وَالْوَتْرِ وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَسْرِ هَلْ فِي ذَلِكَ قَسَمٌ لِذِي حِجْرِ».

"By the sun and his morning brightness and by the moon when she follows him, and by the day when it displays him and by the night when it enshrouds him! By the heaven and That which built it and by the earth and That which extended it! By the soul, and That which shaped it and inspired it to lewdness and godfearing! Prosperous is he who purifies it" (Sura al-Shams 91:1-9).

سورة الشمس ٩١:١-٩ «وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَاهَا وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا».

"By the white forenoon and the brooding night! Thy Lord

has neither forsaken thee nor hates thee” (Sura al-Duha 93:1-3).

سورة الضحى ٩٣:١-٣ «وَالضُّحَى وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَى».

“By the fig and the olive and the Mount Sinai and this land secure! We indeed created man in the fairest stature” (Sura al-Tin 95:1-4).

سورة التين ٩٥:١-٤ «وَالَّتَيْنِ وَالزَّيْتُونِ وَطُورِ سِينِينَ وَهَذَا الْبَلَدِ الْأَمِينِ».

“By heaven and the night-star! And what shall teach thee what is the night-star? The piercing star! Over every soul there is a watcher” (Sura al-Tariq 86:1-4).

سورة الطارق ٨٦:١-٤ «وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الطَّارِقُ أَنْتَجُمُ النَّاقِبِ إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ».

We would like to ask: Why should the author of the Qur’an, if he were truthful, swear by all these things – the sun, the moon, the day, the night, heaven, the earth, the soul, the forenoon, the fig, the olive, Mount Sinai, Mecca, and the star? The one who tells the truth does not need to swear by an oath to confirm his words. Christ said, “But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No’ be ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one”

(Matthew 5:34-37). Is it not obvious, then, why the author of the Qur’an swore by all those things?

## 7. Legalising Deceit

**Question 74:** We read in Sura al-Ma’ida 5:89: “God will not take you to task for a slip in your oaths; but he will take you task for such bonds as you have made by oaths, whereof the expiation is to feed ten poor persons with the average of the food you serve your families, or to clothe them, or to set free a slave; or if any finds not the means, let him fast for three days. That is the expiation of your oaths when you have sworn; but keep your oaths.”

سورة المائدة ٨٩:٥ «لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْفَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ».

We read also in Sura al-Nahl 16:106: “Whoso disbelieves in God, after he has believed – excepting him who has been compelled, and his heart is still at rest in his belief – but whoseoever’s breast is expanded in unbelief, upon them shall rest anger from God, and there awaits them a mighty chastisement.”

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠٦ «مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ عَذَابٌ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ».

Al-Rabi’ Ibn Sulaiman said, quoting Umm Kalthum Ibn ‘Uqba,

"In none other than these three instances have I heard the Messenger of God warrant lying: He said, 'I do not consider him a liar who is set upon reconciling people, and he who lies during wartime, and he who lies to his wife and she who lies to her husband, telling a lie with the sole intention of reconciling people'" (Muslim, *Birr* 101; Musnad Ahmad Ibn Hanbal 6:403,404,459,461).

Muhammad said, "If you hear a hadith [discourse] about me that leads to the right path or leads away from evil, then receive it; whether I said it or not. And if you hear a hadith about me that leads to evil or leads away from the right path, then receive it not, for I say nothing but the truth."

Such sayings as these open the door wide for lying. Are good manners and peace-making founded upon lies? What kind of home is that in which husband and wife lie to one another? What kind of upbringing will the children receive in such a home? The family is indeed an integral unit of society. If it becomes corrupt, then all society will be corrupt! As for Christianity, it categorically forbids lying. The Bible says in Revelation 21:8: "But... the sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," thus ranking liars side by side with sorcerers and idolaters.

## 8. The Legalisation of Revenge

**Question 75:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:194: "Whoso commits aggression against you, do you commit aggression against him like as he has committed against you."

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٩٤ «فَمَنْ آغْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَآغْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا آغْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ».

We can see the negative effect which the principle of taking revenge has helped spread. Policemen have toiled and laboured because of its effects, and teachers' throats have been parched teaching against it! Is returning aggression for aggression a good remedy for crime? Violence breeds more violence. Christ said, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). He also said, "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also" (Matthew 5:38-39). Likewise the apostle Paul said, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:19-21). The apostle Peter said, "Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps: 'Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth'; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2:21-23).

## 9. Legalising Sensual Indulgence

**Question 76:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:3: "Marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not

be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own; so it is likelier you will not be partial.”

سورة النساء ٤:٣ عن تعدد الزوجات «فَأَنْكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنًى وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ

أَذْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا».

We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:230,236 regarding the divorcee: “If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, until she marries another husband. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other, if they suppose that they will maintain God’s bounds. Those are God’s bounds; He makes them clear unto a people that have knowledge.... There is no fault in you, if you divorce women.”

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٣٠ و ٢٣٦ عن المطلقة «فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّىٰ تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ... لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ».

We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:50 concerning Muhammad’s marriage: “O Prophet, we have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and what thy right hand owns, spoils of war that God has given thee, and the daughters of thy uncles paternal and aunts paternal, thy uncles maternal and aunts maternal, who have emigrated with thee, and any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desires to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers – We know what We have imposed upon them

touching their wives and what their right hands own – that there may be no fault in thee; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.”

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣:٥٠ عن زواج محمد « يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحَلَّلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ الَّتِي آتَيْتَ أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ بِمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّاتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَاتِكَ الَّتِي هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَأَمْرًا مُؤْمِنَةً إِنْ وَهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَسْتَنْكِحَهَا خَالِصَةً لَكَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِي أَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ لَكِنِّي لَا يَكُونُ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا».

And in Sura al-Waqi’a 56:20-23, we read concerning the *huris* of Paradise: “And such fruit as they shall choose, and such flesh of fowl as they desire, and wide-eyed *huris* as the likeness of hidden pearls.”

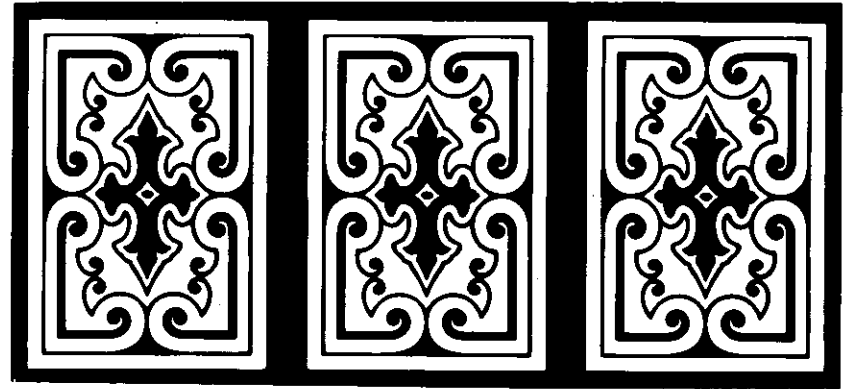
سورة الواقعة ٥٦:٢٠-٢٣ «وَفَاكِهَةٍ مِمَّا يَخْتِيزُونَ وَحَلْمِ طَيْرٍ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ وَحُورٍ عِينٍ كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ».

We ask: Would a religion that God instituted sanction polygamy, when such stands in contrast to the ordinance that He established from the beginning, when he created man male and female, and made them one flesh? How can a Book sent from God allow a messenger sent by God to marry the captives his right hand owns, as well as any woman who desires him and gives herself to him, provided that she appeals to him, of course? Is the paradise of God a place of sexual pleasure and frolicking with the wide-eyed *huris*?

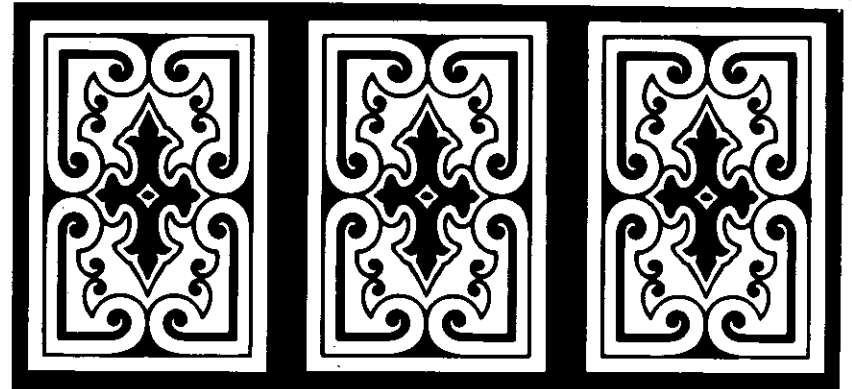
Christ said, “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are

*Part Three*

given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven”  
(Matthew 22:30).



*Part Four*  
*Theological Questions*



## 1. A Misconception of the Holy Trinity

**Question 77:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:116: "And when God said, 'O Jesus son of Mary, didst thou say unto men, "Take me and my mother as gods, apart from God"?' "

سورة المائدة ٥: ١١٦ «وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ آأَنْتَ قُلْتَ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمَّي إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ؟».

We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:171: "People of the Book, go not beyond the bounds in your religion, and say not as to God but the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God, and His word that he committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him. So believe in God and His Messenger, and say not, 'Three.' Refrain; better is it for you. God is only One God. Glory be to Him – that he should have a son! To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and in the earth; God suffices for a guardian."

سورة النساء ٤: ١٧١ «يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلِمَتُهُ أَلْقَاهَا إِلَى مَرْيَمَ وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا».

We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:73: "They are unbelievers who say, 'God is the Third of Three.' No god is there but One God. If they refrain not from what they say, there shall afflict those of them that disbelieve a painful chastisement."



سورة المائدة ٧٣:٥ «لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَوَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَشْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ».

These verses show clearly that Muhammad heard from some Christian heretics that there were three gods: God, Mary and Jesus. He consequently answered this heresy, repeating over and over that God is one. Whoever has the least acquaintance with the Old and the New Testament knows that the unity of God is the foundation of the Christian faith. Both the Old and the New Testament hold that "The Lord our God, the Lord is one!" (Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29). With all due respect and love for the Virgin Mary, no true Christian has ever worshipped her as a god. But Christians do worship the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, or God, His word and His Spirit, according to the words of the Qur'an. These three hypostases [persons of the Trinity] are of one substance.

The Qur'an agrees with the Bible when it refers to God with plural pronouns. Neither in the Bible nor in the Qur'an is there any record of an intelligent being speaking of himself in the plural, which proves that God has one substance and composite essence in the Godhead. We read for instance in Sura al-Baqara 2:23: "... We have sent down on our servant...." Sura al-A'raf 7:196 says, "... Allah who [in the singular] sent down the Book...." Sura al-Ma'ida 5:46, 110 says, "And We sent, following in their footsteps, Jesus son of Mary, confirming the Torah before him... 'Jesus, son of Mary, remember My blessing upon thee and upon thy mother, when I confirmed thee with the Holy Spirit,'" where God is referred to with plural pronouns, side by side with singular ones. The first form of pronoun in verse 46

indicates a plurality of hypostases [a Greek word that means persons having the same substance], whereas the second indicates the unity of the Godhead. Among the 99 excellent names of God there is one that bears on the subject at hand. The Qur'an alludes to it in Sura al-Buruj 85:14: "He is the All-forgiving, the All-loving." The last of these titles refers to one of God's attributes. Since this attribute must be eternal, then God must have loved from eternity, which is possible only if we regard the Godhead as three hypostases in mutual love with one another, before anything was created. If we hold a view other than this, we would be saying that the attribute of love started functioning only after God created angels and mankind. But God forbid that He should change!

How can we believe in God's eternal attributes, such as hearing and speaking, without believing in three hypostases in One God? We cannot bridge the vast gap between God and man except through a relationship with Him based on His fatherhood, our sonship to Him and the life of fellowship with Him that is revealed in the doctrine of the Trinity!

Belief in the abstract unity of God with no spiritual communion with Him is the same as the belief of the demons, for the Bible says in James 2:19: "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe – and tremble!" The Trinity can be demonstrated by examples such as intellect, thought and speech; these three are distinguishable yet inseparable aspects of one thing. Fire, light and heat, as well, are three distinguishable yet inseparable aspects of one thing. If it is feasible in the physical realm, why not all the more so in the spiritual realm? The revelation of Scripture concerning three distinguishable yet inseparable persons in one Godhead is indeed not implausible.

## 2. The Denial of Atonement

**Question 78:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:31: "If you avoid the heinous sins that are forbidden you, We will acquit [Arabic: 'atone for'] you of your evil deeds, and admit you by the gate of honour."

سورة النساء ٤: ٣١ «إِنْ جَعَلْتُمْ كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ تُكْفِرُ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَتُدْخِلُكُمْ مُدْخِلًا كَرِيمًا».

The same idea is repeated in Sura al-Najm 53:32: "Those who avoid the heinous sins and indecencies, save lesser offenses – surely thy Lord is wide in His forgiveness."

سورة النجم ٥٣: ٣٢ «الَّذِينَ يَجْتَنِبُونَ كَبَائِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ وَاسِعٌ الْمَغْفِرَةِ».

Al-Baidawi said, "God forgives the lesser offenses when one avoids the heinous [Arabic: greater] ones."

This leads us to the question: Is it sensible for God or a judge to forgive a culprit if he steals, simply because he avoided killing? The Bible, however, asserts that there is no forgiveness except through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, whom the Qur'an describes as "a sign unto men and a mercy from Us" (Sura Maryam 19:21). The holy and just God does not grant forgiveness to a sinner without atonement, nor does he pardon him without redemption. Forgiveness, granted blindly, would be tantamount to abuse of the perfect and holy attributes of God. Justice demands a sinner's punishment, and mercy seeks his pardon. A response to the demand of either attribute would mean a suspending of the other. Christianity reveals the abso-

lute wisdom of God that was manifested in the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ by the mighty power of God. In this way God's perfect justice and mercy were reconciled to each other. The Bible says, "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

As for the Qur'anic statement that "the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds" (Sura Hud 11:114), it does not conform to God's holiness and justice, neither does it give the conscience rest or peace or a joyous feeling of forgiveness. For though Muhammad was commanded in the Qur'an to "ask forgiveness for [his] sin, and for the believers, men and women" (Sura Muhammad 47:19), neither he, his Companions, nor the rightly-guided Caliphs experienced rest and peace of mind. There were indeed none better in Islam than Muhammad, Abu Bakr the faithful, 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab and 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, who were among the ten men assured of entering paradise. Nevertheless, it was reported about Abu Bakr that he said, "I would I were a tree; to be cut down and eaten...." He also said, "I wish I were a young green plant left for wolves to eat." It was also reported that he was so overcome by grief and sorrow that one could smell the scent of roasted liver from his mouth (*Da'irat al-Ma'arif*, vol. 2, pp. 39,40). Al-Qasim Ibn Muhammad reported that Abu Bakr said to his daughter 'Aisha on his deathbed, "My daughter, this is a day on which my giving is left aside, and my reward is seen; if it is joy, then permanent, and if it is sorrow, then continuing" (*Al-Iqd al-Farid*, part 2, p. 256). As for 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, Dhirar Ibn Hamza said, describing him, "I saw him in some situations, when night fell and the stars descended. He would sit there at his shrine, gripping his beard and mumbling into it as would one who is in dismay, and weeping as would one who is in sorrow. I can



still hear him say, 'Earthly life, was it me you sought out, or was it me you longed for? But oh! Beguile someone else. I have committed to you three things, none of which I shall take back: my short lifetime, your despicable living and your great jeopardy. Oh, how little is food, and how dreary the way!' " (*Al-Khatib al-Ibshihi, Al-Kitab al-Mustatraf*, p. 165). Likewise, 'Umar said, "Had I been in possession of the gold in the mountains, I would have given it in ransom for myself from the chastisement of God highly exalted before I ever see Him" (al-Bukhari). Dawud Ibn Hind reported, quoting Qatada: "When 'Umar fell severely ill, he said to 'Abdallah his son, 'Place my cheek on the ground.' But his son was unwilling to do so. So 'Umar placed his own cheek on the ground and said, 'Woe unto 'Umar, and unto 'Umar's mother, unless God pardons him'" (*Al-'Iqd al-Farid*). We also read that " 'Umar used to put his hand close to the fire and say, 'Ibn al-Khattab, can you endure this with patience?' Then he would cry till there were two black streaks along his face, because of his tears. He would also say, 'I would to God that I were not created! I wish my mother had not conceived me! I wish I were nothing! I wish I were cast into total oblivion!'"

### 3. The Human Origin of the "Revelation"

**Question 79:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:82: "What, do they not ponder the Qur'an? If it had been from other than God surely they would have found in it much inconsistency."

سورة النساء ٤: ٨٢ وَأَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا.

Does the Qur'an permit pondering and scrutiny? Do Muslims

allow investigation, so as to know the truth about the Qur'an? Research has shown that Muhammad assimilated into the Qur'an teachings from the Sabaeans, the pre-Islamic Arabs, the Jews, the Christians and his own practices, which he then instituted as law. Following is a list of the groups from whom Muhammad adopted various tenets of faith:

#### *From the Sabaeans*

Muhammad regarded the Sabaeans as people of a God-given religion, who were admitted to paradise: "Surely they that believe, and those of Jewry, and the Sabaeans, and those Christians, whosoever believes in God and the Last Day, and works righteousness – no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow" (Sura al-Ma'ida 5:69; the same idea is repeated in Suras al-Baqara 2:61 and al-Hajj 22:17). Islam preserved many of the Sabaean's doctrines, which are still practised among the Muslims today. In his book *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab* (vol. 2, chapter on the Sabaeans) Muhammad Shukri al-Alusi said, "The Sabaeans have five prayers similar to the five prayers of the Muslims. Others say they have seven prayers, five of which are comparable to the prayers of the Muslims with regard to time [that is, morning, noon, afternoon, evening and night; the sixth is at midnight and the seventh is at forenoon]. It is their practice to pray over the dead without kneeling down or even bending the knee. They also fast for one lunar month of thirty days; they start their fast at the last watch of the night and continue till the setting of the sun. Some of their sects fast during the month of Ramadan, face the Ka'ba when they pray, venerate Mecca, and believe in making the pilgrimage to it. They

consider dead bodies, blood and the flesh of pigs as unlawful. They also forbid marriage for the same reasons as do Muslims.”

### ***From the Pre-Islamic Arabs***

Muslim scholars acknowledge that many Islamic tenets and customs were already being practised among the pre-Islamic Arabs. The following is quoted from an Arabic book titled *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal* by al-Shahrastani:

The Arabs during the pre-Islamic period used to practise certain things that were included in the Islamic Sharia. They, for example, did not marry both a mother and her daughter. They considered marrying two sisters simultaneously to be a most heinous crime. They also censured anyone who married his stepmother, and called him *dhaizan*. They made the major [*hajj*] and the minor [*umra*] pilgrimage to the Ka'ba, performed the circumambulation around the Ka'ba [*tawaf*], ran seven times between Mounts Safa and Marwa [*sa'y*], threw rocks and washed themselves after intercourse. They also gargled, sniffed water up into their noses, clipped their fingernails, plucked the hair from their armpits, shaved their pubic hair and performed the rite of circumcision. Likewise, they cut off the right hand of a thief (vol. 2, chapter on the opinions of the pre-Islamic Arabs).

The following is a summary of what we found in *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab* concerning the monotheists who lived before Islamic times:

The Arabs used to worship according the law of Abraham, the friend of the All-Merciful, which had been

passed on to them through his son Ishmael. They believed that God is one with no associate or helper, and that He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing. They used to pray, fast, make the pilgrimage, and pay the *zakat*. But with the passing of the years they went astray, differed in opinion and were divided into factions over worship. Only a remnant did not change or alter the law of Ishmael the son of Abraham; they abided by the practices of the past, such as venerating the Ka'ba, circumambulation around the Ka'ba [*tawaf*], the minor and the major pilgrimage, etc.... Thus they became divided: some remained steadfast in monotheism, while others adhered to other cults. The Arabs before Islam were not used to approaching women during their monthly period. They also determined that divorce was official if it was repeated three times, provided that the first and the second time could be abrogated. They used to run around the Ka'ba seven times (vol. 2, chapter on the religions of the Arabs before Islam.)

We quote lastly from a book entitled *Al-Sira al-Nabawiya al-Malakiya*: “The Quraish used to say in prayer, before the coming of Islam, ‘Here I am, God, here I am. There is no associate for Thee, except for an associate you appointed, but he reigneth not.’ Hence they professed belief in the unity of God, but brought in their own gods and put them under his reign.”

### ***From the Jews***

In the Qur'an we read: “Surely this is in the ancient scrolls, the scrolls of Abraham and Moses” (Sura al-A'la 87:18,19). From the Torah Muhammad adopted the story of Adam, Cain, Abel,

Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Lot, Joseph, Moses, Pharaoh, the Children of Israel, the manna, the Ten Commandments and the ark. The law of "an eye for an eye" and the sacrifices were also incorporated into his creed. There are other stories he quoted in a distorted form, such as the story of the spies, Korah, Balaam, Gideon, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha and Job. In the Qur'an, we also find some excerpts from the sayings of Isaiah, David, Ezekiel, Jonah and others, whose words are "in the Scriptures of the ancients" (Sura al-Shu'ara' 26:196).

#### **From the Christians**

From the New Testament, Muhammad adopted the accounts of the angel foretelling the coming of John the Baptist to Zechariah, and of Christ to the Virgin Mary. Muhammad also took from the Christians the name of God (Allah in Arabic is actually a contraction of *al-Ilah*, meaning "the God"). The second part *Ilah* is taken from Syriac, in which it means "power" or "might".) In addition, he echoed the anointing, teaching, miracles [such as healing the lepers, opening the eyes of the blind and raising the dead], death and ascension of Christ. He picked out some of the apostle Paul's words that occur in his epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Philippians, Thessalonians and Hebrews, as well as the words of the apostles James, Peter and John. Apart from this, he adopted part of the Apostles' Creed, the sayings of the Church Fathers and other famous Eastern bishops.

#### **From His Own Practices**

The Qur'an contains many of Muhammad's personal ex-

periences, which he instituted as law for his followers. For example, it is full of accounts of Muhammad's invasions, incidents that occurred with his wives 'Aisha, Zainab, Khadija, Maryam al-Qibtiyya (Mary the Copt), Hafsa, Umm Hani' and the rest. The Qur'an even records his vulnerability to magic as well as the incantations he used to ward it off. The Qur'an also records some of the Companions' words, presuming they, too, were the "sending down of the All-wise, the All-knowing"!

#### **4. The Pre-Islamic Friday**

**Question 80:** We read in Sura al-Jum'a 62:9-11: "O believers, when the proclamation is made for prayer on the Day of Congregation, hasten to God's remembrance and leave trafficking aside; that is better for you, did you but know. Then when the prayer is finished, scatter in the land and seek God's bounty, and remember God frequently; haply you will prosper. But when they see merchandise or diversion they scatter off to it, and they leave thee standing. Say: 'What is with God is better than diversion and merchandise. God is the best of providers.'"

سورة الجمعة ٦٢:٩-١١ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا نُودِيَ لِلصَّلَاةِ مِنْ يَوْمِ  
الْجُمُعَةِ فَاسْعَوْا إِلَىٰ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَذَرُوا الْبَيْعَ ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ  
فَإِذَا قُضِيَتِ الصَّلَاةُ فَانْتَشِرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ  
كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ وَإِذَا رَأَوْا تِجَارَةً أَوْ لَهْوًا انفَضُوا إِلَيْهَا وَتَرَكَوْكَ قَائِمًا  
قُلْ مَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ اللَّهِوِ وَمِنَ الشَّجَارَةِ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ.

These verses were explained by al-Baidawi as follows: "It was called the Day of Congregation because people [were] to gather on it for prayer. Arabs had called it *al-'Aruba*. Some claim

that it was Ka'b Ibn Lu'ay who called it that name, for people used to gather around him on that day. The first Friday on which the Messenger of God gathered the people for prayer was in Medina after he had spent a week in Quba'. It was in valley of the clan Salim Ibn 'Auf."

The author of *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab* said the same thing as above but added that Ka'b Ibn Lu'ay used to preach to the people on that day (vol. 1, p. 250). Thus, the sanctity of Friday was a pre-Islamic tradition, laid out by Ka'b Ibn Lu'ay, not by the revelation of God.

In *Al-Sira al-Nabawiya* by Ibn Hisham (2:154) we read: "When Muhammad emigrated to Medina, the Muslims said to him, 'Jews have the Sabbath as a day of gathering, worship and hearing sermons. Christians also have a day for gathering, worship and hearing sermons. But we Muslims have no special day on which we can gather to worship God as the example of the people of the Book.' Therefore he suggested Friday to them."

If the Jews gather to worship God on the Sabbath as a memorial of the day on which God rested after he created the universe in six days, and if Christians hallow Sunday as a memorial of Jesus' resurrection, why do Muslims gather on Friday? Do they just want to emulate the people of the Book? They indeed have made the wrong choice, for they did not select the day God appointed but chose the day the pre-Islamic Arabs commemorated.

## 5. The Sacred Months

**Question 81:** We read in Suras Muhammad 47:4 and al-Tawba

9:5: "[When the sacred months are drawn away,] slay the idolaters wherever you find them."

سورة محمد ٤:٤٧ وسورة التوبة ٩:٥ وَإِذَا أَسْلَمَ الْأَشْهُرُ الْحُرْمُ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ.

Islam forbids killing, fighting and retribution in the sacred months of Rajab, Dhu al-Qa'da, Dhu al-Hijja and Muharram, for various reasons. This practice, however, was already known to the Arabs before Islam.

In *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab*, we read, "The four sacred months, Rajab, Dhu al-Qa'da, Dhu al-Hijja and Muharram, had been considered sacred during the pre-Islamic period [*Jahiliya*]. Raids, taking revenge, war, fighting and disputes were forbidden during them. If a man were to meet his enemy who killed his father or brother during these months, he would not start a quarrel with him.... During the sacred months, [the people] were under a restriction not to fight or make raids, and had to remove [their] spearheads as a sign that they would avoid fighting at all costs." Obviously, Islam borrowed the hallowing of these months from the pre-Islamic Arabs and introduced nothing new into the world.

The Arabs used the sacred months as an opportunity for reconciliation and relatively peaceful coexistence. But after Muhammad granted the sanctity of these months to them, making this a law from Allah, he realised that this conflicted with his own ambitions for invasion and revenge. So he betrayed the Arabs and permitted what he had previously forbidden, and contradicted himself in Sura al-Baqara 2:214: "They will ques-

tion thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say: 'Fighting in it is a heinous [*i.e.*, monumental] thing.'

## 6. Magnifying God: a Pre-Islamic Practice

**Question 82:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:111: "Say: 'Praise belongs to God, who has not taken to Him a son, and who has not any associate in the Kingdom, nor any protector out of humbleness.' And magnify Him with repeated magnificats."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:١١١ «وَقُلْ أَحْمَدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ شَرِيكٌ فِي الْمَلِكِ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وِليٌّ مِنَ الذُّلِّ وَكَبْرُهُ تَكْبِيرًا».

We also read in Sura al-An'am 6:78: "When he saw the sun rising, he said, 'This is my Lord, this is greater [Arabic: more magnificent or magnified]!' But when it set he said, 'O my people, surely I am quit of that which you associate [with Allah].'"

سورة الأنعام ٦:٧٨ «فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسُ بَازِعَةً قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ».

The pre-Islamic Arabs used to magnify God in some situations, saying, "God is greater," on the supposition that there is a God in heaven, who is Allah, among all the gods, and that he is their God and Lord. The other gods were considered his helpers and deputies on earth. A quotation from *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab* supports this fact: "Concerning the episode of 'Abd al-Muttalib the Hashimite, his son 'Abdallah and the camels, which he had vowed to offer up as sacrifice to God at the casting of lots, someone said, 'His folk advised him to redeem him [*i.e.*, his son] with a hundred camels and to let the lots determine which would

be sacrificed. Which when they did, the lot determined that the camels would be sacrificed, and 'Abdallah was delivered. 'Abdallah then shouted, 'God is greater,' and all the Quraish praised with 'Abdallah" (*Al-Sira al-Halabiyya*, vol. 1).

## 7. The Muslim Jinn

**Question 83:** We read in Sura al-Ahqaf 46:29-31: "We turned to thee a company of *jinn* giving ear to the Qur'an; and when they were in its presence, they said, 'Be silent!' Then, when it was finished they turned back to their people, warning. They said, 'Our people, we have heard a Book that was sent down after Moses, confirming what was before it, guiding to the truth and to a straight path. O our people, answer God's summoner, and believe in Him, and He will forgive you for some of your sins, and protect you from a painful chastisement.'"

سورة الأحقاف ٤٦:٢٩-٣١ «وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفْرًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنْصِتُوا فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ يَا قَوْمَنَا أَجِيبُوا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ وَآمِنُوا بِهِ يَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مِنْ ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَيُجِزَّكُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ أَلِيمٍ».

The same idea is repeated in Sura al-Jinn 72:1-6: "Say: 'It has been revealed to me that a company of the *jinn* gave ear, then they said, "We have indeed heard a Qur'an wonderful, guiding to rectitude. We believe in it, and we will not associate with our Lord anyone.... The fool among us spoke against God outrage, and we had thought that men and *jinn* would never speak against God a lie. But there were certain men of mankind who

would take refuge with certain men of the *jinn*, and they increased them in vileness.””

سورة الجن ١:٧٢-٦ قُلْ أُوْحِيْ اِلَيْيْ اِنَّهُ اَسْتَمَعَ نَفَرًا مِّنْ اَلْجِنِّ فَقَالُوْا اِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْاٰنًا عَجَبًا يَّهْدِيْٓ اِلَى الْرُّشْدِ فَاٰمَنَّا بِهٖ وَلَنْ نُّشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا اَحَدًا وَّاِنَّهٗ تَعَالٰى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَّلَا وَلَدًا وَّاِنَّهٗ كَانَ يَقُوْلُ سَفِيْهُنَا عَلٰى اَللّٰهِ شَطَطًا وَّاَنَا ظَنَنَّا اَنْ لَّنْ تَقُوْلَ الْاِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلٰى اَللّٰهِ كَذِبًا وَّاِنَّهٗ كَانَ رِجَالًا مِّنَ الْاِنْسِ يَهُوْدُوْنَ بِرِجَالٍ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ فَرَاٰدُوْهُمْ رَهَقًا.

The Bible teaches that there are only angels and devils, as far as heavenly beings are concerned. There is no mention in the Bible of such a creature as *jinn*. The Qur'an alleges that they are an intelligent race, somewhere between man and devil, who believed in God and the Qur'an when they heard it being recited; they also preached to the other *jinn* about the Book that came after Moses.

Why did God not let the *jinn* hear the message of Moses and Jesus? Why did He confer the Qur'an in particular upon them? Why did the *jinn* say that the Qur'an came after Moses, and not after the *zabur* (Psalms) or the *Injil* (Gospel), which were nearer to them in time than Moses? How could the Qur'an conceive of the *jinn* marrying and propagating, when in fact the Qur'an claims that Iblis (the devil) is one of them?

### 8. The Command to Commit Ungodliness

**Question 84:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:16: "And when We desire to destroy a city, We command its men who live at ease, and they commit ungodliness therein, then the Word is realised against it, and We destroy it utterly."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:١٦ «وَإِذَا أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا فَحَقَّ عَلَيْهَا الْقَوْلُ فَدَمَّرْنَاَهَا تَدْمِيرًا».

Does God desire to destroy the people He created? Would He really command people who live at ease in a certain place to commit ungodliness, so that they would be worthy of punishment, together with the poor who live among them? Is this compatible with God's justice, holiness and faithfulness? How could anyone ascribe to God such infamy, injustice and ungodliness?

Besides, the Qur'an contradicts this statement in many other places. Among these are: "Follow not the steps of Satan; he is a manifest foe to you. He only commands you to evil and indecency" (Sura al-Baqara 2:168,169). "Surely God bids to justice and good-doing and giving to kinsmen; and He forbids indecency, dishonour and insolence" (Sura al-Nahl 16:90). "And whenever they commit an indecency they say, 'We found our fathers practising it, and God had commanded us to do it.' Say: 'God does not command indecency; what, do you say concerning God such things as you know not?'" (Sura al-A'raf 7:28).

### 9. The Doubtful Revelation

**Question 85:** We read in Sura Yunis 10:94: "So, if thou art in doubt regarding what We have sent down to thee, ask those who recite the Book before thee."

سورة يونس ١٠:٩٤ «فَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي شَكٍّ مِّمَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ فَاسْأَلِ الَّذِينَ يُقْرَأُونَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ».

We also read in Sura al-A'raf 7:2: "A Book sent down to thee – so let there be no impediment in thy breast because of it – to warn thereby, and as a reminder to believers."

سورة الأعراف ٧:٢ «كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ فَلَا يَكُنْ فِي صَدْرِكَ حَرَجٌ مِنْهُ  
لِتُنذِرَ بِهِ وَذِكْرَى لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ».

Al-Razi's exposition of Sura Yunis 10:94 reads: "One may interpret the verse, 'If thou art in doubt regarding what we have sent down unto thee,' as being addressed to Muhammad, who was a mere human being subject to confused thoughts and disturbed ideas. Such ideas could be dispelled only by furnishing proofs and establishing indisputable evidences, by which such misgivings could be removed from his mind."

Al-Baidawi's interpretation of Sura al-A'raf 7:2 is as follows: "By 'impediment' is meant doubt. Doubt indeed lay heavy on his breast and anguished his heart for fear he should be lying concerning it [i.e., the revelation]."

It is obvious from these interpretations that Muhammad had doubts whether the revelation he was given was really of God – so much so that the source of his revelation had to advise him to ask the Jews and Christians, who had been reciting the Book before him. If a messenger doubts his own message, and a bearer of news suspects the truth of his report, do their words then deserve to be believed by others? Indeed not! The apostle Paul, speaking on behalf of all the disciples, said, "But even if we, or any angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8,9). The prophet Isaiah had prophesied also that the law would be sealed by the apostles and disciples of Christ,

and that there would be no revelation given after that: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (Isaiah 8:16). Therefore the Bible concludes with this verse: "If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18).

When Muhammad was assailed by doubts concerning his Qur'an, he admittedly fell back on the Bible as a reference for his sayings. That is why the Qur'an says, "If thou art in doubt regarding what We have sent down to thee, ask those who recite the Book before thee. The truth has come to thee, so be not of the doubters." The Qur'an affirms in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:43 that the Jewish Torah in Muhammad's era was accurate and correct, and that it contained the judgement of God. Muhammad wanted to say that the people should rather refer to it as judge, not to him: "Yet how will they make thee their judge seeing they have the Torah, wherein is God's judgement?" In the same sura the Qur'an encourages Christians to abide by the judgements of their Gospel and pronounces ungodly all those who do not follow and keep the judgements of the Gospel: "So let the people of the Gospel judge according to what God has sent down therein. Whosoever judges not according to what God has sent down – they are the ungodly" (v. 47).

## 10. Mortal Speech

**Question 86:** We read in Sura al-Muddaththir 74:25: "This is nothing but mortal speech."

سورة المدثر ٧٤:٢٥ «إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا قَوْلُ الْبَشَرِ».

Muhammad answered this accusation by saying that his

Qur'an was a revelation from God: "This is naught but a revelation revealed" (Sura al-Najm 53:4).

It is evident that this is mortal speech from the fact that it contains the words of 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, which Muhammad wrote down as though they were "sent down from heaven". Once 'Umar said, "O Messenger of God, what if we take Abraham's station for a place of prayer?" So it was "revealed" in the Qur'an: "Take to yourselves Abraham's station for a place of prayer" (Sura al-Baqara 2:125).

On another occasion 'Umar said, "O Messenger of God, both the righteous and the unrighteous come to your wives; what if you order them to be veiled?" It was revealed later in the Qur'an: "O Prophet, say to thy wives and daughters and the believing women, that they draw their veil close to them; so it is likelier they will be known, and not hurt. God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate" (Sura al-Ahzab 33:59).

Muhammad's wives once assembled when they became jealous of each other, and 'Umar said to them, "It is possible that, if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you." Immediately, it was "revealed" in the Qur'an: "It is possible that, if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you" (Sura al-Tahrim 66:5).

The Qur'an once said: "We created man out of an extraction of clay." When 'Umar heard it, he said, "Blessed be God, the fairest of creators!" So Muhammad said in the Qur'an: "We created man of an extraction of clay... Blessed be God, the fairest of creators!" (Sura al-Mu'minin 23:11-14).

A Jew once met 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, and said, "Gabriel,

whom your friend makes mention of, is an enemy to us." 'Umar answered him, "Whosoever is an enemy to God and His angels and His Messengers, and Gabriel, and Michael – surely God is an enemy to the unbelievers." So Muhammad recorded 'Umar's words verbatim: "Whosoever is an enemy to God and His angels and His Messengers, and Gabriel, and Michael – surely God is an enemy to the unbelievers." (Sura al-Baqara 2:98; see *Al-Itqan*, section on the revelation that was told by some of the Companions).

## 11. There Are Suras Like It

**Question 87:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:23,24: "And if you are in doubt concerning that We have sent down on Our servant, then bring a sura like it, and call your witnesses, apart from God, if you are truthful. And if you do not doubt – and you will not – then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the unbelievers."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٣ و ٢٤ «وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ فَإِنْ لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ».

We find the same idea in Sura Yunis 10:38: "Or do they say, 'Why, he has forged it'? Say: 'Then produce a sura like it, and call on whom you can, apart from God, if you speak truly.'"

سورة يونس ١٠: ٣٨ «أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا مَن اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ».



It also says in Sura al-Isra' 17:88: "Say: 'If men and *jinn* banded together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they would never produce its like, not though they backed one another.'"

سورة الإسراء ١٧: ٨٨ «قُلْ لَئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا»

What if we were to take up the challenge and bring one, two or maybe three suras like the Qur'an, without men and *jinn* having to band together? Here are the three such suras:

#### ***Sura al-Khal' (The Casting Off)***

O God, we pray Thee for succour and pardon,  
And we praise Thee and disbelieve not in Thee,  
And we cast off and leave whosoever disobeys Thee.

#### ***Sura al-Hafd (The Hastening)***

O God, Thee we adore,  
And unto Thee do we pray and worship,  
And unto Thee we run and hasten.  
We hope for Thy mercy and fear Thy chastisement;  
Surely Thy chastisement is afflicting.

#### ***Sura al-Nurain (The Two Lights)***

*In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate*  
O believers, believe in the two lights – He sent them down reciting to you My verses and admonishing you of the chastisement of a great Day. Two lights, one is from the other, and I am All-hearing, All-knowing. Surely those who admit the covenant of God, and His Messenger, are in

wonders – to them are the gardens of enjoyment. And those who disbelieved after that they believed; in that they broke their compact and what the Messenger took pledge from them for, they will be cast into Hell.

They wronged themselves and disobeyed the revelation of the Messenger – those are watered with boiling water. God, who enlightened the heavens and earth with what He willed, and chose the angels and the Messengers, and made those of the believers of His creation, He does whatever He wills; there is no God but He, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Those who had been before them devised evil against their Messengers, so I seized them in what they devised; surely my seizing is severe and painful. Surely God destroyed 'Ad and Thamud for they deserved this, and made them for a reminder to you; so haply you may fear.

And Pharaoh, in that he waxed insolent to Moses and his brother Aaron – I drowned him, and those who followed him, altogether. So that he should be a sign unto you; and surely most of you are ungodly. God shall gather them on the Day of Mustering, that they will not be able to answer when they are questioned.

Surely Hell is their abode, and God is All-wise, All-knowing. O Messenger, deliver My warning, so that they should know. Lost indeed are those who have turned away from My signs and judgement, The like of those who have fulfilled your covenant, I have rewarded them with gardens of enjoyment.

I do indeed forgive and reward greatly. And 'Ali is one of the godfearing. Surely We shall heap up the measure for him on the Day of Judgement. And We are not heedless of his being wronged, and have honoured him above his people, altogether. Surely he and his seed are patient, and their enemy is the chief of sinners.

Say to those who disbelieved after that they believed: "You sought the adornment of this life, and sought it hastily, but forgot that which God and His Messenger promised you, and broke the covenants after that they were made sure; and we struck you similitudes, haply you may be guided."

O Messenger, We have sent down to thee clear signs in which are those whom death will seize while yet believers, and in which are made known those who turn away after thee. So turn away from them; they themselves have turned away. They have those who incite them on a day when nothing profits them, neither shall they be shown mercy. They have in Gehenna a dwelling from which they shall not turn. So praise the name of thy Lord, and be among those who worship.

And We surely sent Moses and Aaron with what was left, and they waxed insolent to Aaron, but sweet patience, so We made some of them apes and pigs, and cursed them unto the day they will be resurrected. So be patient, for they will be tried with an affliction; and We have brought you as judge, like the Envoys that were before thee. And We made for you one of them a sponsor, haply they may return. And whoever turns away from My command, surely I make him turn back; let them seek protection in their

unbelief for a while, so that you may not ask of those who swear fealty.

O Messenger, We have made to you in the necks of the believers a covenant, so take it and be of the thankful. 'Ali is indeed obedient in the watches of the night, bowing himself, he being afraid of the world to come and hoping for the reward of his Lord. Say: "Are the evil-doers equal, being cognisant of My chastisement?"

He will put fetters around their necks, while they bemoan their deeds. We have brought you the good tidings of the seed of the righteous, and they will not transgress Our command. There is therefore a prayer from Me upon them, and mercy; whether alive or dead, and the day they will be resurrected. And upon those who will be insolent to them after you – My wrath; in that they are wicked people, lost. And upon those of them that behaved their behaviour – mercy, while they are in the chambers, secure. And praise be to God, the Lord of all being, Amen (from *Al-Qur'an al-Majid*, by Darwaza).

It is known that the first two suras, al-Khal' and al-Hafd, appeared in the copies of the Qur'an of Ubayy Ibn Ka'b and Ibn 'Abbas. Muhammad taught them to 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib, who in turn taught them to the people. 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab recited them in prayer. So why aren't they in the Qur'an that we have with us today? Why have Muslims omitted these suras?

The three suras we have just presented are similar to the Qur'an and in perfect harmony with it, which refutes the Qur'an's allegation that no one can "bring a sura like it". We ask: Are these omitted suras part of the Qur'an? Why did Muslims dis-

agree concerning them? Those who lived long ago approved of them, whereas most of those of later years denied them!

## 12. God Wills Unbelief

**Question 88:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:89: "We should have forged against God a lie if we returned in your creed, after God delivered us from it. It is not for us to return into it, unless God our Lord so will. Our Lord embraces all things in His knowledge."

سورة الأعراف ٧:٨٩ «قَدْ أَفْرَبْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ بَعْدَ إِذْ نَجَّانَا اللَّهُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا».

Al-Baidawi said in explanation of this verse:

"We should have forged against God a lie" means we should have devised a lie. "If we returned in your creed, after God delivered us from it," is a protasis [relative clause of a conditional sentence] whose apodosis [main clause] is omitted. It should be understood as being in the future, because it was not stated as subjunctive but as indicative for exaggeration. The sentence was introduced by Qadd to make it as close as possible to the present tense. So it should mean, "We have now forged a lie if we decide to return after we were delivered." Then we would claim that God has an equal, and that what we held is wrong and what you held is right. Other interpreters say it is an oath, whose supposed full form should be "By God we have forged"; this would then mean that we should not have returned in it, unless God wills [our mortification and apostasy]. This implies that unbelief is by the will of God."

We ask: Does God will unbelief, the most heinous of transgressions? Is this compatible with the holiness, goodness and justice of God? Is it not more commensurate with the glory of God to believe the statement of the Bible, which says that God "desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4)?

## 13. God Tempts?

**Question 89:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:163: "And question them concerning the township which was bordering the sea, when they transgressed the Sabbath, when their fish came to them on the day of their Sabbath, swimming shorewards, but on the day they kept not Sabbath, they came not unto them. Even so we were trying them for their ungodliness."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٦٣ «وَأَسْأَلُهُمْ عَنِ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي كَانَتْ حَاضِرَةَ الْبَحْرِ إِذْ يَعْتَدُونَ فِي السَّبْتِ إِذْ تَأْتِيهِمْ حِيَتَانَهُمْ يَوْمَ سَبْتِهِمْ شُرْعًا وَيَوْمَ لَا يَنْسَبُونَ لِأَتْيِهِمْ كَذَلِكَ نَبْلُوهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ».

This means that the Jews were commanded by God to rest from their works and worship Him on the Sabbath. The fish were made to appear on the Sabbath to tempt them to fish, and then to disappear for the remainder of the days! Can we imagine that God would tempt men, whom He created, to do evil, and even facilitate disobedience by making the fish appear on the Sabbath? The Bible says: "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed" (James 1:13,14).

## 14. Christ Is Like Adam?

**Question 90:** The Qur'an says in Sura Al Imran 3:59: "Truly, the likeness of Jesus, in God's sight, is as Adam's likeness; He created him of dust, then said He unto him, 'Be,' and he was."

سورة آل عمران ٣:٥٩ «إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ».

We hold that Adam is like Christ in that he is the father and representative of mankind. Adam's disobedience, however, dragged all of his offspring into damnation. Christ, however, is a new father and representative for those who believe in Him. His atonement and vicarious work granted them their salvation. Therefore the Bible says that Adam "is a type of Him who was to come" (Romans 5:14).

It is wrong to liken Christ to Adam, if one implies that both Christ and Adam were created by the command of God. Christ does not exist by the word of God, since He Himself is the eternal Word of God, who was born of the Virgin Mary and was made incarnate to save mankind. The Qur'an, after all, makes contradictory statements about Christ. It says in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:17: "They are unbelievers who say, 'God is the Messiah, Mary's son.' Say: 'Who then shall overrule God in any way if He desires to destroy the Messiah, Mary's son, and his mother, and all those who are on earth?'" It says also in Sura al-Zukhruf 43:59: "He is only a servant We blessed, and We made him to be an example to the Children of Israel." Yet, at the same time there are verses that point to the deity of Christ, in that they represent Him as a strange and wonderful person among mankind. The

Qur'an bestows upon Jesus the greatest titles, which were not given to anyone else in the Qur'an. Consider the following:

(1) The Word of God: This honourable name cannot apply to an ordinary creature; it designates Christ alone. He is distinguished by this name among all the angels and men. It occurs twice in the Qur'an, in Suras Al Imran 3:45 and al-Nisa' 4:171: "Mary, God gives thee good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; high honoured shall he be in this world and the next, near stationed to God.... The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him." This is a biblical name of Christ, since the Bible says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:1,2). The word of a man proceeds from him and is a manifestation of his character. It is an audible representation of his mind and thought. It is his means of expressing himself and putting his authority and power into effect. Christ is called the very Word of God. This proves His deity because, just as the word of a man proceeds from him, the Word of God proceeds from God and is in God from eternity. Could it be that God existed for a certain period of time apart from His Word?

(2) The Spirit of God: We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:171: "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only the Messenger of God and His Word that He committed to Mary, and a Spirit from Him." This verse goes beyond the statement of Jesus' apostleship, testifying that He is the Word of God.

And to make sure that we do not misunderstand the expression “the Word of God”, the Qur’an follows it up with “and a Spirit from Him”, which clears all doubt concerning Christ’s extraordinary apostleship. It definitely points to the fact that He is a Son sent from His Father to our world, as the rays of the sun that are emitted from it to the earth. There is no difference between the Christian creed, which maintains that Christ is “light of light, true God of true God, begotten, and not made, of one being with the Father”, and the statement of the Qur’an that He is the Spirit of God, or a Spirit from Him. Do not all these statements indicate that He is of the same essence and substance as God?

(3) Born of a Virgin by the Holy Spirit: Of all human beings, Christ alone was born of a virgin! He is unique among the prophets by reason of the miraculous way He entered our world. He is the Word and Spirit of God, who descended in the Virgin Mary’s womb, was incarnated and made manifest to the people as a sign and mercy for all. If He is a son, who is His mother? Who is His father? Sura al-Anbiya’ 21:91 gives the answer: “We breathed into her of Our spirit and appointed her and her son to be a sign unto all beings.”

(4) Holy and free of evil: The Qur’an testifies to Christ’s absolute holiness in contrast to the rest of mankind. He has never sinned. We read in Sura Al Imran 3:36: “And I have named her Mary, and commend her to Thee with her seed, to protect them from the accursed Satan.” In a hadith by Muslim, Muhammad is reported to have said to ‘Aisha: “There is none born among men but is thrust by Satan at his birth, so that he raises his voice screaming because of

Satan’s goad, except for the son of Mary and his mother.” In al-Ghazzali’s *Ihya’ Ulum al-Din* (vol. 3, p. 96), we read: “When Jesus, peace be upon him, was born, the devils came to Satan and said, ‘The idols have been turned upside-down.’ He said, ‘This is surely [due to] an event that took place. Stay in your places.’ He flew till he reached the two ends of the earth, but found nothing [to tell him]. But he found that Jesus, peace be upon him, had been born, and the angels were surrounding him. Satan returned to [the devils] and said, ‘A Prophet was born yesterday; no female has ever given birth to a child except that I am there, save this one. So abandon the notion that idols will be worshipped after tonight. But approach the children of man with alacrity and dispatch.’”

But we ask: What is the secret of this absolute holiness and perfection? Why is there no mention in the Qur’an of any sin Jesus committed, as is the case with the other prophets? Why isn’t there any mention in the Qur’an that Jesus repented or that God accepted His repentance as He did with the rest of the prophets and messengers? Isn’t it because Jesus is holy, being the Word of God and His Spirit?

(5) His ability to work miracles: The Qur’an attests to Christ’s absolute power to work miracles, which had no equal among the prophets. The Qur’an attributes to Christ the knowledge of the unseen in Sura Al Imran 3:49: “I will inform you too of what things you eat, and what you treasure up in your houses. Surely in that is a sign for you, if you are believers.” Yet, the knowledge of the unseen is

exclusively a divine attribute, as is made clear in Sura Yunis 10:20: "Say: 'The Unseen belongs only to God.'" The Qur'an also ascribes to Christ the ability to create. It says in Sura Al Imran 3:49: "I will create for you out of clay as the likeness of a bird; then I will breathe into it, and it will be a bird, by the leave of God." In this same verse the Qur'an also ascribes to Christ the power to heal the sick and raise the dead: "I will also heal the blind and the leper, and bring to life the dead, by the leave of God." The power to create is exclusively a divine attribute, for the Qur'an says in Sura al-Nahl 16:17: "Is He who creates as he who does not create?" The same holds true concerning the power to raise the dead: "It is He who gives life, and makes to die" (Sura al-Mu'minun 23:80).

(6) His ascension to heaven: The Qur'an testifies that Christ was lifted up from earth to God, and that He is alive forever in heaven. It says in Sura Al Imran 3:55: "When God said, 'Jesus, I will take thee to Me and will raise thee to Me, and I will purify thee of those who believe not. I will set thy followers above the unbelievers till the Resurrection Day.'" In contrast, the Qur'an says with regard to Muhammad in Sura al-Anbiya' 21:34,35: "We have not assigned to any mortal before thee to live forever; therefore if thou diest, will they live forever? Every soul shall taste of death." The question that presents itself is, How did Christ conquer death, and live eternally in glory and honour, when ordinary people in all generations have died?

(7) Highly honoured in this world and the next: The Qur'an testifies to the high honour of Christ both in this world and in

the one to come. We read in Sura Al Imran 3:45: "When the angels said, 'Mary, God gives thee good tidings of a Word from Him whose name is Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary; high honoured shall he be in this world and the next, near stationed to God.'" "

In *Al-Jalalan* we read: "'High honoured' means high favour – 'in this world' on account of his prophethood, and in 'the next' by the intercession and sublime station." Why does the Qur'an ascribe to Christ in particular high honour in this world and the next? It says in Sura al-Sajda 32:4: "God is He that created the heavens and the earth, and what between them is, in six days, then seated Himself upon the Throne. Apart from Him, you have no protector neither mediator [Arabic: intercessor]; will you not remember?" Why then didn't God grant authority to any man to intercede or mediate, except Christ? Isn't it because Christ is the incarnate Son of God, the only mediator between God and man, the One that gives life to the dead, the One who is the very life of our bodies and souls?

(8) The Saviour: The Qur'an calls Christ *Isa*, which is "Jesus", 25 times. This proper name of Christ means "Saviour". It calls Him Christ eight times, or the Messiah, which means "anointed of God" to be king, prophet and priest. These appellations designate Him as the Saviour of mankind, the one who brought the good news, the gospel. The word *gospel*, a Greek word that means "good news", occurs 21 times in the Qur'an. Why is Jesus distinguished by the good news? The Qur'anic account of Jesus far

exceeds the accounts of other men, including Muhammad. Doesn't this indicate Christ's uniqueness and the difference between him and all the rest of humanity? The Bible says the same about the divinity of Christ.

### 15. God Consults with Angels?

**Question 91:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:30: "And when thy Lord said to the angels, 'I am setting in the earth a viceroy.' They said, 'What, wilt Thou set therein one who will do corruption there, and shed blood, while we proclaim Thy praises and call Thee Holy?' He said, 'Assuredly I know that you know not.'"

سورة البقرة ٢: ٣٠ «وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ».

Why would God seek the counsel of angels when he has no need of it? The Bible says, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgements and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to Him? For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:33-36). Is it conceivable that the righteous angels, who are different from the fallen ones, disobey God, object to His desires, claim to have knowledge of the unseen, discredit Adam before he was created and recommend their own selves?

### 16. Bowing Down to Someone Other Than God

**Question 92:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:31-34: "And he taught Adam the names, all of them; then He presented them unto the angels and said, 'Now tell the names of these, if you speak truly.' They said, 'Glory be to Thee! We know not save what Thou hast taught us. Surely Thou art the All-knowing, the All-wise.' He said, 'Adam, tell them their names.' And when he had told them their names He said, 'Did I not tell you I know the unseen things of the heavens and earth? And I know what things you reveal, and what you were hiding.' And We said to the angels, 'Bow yourselves to Adam'; so they bowed themselves, save Iblis; he refused, and waxed proud, and so he became one of the unbelievers."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٣١-٣٤ «وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ».

We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:11-13: "Then We said to the angels: 'Bow yourselves to Adam'; so they bowed themselves, save Iblis – he was not of those that bowed themselves. Said he, 'What prevented thee to bow thyself, when I commanded thee?' Said he, 'I am better than he; Thou createdst me of fire, and him Thou createdst of clay.' Said He, 'Get thee down out of it; it is not for thee to wax proud here.'"

سورة الأعراف ٧: ١١-١٣ «ثُمَّ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ قَالَ مَا مَنَعَكَ أَلَّا تَسْجُدَ إِذْ أَمَرْتُكَ قَالَ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ قَالَ فَاهْبِطْ مِنْهَا فَمَا يَكُونُ لَكَ أَنْ تَتَكَبَّرَ فِيهَا».

We read also in Sura al-Hijr 15:28-33: "And when thy Lord said to the angels, 'See, I am creating a mortal of a clay of mud moulded. When I have shaped him, and breathed My spirit in him, fall you down, bowing before him!' Then the angels bowed themselves all together, save Iblis; he refused among those bowing. Said He, 'What ails thee, Iblis, that thou art not among those bowing?' Said he, 'I would never bow myself before a mortal whom Thou hast created of a clay of mud moulded.'"

سورة الحجر ١٥: ٢٨-٣٣ «وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتَهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَى أَنْ يَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ قَالَ يَا إِبْلِيسُ مَا لَكَ أَلَّا تَكُونَ مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ قَالَ لَمْ أَكُنْ لِأَسْجُدَ لِبَشَرٍ خَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ صَلْصَالٍ مِنْ حَمَإٍ مَسْنُونٍ».

Suras Ta Ha 20:116 and al-Isra' 17:61 likewise convey the same meaning.

From the aforementioned Qur'anic texts, we see that God initially taught Adam the names, and then He presented them to the angels, who were unable to name them, admitting their inability! How can God test the angels in something they do not know, and give the answers to Adam, so that he could know what they could not? How could God order them to worship

Adam? God forbid that He would command the creatures to worship someone other than Himself! God said in Exodus 34:14: "You shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."

### 17. Gehenna – for Righteous and Unrighteous Alike

**Question 93:** We read in Sura al-Hijr 15:43,44: "Gehenna shall be their promised land all together. Seven gates it has, and unto each gate a set portion of them belongs."

سورة الحجر ١٥: ٤٣ و ٤٤ «لَإِنَّ جَهَنَّمَ لَمَوْعِدُهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ لَهَا سَبْعَةُ أَبْوَابٍ لِكُلِّ بَابٍ مِنْهُمْ جُزْءٌ مَقْسُومٌ».

We read in Sura Maryam 19:71: "Not one of you there is, but he shall go down to it; that for thy Lord is a thing decreed, determined. Then We shall deliver those that were godfearing."

سورة مريم ١٩: ٧١ «وَإِنْ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا وَارِدُهَا كَانَ عَلَى رَبِّكَ حَتْمًا مَقْضِيًّا ثُمَّ نُنْجِي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا».

'Ali Ibn Abi Talib asked once, "Do you know what the gates of Gehenna are like?" Then he placed one of his hands on the other, indicating that there are seven gates, one on top of the other. Ibn Juraij said, "Fire is [divided into] downward steps; the first is *Jahannam* ['Gehenna'], then *Laza* ['fumace'], then *al-Hutama* ['the crushed'], then *al-Sa'ir* ['the blaze'], then *Saqar* ['scorching heat'], then Hell, then the Pit." Al-Dahhak said, "The monotheists who enter the fire in order to be chastised according to their sins are in the first step, and they shall come out of it thereafter. The Christians are in the second step. The Jews are



in the third. The Sabaeans are in the fourth. The fire-worshippers are in the fifth. The unbelievers are in the sixth. The deceivers are in the seventh." Al-Baidawi said, "It has seven gates through which they will be admitted for their great number. The layers they will descend, according to their rank, are respectively: *Jahannam*, *al-Laza*, *al-Hutama*, *al-Sa'ir*, *Saqar*, Hell and the Pit." The gate of each has a divided portion that was set apart for it. The highest is for the rebellious monotheists, the second is for the Jews, the third is for Christians, the fourth is for the Sabaeans, the fifth is for the fire-worshippers, the six is for the unbelievers and the seventh is for the deceivers."

How can a believer go to Hell? What is the benefit of repentance and divine forgiveness then? The Bible asserts that there is a place for the righteous called Heaven, and a place for the wicked called Hell: "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46). The righteous cannot go to Hell because God has justified them with His perfect righteousness. Consequently, they will not leave Heaven and go to Hell either (Luke 16:26).

If all the people will go to hell, as the Qur'an says, and if there is only one group of Muslims that will be saved, as the Hadith claims, won't the fear of death and condemnation reign over the lives of all Muslims? What a great difference there is between the life of a fearful and perplexed Muslim and that of the Christian, who desires to go away from this world to be with Christ, and who awaits the Day of Resurrection with joy, knowing that he will receive the crown of life!

## 18. Paradise Is All Fruits, Meats, and Houris

**Question 94:** We read in Sura al-Waqi'a 56:15-23 that the inhabitants of paradise will be seated "upon close-wrought couches reclining upon them, set face to face, immortal youths going round about them with goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring [containing no intoxicating beverages] and such fruits as they shall choose, and such flesh of fowl as they desire, and wide-eyed *huris*, as the likeness of hidden pearls."

سورة الواقعة ٥٦: ١٥-٢٣ (عَلَى سُرُرٍ مَّوْضُونَةٍ مَّتَّكِينَ عَلَيْهَا مُتَقَابِلِينَ يَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِمْ وِلْدَانٌ مُّخَلَّدُونَ بِأَكْوَابٍ وَأَبَارِيقَ وَكَأْسٍ مِنْ مَّعِينٍ (أَي عَيْن نَابِعَةٍ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ) لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنَزَّفُونَ وَفَأَكْبَهُتُ مِمَّا يَتَخَبَّزُونَ وَلَحْمِ طَيْرٍ مِمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ وَحُورٌ عِينٌ كَأَمْثَالِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الْمَكْنُونِ).

This is a paradise that promotes the lusts of the flesh and encourages sensual indulgence. In place of the scorching desert, Muhammad promised a paradise "beneath [which] rivers flow" (Sura al-Ra'd 13:35). In place of sleeping on the sand, he promised them a paradise with "uplifted couches" (Sura al-Ghashiya 88:13), upon which believers shall lie "gazing" (Sura al-Mutaffifun 83:23). In place of camel skin, he promised them a paradise, wherein "they shall be adorned with bracelets of gold and with pearls, and their apparel there shall be of silk" (Sura al-Hajj 22:23). In place of drought and barrenness, he promised them two paradises full of "fruits and palm trees, and pomegranates" (Sura al-Rahman 55:68) and "vineyards" (Sura al-Naba' 78:32). In place of tents that can neither protect against the heat of summer nor the bitter cold of winter, he promised them "lofty chambers, above which are built lofty chambers"

(Sura al-Zumar 39:20); "therein shall they see neither sun nor bitter cold" (Sura al-Insan 76:13). In place of Bedouin women, he promised them *huris* as wives: "We shall espouse them to wide-eyed *huris*" (Sura al-Tur 52:20), "restraining their glances, untouched before them by any man or *jinn*" (Sura al-Rahman 55:56), "spotless virgins, chastely amorous, like of age" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:36,37). In place of being deprived of servants, he promised them youths who will bring them delicious and dainty food, "immortal youths going round about them with goblets, and ewers, and a cup from a spring" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:17,18), and "immortal youths shall go about them; when [one sees] them, [one supposes] them [to be] scattered pearls" (Sura al-Insan 76:19). In place of the food of poverty, he promised them flesh: "We shall succour them with fruits and flesh such as they desire" (Sura al-Tur 52:22) and "such flesh of fowl as they desire" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:21). And in place of hunger, distress and hardship of living, he promised them a paradise, "[wherein] are rivers of water unstaling, rivers of milk unchanging in flavour, and rivers of wine – a delight to the drinkers, rivers, too, of honey purified" (Sura Muhammad 47:15). What a great difference between this "paradise" and that of Christ: "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven" (Matthew 22:30); "For the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17).

In al-Ghazzali's book, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, we read:

The Messenger of God was asked about the verse that says, "And goodly dwelling-places in the garden of Eden"; to which he replied, "They are palaces of pearls; in each palace there are seventy houses of ruby, and in each

house there are seventy homes of emerald, and in each home there is a bed, and upon each bed there are seventy spreads of every colour, and upon every bed there is one espoused of the wide-eyed *huris*. In each home there are seventy tables, and upon each table there are seventy sorts of food. And in each home there are seventy maids. Each morning, the believer will be given the power for all of these."

Muhammad also said, "The man among the inhabitants of paradise will marry five hundred *huris*, four thousand virgins, and eight thousand women!"

It seems that, in describing its paradise, the Qur'an left out all references to the spiritual happiness the believers will have in the love and praise of their Creator!

### 19. *Barzakh*

**Question 95:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:169: "Count not those who were slain in God's way as dead, but rather living with their Lord, by Him provided."

سورة آل عمران ٣: ١٦٩ وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْواتًا بَلْ  
أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said, "Ibn 'Abbas reported that Muhammad said, 'The spirits of the martyrs [who were killed in wars] are in the interior of green birds that go down to paradise, eat of its fruits and takes shelter in lamps hung in the shade of the Throne.' *Barzakh* ['limbo'] is the place where the spirits of the wicked are kept, so that they cannot come back to this world, as the Qur'an

claims in Sura al-Mu'minun 23:100: 'Till, when death comes to one of them, he says, "My Lord, return me... and there behind them is a barrier [Arabic: *barzakh*] until the day that they shall be raised up.'" In this 'limbo' the spirits of the righteous are supposed to be kept inside green birds."

Ibn 'Abbas reported that Muhammad said to his Companions, "When your fellow-believers were hurt in the Battle of Uhud, their spirits were put inside green birds that go down to the rivers of paradise, eat of its fruits, and take shelter in lamps of gold hung in the shade of the Throne. When they found how good the food and drink was, they said, 'We would that our brothers would know the working of God, otherwise they would refrain from fighting [Arabic: *jihad*] and become weary of war.' God said, 'I shall give them this message for you.' And said, 'Count not those who were slain in God's way as dead, but rather living with their Lord, by Him provided.'"

But we ask: If God created man in the fairest stature (form), as the Qur'an says, how then can he be equal to the birds when he goes to paradise? How can the wicked be changed into pigs and apes, and the righteous into birds and sparrows?

## 20. A Dog Stops the Revelation

**Question 96:** We read in Sura al-Duha 93:1-3: "By the white forenoon and the brooding night! Thy Lord has neither forsaken thee nor hates thee."

سورة الضحى ٩٣:١-٣ وَالضُّحَى وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا سَجَى مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَىٰ

Al-Baidawi said, "It was said that the revelation delayed to come to the Messenger of God for certain days... because a dead puppy was under his bed.... So the unbelievers said, 'Muhammad's Lord has forsaken him and hates him.' The verse in Sura al-Duha was revealed as an answer to this, they said."

Sa'id Ibn Mansur brought out, on the authority of Jundub: "Gabriel delayed to come to Muhammad, so that the unbelievers said he had forsaken Muhammad."

Al-Hakim brought out, on the authority of Zaid Ibn Arqam: "Muhammad lingered certain days during which Gabriel did not come upon him, so that Umm Jamil, Abu Lahab's wife, said, 'Your friend has surely forsaken and hated you.' To which he answered: 'By the white forenoon and the brooding night! Thy Lord has neither forsaken thee nor hates thee.'" It was also reported, and confirmed, that a puppy entered Muhammad's house and hid under the bed. It died, and the revelation ceased. Therefore Muhammad said to his servant woman Khawla, 'Khawla, what happened in my house; Gabriel does not come to me any more?'... Then she said to herself: 'Why don't I tidy up the house and sweep it?' So she took a broom, thrust it under the bed and brought out the puppy. Muhammad began shuddering in his mantle. The shuddering always took him whenever the revelation came upon him. And he said, 'By the white forenoon and the brooding night! Thy Lord has neither forsaken thee nor hates thee.'"

It was also reported on the authority of 'Arda that he said, "Gabriel delayed coming to Muhammad, and the latter was in great alarm. So Khadija said, 'I perceive that your Lord hated you because of the alarm He sees you in.' Opinions are divided as to

the time of cessation of the revelation; Ibn 'Abbas maintained that it was fifteen days, but others claimed as many as forty."

We would like to ask: What kind of a revelation is it that ceases because of a puppy? And what kind of an angel is it that avoids a prophet because of a puppy? What has a dog to do with the revelation of God? Weren't most prophets, such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and David, shepherds of sheep who kept sheepdogs? Why then haven't we heard of any of them being forsaken by heaven because of their dogs? Doesn't this indicate that Muhammad lied when he claimed he received the oracles of God?

## 21. Prayer Atones for Sins

**Question 97:** We read in Sura Hud 11:114: "And perform the prayer at the two ends of the day and nigh of the night; surely the good deeds will drive away the evil deeds."

سورة هود ١١:١١٤ «وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَرُفَاً مِنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ».

Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (5:427) quoted Abu al-Yusr as having said, "A woman who wanted to buy dates came to me. I said [to her], 'There are dates in the house better than these.' So she went into the house with me, and I fell on her and kissed her. So I went to the Prophet and told him. He bowed his head in silence for an hour, till God revealed to him: 'Perform the prayer at the two ends of day and night and nigh at nightfall; surely good deeds shall drive away evil deeds.' He said, 'Is it for me in particular, or for people in general?' Muhammad said, 'It is for

people in general'" (al-Suyuti in *Asbab al-Nuzul* of Sura Hud 11:114).

But we ask: How can people commit all sorts of evil and then receive atonement by the five prayers? Doesn't this contradict God's holiness and justice? Sin cannot be atoned for except by the shedding of blood, as the Bible says: "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). How can anyone take lightly the hideousness and terrible enormity of sin? Christ taught, "Whoever looks at a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28).

## 22. Christ's Likeness Is Cast upon Another?

**Question 98:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:157, 158: "And for their saying, 'We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God' – yet they did not slay him, neither crucified him, only a likeness of that was shown to them. Those who are at variance concerning him surely are in doubt regarding him; they have no knowledge of him, except the following of surmise; and they slew him not of a certainty – no indeed; God raised him up to Him; God is All-mighty, All-wise."

سورة النساء ٤:١٥٧ و١٥٨ «وَقَوْلِهِمْ (اليهود) إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَكِنْ شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا بَل رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزاً حَكِيمًا».

Because of this one Qur'anic verse some Muslims deny the crucifixion of Christ, although the Qur'an affirms in three other places that Christ died, rose from the dead, and was lifted up to

heaven. The first of these is Sura Al Imran 3:55: "Jesus, I will take thee to Me and will raise thee to Me, and I will purify thee of those who believe not. I will set thy followers above the unbelievers till the Resurrection Day." The second is Sura al-Ma'ida 5:117, where Christ says, "But when Thou didst take me to Thyself, Thou wast Thyself the watcher over them." The third is in Sura Maryam 19:33: "Peace be upon me, the day I was born, and the day I die, and the day I am raised up alive!"

We ask: How can the Qur'an say in one verse that Christ was not crucified, but was raised up alive, yet maintain in other verses that He died and was raised up alive?

If we grant that God would cast the likeness of a certain man upon another, wouldn't this make us doubt everything else? For example, if you were to meet a Mr. Zaid, it might be that he is not really Zaid, but someone else who resembled Zaid! If this is generalised, nearly all that is true will turn out to be false! We would then challenge unbroken succession of narrated reports (*tawatur*) because we would doubt whether what the ancients saw was really true or if it only bore resemblance to the truth! We would even have reason to doubt the laws that the prophets, or the examples of the prophets, brought to us!

Is it just for God to cast the likeness of Christ upon someone else and make him die? Don't the Jews believe that God honours and loves Christ? Those who deny the crucifixion depict for us a God who is pleased with deceit and lying!

### 23. The Fast of Ramadan Pardons Sins

**Question 99:** We read in Sura al-Qadr 97:3-5: "The Night of Power is better than a thousand months; in it the angels and the

Spirit descend, by the leave of their Lord, upon every command. Peace it is till, the rising of dawn."

سورة القدر ٩٧:٣-٥ ﴿لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ﴾.

Ibn 'Abbas said: "When the Night of Power [or Portion] comes, God commands Gabriel to descend to the earth, together with seventy thousand angels of the inhabitants of the lotus-tree of the seventh heaven, having with them banners of light. They focus their banners on the sacred mosque, Muhammad's mosque, and the far mosque in Jerusalem. Gabriel focuses a green banner on the black Ka'ba. Then the angels disperse to all the countries of the world, and go to every believer they find in prayer or remembrance [of God] and salute him, shake hands with him, say Amen to his prayer, and ask for forgiveness for the entire Muslim nation until daybreak."

It is reported in another hadith: "God releases on every day of Ramadan sixty thousand slaves from hell. When the last day [of Ramadan] comes, he releases as many as he had already released."

But we ask: Does the mere fasting of Ramadan lead to salvation and remission of sins? Isn't this in conflict with the justice and holiness of God? God, in His wisdom, has reconciled His justice to His holiness through the incarnation and vicarious death of Christ. The risen Christ gives repentant sinners the power to live a righteous and holy life. To rely solely upon the mercy of God, without availing oneself to His salvation, does away with the justice of God. This makes God look like a king

who issues a decree but neglects implementing it and, therefore, does not punish those who break it!

## 24. No Prophet from the Seed of Ishmael

**Question 100:** We read in Sura al-Jathiya 45:16: "Indeed, We gave the Children of Israel the Book, the Judgement, and the Prophethood, and We provided them with good things, and We preferred them above all beings."

سورة الجاثية ١٦:٤٥ «وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنَّبُوءَةَ  
وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ».

And again in Sura al-Ankabut 29:27: "And We gave him Isaac and Jacob, and We appointed the Prophecy and the Book to be among his seed; We gave him his wage in this world, and in the world to come he shall be among the righteous."

سورة العنكبوت ٢٧:٢٩ «وَوَهَبْنَا لَهُ إِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي ذُرِّيَّتِهِ  
النَّبُوءَةَ وَالْكِتَابَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ أَجْرَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمَنْ الصَّالِحِينَ».

This is a declaration of the fact that prophethood was restricted to the Children of Israel alone, which agrees with the viewpoint of the Torah, for the Torah warned the Children of Israel about receiving anyone from the seed of Ishmael who would claim to be a prophet: "And Abraham said to God, 'Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!' Then God said, 'No, Sarah your wife, shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him'" (Genesis 17:18,19). "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne

to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, 'Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son [namely, with Isaac].' And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, 'Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called'" (Genesis 21:9-12). God also said to Abraham: "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). God repeated this promise to Isaac and said to him after his father's death, "And I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of the heavens; I will give to your descendants all these lands; and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 26:4). This same message was repeated to Jacob, to whom God said when he had to run away from his brother's sight, "Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 28:14).

So the blessing for the world and the divine covenant of the promised seed are restricted to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – a lineage which ultimately led up to Christ. The New Testament has confirmed what the Old Testament said about the restriction of the prophethood to the Children of Israel. Christ said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). The apostle Paul said, "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God" (Romans 3:1,2). He also described the Jews as being "Israelites, to whom pertain

the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God, and the promises; of whom are the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen" (Romans 9:4,5).

Seeing that prophethood was restricted to the Children of Israel, according to the unanimous testimony of the Torah, the Injil and the Qur'an, how then could Muhammad claim to be a prophet? How could the Qur'an say in Sura Maryam 19:54, "And mention in the Book Ishmael; he was true to his promise, and he was a Messenger, a Prophet", and say later that Muhammad alone was the Prophet of the Arabs, with no predecessor having been sent to them: "We have not given them any Books to study, nor have We sent them before thee any warner" (Sura Saba' 34:44); "That thou mayest warn a people to whom no warner came before thee, that haply so they may be guided" (Sura al-Sajda 32:3)?

The Qur'an acknowledges the advantage the Children of Israel have over all others when it says, "Children of Israel, remember My blessing wherewith I blessed you, and that I have preferred you above all beings" (Sura al-Baqara 2:47). It says repeatedly that Isaac, the second son of Abraham, and his grandson Jacob were God's gift to Abraham, without the least mention of Ishmael, even though Ishmael was Abraham's firstborn. The following references attest to this fact:

"And We gave to him Isaac and Jacob – each one We guided" (Sura al-An'am 6:84).

"So, when he went apart from them and that they were serving, apart from God, We gave him Isaac and Jacob, and each We made a Prophet; and We gave them of Our

mercy, and We appointed unto them a tongue of truthfulness, sublime" (Sura Maryam 19:49,50).

"And We gave him Isaac and Jacob in superfluity, and every one made We righteous and appointed them to be leaders guiding by Our command, and We revealed to them the doing of good deeds, and to perform the prayer, and to pay the alms, and Us they served" (Sura al-Anbiya' 21:72,73).

"And We blessed him [*i.e.*, Abraham], and Isaac" (Sura al-Saffat 37:113).

## 25. The Arab Countries Are for Christ

**Question 101:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:82: "And thou wilt surely find the nearest of them in love to the believers are those who say 'We are Christians'; that, because some of them are priests and monks, and they wax not proud."

سورة المائدة ٥: ٨٢ «لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ  
أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَى ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ  
مِنْهُمْ قَسِيصِينَ وَرُهَبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ».

Christianity spread in the land of Arabia, and some Arab tribes like Himyar, Ghassan, Rabi'a, Najran and Hira embraced it. The book of Acts mentions some Arabs among those present on the feast of Pentecost at Jerusalem (Acts 2:11). These Arabs certainly must have carried the news of Christianity back to their countries, thus fulfilling the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah: "Sing to the Lord a new song, and His praise from the ends of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that is in it, you coastlands

and you inhabitants of them! Let the wilderness and its cities lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar [Ishmael's second son] inhabits. Let the inhabitants of Sela [the stronghold of the land of Edom] sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to the Lord, and declare his praise in the coastlands" (Isaiah 42:10-12).

If the Qur'an so elevates the Christians, why then have Muslim Arabs persecuted them? Why have they killed some of them and forced others to embrace Islam, while the rest they sent into exile?

## 26. A Beast Devours the Revelation

**Question 102:** We read in Sura al-Hijr 15:9: "It is We who sent down the Remembrance, and We watch over it."

سورة الحجر ٩:١٥ «إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ».

Ibn Maja reported: "Aisha said that the verses of *al-Rajm* ['stoning'] and of *al-Rada'a* ['gestation'] were sent down... and the sheet of paper on which they were written was under my bed. Then the Messenger of God died. And while I was busy on account of his death, a beast came in and devoured the sheet of paper."

If the Qur'an really contains divine oracles, why didn't God keep it from being digested in the belly of a beast?

## 27. Fire Devours the Revelation

**Question 103:** We read in Sura al-Fath 48:23: "And thou shalt never find any changing the wont [or law] of God."

سورة الفتح ٢٣:٤٨ «وَلَنْ نَجِدَ لِسِنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا».

'Uthman, the third Rightly-Guided Caliph, burned all the copies of the Qur'an that differed from the one that he had written.

We ask: Weren't the copies of the Qur'an that differed from the copy of 'Uthman nonetheless from God? Why then did 'Uthman burn them? And if they were the oracles of God, why didn't He keep them from being burned and lost forever? Why did 'Uthman replace the copies of the Qur'an with another one; burning the others, and keeping his own?

## 28. God Misleads and Tortures Man

**Question 104:** We read in Sura Ibrahim 14:4: "He guides whosoever He will; and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise."

سورة إبراهيم ١٤:٤ «فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ».

The same idea is expressed in the following verses:

"So God leads astray whosoever he will, and He guides whosoever he will" (Sura al-Muddaththir 74:31).

سورة المدثر ٣١:٧٤ «كَذَلِكَ يُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ».

"God has set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a covering, and their awaits them a mighty chastisement" (Sura al-Baqara 2:7).

سورة البقرة ٧:٢ «خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةً وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ».



“Whosoever God guides, he is rightly guided; and whom He leads astray – they are the losers. We have created for Gehenna many *jinn* and men” (Sura al-A‘raf 7:178,179).

سورة الأعراف ١٧٨:٧ و ١٧٩ «مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِي وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسِ».

“Excepting those on whom thy Lord has mercy. To that end He created them, and perfectly is fulfilled the word of thy Lord: ‘I shall assuredly fill Gehenna with *jinn* and men all together’” (Sura Hud 11:119).

سورة هود ١١٩:١١ «إِلَّا مَنْ رَحِمَ رَبُّكَ وَلِذَلِكَ خَلَقَهُمْ وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ لِأَمَلَانِ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ».

“If We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance; but now My word is realised – ‘Assuredly I shall fill Gehenna with *jinn* and men all together’” (Sura al-Sajda 32:13).

سورة السجدة ١٣:٣٢ «وَلَوْ شِئْنَا لَآتَيْنَا كُلَّ نَفْسٍ هُدَاهَا وَلَكِنْ حَقَّ الْقَوْلُ مِنِّي لَأَمَلَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ».

But we ask: What sort of god is this that leads the people he created astray in order to fill Gehenna with them, even though he had already irrevocably destined them there from the beginning? Where is man’s dignity and freedom of choice? What is the meaning of the commandments and the prohibitions, the laws, and the encouragement of reward and the warning of punishment?

## 29. God Ordained Evil

**Question 105:** We read in Sura al-Talaq 65:3: “God attains His purpose. God has appointed a measure for everything.”

سورة الطلاق ٣:٦٥ «إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِأَلْفِ أَمْرٍ قَدَرًا».

The following verses also attest to the sovereignty of God:

“But you will not unless God wills” (Sura al-Insan 76:30).

سورة الإنسان ٣٠:٧٦ «وَمَا تَشَاؤُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ».

“We have destroyed the likes of you; is there any that will remember? Everything that they have done is in the Scrolls, and everything, great and small, is inscribed” (Sura al-Qamar 54:51-53).

سورة القمر ٥٤:٥١-٥٣ «وَلَقَدْ أَهْلَكْنَا أَشْيَاعَكُمْ فَهَلْ مِنْ مَدَّكِرٍ كُفٍّ فَعَلُوهُ فِي الزُّبُرِ وَكُلُّ صَغِيرٍ وَكَبِيرٍ مُنْتَطَرٌ».

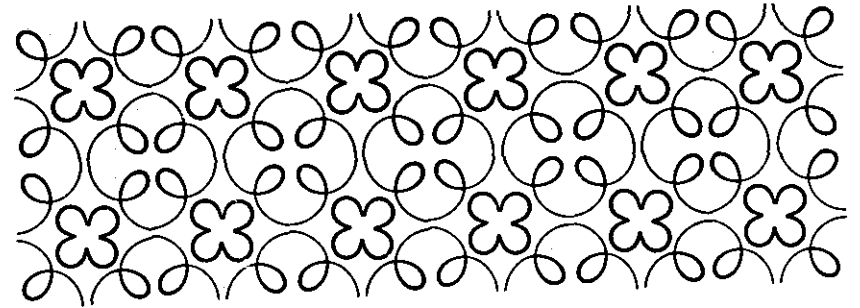
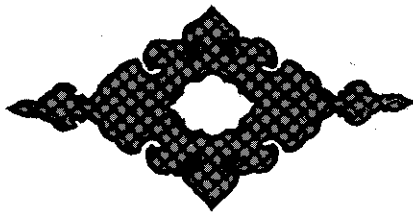
“Behold, We sent it down on the Night of Power; and what shall teach thee what is the Night of Power? The Night of Power is better than a thousand months; in it the angels and the Spirit descend, by the leave of their Lord, upon every command” (Sura al-Qadr 97:1-4).

سورة القدر ٩٧:١-٤ «إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّوحِ فِيهَا بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ».

From these and many other verses it is clear that the Muslim

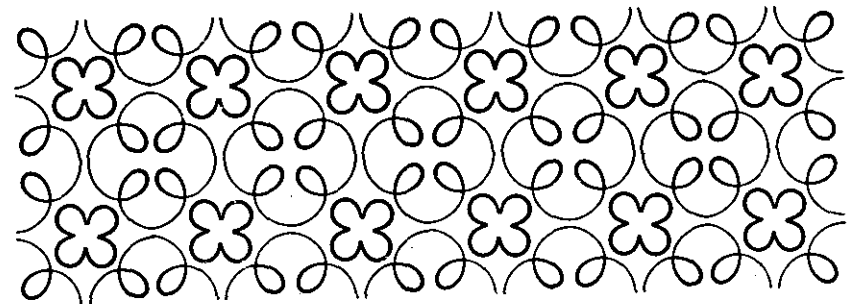
viewpoint is that all that happens in the world, whether good or evil, is from God! Thus, God is the original cause of evil, and the message of the prophets and God's commissioning them to preach to the people is a useless nonsense! This, however, is contrary to biblical teaching. For Christ addresses Jerusalem, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate" (Matthew 23:37,38). By saying "you were not willing", He made known to us that the free will of man counts. There is another example from the life of Jesus that explains the importance of man's will. He once said to a rich young man, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Matthew 19:16,17,21).

Philosophers have described animals as creatures endowed with senses and governed by will. So if the definition of an animal states that it acts by its own will, how can we possibly imagine that humans, who are the most elevated among God's rational creation, are helpless, compelled to either obedience or disobedience? If it is a matter of compulsion, what then is the benefit of the intellect?



## *Part Five*

### *Grammatical Questions*





Before we delve into the grammatical errors of the Qur'an we should point out a few things about the grammar of the Arabic language, without which it will be difficult to understand the significance of these errors, or even why they are considered to be errors.

The Arabic language is an ancient Semitic language, as old as biblical Hebrew or Aramaic. Semitic languages in general, and Arabic in particular, are highly inflected languages that assign the role or function of a word according to its case ending, not according to its position in a sentence. The case endings of words are therefore very important in understanding a given text or phrase, and if these case endings are confused or jumbled, the reader will not be able to grasp the meaning. The cases in Arabic are: the nominative, the accusative, the genitive and the apocopate. The nominative case is the case of the subject or predicate. The accusative case is the case of the object or of any noun that directly follows an accusative particle, like *inna* or its "sister particles", or any noun that comes after *kana* or its "sister verbs". What we may call with a bit of license the genitive case, or more descriptively, the construct case, is the case of the second term of an *idafa* (addition) construction. Verbs can be put in the apocopate form in Arabic, which results in the loss of a vowel, when they are preceded by certain particles or when they are in a subjunctive or conditional clause. The first part in such a clause is called the protasis, and the second is called the apodosis.

Another aspect of Arabic is the consistent agreement of gender and number between the nominal and verbal subject and the predicate, between the noun and the adjective that qualifies it, and between the verb and the noun that carries out the action

(the agent). There are some other features of the Arabic grammar that we will touch on further along.

### 1. A Nominative Noun That Should Be Accusative

**Question 106:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:69: "Surely they that believe, and those of Jewry, and the Sabaeans...."

سورة المائدة ٥:٦٩ «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِئُونَ».

This verse in the original Arabic has the word for Sabaeans (*sabi'un*) in the nominative, but it ought to be in the accusative because it is added to all the previous nouns that are accusative themselves as a result of following *inna*. Thus the word for Sabaeans should have been *sabi'ina*, which appears in Suras al-Baqara 2:62 and al-Hajj 22:17.

### 2. The Subject Is Incorrectly Accusative

**Question 107:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:124: "My covenant shall not reach the evildoers."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٢٤ «لَا يَتَّالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ».

This wrong and awkward translation is in fact a result of an unbelievable grammatical mistake in the Arabic Qur'an. The Qur'an meant to say, "The evildoers shall not attain to My covenant," but since the word *al-zalimin* ["the evildoers"] appears in the accusative rather than the correct nominative, the translator ended up saying that the covenant does not reach the evildoers, an image that is very foreign to the Arabic mind. In fact, the Qur'an should have simply said *al-zalimun*, and the problem would have been solved!

### 3. A Feminine Subject with a Masculine Predicate

**Question 108:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:56: "Surely the mercy of God is nigh...."

سورة الأعراف ٧:٥٦ «إِنَّ رَحْمَةَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ».

In this verse, the Arabic for "nigh" is *qaribun*. This predicate is masculine while the subject *rahmah* ("mercy") is feminine. Had the Qur'an preserved the agreement between the subject and the predicate, it would say *qaribatun*.

### 4. A Wrong Gender and Incorrect Use of Plural

**Question 109:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:160: "And We cut them up into twelve tribes, nations."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٦٠ «وَقَطَعْنَا لَهُمْ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ أَسْبَاطًا أُمَّمًا».

The Arabic rendering of this verse reads: "*Wa qatta'nahum ithnatay 'ashrata asbatan*." There are two grammatical errors in this sentence; the first is the feminine number *ithnatay 'ashrata*, and the second is the plural noun *asbatan*. The word "tribe" is masculine and requires a masculine number; also, a noun used in conjunction with a number above ten should be singular. Therefore the Qur'an should have said: "*Ithnay 'ashra sibtan*."

### 5. An Incorrect Plural Verb and Pronoun

**Question 110:** We read in Sura al-Hajj 22:19: "These are two disputants who have disputed concerning their Lord."

سورة الحج ٢٢:١٩ «هَذَانِ خَصِمَانِ اٰخْتَصَمُوْا فِي رَّبِّهِمْ».

This sentence reads thus in Arabic: "*Hadsan khasman ikhtasamu fi rabbihim.*" The verb *ikhtasamu* ("disputed") is plural, and the possessive pronoun in the word *rabbihim* refers also to a plural antecedent. The Qur'an ought to have attached a dual ending to the verb and a dual possessive pronoun to the word *rabb*. The sentence should be: "*Hadsan khasman ikhtasama fi rabbihima.*"

### 6. A Relative Pronoun in a Wrong Singular Form

**Question 111:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:69: "You have plunged as they plunged."

سورة التوبة ٩:٦٩ «وَحُضُّنَا كَالَّذِي خَاضُوا».

The Arabic relative pronoun *alladhi*, unlike our English "who" or "that", is subject to declension. That means it does not remain the same with every noun it refers to. It can receive a plural or a dual ending. The word "as" in this verse is actually the translation of the relative pronoun *alladhi* in the singular form. It should have been in the plural form since it refers to a plural pronoun. Thus the Arabic should read: "*Khudhtum kalladhina (instead of al-ladhi) khadhu.*"

### 7. A Verb Is Apocopate Instead of Accusative

**Question 112:** We read in Sura al-Munafiqun 63:10: "Expend of what We have provided you before that death comes upon one of you and he says, 'O my Lord, if Thou wouldst defer me unto a near term, so that I may make freewill offering, and so I may become one of the righteous.'"

سورة المنافقون ١٠:٦٣ «وَأَنْفِقُوا بِمَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِي أَحَدَكُمْ الْمَوْتُ فَيَقُولَ رَبِّ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنِي إِلَى أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ فَأَصَّدَّقَ وَأَكُنْ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ».

The Arabic for "I may become" in this verse is *akun*, with the medial vowel struck off as though it is apocopated. Actually, it should be in the accusative because it is added to the accusative verb *al-sadaqa* ("make freewill offering"). The correct sentence should be: "*Fa'assadaqa wa akuna (with a long u)....*"

### 8. A Plural Pronoun Refers to a Singular Antecedent

**Question 113:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:17: "The likeness of them is as the likeness a man who has kindled a fire, and when it lit all about him God took away their light."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٧ «مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي أَشْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ».

The Qur'an ought to have attached a singular possessive pronoun to the singular antecedent "man". Thus the verse should read: "... a man who has kindled a fire... God took away his light."

### 9. Accusative Instead of Nominative!

**Question 114:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:162: "But those of them that are firmly rooted in knowledge, and the believers believing in what has been sent down to thee, and what was sent down before thee, that perform the prayer and pay the alms, and

those who believe in God and the Last Day – them We shall surely give a mighty wage.”

سورة النساء ٤: ١٦٢ «لَكِنِ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ يُؤْمِنُونَ  
بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ  
وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا».

The Arabic word for “perform the prayer” is *al-muqimina*. The word is put in the accusative for no legitimate reason. It should have been *al-muqimuna*, for it is added to the nominative words that preceded it, namely *al-rasikhuna* and *al-mu'minuna*, and should agree also with the nominative ones coming after it, namely *al-mu'tuna* and *al-mu'minuna*.

### 10. A Governed Genitive Noun Is Accusative!

**Question 115:** We read in Sura Hud 11:10: “But if We let him taste prosperity after hardship that has visited him, he will say, ‘The evils have gone from me’; behold, he is joyous, boastful.”

سورة هود ١١: ١٠ «وَلَئِنِ أَدْقَانَاهُ نِعْمَاءً بَعْدَ ضَرَاءٍ مَسَّتْهُ لَيَقُولَنَّ ذَهَبَ  
السَّيِّئَاتُ عَنِّي إِنَّهُ لَفَرِحٌ فَخُورٌ».

In Arabic, nouns coming after *ba'da* (meaning “after”) are supposed to be in an *idafa* construct (addition construct), and should have a *kasra* (an *i* vowel) at the end as a case indicator if they are singular or feminine. But in this verse the word *dharra'a* that comes after *ba'da* has a *fatha* (an *a* vowel) instead, as though the word is accusative! The word should have been spelled *darra'i*.

### 11. An Incorrect Plural of Multitude

**Question 116:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:80: “The fire shall not touch us save a number of days.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٨٠ «لَنْ نَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً».

The Arabic reads: “... *illa ayyaman ma'duda*.” In the Arabic language there is a feature that is unique, namely the plural of multitude (which refers to a great number of things or people) and the plural of paucity (which refers to a small number of things or people). The words in this verse were uttered by common folk who wanted to say that the days of their chastisement were numbered and few. Therefore the Qur'an should have used *ma'dudat*, which is the plural of paucity, rather than *ma'duda*, which is a plural of multitude.

### 12. An Incorrect Plural of Paucity

**Question 117:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:183,184: “O believers, prescribed for you is the Fast, even as it was prescribed for those that were before you – haply you will be godfearing – for days numbered.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٨٣ و ١٨٤ «كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ  
أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ».

The Arabic for “days numbered” is *ayyaman ma'dudat*, which is a plural of paucity. The number of days the Muslims fast in Ramadan, however, is thirty days, which requires a plural of multitude. These words should have been *ayyaman ma'duda*.

### 13. A Wrong Plural Ending

**Question 118:** We read in Sura al-Saffat 37:123-132: "Elias too was one of the Envoys.... Peace be upon Elias."

سورة الصافات ٣٧:١٢٣-١٣٢ «وَإِنَّ إِلْيَاسَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ... سَلَامٌ عَلَى  
إِلْيَاسِينَ... إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ».

The Arabic Qur'an has two spellings for Elias in this passage. The one in the beginning of the quotation is *Ilyas*, while the other is *Ilyasin*, as if it were plural! In fact, the author of the Qur'an was so fond of rhyme that he often sacrificed the rules of grammar for the sake of it. He said in Sura al-Tin 95:1-3: "By the fig and the olive and the Mount Sinai and this land secure." In Arabic, he changed the word for Sinai (*sina'*) to its plural form (*sinin*) for the same reason!

### 14. A Noun in Place of an Adjective

**Question 119:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:177: "It is not piety that you turn your faces to the East and to the West. True piety is this: to believe in God and the Last Day."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٧٧ «لَيْسَ الْبِرُّ أَنْ تَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ  
وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَآلَمَلِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ».

A more precise translation of the last part of this verse is: "But piety is he who believes in God and the Last Day." In Arabic there are two similar words, namely *birr* and *barr*. The first means "piety", while the second means "pious". So in order to correct the verse, we think it more accurate to say, "... But pious is he who believes in God and the Last Day."

### 15. Accusative instead of Nominative

**Question 120:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:177: "And they who fulfil their covenant when they have engaged in a covenant, and endure with fortitude misfortune, hardship and peril."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٧٧ «وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي  
الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ».

The Arabic for "and endure" is *wa al-sabirin*, which is a plural noun added to "and they who fulfil" (*wa al-mufuna*). But it is in the accusative, contrary to the rules of grammar. It should have been *al-sabirun* – just as nominative as *al-mufuna*.

### 16. An Incorrect Tense

**Question 121:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:59: "Truly, the likeness of Jesus, in God's sight is as Adam's likeness; He created him of dust, then said He unto him, 'Be,' and he was."

سورة آل عمران ٣:٥٩ «إِنْ مَثَلٌ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ  
ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ».

The Arabic of this verse reads: "... then said he unto him, 'Be,' and he is." Of course the context requires the past tense – not the present tense – as indeed the translator understood it.

### 17. A Conditional Clause with No Apodosis

**Question 122:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:15: "So when they went with him, and agreed to put him in the bottom of the well, and We revealed to him, 'Thou shalt tell of this their doing when they were unaware.'"

سورة يوسف ١٢:١٥ «فَلَمَّا ذَهَبُوا بِهِ وَأَجْمَعُوا أَنْ يَجْعَلُوهُ فِي غِيَابَةِ آلِئِبِّ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ».

Where is the apodosis [the consequence clause of a conditional sentence] of the sentence? Actually, if we omit the “and” that comes before “We revealed”, the sentence would be straightened out!

### 18. The Meaning Is Obscured by Odd Structure

**Question 123:** We read in Sura al-Fath 48:8,9: “Surely We have sent thee as a witness, good tidings to bear, and warning, that you may believe in God and His Messenger and succour Him, and reverence Him, and that you may give Him glory at the dawn and in the evening.”

سورة الفتح ٤٨:٨ و ٩ «إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِداً وَمُبَشِّراً وَنَذِيراً لِّتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلاً».

This sentence is disrupted because of a sudden shift from addressing Muhammad to addressing other people. Apart from this, the accusative pronoun in “succour Him, and reverence Him” refers, beyond doubt, to Muhammad, who was mentioned earlier, not to God as the English translator understood it. But “give Him glory” refers to God. The entire verse is chaotic. The reader cannot be expected to understand its true meaning from the arrangement of words. It is *kufir* (“unbelief”) to say “and succour Him, and reverence Him, and that you may give Him glory at the dawn and in the evening” about Muhammad, since glory should be given to God alone. It is also *kufir* to make such a

statement with reference to God, since God almighty is not in need for succour or help!

### 19. A Diptote Receives the Nunnation

**Question 124:** We read in Sura al-Insan 76:15: “And there shall be passed around vessels of silver, and goblets of crystal.”

سورة الإنسان ٧٦:١٥ «وَرِيَّاطَافٍ عَلَيْهِم بِأَيِّئَةٍ مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا».

The Arabic word *qawariran* which was translated as “crystal” is in fact a diptote; that is, it has two cases only and cannot receive the final *n* that distinguishes the triptotes. But the Qur’an seems to have been unaware of this grammatical rule, or rather to have done violence to it, to maintain the rhyme!

The same error occurs in verse 4 of the same sura (al-Insan), where we read: “Surely We have prepared for the unbelievers chains, fetters, and a Blaze.” Here the Arabic word for chains (*salasilan*) is given a final *n* in violation of the same rule.

### 20. A Predicate with an Incorrect Gender

**Question 125:** We read in Sura al-Shura 42:17: “God it is He who sent down the Book with the truth, and also the Balance. And what shall make thee know? Haply the hour is nigh.”

سورة الشورى ٤٢:١٧ «اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّ السَّاعَةَ قَرِيبٌ».

The last part of this verse in Arabic is: *la‘alla al-sa‘ata qaribun*. There is no gender agreement between *al-sa‘ata* (“hour”) which



is a feminine subject, and *qaribun* (“nigh”) which is a masculine predicate!

## 21. Pointing Out the Obvious

**Question 126:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:196: “Or if he finds none, then a fast of three days in the Pilgrimage, and of seven when you return, that is ten completely.”

سورة البقرة ٢:١٩٦ «فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ».

There was no need to add “completely” in this verse, for who would think that three and seven make nine?

## 22. A Sudden Transition in Person

**Question 127:** We read in Sura Yunis 10:21: “And when you are in the ship – and the ships run with them with a fair breeze, and they rejoice in it, there comes upon them a strong wind.”

سورة يونس ١٠:٢١ «حَتَّىٰ إِذَا كُنْتُمْ فِي الْفُلِّ وَجْرَمْنَ بِهِمْ بِرِيحٍ طَيِّبَةٍ وَفَرِحُوا بِهَا جَاءَتْهَا رِيحٌ عَاصِفٌ».

This sudden transition from the second person to the third person is not good grammar; it would have been preferable to maintain the second person throughout the entire text.

## 23. A Singular Pronoun Instead of a Dual One

**Question 128:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:62: “But God and His Messenger – more right is it they should please Him.”

سورة التوبة ٩:٦٢ «وَاللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُرْضَوْهُ».

Why wasn't the pronoun referring to God put in the dual form, since in this verse both God and the Messenger are to be pleased?

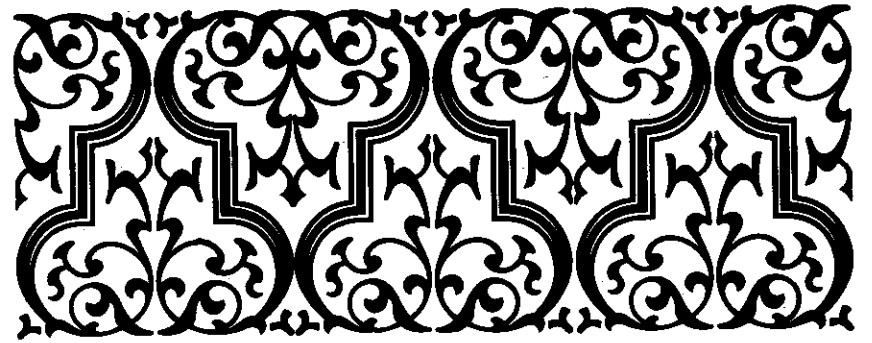
## 24. A Plural Noun Used in Place of a Dual one

**Question 129:** We read in Sura al-Tahrim 66:4: “If you two repent to God, yet your hearts are inclined.”

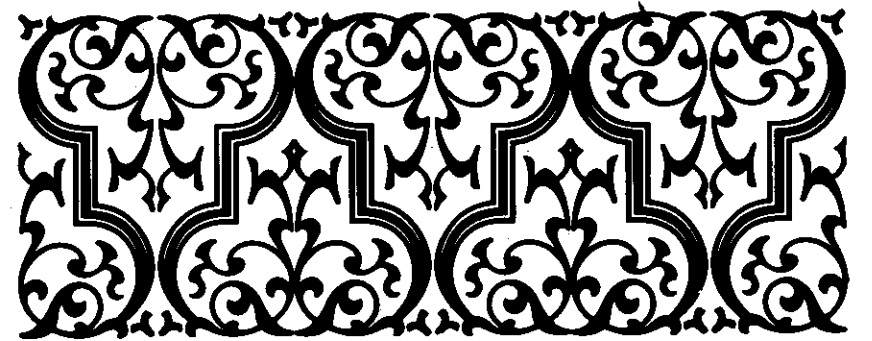
سورة التحريم ٦٦:٤ «إِنْ تَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا».

Al-Baidawi says that Hafsa and 'Aisha were being addressed with this verse. But in spite of this, the Arabic for “your hearts” (*qulubukuma*) is in the plural form! Can two people have more than two hearts?





*Part Six*  
*Legal Questions*





## 1. Severing a Thief's Hand

**Question 130:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:38: "And the thief, male and female, cut off the hands of both, as a recompense for what they have earned, and a punishment exemplary from God; God is Almighty, All-wise."

سورة المائدة ٥: ٣٨ «وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ».

The Qur'an has established the law of cutting off the hands of a thief. But isn't this an offense to humanity? Those who had their hands cut off, even after they have repented, become a burden to society, living with bitterness and resentment. Cutting off the hand of a thief deprives him of the opportunity to work and earn his own livelihood. Apart from this, Shahrastani, in *Al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, says that cutting the hand of the thief was a pre-Islamic punishment. Why did Muhammad demand that his followers adhere to this despicable heathen tradition as part of Islam?

## 2. Until She Marries Another Husband

**Question 131:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:230: "If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, until she marries another husband."

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٣٠ «فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّى تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ».

Al-Baidawi explained this verse, saying, "Rifa'a's wife said to the Messenger of God, 'Rifa'a divorced me finally, and 'Abd al-

Rahman married me. But what he has is as [limp] as the hem of the garment.' The Messenger of God said, 'Do you want to return to Rifa'a?' She said yes. But he said, 'No, not until you enjoy intercourse with him, and he with you.'"

Sometimes an influential man divorces his wife in a fit of anger. Later, as is often the case, he regrets what he has done and desires to have his wife back. But Islamic law compels this woman to have intercourse with another man before she can return to her husband. How inhumane and degrading this is!

### 3. Women Are Beaten and Denied Their Rights

**Question 132:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:34: "And those you fear may be rebellious admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them. If they then obey you, look not for any way against them; God is All-high, All-great."

ورة النساء ٤:٣٤ «وَالَّذَاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَأَضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْتَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا».

Why does the Qur'an make it a law for a man to beat his wife? We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:282: "And call in to witness two witnesses, men; or if the two be not men, then one man and two women, such witnesses as you approve of, that if one of the women errs the other will remind her."

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٨٢ «وَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٍ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى».

Why is the witness of two women equal to that of one man, even though a woman may, in many cases, excel her husband in soundness of mind, education and personality?

We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:11: "God charges you, concerning your children: to the male the like of the portion of two females."

سورة النساء ٤:١١ «يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَيْنِ».

Why does the Qur'an grant a woman only half of what it gives a man, when life is often harder for a woman? In fact, granting a man a double portion owes its origin to pre-Islamic practice. We read in *Bulugh al-'Arab fi Ahwal al-'Arab* (vol. 1, p. 184): "The first one to give the male the portion of two females was 'Amir Ibn Jahm al-Jahmi."

### 4. Polygamy

**Question 133:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:3: "Marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own; so it is likelier you will not be partial."

سورة النساء ٤:٣ «فَالْيَاكُحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْوَلُوا».

Al-Baidawi explained "what your right hands own" as being concubines. But haven't polygamy and concubinage been contrary to God's law from the beginning of creation? God created one Eve for one Adam. We pay respect to mankind when we respect mothers, sisters, daughters and wives. Whoever corrupts the home, corrupts humanity. Polygamy corrupts the

husband's morals because it promotes injustice, limitations regarding children and humiliation of the wives; moreover, it hinders social progress and national security.

### 5. Divorce

**Question 134:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:236: "There is no fault in you if you divorce women...."

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٣٦ ﴿لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِن طَلَقْتُمْ نِسَاءً﴾.

The Qur'an gives absolute and unconditional licence to a man to destroy his family, undermine its foundations and scatter it through divorce. It is indeed pitiful to see a Muslim man away from his household and hear him swear three times that he will divorce his wife if such-and-such thing occurs (or does not occur), and then find that man casting his unsuspecting wife out of the house. Muslims say, "Divorce is the most hateful thing God made lawful." How can God make lawful something He hates? Wouldn't it be more appropriate to forbid it altogether?

### 6. Scourging All Fornicators

**Question 135:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:2: "The fomicatress and the fornicator – scourge each one of them a hundred stripes, and in the matter of God's religion let no tenderness from thee seize you if you believe in God and the Last Day; and let a party of the believers witness their chastisement."

سورة النور ٢:٢٤ ﴿الزَّانِيَةُ وَالزَّانِي فَاجْلِدُوا كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا مِائَةَ جَلْدَةٍ وَلَا تَأْخُذْكُمْ بِهِمَا رَأْفَةٌ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلْيَشْهَدْ عَذَابَهُمَا طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾.

We ask: Does public punishment chasten the sinner or cleanse his heart? Let's see what the Bible has to say about this:

Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now, Moses, in the law, commanded that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest, even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither I condemn you; go and sin no more" (John 8:3-11).

### 7. Concubinage Is Sanctioned

**Question 136:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:3: "Marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four... or what your right hands own."

سورة النساء ٤: ٣ «فَأَنكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنَى وَفَلَاحٌ وَرَبَاعٌ  
فَإِن خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ».

We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:50: "O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and what thy right hand owns."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣: ٥٠ «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَحْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ اللَّاتِيَّاتِ  
أُجُورَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ».

We ask: Is concubinage honourable for the Prophet and believers? Does it honour wives, daughters or children? Does it promote the family, the nation or society?

## 8. The Curtain

**Question 137:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:53-55: "And if you ask his wives for any object, ask them from behind a curtain; that is cleaner for your hearts and theirs.... There is no fault in the Prophet's wives touching their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons, their women and what their right hands own. And fear you God; surely God is witness of everything."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣: ٥٣-٥٥ «وَإِذَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُنَّ مَتَاعًا فَاسْأَلُوهُنَّ مِنْ وَرَائِ  
حِجَابٍ ذَلِكُمْ أَطْهَرُ لِقُلُوبِكُمْ وَقُلُوبِهِنَّ... لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِنَّ فِي آبَائِهِنَّ وَلَا  
أَبْنَائِهِنَّ وَلَا إِخْوَانِهِنَّ وَلَا أَبْنَاءَ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ وَلَا نِسَائِهِنَّ وَلَا  
مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ وَاتَّقِينَ اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا».

Al-Baidawi said:

Ibn 'Umar said, "O Messenger of God, both the righteous and the unrighteous enter to your wives; what if you order them to be veiled." And it was later revealed in the Qur'an: "... There is no fault in the Prophet's wives touching their fathers, their sons, their brothers, their brothers' sons, their sisters' sons." These are the people from whom they were not supposed to be veiled. It was reported that, when the verse of the Hijab was revealed, the fathers, the sons and the relatives said, "Messenger of God, shall we too speak to them from behind a curtain?" And this verse was immediately revealed. The paternal uncles and the maternal uncles were not mentioned because they are in the position of the parents themselves, or because he objected keeping them from being veiled from them, so that they could go and describe them to their sons. "Their women" means the believing women. "And what their right hands own" refers to slaves and handmaids – especially to handmaids.

We ask: Does the veil keep the eyes of an immoral man from lusting? The immoral man sees with the eye of imagination! The Bible speaks of a new birth and transformation of heart by the Holy Spirit. A man with such a transformed heart is to "put on the new man which was created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24).

## 9. Idolatrous Rites in the Pilgrimage

**Question 138:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:158: "Safa and Marwa are among the waymarks of God; so whosoever makes

the Pilgrimage to the House, or the Visitation, it is no fault in him to circumambulate them.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٥٨ «إِنَّ الْأَصْفَا وَالزُّوَّةَ مِنَ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ  
أَعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطُوفَ بِهِمَا».

Al-Baidawi said:

“Safa and Marwa” are two mountain peaks in Mecca. “Are among the waymarks of God” refers to the waymarks of His rites. A waymark is a sign. In “... so whosoever makes the pilgrimage to the House, or the Visitation,” pilgrimage (*hajj*) means “being bound for”, and visitation (*i’timar*) refers to a visit. In the Sharia these were turned into technical terms and mean what they mean now. “It is no fault in him to circumambulate them” was revealed because the idols Isaf and Na’ila were situated on Safa and Marwa respectively, and before the coming of Islam the people used to rub them during their circumambulation. Once Islam came, and the idols were broken to pieces, Muslims also felt pressured not to circumambulate between them. It is agreed that the pilgrimage and visitation are lawful.

But we want to ask: How could the Qur’an turn the idolatrous rites into the waymarks of God? Were the heathen inspired by God in doing what they used to do?

### 10. Trading During the Pilgrimage

**Question 139:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:198: “It is no fault in you, that you should seek bounty from your Lord.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٩٨ «لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ».

The pre-Islamic Arabs used to trade in the markets of ‘Ukaz, Mina, and Dhu al-Hijja, during fixed seasons. They spent twenty days of Dhu al-Qa ‘da in ‘Ukaz, and then moved to Mina, which is at ‘Arafa, where they would spend eighteen days – ten of which are of the latter part of Dhu al-Qa ‘da, and eight of which are the early part of Dhu al-Hijja. After that they used to go out to ‘Arafa. When Islam came, it seems they felt guilty about trading in the seasons of Pilgrimage. But Muhammad granted them the right to do it. Abu Majih al-Taymi reported: “I was a man who traded during the Pilgrimage, and the people used to tell me I had no Pilgrimage. I met Ibn ‘Umar and asked him about this. He said, ‘You have a Pilgrimage.’ And a man came to Muhammad and asked him about this matter, to which he did not respond. But then he finally allowed it.”

We ask: Was this matter such a novelty that it required a revelation from God? Wasn’t Muhammad’s permission to trade during the season of the Pilgrimage a normal thing that was to the advantage of the Arabs’ worldly concerns?

### 11. Disputes During the Pilgrimage

**Question 140:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:197: “Whoso undertakes the duty of the Pilgrimage... shall not... indulge in... disputing in the Pilgrimage. Whatever good you do God knows it. And take provision; but the best provision is godfearing.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٩٧ «وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَغْلَمَهُ اللَّهُ  
وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَى».

Some of the pre-Islamic Arabs used to stand by 'Arafa and some by Muzdalifa, while some made the Pilgrimage in Dhu al-Qa'da, and others in Dhu al-Hijja. All of them used to say, "What I did is the right thing." But Muhammad said that the Pilgrimage was definitely to be performed in Dhu al-Hijja.

Is what he said not an evidence that his religion was adapted from the Arab idol-worshippers? The rest of the verse says: "And take provision; but the best provision is godfearing." This was occasioned by the habit of the Yemenite Muslims to go forth to the Pilgrimage without any provisions and say, "We are dependant (upon God)," or "We are making the Pilgrimage to the House of our Lord; shouldn't He feed us?" But after arriving at Mecca, they would beg for their food, or maybe even end up robbing and pillaging other Muslims. Therefore Muhammad admonished them to "take provision". But what he said was obvious common sense; it required no divine revelation to say it!

## 12. The Pressing On (*Ifada*)

**Question 141:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:199: "Then press on from where the people press on."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٩٩ ﴿ثُمَّ أفيضوا من حيث أفاض الناس﴾.

This verse means: Descend from 'Arafa from where the people go down, not from Muzdalifa, so that you will set yourselves above the rest of the people. This verse was addressed to the Quraish, who used to set themselves above the people. Tawus said, "The people were used to descending from 'Arafa before sunset, and from Muzdalifa before sunrise. They used to say, 'Rise, O Thabir, so that we may raid.'" Exegetes said,

"They used to stay aloof or stand with the rest of the people on 'Arafa. And when the people would press on (go down) from 'Arafa, the *hums* [i.e., "the religious"] would press on from Muzdalifa. But when Muhammad came, he ordered them to stand with the rest of the people and then go down from Muzdalifa to the gathering.

We ask: Isn't the command to stand on 'Arafa in order to descend from it like the rest of the people during *Jahiliya* a proof that one of the pillars of Islam – the Pilgrimage – has a heathen origin and that it is not at all a God-given law?

## 13. The Pilgrimage Is a Pre-Islamic Custom

**Question 142:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:197-200: "The Pilgrimage is in months well-known; whoso undertakes the duty of Pilgrimage in them shall not go in to his womenfolk nor indulge in ungodliness and disputing in the Pilgrimage. Whatever good you do, God knows it. And take provision; but the best provision is godfearing, so fear you Me, you men possessed of minds! It is no fault in you, that you should seek bounty from your Lord; but when you press on from 'Arafa, then remember God at the Holy Waymark, and remember Him as he has guided you, though formerly you have gone astray. Then press on from where the people press on, and pray for God's forgiveness; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. And when you have performed your holy rites remember God, as you have remembered your fathers or yet more devoutly."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٩٧-٢٠٠ ﴿وَالْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَغْفِرْهُ اللَّهُ﴾



وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ  
 أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَإِذَا أَفَضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ  
 الْحَرَامِ وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمَنِ الضَّالِّينَ ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ  
 حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمْ  
 مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَأَذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا.

The name of the month of the Pilgrimage was already known and in use before Islam. Likewise *ihram* ("abstinence from sexual intercourse and hunting") was already in practice before Islam, as were trade, pressing on from 'Arafa, delivering speeches and extolling the virtues of people at the Holy Waymark. When Islam came, it fell back on the idolatrous Arabs for its traditions and rites!

#### 14. Abuse of the Zakat

**Question 143:** We read Sura al-Tawba 9:58-60: "Some of them that find fault with thee touching the freewill offerings; if they are given a share of them they are well-pleased, but if they are given none then they are angry. O were they well-pleased with what God and His Messenger have brought them, saying, 'Enough for us is God; God will bring us of his bounty, and His Messenger; to God we humbly turn.' The freewill offerings are for the poor and needy, those who work to collect them, those whose hearts are brought together, the ransoming of slaves, debtors, in God's way, and the traveller; so God ordains; God is All-knowing, All-wise."

سورة التوبة ٩: ٥٨-٦٠ «وَمِنْهُمْ مَن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْخَطُونَ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ

وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَاةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ.

Al-Baidawi said:

Some of them found fault with him [namely, Muhammad] touching the distribution of the freewill offerings. "If they are given a share of them they are well-pleased, but if they are given none then they are angry" was revealed because of Ibn Dhi Khuwaisir, the chief of the Khawarij [dissenters]. When the Messenger of God was distributing the spoils of Hunain, he won over the people of Mecca by granting them a lavish portion. Then Ibn Dhi Khuwaisir said, "Be just, Messenger of God." Therefore Muhammad said, "Woe unto you, if I am not just, who then is so?"

"Those whose hearts are brought together" are a group of people who converted to Islam but who had a weak intention to remain in it, whose hearts were brought together by the freewill offerings [that were given them]. Or they could be some of the nobility who would turn to Islam when they saw how their fellows had both honour and money bestowed on them. The Messenger has indeed given [money to] 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn, al-Aqra' Ibn Habis, and al-'Abbas Ibn Mirdas for that reason. It was said they were some of the nobility whose hearts Muhammad had brought together by giving them money; to some he also promised money if they were ready to fight the

unbelievers. It was also said that the portion of money allotted to bringing the hearts of people together was for the purpose of increasing the number of Muslims, so after God made Muhammad strong and increased his followers that portion was cancelled. "In God's way" means covering the expenses of *jihad*, such as sustaining volunteers and purchasing horses and weaponry, or, according to some, building bridges and factories.

*Zakat* is one of the five pillars of Islam; the other four are prayer, fasting, pilgrimage and the confession [*i.e.*, "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is his Prophet."] *Zakat* is an essential part of the Islamic religion, and is collected for the sake of the poor and needy, but is spent for purely Islamic purposes. It was also spent to make converts of some of the people, to win them over to Islam, even though they were rich. *Zakat* is actually spent in purchasing weapons, equipping soldiers to fight unbelievers and waging Holy War – all to uphold the cause of Islam.

Christians collect tithes which they spend on the needs of the poor, the construction and repair of churches, the sustaining of ministers of the Gospel, and the spreading of the message of the Bible and Christian principles. The Bible prohibits spreading the Christian faith by means of either money or sword, so as not to entice or terrorise people. Christians offer their testimony with love, courage, and self-sacrifice, as did Christ, their Lord.

### 15. Men Are Preferred to Women

**Question 144:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:34: "Men are the managers of the affairs of women for that God has preferred in

bounty one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property."

سورة النساء ٤:٣٤ «الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"Men are managers of the affairs of women" such as governors are over their subjects. This is explained by two reasons; one is a natural gift, and the other is acquired. "God has preferred" refers to God preferring men to women on account of the former's soundness of mind, ability of management, and the surplus of power they have in deeds and obedience. Therefore they were particularly chosen to be prophets, leaders and governors, and to perform the rites of religion, bear witness in the assemblies of lawsuits, fight Holy War, gather on Fridays [in the mosques], have a larger portion in inheritance and have superiority in the matter of divorce. "And for that they have expended of their property" when they married them, which refers to the marriage portion and alimony. It was reported that Sa'd Ibn al-Rabi', one of the chieftains of the Ansar, slapped his wife Habibah, the daughter of Zaid, the son of Abu Zuhair, when she rebelled against him. Her father took her immediately to the Messenger of God so that she could be avenged. It was then that this verse was revealed! The man said, "We wanted something, and God wanted another; what God wanted is better."

We read likewise in Sura al-Baqara 2:228: "Women have

such honourable rights as obligations, but their men have a degree above them.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٢٨ «وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ».

Al-Baidawi said:

“Women have such honourable rights as obligations” means that they have some rights over men, just as men have rights over them, which they are advised to demand. These rights are not owing to gender. “But their men have a degree above them” as to rights and pre-eminence, for women’s souls are the rights of men, while women’s rights are the marriage portion, sustenance, avoidance of harm and the like, or honour and preference, since [men] are managers of [women’s] affairs and watchers over them. They share with women the purpose of marriage, but are distinguished by preference of care-taking and sustenance.

We ask: Why does the Qur’an deny a woman her rights in considering it permissible for a man to possess her very soul, while she can possess only a portion of his money? It is understood that the woman’s body should belong to the man, and the man’s body to the woman. Why then is the man allowed to have dominion in the matter of divorce, while the woman cannot divorce if she sees her husband cheat her with another woman? If man and woman are equal, then why doesn’t the Qur’an allow a woman to beat her husband, if it allows him to beat her?

## 16. Islamic Prayer Is a Pagan Tradition

**Question 145:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:238: “Be you watchful over the prayers, and the middle prayer; and do you stand obedient to God.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢٣٨ «حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ».

Islam enforced upon Muslims five daily prayers; which are the prayers of dawn, noon, afternoon, evening and night. These prayers occurred at the same times as the Christian, Jewish and Sabaeans prayers. Abu al-Fida’ said in his *History*, “The Sabaeans have several [sorts of] worship. Among them are seven prayers, five of which are conformable to Islamic prayers, while the sixth is at forenoon and the seventh is exactly at six o’clock in the evening. Their prayers are like those of the Muslims in that they should be from the heart and not be mixed with other things. They also pray over the dead without kneeling or worshipping.”

We ask: Why did the Muslims copy the prayer system of the Sabaeans?

## 17. Using Dust for Washing Oneself

**Question 146:** We read in Sura al-Ma’ida 5:6: “O believers, when you stand up to pray wash your faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and wipe your heads, and your feet up to the ankles. If you are defiled, purify yourselves; but if you are sick or on a journey, or if any of you comes from the privy, or you have touched women, and you can find no water, then have recourse

to wholesome dust and wipe your faces and your hands with it. God does not desire to make any impediment for you; but He desires to purify you, and that He may complete His blessing upon you; haply you will be thankful.”

سورة المائدة ٦:٥ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا  
وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ  
وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطْبَهُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ  
مِنَ الْمَاءِ فَاغْسِلُوا فَمَنْ سَأَلَ فَمَنْ سَأَلَ فَمَنْ سَأَلَ فَمَنْ سَأَلَ فَمَنْ سَأَلَ  
بِوَجْهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ  
لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيَسِّمَ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said, “‘But if He desires to purify you’ means to cleanse or clean of transgressions, for the ablution makes atonement for transgressions. It may also mean to purify by dust in case they lacked water. ‘That He may complete His blessing upon you’ means to complete with this ritual that which is a purification to your bodies and an atonement for your transgressions as to religion.”

Al-Bukhari reported:

‘Aisha said, “A necklace of mine fell off in the desert as we were about to enter Medina. Muhammad made the camel kneel down; then he dismounted and lay with his head in my lap and fell asleep. Abu Bakr came and nudged me strongly and said, ‘You held the people up because of a necklace!’ After that, as morning broke, Muhammad woke up and sought water. When he found none, he used dust instead.” ‘Aisha also said, “After all this happened on account of my necklace, and after malicious people said

what they said about me, I went out with Muhammad on another raid, and the people were held up looking for it. Then Abu Bakr said to me, ‘My little daughter, in all our travels you have been a burden and an affliction to the people!’ But Abu Bakr was pleased with her when she became the reason for resorting to dust (*tayammum*).

Muhammad said in a hadith, “Wholesome dust can serve as ablution to the Muslim even for ten years till he finds water. If he finds it, let him rub his skin with it.”

We ask: Why did Muhammad take ‘Aisha along on a raid, when she had caused a great problem, being accused of committing adultery with Safwan Ibn al-Mu‘attal? What does it mean to use dust instead of water? Dust is a cause of sickness, not health. Moreover, how could anyone believe that water or dust can atone for one’s sins?

## 18. Changing the Direction of Prayer (*Qibla*)

**Question 147:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:115,142-145: “To God belong the East and the West.... The fools among the people will say, ‘What has turned them from the direction they were facing in their prayers aforesaid?’ Say: ‘To God belong the East and the West; He guides whosoever He will to a straight path.’ Thus We appointed you a midmost nation that you might be witnesses to the people, and that the Messenger might be a witness to you; and We did not appoint the direction thou wast facing, except We might know who followed the Messenger from him who turned on his heels – though it were a grave thing save for those whom God has guided; but God would never leave your faith to waste – truly, God is All-gentle with His people, All-

compassionate. We have seen thee turning thy face about in the heaven; now We will surely turn thee to a direction that shall satisfy thee. Turn thy face towards the Holy Mosque; and wherever you are turn your faces towards it. Those who have been given the Book know it is the truth from their Lord; God is not heedless of the things they do. Yet if thou shouldst bring to those that have been given the Book every sign, they will not follow thy direction, neither are thy followers of one another's direction. If thou followest their caprices, after the knowledge that has come to thee, then thou wilt surely be among the evil-doers."

سورة البقرة ٢: ١١٥ و ١٤٢-١٤٥ «وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَهُنَّ وَجْهٌ لِلَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ... سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَاهُمْ عَنِ قِبَلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لَتَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ قَدْ نَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ وَلِئِنْ آتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَغْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعِ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ وَلِئِنْ آتَيْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"The fools among the people" are those whose minds became weak and despicable, affected by traditions and unwillingness to reconsider. It refers to the hypocrites, the unbelievers and the Jews who objected to the changing of the *qibla*. "What has turned them" refers to what has diverted them. "From the direction they were facing" refers to Jerusalem. The *qibla* originally meant the state in which a man faces something, and it came to mean the place to which prayers are directed. "To God belong the East and the West" means that there is no special place with Him, and that there is no objective quality that sets one place apart from another or that makes it impossible to set another one in its stead. It is rather owing to the command he gives, not to the characteristics of a given place. "He guides whosoever He will to a straight path" refers to the change of the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca, which was agreeable to wisdom and enjoined by the welfare [of the Muslims]. "Thus" is a reference to the conception of the previous verse, which means that he guided them to the straight path or made their *qibla* the best of *qiblas*. "We appointed you a midmost nation", namely a just or a moderate nation, marked by knowledge and deeds. "Midmost" [*wasatan*] was originally a name used for a central point which is equally distant from all sides; then it came to refer to commendable qualities that fall between two extremes, such as liberality between over-generosity and stinginess, or bravery between recklessness and timidity. Later it became a designation for those who have the quality of moderation.... "And We

did not appoint the direction thou wast facing” is a reference to the Ka‘ba, to which Muhammad directed his face in prayer, for he, peace be upon him, used to face it in prayer while at Mecca. Then when he emigrated, he was commanded to face the Rock, so as to maintain friendship with the Jews. Ibn ‘Abbas said that the Rock that was his *qibla* in Mecca was Jerusalem, but he used to set the Ka‘ba between himself and Jerusalem, so the first command abrogated the second. The verse means that God intended originally for him to face the Ka‘ba, not Jerusalem. “But God would never leave your faith to waste” refers to believers’ steadfastness of faith. Others said it refers to their faith in the abrogated *qibla* or their prayer towards it. This was occasioned by what was reported about Muhammad, peace be upon him, when he faced the Ka‘ba, and it was said, “What is the case, Messenger of God, with our brothers who died before the change in direction?” Therefore the verse, “Truly, God is All-gentle with His people, All-compassionate” was revealed, meaning that He will give them their recompense. As for “Turn thy face towards the Holy Mosque,” it was reported that Muhammad faced Jerusalem in prayer for sixteen months after arriving at Medina; then in the afternoon he faced the Ka‘ba in Rajab (two months before the Battle of Badr). His Companions prayed in the mosque of Banu Salama and performed two prostrations of the noon prayer. He then turned his face in prayer toward the gutter on the roof. Men and women exchanged their rows, and therefore the mosque was called the mosque of the two *qiblas*.

We ask: If the *qibla* was a law and a pillar of prayer, why should it change? Or was it merely a political scheme to win the Arabs over at one time, and the Jews at another? While Muhammad was with the Arabs in Mecca, he faced the Ka‘ba, and when he emigrated to Medina, where there were many Jews, he faced Jerusalem. But when the Jews opposed him, he made the Ka‘ba his *qibla* once again! The change of the *qibla* actually had a rebounding effect on the people, in that many of the Muslims embraced Judaism and said, “Muhammad has returned to the religion of his forefathers, and has turned away from the true *qibla* of the Jews!” The Jews taunted the Muslims, for Huyay Ibn Ahtab and his Jewish friends said, “Tell us about your prayer towards Jerusalem. If it was the true guidance, then why did you leave it? And if it was by error, you have worshipped God by it, and those of you who died have died in error!” Among those who died before the *qibla* was changed to the Ka‘ba were Ahmad Ibn Zurara of the family of Najjar and al-Bara’ Ibn Ma‘rur of the family of Salama, both of whom were chiefs of their people. The families of these people rushed to Muhammad, and he calmed them down by saying, “The fools among the people will say, ‘What has turned them from the direction they were facing in their prayers aforesaid?’ Say: ‘To God belong the East and the West.’” But why did Muhammad accuse those who objected to his shifting the *qibla* of being fools? Indeed, they were entitled to ask that question!

### 19. Vain Repetitions of Prayer

**Question 148:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:238: “Be you watchful over the prayers, and the middle prayer; and do you stand obedient to God.”

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٣٨ ﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said:

“Be you watchful over the prayers” by performing them at their [appointed] times and by being consistent in doing that. “And the middle prayer” is the one occurring between the two of them, or the best of them in particular, which is the afternoon prayer. For someone said on the Day of the Confederates, “They kept us busy, which prevented us from performing the middle prayer, the afternoon-prayer; may God fill their houses with fire!” It was considered the best [prayer] of all, because people are very busy doing their own things at the time of its performance, at which time also the angels gather.

We ask: What is the benefit of prayer if it is repeated with neither variation nor change five times a day, every week, every month, every year? Prayer is an expression of man’s feelings towards God. Christ said, “But when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them” (Matthew 6:7,8).

## 20. Reducing the Number of Prayers

**Question 149:** We read in Sura al-Isra’ 17:1: “Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show Him some of Our signs. He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.”

سورة الإسراء ١٧:١ ﴿سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾.

Some Muslim commentators have said, “When God carried Muhammad by night, and he saw the wide-eyed *huris* and saluted them, he met Moses, who asked him, ‘What did your Lord impose upon you?’ (Others said he asked him, ‘What have you been commanded?’) Muhammad answered, ‘Fifty prayers.’ Moses said to him, ‘Go back to your God and ask Him to make them less.’”

Al-Bukhari said: “He said to him, ‘Your people cannot perform fifty prayers every day. By God, I have tried people before you, and dealt with the Children of Israel most severely [namely, he imposed upon them two prayers, which consisted of two prostrations at dawn and another two in the evening, which they refused].’” Al-Baidawi’s commentary also holds that God imposed fifty prayers on the Muslims initially. But al-Suyuti said that this is all untrue. Muhammad is supposed to have said after that, “And I returned to my Lord and said, ‘O my Lord, make them less for my people. Take away five of them.’ Then I returned to Moses and said, ‘He took away five for me.’ Moses said, ‘Your people cannot bear that; go back to your Lord and ask Him to make them less.’ So I continued going back and forth between my Lord and Moses until God, highly exalted, said, ‘Muhammad, they are five prayers every day and every night; each one of them will count for you as ten, which makes fifty in all.’ I went down until I came to Moses and told him. He said, ‘Go back to your Lord and ask again to have the number reduced.’ I said to him, ‘I have

already returned to my Lord so many times that I feel ashamed.’”

We would like to ask: Are the prophets, with all due respect, more knowledgeable of the conditions of the people than God Omniscient? Does God follow the suggestions of men? Isn't all this confusion a result of Muhammad's ignorance of the attributes of God and the nature of prayer, which is communion with God and not an imposed obligation or bondage? The Muslim who is more concerned with an ablution and the cleanliness of the body over the heart doesn't know the meaning of prayer, since he is also more concerned with the correct direction of prayer (the *qibla*) than with his attitude towards God. Such a person holds fast to memorised formulas of prayer, but does not concern himself with expressing his own real needs. He considers prayer in itself a good deed that can annul bad deeds, and is careful to sacrifice and pray so as to fulfil the verse: "So pray unto thy Lord and sacrifice." Such a one does not have the least conception of the meaning of the true and only sacrifice of Christ, which brought us redemption and atonement.

## 21. Fasting

**Question 150:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:183-187: "O believers, prescribed for you is the Fast, even as it was prescribed for those that were before you – haply you will be godfearing – for days numbered; and if any of you be sick, or if he be on a journey, then a number of other days; and for those who are able to fast, a redemption by feeding a poor man. Yet better it is for him who volunteers good, and that you should fast is better for you, if you but know; the month of Ramadan, wherein the Qur'an was sent down to be a guidance to the people, and as clear signs of the

Guidance and the Salvation. So let those of you, who are present at the month, fast during it; and if any of you be sick, or if he be on a journey, then a number of other days; God desires ease for you, and desires not hardship for you; and that you fulfil the number, and magnify God that He has guided you, and haply you will be thankful. And when My servants question thee concerning Me – I am near to answer the call of the caller, when he calls to Me; so let them respond to Me, and let them believe in Me; haply so they will go aright. Permitted to you upon the night of the fast is to go in to your wives; they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them. God knows that you have been betraying yourselves, and has turned to you and pardoned you. So now lie with them, and seek what God has prescribed for you. And eat and drink, until the white thread shows clearly to you from the black thread at the dawn; then complete the Fast unto the night, and do not lie with them while you cleave to the mosques. Those are God's bounds; keep well within them. So God makes clear His signs to men; haply they will be god-fearing."

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٨٣-١٨٧ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ أَيَّامًا مَّعْدُودَاتٍ فَمَن كَانَ مِنكُم مَّرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامٌ مِّسْكِينَ فَمَن تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَأَن تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُم وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي



فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أَجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ  
يُرْشَدُونَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِيَابِسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ  
لِيَابِسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ  
فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَنْبِتُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ  
الْحَبِطَ الْأَيْبُسَ مِنَ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَلَا  
تُبَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ  
يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said: "It was reported that Ramadan was prescribed upon the Christians, and if it occurred in a severely cold or hot season, then they shifted it to the spring and added to it twenty more days as atonement for shifting it. It was also reported that they added these (days) for a drought that befell them."

In his *History*, Abu al-Fida' says: "The Sabaeans have several [sorts of] worship. Among them are seven prayers, and thirty days of fasting. If the lunar month is lacking, they fast 29 days.... They broke their fast when the sun reached the Aries. They fasted from the last quarter of the night till the setting of the sun.

The question is: Since the fast of Ramadan was neither a new statute nor a part of the revealed religion, but rather taken from the Sabaeans of the Arab countries, how then could it be said that it was given by divine revelation? Apart from that, there isn't any evidence that Ramadan was first prescribed for the Christians!

## 22. The Sacred Months

**Question 151:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:1-5,36,37: "An

acquittal, from God and His Messenger, unto the idolaters with whom you made covenant: 'Journey freely in the land for four months; and know that you cannot frustrate the will of God, and that God degrades the unbelievers.' A proclamation, from God and His Messenger, unto mankind on the day of the Greater Pilgrimage: 'God is quit, and His Messenger, of the idolaters. So if you repent, that will be better for you; but if you turn your backs, know that you cannot frustrate the will of God. And give good tidings to the unbelievers of a painful chastisement; excepting those of the idolaters with whom you made covenant, and they failed you naught neither lent support to any man against you. With them fulfil your covenant till their term; surely God loves the godfearing. Then, when the sacred months are drawn away, slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them, and confine them, and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush. But if they repent, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms, then let them go their way; God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.... The number of the months, with God, is twelve in the Book of God, the day that He created the heavens and the earth; four of them are sacred. That is the right religion. So wrong not each other during them. And fight the unbelievers totally even as they fight you totally; and know that God is with the godfearing. The month postponed is an increase of unbelief whereby the unbelievers go astray; one year they make it profane, and hallow it another, to agree with the number that God has hallowed, and so profane what God has hallowed. Decked out fair to them are their evil deeds; and God guides not the people of the unbelievers."

سورة التوبة ٩:١-٥ و ٣٦ و ٣٧ «بِرَاءةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ فَسِيحُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ مُخْزِي الْكَافِرِينَ وَأَذَانٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ يَوْمَ الْحَجِّ الْأَكْبَرِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ بَرِيءٌ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَرَسُولُهُ فَإِنْ تُبْتُمْ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ غَيْرُ مُعْجِزِي اللَّهِ وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ عَاهَدْتُمْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَنْقُصُوكُمْ شَيْئاً وَلَمْ يُظَاهِرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَحَداً فَأَتُوا إِلَيْهِمْ وَعَاهَدَهُمْ إِلَىٰ مُدَّتِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فَإِذَا أَسْلَخَ الْأَشْهُرَ الْحُرْمَ فَاقْتُلُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَخْضُرُوهُمْ وَأَقْعُدُوا لَهُمْ كُلَّ مَرْصِدٍ لَّئِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَخَلُّوا سَبِيلَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ... إِنَّ عِدَّةَ الشُّهُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ اثْنَا عَشَرَ شَهْرًا فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ مِنْهَا أَرْبَعَةٌ حُرْمٌ ذَلِكَ الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْبَيْتَ وَمَا لَكُمْ لِمَنِ كُنْتُمْ تُكْفِرُونَ كَمَا يُكْفِرُونَ كَمَا أَقْبَلْتُمْ فِي الشُّهُورِ الْحُرْمِ أَجْرًا لِيُكْفِرُوا فِي الْأَشْهُرِ الْحُرْمِ وَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُكْفِرُونَ وَهُوَ مُخَوِّمٌ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ»

We read also in Sura al-Baqara 2:194,217: "The holy month for the holy month; holy things demand retaliation.... They will question thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say: 'Fighting in it is a heinous [*i.e.*, monumental] thing, but to bar from God's way, and disbelief in Him, and the Holy Mosque, and to expel its people from it – that is more heinous in God's sight.'"

سورة البقرة ٢:١٩٤ و ٢١٧ «الشُّهُرُ الْحُرْمُ بِالْشُّهُرِ الْحُرْمِ وَالْحُرْمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ... يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشُّهُرِ الْحُرْمِ قَاتِلٍ فِيهِ قُلْ فِيهِ كِبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَنِ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ»

In Sura al-Ma'ida 5:2,97 we read: "O believers, profane not God's waymarks nor the holy month, neither the offering, nor the necklaces, nor those repairing to the Holy House seeking from their Lord bounty and good pleasure.... God has appointed the Ka'ba, the Holy House, as an establishment for men, and the holy month, and offering, and the necklaces."

سورة المائدة ٥:٢ و ٩٧ «يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا سَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَسْهُرَ الْحَرَامِ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَتَتَفَعُونَ فُضْلاً مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَاناً... يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحِلُّوا سَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَسْهُرَ الْحَرَامِ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَتَتَفَعُونَ فُضْلاً مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَاناً»

But we ask: Why does the Qur'an prohibit fighting during the four sacred months only, yet allow it during the rest of the months of the year? Isn't it better to prohibit fighting altogether, so that people can live in peace? But Muhammad broke the age-old agreement of the Arabs not to fight during the sacred months and actually fought during them! So, why did he break that rule, which the Arabs had agreed upon, by profaning the sacred months with bloodshed after he had already declared that the sacred months were "God's waymarks"? In fact, his contemporaries accused him of treachery and deception on account of this incident! Then, after all this, the Qur'an defends the holy months and confuses the lunar and the solar year, claiming that the solar year is *kufur* ("unbelief"). But if the sacred months were of God, why then are they not observed throughout the whole Islamic world at present?

### 23. Spreading Religion by the Sword

**Question 152:** We read in Sura al-Fath 48:16,17: "Say to the Bedouins who were left behind: 'You shall be called against a people possessed of great might to fight them, or they surrender. If you obey, God will give you a goodly wage; but if you turn your backs before, He will chastise you with a painful chastisement.' There is no fault in the blind, and there is no fault in the lame, and there is no fault in the sick. And whosoever obeys God and His Messenger, He will admit him into gardens underneath which rivers flow; but whosoever turns his back, him will He chastise with a painful chastisement."

سورة الفتح ٤٨:١٦ و ١٧ «قُلْ لِلْمُخَلَّفِينَ مِنَ الْأَعْرَابِ سُدْعُونَ إِلَى قَوْمِ  
أَوْلِي بَأْسٍ شَدِيدٍ ثَمَّاتُ لَوْ نَهَمُوا أَنْ يُسَلِّمُوا فَمَا يُسَلِّمُونَ فَإِنْ تُطِيعُوا يُؤْتِكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا  
وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا كَمَا تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَعْمَى حَرْجٌ  
وَلَا عَلَى الْأَعْرَجِ حَرْجٌ وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرْجٌ وَمَنْ يَطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ  
جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ يُعَذِّبْهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا».

Al-Baidawi said:

"Say to the Bedouins who were left behind" are words that are used repeatedly so as to enhance the guilt of the people and make them feel keenly the shame of being left behind. "You shall be called against a people possessed of great might" refers to the Banu Hanifa or others who had backslidden after the Messenger of God [had died], or the idolaters, for it says, "To fight them, or they surrender," which means that they had either of two choices: to be fought against or to surrender [embrace Islam]. It can mean that they surrender and the rest be fought against or

they pay the tribute. "If you obey, God will give you a goodly wage," – that is, the goods of this world, and Paradise in the one to come.

We ask: Can true religion be based on anything but reason and evidence? If the Meccan verses encourage peace-making, whereas the Medinan ones encourage fighting, which, then, are more established and rooted? Which of them are more suitable to faith and divine approval?

Fear of violence indeed has led people to pretend to convert to Islam. A poet has said: "The idolaters surrendered by sword, under compulsion, but when they are by themselves, they are sinners. They felt safe from losing of their money and souls, but they are neither safe nor surrendered!"

### 24. Victim's Blood to Be Shed with Impunity

**Question 153:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:178: "O believers, prescribed for you is retaliation, touching the slain; freeman for freeman, slave for slave, female for female. But if aught is pardoned a man by his brother, let the pursuing be honourable, and let the payment be with kindness. That is a lightening granted you by your Lord, and mercy; and for him who commits aggression after that – for him there awaits a painful chastisement."

سورة البقرة ٢:١٧٨ «يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْقِصَاصُ فِي  
الْقَتْلِ أَلْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأَنْثَى بِالْأُنْثَى فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ  
فَاتَّبَعْ بِالْمَغْرُوفِ وَأَدَّاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنْ  
أَخْتَدَى بِغَدِّ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ».

Al-Baidawi said:

“O believers, prescribed for you is retaliation, touching the slain; freeman for freeman, slave for slave, female for female.” Before Islam there was bloodshed between two Arab families; one of them had advantage over the other. So this one swore to slay a freeman from among the other for each slave, male and female. When Islam came, they went to the Messenger of God to judge between them. Therefore this verse was revealed, and they were commanded to avenge themselves in like manner. It indicates neither that the freeman should be killed for a slave, nor the male for the female, nor vice versa.... Yet Malik and al-Shafi'i have forbidden the killing of a freeman for a slave, whether he be his slave or the slave of another. It was reported, on the authority of 'Ali, that a man killed his slave, so the Messenger had him whipped and banished for a year, and did not go to see him. It was reported on the same authority that it is from the *Sunna* [“the way of the Prophet”] not to kill a Muslim for a man of covenant [*dhimmi*], or a freeman for a slave.

We ask: Why did Muhammad, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Ali allow the rich and the rulers to kill the slaves with impunity, yet make it a statute not to kill a freeman for a slave or a Muslim for a man of covenant, a statute that the Maliki and Shafi'i schools of Islam agreed to? Why didn't they consider the principles of the Torah, which we find in the Qur'anic verse – “soul for soul” – a divine law which must be followed? Rather, they claimed that the Torah does not abrogate the Qur'an, even though the Qur'an's statement contradicts the rules of justice and equality between mankind. God is one and His law is one. Why then do Muslims

show favour to the rich? Why don't they claim the blood of the slaves, shed by the hands of their lords? Strangely, the Qur'an declares that the believer is not to be killed in place of the unbeliever or the man of covenant. Isn't this a license for Islam to mistreat the souls of mankind and consider their covenants to be mere ink on paper?

## 25. Kill the Apostate

**Question 154:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:217: “And whosoever of you who turns from his religion, and dies disbelieving – their works have failed in this world and the next; those are the inhabitants of the Fire; therein they shall dwell forever.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٢١٧ «وَمَنْ يَزِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ».

Sura al-Nisa' 4:89 says: “They wish that you should disbelieve as they disbelieve, and then you would be equal; therefore take not to yourselves friends of them, until they emigrate in the way of God.”

سورة النساء ٤: ٨٩ «وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّى يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَحُذِرْهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا».

Consider also Sura al-Ma'ida 5:33: “This is the recompense of those who fight against God and His Messenger, and hasten about the earth, to do corruption there: they shall be slaughtered, or crucified, or their hands and feet shall alternately be struck off,

or they shall be banished from the land. That is a disaster for them in this world; and in the world to come there awaits them a mighty chastisement.”

سورة المائدة ٥: ٣٣ «إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ»

It is evident from Sura al-Baqara 2:217 that those who turn their backs on Islam are regarded as unbelievers, while Sura al-Nisa' 4:89 shows that the Qur'an made it obligatory for Muslims to kill all those who abstained from converting wherever they found them, like the rest of the unbelievers! Where is freedom of religion then? It is indeed a disgrace to Islam to kill all those who view Islam differently from the way it sees itself. Hasn't Abu Bakr stained his hands with the blood of thousands of apostates? The following is quoted from al-Tabari's *Ta'rikh al-Rusul wa al-muluk* (vol. 4, p. 2,065f.):

There arose in the Arabian peninsula, shortly before the demise of the Prophet, a movement of resistance to Islam. And as soon as the Prophet died and Abu Bakr was elected caliph, this movement increased and grew stronger. Abu Bakr, however, was determined to annihilate this movement, and confronted the apostates in the Arabian peninsula with Khalid Ibn al-Walid, and likewise gave commission to other leaders to go to the extremities of the peninsula to suppress apostasy in them. Khalid annihilated the apostasy of Banu Asad, Tamim and Hanifa after a fierce war, and the other leaders did likewise throughout the

Arabian peninsula. It was only a year or so after the death of the Messenger that the peninsula returned to the fold of the new religion of God and the new Islamic Empire, thanks to the conviction and commitment of Abu Bakr and the military genius of Khalid.

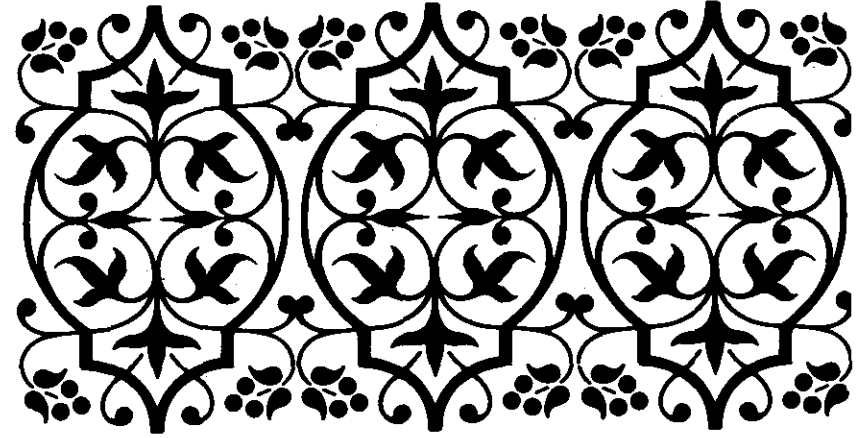
It so happened also that 'Umar threatened to cut off the head of Jabala Ibn al-Ayham, were he to turn from Islam to Christianity. Al-Jabala Ibn al-Ayham was the last Christian king among the Ghassanid kings in Syria, who embraced Islam under 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab. It seems that he did so, not out of belief in the truth and superiority of Islam over his religion, but out of fear or desire (to gain something). After his conversion to Islam, Jabala made the pilgrimage to Mecca with the pomp of a king in grand procession. 'Umar honoured him and welcomed him. And it so happened that while he was circumambulating in his ritual consecration, as is the habit of the hajjs, a man from Banu Fazara hit the end of his waist-band so that it came loose, and his nakedness showed. Ja'bla became angry and hit the man with his fist so hard that he bled. The man said to him, "You hit me in the House of God, the law of God being between us?" They consulted 'Umar, who judged that the Fazarite should hit Jabala back as he hit him, or pay him an indemnity. Jabala answered, "Are the rabble among you equal to kings?" To which 'Umar answered, "All are equal among us when it comes to the truth." He said, "I will go back to my religion then." 'Umar said, "You do that, and I will cut off your head." Ja'bla said, "Give me till tomorrow." When it was night, Jabala and his men broke camp and went to the Roman Emperor in Constantinople.

## 26. Marrying Christian Women

**Question 155:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:5: "Today the good things are permitted you, and the food of those who were given the Book is permitted to you, and permitted to them is your food. Likewise believing women in wedlock, and in wedlock women of them who were given the Book before you if you give them their wages, in wedlock and not in licence, or as taking lovers."

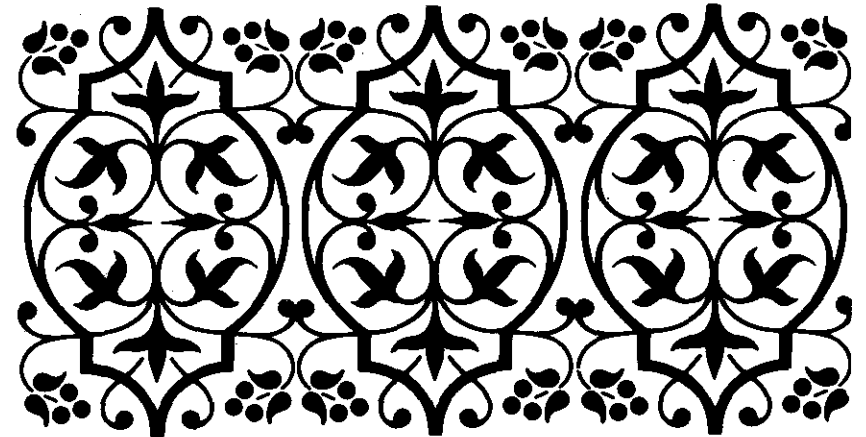
سورة المائدة ٥:٥ «الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ وَالنِّكَاحَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالنِّكَاحَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ».

The Qur'an permits Muslims to have Christian wives, while the New Testament forbids explicitly the marriage of Christian women to non-Christians. The apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7:39, "She is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord." The verse in Sura al-Ma'ida is ultimately a declaration of respect for the Christian faith, since the Christian mother, in that case, will be rearing the children of the Muslim husband.



## Part Seven

### Social Questions





## 1. A Woman's Testimony Is Worth Half a Man's

**Question 156:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:282: "And call in to witness two witnesses, men; or if the two be not men, then one man and two women, such witnesses as you approve of, that if one of the women errs the other will remind her."

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٨٢ «وَأَسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَآمْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّن تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكِّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَى».

Al-Baidawi said:

"And call in to witness two witnesses" means ask for the witness of two people to the religion – "men" that is, Muslim men, for being Muslim is the condition a witness should meet, a condition that most scholars uphold. Abu Hanifa said that the unbelievers' witness against one another is acceptable. "Or if the two be not men" – namely, if the two witnesses are not men, "then one man and two women," that is, let one man and two women bear witness. "That if one of the women errs the other will remind her" implies their [the women's] irrationality and lack of self-control.

We ask: How humiliated and cheated do women feel because of this debasing principle, which is far from being fair? How often has a virtuous woman been better than several foolish men?

## 2. A Woman's Inheritance Is Worth Half a Man's

**Question 157:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:11: "God charges

you, concerning your children: to the male the like of the portion of two females.”

سورة النساء ٤: ١١ «يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلذَّكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثِيَيْنِ».

Al-Baidawi said, “To the male the like of the portion of two females’ means that each male is to be considered equal to two females, and his portion is to be double. The male is referred to in particular in terms of his portion, because it is the demonstration of his superiority and the announcement that doubling the portion is commensurate to this superiority.”

We ask: Why shouldn’t a man and a woman receive an equal portion of an inheritance? Don’t they both have a body that needs to be covered and a stomach that needs to be filled? Aren’t the needs of both the same? Life is perhaps even harder for a woman if she is not yet an adult or married, or if she is a widow.

### 3. Polygamy

**Question 158:** We read in Sura al-Nisa’ 4:3: “If you fear that you will not act justly towards the orphans, marry such women as seem good to you, two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own.”

سورة النساء ٤: ٣ «وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَثْنَىٰ وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۚ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ».

Al-Baidawi said:

“If you fear that you will not act justly towards the

orphans” – namely, if you fear you will not be fair to all of them when you marry them. “Marry such women as seem good to you” means marry the non-orphans, such as possess riches and beauty, two, three, and four. “But if you fear you will not be impartial” to all of these women, “then only one” is sufficient for you. “Or what your right hands own” refers to any number of concubines, for they do not need a great deal of sustenance, and one has the freedom not to be impartial to them! Women are referred to with “what”, so as to indicate their lack of mental capability.

We ask: Isn’t the family a picture of society in miniature? If one man marries four women and has a large number of concubines, he will inevitably do them injustice, which will breed rancour and hatred, and will often result in divorce. And what about the innocent children of divorced parents; won’t they be torn between mother and father or, even worse, wander about homeless? Furthermore, if a man can marry four or more women at once, why isn’t the woman allowed to marry four men simultaneously as well? Isn’t it best to regard the original divine institution which God established when He created one Adam and one Eve?

### 4. Beating Women

**Question 159:** We read in Sura al-Nisa’ 4:34: “And those you fear may be rebellious admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them. If they then obey you, look not for any way against them; God is All-high, All-great.”



سورة النساء ٤:٣٤ «وَالَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ نُشُوزَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَأَهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَأَضْرِبُوهُنَّ فَإِنْ أَطَعْتَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا».

The Qur'an asserts that if a woman fears her husband will reject her or desert her, she should have recourse to a "court of arbitration" consisting of her people and his, so as to reconcile them: "If a woman fear rebelliousness or aversion in her husband, there is no fault in them if the couple set things right between them; right settlement is better" (Sura al-Nisa' 4:128). Yet in the same breath the Qur'an says that if a man fears his wife will rebel against him, he should beat her by slapping her with his hand, punching her with his fist, kicking her with his feet, lashing her with a whip or thrashing her with a stick. What a world of difference there is between this teaching of the Qur'an and that of the New Testament: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it.... So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'" (Ephesians 5:25-33).

### 5. Women and Divorce

**Question 160:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:230: "If he divorces her finally, she shall not be lawful to him after that, until she marries another husband. If he divorces her, then it is no fault in them to return to each other, if they suppose that they will

maintain God's bounds. These are God's bounds; He makes them unto a people that have knowledge."

سورة البقرة ٢:٢٣٠ «إِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ حَتَّى تَكَحَّ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ طَلَّأَا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ وَتِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "By 'she shall not be lawful to him after that' is meant after the divorce.... And the Messenger of God has cursed the husband and the *muhallil* [the one who is called on to marry a divorced woman and then divorces her as soon as possible, so that the original husband can marry her again according to the Sharia]."

We ask: Don't reasonable people repudiate this odd system? Why would the Qur'an allow a woman to be reconciled to her husband and return to him after she had married another man, whom Arabs call a *muhallil*? Why did Muhammad curse both the *muhallil* and the original husband?

### 6. Women and the Veil

**Question 161:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:31: "And let them cast their veils over their bosoms."

سورة النور ٢٤:٣١ «وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُجُوبِهِنَّ».

Why should a woman be put in a prison like the veil? The veil kills the spirit of work and personal freedom in the woman, and brings humanity back to the age of slavery.

## 7. Demanding the *Zakat* by Coercion

**Question 162:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:58-60: "Some of them find fault with thee touching the freewill offerings; if they are given a share of them they are well-pleased, but if they are given none then they are angry. O were they well-pleased with what God and His Messenger have brought them, saying, 'Enough for us is God; God will bring us of his bounty, and His Messenger; to God we humbly turn.' The freewill offerings are for the poor and needy, those who work to collect them, those whose hearts are brought together, the ransoming of slaves, debtors, in God's way, and the traveller; so God ordains; God is All-knowing, All-wise."

سورة التوبة ٩: ٥٨-٦٠ «وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَلْمِزُكَ فِي الصَّدَقَاتِ فَإِنْ أُعْطُوا مِنْهَا رَضُوا وَإِنْ لَمْ يُعْطُوا مِنْهَا إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَخْطُونَ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ رَضُوا مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ سَيُؤْتِينَا اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَرَسُولُهُ إِنَّا إِلَى اللَّهِ رَاغِبُونَ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ».

Al-Tabari's *History* (2:250-300) and Abu Yusuf's *al-Kharaj* (pp. 141, 149) say: "Caliph Abu Bakr sent Khalid Ibn al-Walid to fight those who refused to pay the *zakat* ["free-will offering"]. He, therefore, went himself to al-Bata'ih to fight Malik Ibn Nuwaira. He did not leave there till he had slain him, and his people started to pay the *zakat* once again."

If *zakat* is one of the pillars of Islam, which is supposed to be rendered to God, can we still consider such religion acceptable if

we practise it without using our freewill? The *zakat* that the swords of Khalid Ibn al-Walid and others have collected is rejected by God, for it was not given freely.

## 8. The Spoils

**Question 163:** We read in Sura al-Anfal 8:41: "Know that, whatever booty you take, the fifth of it is God's, and the Messenger's, and the near kinsman's, and the orphans', and for the needy, and the traveller."

سورة الأنفال ٨: ٤١ «وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"Know that, whatever booty you take" refers to whatever you take from the unbelievers by force; and "whatever" includes everything, even the thread. "The fifth of it is God's, and the Messenger's, and the near kinsman's, and the orphans', and for the needy, and the traveller" means that God has the fifth of it which should be given to those mentioned in particular. But the portion of the Messenger, peace be upon him, is spent for the good of Muslims, or given to the imam. "And the near kinsman" refers to the Hashimites and the children of al-Muttalib, or to the whole of the Quraish, both the rich and the poor. This verse was revealed in Badr. And it was reported that the fifth was in the raid of Banu Qainuqa', three months and three days after Badr, during the first half of Shawwal, twenty months after the Hijra.

But we would like to ask: How can people be slaughtered like sheep and their belongings seized, in the name of Allah? How can a religious leader receive a portion of the booty?

## 9. The Tribute

**Question 164:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:29: “Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and [who] do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden – such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book – until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled.”

سورة التوبة ٢٩:٩ وَقَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَلَا يُحَرِّمُونَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَتَّى يُعْطُوا الْجِزْيَةَ عَنْ يَدٍ وَهُمْ صَاغِرُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said:

“Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day” refers to those who do not believe in God properly... for their belief is as good as unbelief. “And do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden” means all the things that were proven forbidden in the Qur’an and the *Sunna*. Another interpretation of “His Messenger” is the one they claim to have followed, which will then mean that they deviated from the original form of their religion, which has been abrogated both in doctrine and practice. “Such men as practise not the religion of truth” means the true religion which is the established one that has abrogated and annulled all the other religions. “Until they pay the tribute” means that which was determined for them to pay.

*Jizya* [“head tax”] is derived from a verb that means to settle one’s debt. “Out of hand” explains the means of paying, namely, that they should pay with a submissive attitude. It was forbidden to appoint someone else to do it. It could also refer to the rich, and therefore it was said that it should not be taken from the poor or from an oppressive hand. It may also refer to the fact that tribute should be given from hand to hand; the hand could also refer to grace, for keeping them under tribute was a great grace! Ibn ‘Abbas reported that tribute is to be taken from the *dhimmi*, and his neck is to be struck. The meaning of the verse requires that the tribute be taken from the people of the Book, which is supported by the fact that ‘Umar never took tribute from the fire-worshippers [*majus*] until ‘Abd al-Rahman Ibn ‘Auf testified that the Prophet took tribute from a fire-worshipper who emigrated, and that he [Muhammad] said, “Deal with them according to the rule you have in dealing with the people of the Book, since they resemble the people of the Book, for which reason they were associated with those who have a Book.” As for the rest of unbelievers, no tribute is to be taken from them in our opinion. Abu Hanifa is of the opinion that tribute can be taken from unbelievers, except for the idolaters of the Arabs, which is based on the historical fact related by al-Zuhri that the Messenger reconciled the idolaters, with the exception of the Arab idolaters. In Malik’s opinion, it is to be accepted from every unbeliever, except for the apostate; the least amount of which should be a dinar a year for both the rich and the poor. But Abu Hanifa said, “The young man should pay 48 dirhams; the elderly half that much; the

poor man of steady means a quarter of that, and the poor man who has no means, nothing at all.”

We ask: How can a people make it lawful for themselves to fight against other people in the name of religion, giving them the alternatives of adopting Islam, death or paying a tribute?

### 10. Constraining Slave Girls to Prostitution

**Question 165:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:33: “And constrain not your slave girls to prostitution, if they desire to live in chastity, that you seek the chance goods of this life. Whosoever constrains them, surely God, after their being constrained, is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.”

سورة النور ٢٤:٣٣ «وَلَا تُكْرِهُوا فَتِيَاتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِيَبْتِغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَمَنْ يُكْرِهْهُنَّ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ».

Al-Baidawi said:

‘Abdallah Ibn ‘Ubay had six handmaids whom he constrained to prostitution and from whom he demanded a percentage. Some of them [the maids] complained to the Messenger of God. Therefore, “If they desire to live in chastity” was revealed, which is the condition for constraining to prostitution. But if the sentence is to be understood as a condition for prohibiting prostitution, then one should not think that constraining to prostitution is allowable. He preferred *in* to *idha* [which both mean “if”] because the desire to be chaste among the slave girls is such a rare thing. “That you seek the chance goods of this

life. Whosoever, constrain them, surely God, after they are constrained, is All-forgiving, All-compassionate” refers to them [the girls] or to him [the one who constrains]. The first interpretation is more suitable to the literal meaning and to the copy of Ibn Mas‘ud which says, “God, after they being constrained, is All-forgiving, All-compassionate to them.” This is not to be answered with the argument that the one who is constrained needs no forgiveness; for being constrained does not absolve one from personal blame. Therefore, those under constraint were commended to be punished, not killed.

But we ask: Isn’t it a commendable thing to command the girls to declare their obedience to God and to prohibit the practice of prostitution? Instead of saying “God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate,” he should have said, “Surely God is severe in visiting His punishment, except toward those who repent”!

### 11. Frustrating and Scourging the Witnesses

**Question 166:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:4: “And those who cast it up on women in wedlock, and then bring not four witnesses, scourge them with eighty stripes, and do not accept any testimony of theirs ever; those – they are the ungodly.”

سورة النور ٢٤:٤ «وَالَّذِينَ يَزْمُونَ الْفَحْشَاءَ لَمْ يَأْتُوا بِأَرْبَعَةِ شُهَدَاءَ فَاجْلِدُوهُمْ ثَمَانِينَ جَلْدَةً وَلَا تَقْبَلُوا لَهُمْ شَهَادَةً أَبَدًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ».

With regard to this verse we ask: How is it possible for four people to witness such an act which is usually committed in

privacy and secrecy? Also, why does the Qur'an require four witnesses and then sentence them, if they were three only, to eighty stripes, even though these witnessed the act with their own eyes? Demanding four witnesses makes it next to impossible to prove adultery, and it is also a frustration and impediment which only absolves the guilty.

## 12. Scourge the Fornicators Mercilessly

**Question 167:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:2: "The fomicatress and the fornicator – scourge each one of them a hundred stripes, and in the matter of God's religion let no tenderness from them seize you if you believe in God and the Last Day; and let a party of the believers witness their chastisement."

سورة النور ٢:٢٤ «الزانية والزاني فاجلدوا كل واحد منهما مائة جلدة ولا تأخذكم بهما رأفة في دين الله إن كنتم تؤمنون بالله واليوم الآخر وليشهد عذابهما طائفة من المؤمنين».

We ask: Isn't it better to treat those at fault with a spirit of gentleness and compassion? Christianity does not demand that those at fault be whipped, but rather that they be separated from the community and then readmitted and welcomed if they declare their repentance (1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

## 13. Life Imprisonment

**Question 168:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:15: "Such of your women as commit indecency, call four of you to witness against

them; and if they witness, then detain them or God appoints for them a way."

سورة النساء ١٥:٤ «واللاتي يأتين الفاحشة من نسائكم فاستشهدوا عليهن أربعة منكم فإن شهدوا فأمسكوهن في البيوت حتى يتوفاهن الموت أو يجعل الله لهن سبيلاً».

We ask: Does life imprisonment correct the guilty in such a case? How could a sixteen-year-old girl be detained if she were to live to the age of eighty? It is more suitable to give the sinner a chance to repent and live a new and holy life.

Muslim scholars say that this verse was abrogated by punishing an unmarried girl with scourging (Sura al-Nur 24:2) and killing a married woman by stoning, although the verse of stoning was abrogated (see *Al-Itqan*, by al-Suyuti; section on the abrogating and the abrogated verses). The Qur'an says, as well, that the punishment for slave girls is supposed to be half that which a free woman is to receive (Sura al-Nisa' 4:25), but we have not yet discovered how to half stone someone!

## 14. Retribution

**Question 169:** We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:126: "And if you chastise, chastise even as you have been chastised; and yet assuredly if you are patient, better it is for those patient."

سورة النحل ١٦:١٢٦ «وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَئِنْ صَبَرْتُمْ لَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لِلصَّابِرِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said: "It was reported that the Prophet said, as he saw Hamza's body being mangled, 'By God, if Allah gives me

victory over them I shall mangle seventy people in your stead.' But later he made atonement for his oath when this verse was revealed. This indicates that an avenger is allowed to do as much as the offender, but not to exceed him."

We ask: Does taking revenge purify a soul or guarantee safety? We suffer bitter woes from the practice of taking revenge. The Lord Jesus said that those who take the sword will perish by the sword (Matthew 26:52). What a world of difference there is between the words, "By God, if Allah gives me victory over them I shall mangle seventy people in your stead," which Muhammad uttered, and the saying of Christ: "And if he [your brother] sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day he returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him" (Luke 17:4; see also Matthew 18:21,22)!

## 15. Invasion

**Question 170:** We read in Sura al-Anfal 8:60: "Make ready for them whatever force and strings of horses you can, to terrify thereby the enemy of God and your enemy, and others besides them that you know not; God knows them. And whatsoever you expend in the way of God shall be repaid you in full; you will not be wronged."

سورة الأنفال ٨: ٦٠ «وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُمْ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ قُوَّةٍ وَمِنْ رِبَاطِ الْخَيْلِ تُزْهِبُونَ بِهِ عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ وَعَدُوَّكُمْ وَآخَرِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَهُمُ اللَّهُ يَعْلَمُهُمْ  
وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"Make ready" is an address to the believers. "For them"

refers to those who broke their covenant, or to the unbelievers. "Whatever force" refers to whatever makes one strong at war. 'Uqba Ibn 'Amir reported that he heard the Prophet say from the pulpit: "Behold, the force is archery." He said it three times, and perhaps he mentioned it especially because it is the strongest. "And strings of horses" is a description of the horses that are bound in the way of God; but another reading says simply horses. "To terrify thereby" means to frighten thereby the enemy of God and your enemy, who are the idolaters of Mecca. "And others besides them" means other unbelievers who were said to be Jews, or the deceivers or the Persians.

We ask: How can the Qur'an order people to bear arms and prepare to invade and conquer lands for the sake of religion, forcing the inhabitants to accept it, thus destroying people's lives and pillaging their properties? The sword is the weapon of those who cannot tolerate opposition!

## 16. Detestable Bigotry

**Question 171:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:51: "O believers, take not Jews and Christians as friends; they are friends of each other. Whoso of you makes them his friends is one of them. God guides not the people of the evildoers."

سورة المائدة ٥: ٥١ «يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ  
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ  
الظَّالِمِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said:

“O believers, take not Jews and Christians as friends” means that Muslims should not depend on them or be on intimate terms with them, as with loved ones. “They are friends of each other” is a reference to the reason for the forbidding; they agree to contract with and antagonise Muslims, being friends with one another, owing to the close relation of their religion. “Whoso of you makes them his friends is one of them” means that such a one will be considered or regarded as one of them. The emphasis here is to avoid them, as the Messenger of God said. “Their fire shall not be seen” means that those of them who were their friends were hypocrites. “God guides not the people of the evildoers” refers to those who harmed themselves by making friends with the unbelievers or with their enemies.

We ask: What can the result of this Qur’anic advice be, if not self-centredness? And how can a Muslim reconcile this close-minded verse with the exhortation to marry a woman of the Book (*kitabiyya*) who would rear his children and take charge of his home? How many lives have been destroyed owing to religious discrimination! Christianity, however, calls for peace and love and service to all, just as Christ is the Lord of peace. He taught us in the parable of the good Samaritan how to sacrifice and serve all people, with no regard to race, language or religion. Perhaps the advice of the Qur’an was effective at the time when the Muslims were conquerors, but today it undermines the spirit of brotherhood between nations and hinders progress.

## 17. Hatred to All People

**Question 172:** We read in Sura Muhammad 47:4: “When you meet the unbelievers, smite their necks, then, when you had made wide slaughter among them, tie fast the bonds; then set them free, either by grace or ransom, till the war lays down its loads.”

سورة محمد ٤٧:٤ «وَإِذَا لَقِيتُمْ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَضَرْبِ الرِّقَابِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَنْخَسْتُمُوهُمْ فَسُدُّوا الرِّقَابَ وَإِمَّا مَتًّا بَعْدَ وَإِمَّا فِدَاءً حَتَّىٰ تَضَعَ الْحَرْبُ أَوْزَارَهَا.»

Sura al-Tahrim 66:9 says: “O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers and the hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them; their refuge shall be Gehenna – an evil homecoming!”

سورة التحريم ٦٦:٩ «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ.»

While Muhammad was in Mecca he made peace with all people and respected the Jews, the Christians and the Sabaeans; he even said that they would go to paradise (Sura al-Ma’ida 5:69). But when he grew strong in Medina, after the Ansarites joined him, he commanded that all non-Muslims be slaughtered, pay tribute or join Islam. This means that Muhammad restricted brotherhood to the Islamic brotherhood only, and tore down the pillars of the universal brotherhood of man, breaking the bonds of love and goodwill between the different classes of society. In keeping with this, Muslims have prohibited all non-Muslims from living in the Hijaz.

## 18. Heathen Regulations

**Question 173:** We read in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:97: "God has appointed the Ka'ba, the Holy House as an establishment for men, and the holy month, the offering and the necklaces."

سورة المائدة ٥:٩٧ ﴿جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ﴾.

Making the pilgrimage to the Ka'ba, with the rites it involves is a custom from pre-Islamic times. One of these rites is kissing the black stone. 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab was quoted once as having said to the black stone, "By God, I know of certainty that you are a piece of stone that does neither harm nor good. Unless I had seen the Messenger of God kiss you I wouldn't have done so myself." The prophet Habakkuk said, "What profit is the image that its maker should carve it, the molded image, a teacher of lies, that the maker of its mold should trust in it, to make mute idols? Woe to him who says to wood, 'Awake!' to silent stone, 'Arise! It shall teach!' Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver, and in it there is no breath at all" (Habakkuk 2:18,19). Hosea the prophet also said, "Now they sin more and more, and have made for themselves molded images, idols of their silver, according to their skill; all of it is the work of craftsmen. They say to them, 'Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves!' Therefore they shall be like the morning cloud and like the early dew that passes away, like chaff blown off from the threshing floor and like smoke from a chimney" (Hosea 13:2,3).

We ask: Is there any spirit in the black stone that would allow it to feel the warmth of the kisses that Muslims place on it, or does it have a mind to understand the Muslims' appreciation and re-

spect for it? Why should the Muslims pay this homage and honour to a stone that the pre-Islamic Arabs used to revere as an idol? Why did Muhammad preserve such religious veneration for the stone? Why did he leave that stone in the Ka'ba and not remove it as he did the other idols?

## 19. Ordinances that Society Renounces

**Question 174:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:89: "They wish that you should disbelieve as they disbelieve, and then you would be equal; therefore take not to yourselves friends of them, until they emigrate in the way of God; then, if they turn their backs, take them, and slay them wherever you find them; take not to yourselves any one of them as friend or helper."

سورة النساء ٤:٨٩ ﴿وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وِلِيَاءَ وَلَا نَصِيرَةً﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'Take not to yourselves any one of them as friend or helper' means that they are to avoid them utterly and not to accept their friendship or help; neither should believers receive any help from them against their enemies."

We ask: Does this agree with the history of the Muslims, with regard to their using Christians in many instances? Cooperation with others is expedient, both socially and militarily. Political isolation contradicts social laws, and it has been denounced by society.



## 20. Entering in Throngs

**Question 175:** We read in Sura al-Nasr 110:1-3: "When comes the help of God, and victory, and thou seest men entering God's religion in throngs, then proclaim the praise of thy Lord, and seek His forgiveness; for He turns again unto men."

سورة النصر ١١٠:١-٣ «إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا».

Al-Baidawi said:

"When comes the help of God" refers to the help of God against enemies. "And victory" refers to that over Mecca, or according to others, the victory that God gave to the believers over the people of Mecca and of all other cities. "And thou seest men entering God's religion in throngs" refers to dense crowds, such as the people of Mecca, al-Ta'if, Yemen, Hawazin and the rest of the Arab tribes. "Then proclaim the praise of thy Lord" means to marvel at the way God facilitated what could not have occurred according to the mind of anyone, and to praise Him for it, or to pray unto Him, thanking Him for His grace.

We maintain, however, that it is natural for people to imitate one another. In fact, certain Arab groups and tribes were so influenced by others that they adopted Islam just to maintain their status among the tribes. This status could easily be taken away from them if they opposed Islam. We see, therefore, no miracle in the swift and far-reaching acceptance of Islam among the Arabs, since they were not by any means scholars or people of enlightened and educated minds, such as the people of Berea

or the Greeks, who searched the Scriptures to know whether or not what the apostle Paul was preaching to them was true. If the truth of a religion were measured by the number of its adherents or its mass acceptance among the people, what can our Muslim brothers say about the spread of heathen religions from western India to the borders of Siberia, and the vast number of people that follow them? The temples and religious monuments of those religions are innumerable, and some of them are absolutely magnificent and opulent. Is heathenism, then, from God?

## 21. The Muslims' Interpersonal Conflicts

**Question 176:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:103: "And hold fast to God's bond, together, and do not scatter; remember God's blessing upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together, so that by His blessing you became brothers. You were upon the brink of a pit of Fire, and He delivered you from it; even so God makes clear to you His signs; so haply you will be guided."

سورة آل عمران ١٠٣:٣ «وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ».

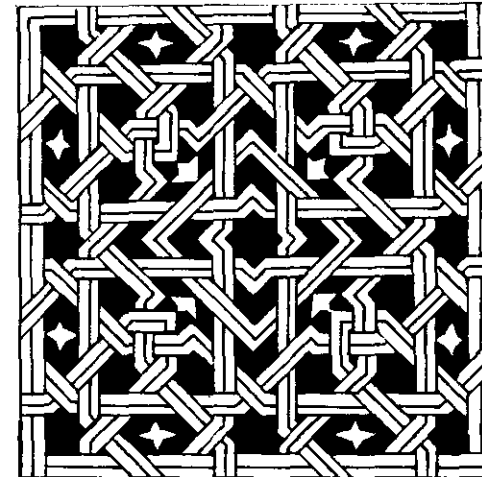
Muslims believe that one the bounties of Islam is that it brought the hearts of the Arabs together, for they were once separate tribes waging war against each other. But this is untrue, for wars and raids were as fierce as ever among the Arabs

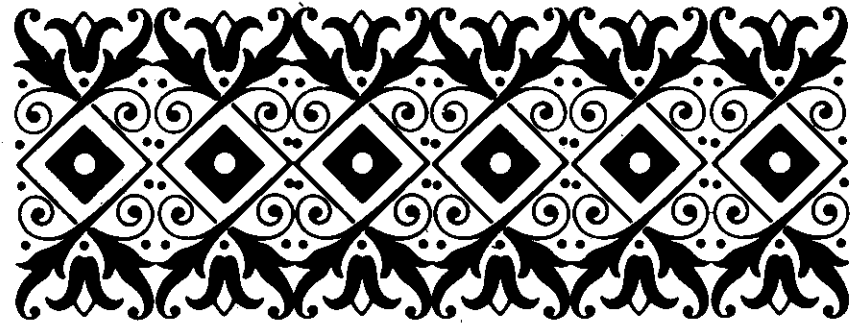
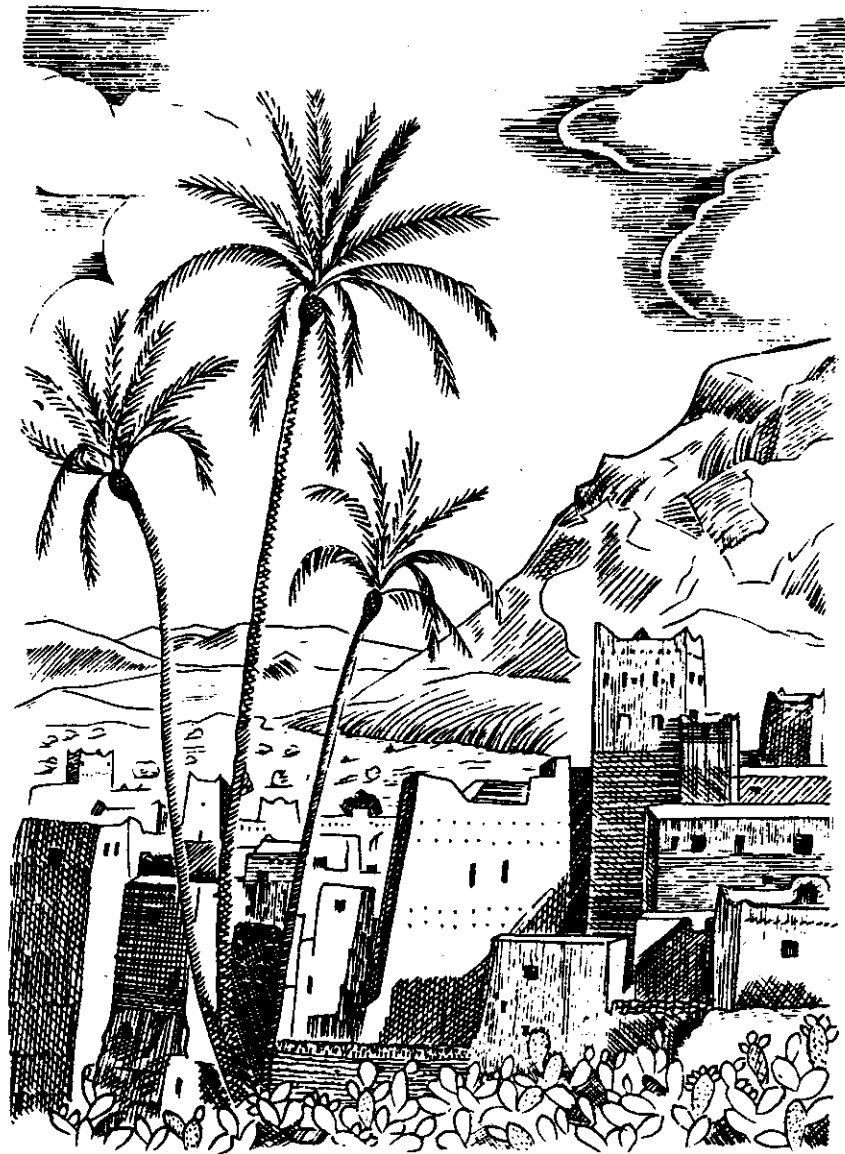
during Muhammad's time. And after Muhammad's death Abu Bakr engaged in the War of Apostasy. After 'Umar died, Muslims massacred one another so that 'Ali and 'Uthman were killed by the swords of their fellow Muslims. Thereafter the War of the Camel broke out between 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib and 'Aisha. Then another war erupted between Mu'awiya, 'Ali and his son al-Husain on the one side, and Muhammad Ibn Abi Bakr, who was killed by Amr Ibn al-'As, on the other. In the year 71 A.H. 'Abdallah Ibn al-Zubair led an insurrection to succeed 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan the Ummayyad as caliph, which brought about a war between him and al-Hajjaj Ibn Yusuf al-Thaqafi. After al-Hajjaj laid siege to Mecca, he was able to kill Ibn al-Zubair and many of the Muslim elite, and he destroyed a part of the Ka'ba by means of catapults.

It is worth noting, in addition to the foregoing, that in order to establish 'Abdallah Ibn al-Zubair as caliph, the clan of Kilab dealt treacherously with the clan of Kalb, both of which belonged to the tribe of Fazara. They employed trickery and perjury to accomplish their goal. This despicable act of deceit led to a massacre of many people in the clan of Kalb. Not long after, the clan of Qais, which belonged to the tribe of Fazara, and the aforementioned clan of Kilab waged war. Thus the clan of Kilab were dealt the same blow they had dealt the clan of Kalb. On learning about all this commotion and strife, 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Marwan wrote to al-Hajjaj, who was then his regent over Hijaz, Ta'if, Yamama and Yemen, and called on him to muster his hordes and go to the tribe of Fazara to kill all the adults he could!

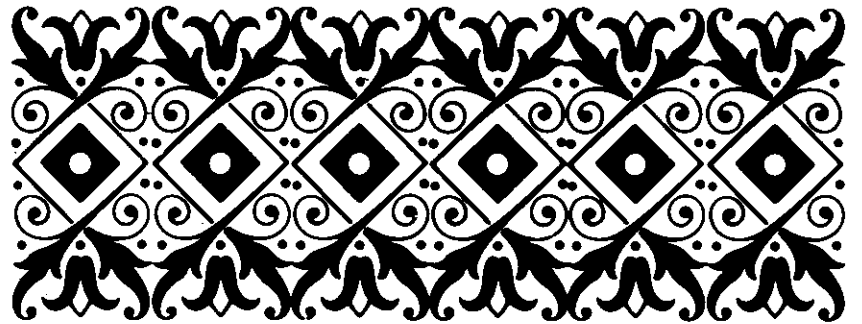
Thus was the situation of the Arabs during the early period of Islam: rife with wars, deception and treachery. So where is that bringing together of hearts, the burying of old grievances and the

doing away with enmity and strife which Islam is supposed to have accomplished among the Arabs?





*Part Eight*  
*Scientific Questions*





## 1. A Statue that Lows

**Question 177:** Sura al-A'raf 7:148 says, "And the people of Moses took to them, after him, of their ornaments a Calf—a mere body that lowed. Did they not see it spoke not to them, neither guided them upon any way? Yet they took it to them, and were evildoers."

سورة الأعراف ١٤٨:٧ «وَاتَّخَذَ قَوْمُ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ بَغْيِهِمْ عِجْلًا  
جَسَدًا لَهُ خُورَاجٌ أَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّهُ لَا يَكَلِّمُهُمْ وَلَا يَهْدِيهِمْ سَبِيلًا اتَّخَذُوهُ وَكَانُوا  
ظَالِمِينَ.»

We read also in Sura Ta Ha 20:87-95: "But we were loaded with fardels, even the ornaments of the people, and we cast them, as the Samaritan also threw them, into the fire.' (Then he brought out for them a Calf, a mere body that lowed...)."

سورة طه ٨٨-٨٧:٢٠ «وَلَكِنَّا حَمَلْنَا أَوْزَارًا مِنْ زِينَةِ الْقَوْمِ فَقَذَفْنَاهَا  
فَكَذَّبِكَ أَلْفَى السَّامِرِيُّ فَأَخْرَجَ لَهُمْ عِجْلًا جَسَدًا لَهُ خُورَاجٌ.»

Here we must raise an important question: Is it reasonable that a golden calf would low like a real one? Or could it be that the alleged Samaritan desired it, and that Aaron requested it from God, who agreed to it and improved it, making it low like a real one in order to tempt the people to worship it? Did Aaron, the Samaritan and God form an alliance in making the calf?

## 2. A Magical Ring

**Question 178:** We read in Sura Sad 38:34,35: "Certainly We tried Solomon, and We cast upon his throne a mere body; then

he repented. He said, 'My Lord, forgive me, and give me a kingdom such as may not befall anyone after me.'

سورة ص ٣٨:٣٤ و ٣٥ (وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ وَأَلْقَيْنَا عَلَى كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَداً ثُمَّ  
أَنَابَ قَالَ رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَهَبْ لِي مُلْكاً لَّا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ مِنِّ بَعْدِي).

Muslim expositors claimed that Solomon killed the king of Sidon and took his daughter Jarada as captive, for she was beautiful; later she wept over her father in Solomon's house. Therefore, Solomon commanded the devils to make a statue of her father. When they made it, she set it before her and worshipped it for forty days. Now Solomon had a ring he always wore. He would give it to his wife Amina only when he went in for purification. It so happened once that Satan appeared to Amina in the shape of Solomon, took the ring from her, sat on the throne, and married Solomon's wives! He continued reigning for forty days. Meanwhile Solomon was cast away and rejected by all who saw him. Satan flew away, and the ring fell into the sea. Several fishermen caught some fish and gave Solomon two of them as wages for his service in carrying the fish for them. When he ripped a fish open, he found the ring in its belly; so he put it on his finger, and his kingdom was restored to him (al-Tabari 23:158).

What is this magical ring supposed to be? How can whoever wears it become king? Being a spirit, how can Satan marry flesh-and-blood women? Where in the historical records does it say that King Solomon was a beggar and a carrier of fish for forty days?

### 3. The Torment of the Grave

**Question 179:** We read in Sura al-Jum'a 62:8: "Say: 'Surely death, from which you flee, shall encounter you; then you shall be returned to the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible, and He will tell you that you have been doing.'"

سورة الجمعة ٦٢:٨ (قُلْ إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي تَفِرُونَ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مُلَاقِيكُمْ ثُمَّ تُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ).

We read in a hadith reported by Muslim that it was said on the authority of the same that 'Aisha, the wife of the Prophet, said, "A couple of old Jewish women from Medina came into my house and said that the inhabitants of graves [that is, the deceased] are being tormented in their graves, but I said they were lying, and they went out. The Prophet came into my house and I told him what they had said and that I did not believe them. He said, 'They told the truth; they are tormented in their graves such torment as would be heard by all the beasts.' I never saw him praying after that except that he sought refuge from the torment of the grave." Malik also reported that the Messenger of God used to say, "I seek refuge with Thee from irrationality, laziness, timidity and senility. And I seek refuge with Thee from the torment of the grave" (Muslim, *Masajid* 25; Nasa'i, *Jana'iz* 125).

The following is also found in Muslim, *Fadail al-Sahaba* 78; Nasa'i, *Jana'iz* 109, 110; and Ahmad Ibn Hanbal 3:4, 233; 4:296:

It was reported that the Messenger of God said, "As the servant is laid in his grave, and his friends turn away from him, so that he can hear the sound of their footsteps, two angels attend him. They make him sit down and say to him,

'What was your opinion of the man Muhammad?' If he says, 'I bear witness that he is the servant and Messenger of God,' it will be said unto him, 'Behold this seat of yours in hell; God has given you instead of it a seat in paradise.' And the man would then see them together. The unbeliever or the deceiver, however, will say, 'I know not. I followed the opinion of other men.' The angels will say to him, 'You neither know nor perceive,' and strike him with an iron sledgehammer between his ears, for which he will scream so loud as to be heard by those after him, [but for] men and *jinn*."

We ask: If we grant that the deceased hear and are tormented in the grave, why do the beasts alone hear their torment? And since the deceased who confess Muhammad's prophethood are exempt from such torment, why then was Muhammad always seeking refuge with God from the torment of the grave? Perhaps the legend of the two elderly Jewish women (whom 'Aisha said had lied) originated from a hasty burial of a man who was thought to be dead but was actually still alive. When this man regained consciousness, he cried for help but there was none to help him, so he died. Consequently, a rumour may have developed that the inhabitants of the grave are being tormented.

#### 4. A Rock Gave Birth to a Camel

**Question 180:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:73-78: "And to Thamud [We sent] their brother Salih; he said, 'O my people, serve God! You have no god other than He; there has now come to you a clear sign from your Lord – this is the She-camel of God, to be a sign for you. Leave her that she may eat from God's earth,

and do not touch her with evil, lest you be punished by a painful chastisement. And remember when He appointed you successors after 'Ad, and lodged you in the land, taking to yourselves castles of its plains, and hewing its mountains into houses. Remember God's bounties, and do not mischief in the earth, working corruption.' Said the Council of those of his people who waxed proud to those that were abased, to those of them who believed, 'Do you know that Salih is an Envoy from his Lord?' They said, 'In the Message he has been sent with, we are believers.' Said the ones who waxed proud, 'As for us, we are unbelievers in the thing in which you believe.' So they hamstrung the She-camel and turned in disdain from the commandment of their Lord, saying, 'O Salih, bring us that thou promisest us, if thou art an Envoy.' So an earthquake seized them, and morning found them in their habitation fallen prostrate."

سورة الأعراف ٧٣:٧-٧٨ «وَأَلِي ثَمُودَ (أرسلنا) أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُمْ مِنْ إِلَهٍ غَيْرُهُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ هَذِهِ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَمَسُوهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابَ أَلِيمٍ وَأَذْكُرُوا إِذْ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَادٍ وَبَوَّأْنَاكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ تَتَّخِذُونَ مِنْ سُهولِهَا قُصُورًا وَتَتَّخِثُونَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا فَأَذْكُرُوا آلَاءَ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَغْتَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَفْسِدِينَ قَالَ الْمَلَأُ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا مِنْ قَوْمِهِ لِلَّذِينَ اسْتَضَعُّوا مِنْ أَمَنِ مِنْهُمْ أَنْتَعَلَمُونَ أَنَّ صَالِحًا مُرْسَلٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قَالُوا إِنَّا بِمَا أُرْسِلَ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَكْبَرُوا إِنَّا بِالَّذِي آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ كَافِرُونَ فَعَقَرُوا النَّاقَةَ وَعَتَرَا عَنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِمْ وَقَالُوا يَا صَالِحُ آتَيْتَنَا بِمَا نَعْبُدُنَا إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ فَأَخَذْتَهُمُ الرَّجْفَةُ فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي دَارِهِمْ جَائِمِينَ».

Al-Baidawi said:

It was reported [regarding Thamud] that, after 'Ad, they reinhabited their lands and succeeded them. They multiplied and lived very long lives, outliving even their own buildings, so that they hewed for themselves houses from the mountains. They had much fertility and affluence, so that they did mischief in the land and corrupted it by worshipping idols. Thereupon, God sent to them Salih, one of their nobility, who warned them. But they asked him for a sign. He said, "What sign do you want?" They said, "Go out with us to our feast. There, call upon your God, and we will call upon ours; and we will follow the one whose prayer will be answered." He went out with them, and they called upon their gods, but their prayer was not answered. Then, their lord Janda' Ibn Amr pointed to a secluded rock called *al-Katiba* ["the writer"], and said to [Salih], "Bring forth, out of this rock, a huge, hairy, dappled she-camel. Do that, and we will believe you. So Salih accepted their requests and said, "If I do that, will you believe?" They said yes. He, therefore, prayed and called upon his Lord, and the rock was in such labour as with a she-camel, great with child. [The rock] split apart, revealing a huge, hairy, dappled she-camel, just as they described. After that, it gave birth to a camel as large as itself. Accordingly, Janda' believed in him, together with a group of his people, but the rest were barred from belief by Dhu'ab Ibn 'Amr, al-Habbab, their idol-maker, and Rabab Ibn Saghr their priest. The she-camel remained with her young, grazing on the trees and coming down to the water every other day. She would raise her head from the well only after she had drunk up all its

water. Then she would spread her legs, and the people would all milk her as much as they desired, till their vessels were full to the brim. Thus they would drink and stock reserves. She used to spend summer at one end of the valley, which caused their cattle to run to the other end. Then she would spend winter there, which caused their cattle to run to the other end. The people found that too much of a burden for them to bear. It was 'Unaiza Umm Ganam and Sadaqa Bint al-Mukhtar that tempted them to hamstring her. They hamstrung her and divided her meat. The young camel she had in her belly then went up a mountain called Qarra, and foamed thrice. Salih said to them, "Catch up with the young camel, perchance the chastisement will be removed from you." But they could not prevail against it, since the rock opened after it had foamed, and the young camel went into it. So Salih said to them, "Tomorrow your faces will turn yellow, and after tomorrow they will be red, and on the third day they will turn black, after that you will meet chastisement." As they saw the signs, they sought to kill him, but God delivered him and took him to the land of Palestine. When the morning of the fourth day broke, they were embalmed with aloe and shrouded with red skins. The Cry betook them from heaven, and their hearts were rent, and they perished.

We ask: Is it reasonable to say that a rock laboured and gave birth to a she-camel, which would drink up all the water in a well and quench the thirst of all the inhabitants of a city? Is it reasonable that God would destroy an entire city for slaughtering a she-camel if it harmed the people by causing their cattle to stampede in both the summer and winter? Is it also reasonable

that a rock would hear the foaming of the young camel and split apart, letting it enter inside, and later close back up again? Isn't this more like the tales found in *The Arabian Nights*?

### 5. A Firebrand in the Water

**Question 181:** Sura al-Shu'ara' 26:176-190 says: "The men of the Thicket cried lies to the Envoys when Shu'aib said to them, 'Will you not be godfearing? I am for you a faithful Messenger, so fear you God, and obey you me. I ask of you no wage for this; my wage falls only upon the Lord of all Being. Fill up the measure, and be not cheaters, and weigh with the straight balance, and diminish not the goods of the people, and do not mischief in the earth, working corruption. Fear Him who created you, and the generations of the ancients.' They said, 'Thou art merely one of those that are bewitched; thou art naught but a mortal, like us; indeed, we think that thou art one of the liars. Then drop down on us lumps from heaven, if thou art one of the truthful.' He said, 'My Lord knows very well what you are doing.' But they cried him lies; then there seized them the chastisement of the Day of Shadow; assuredly it was a chastisement of a dreadful day. Surely in that is a sign, yet most of them are not believers."

سورة الشعراء ٢٦: ١٧٦-١٩٠ كَذَّبَ أَصْحَابُ الْأَيْكَةِ الْمُرْسَلِينَ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُمْ شُعَيْبٌ أَلَا تَتَّقُونَ إِنِّي لَكُمْ رَسُولٌ أَمِينٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرًا مِّنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَا أَسْأَلُكُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَجْرٍ إِنْ أَجْرِيَ إِلَّا عَلَىٰ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ أَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُخْسِرِينَ وَزِنُوا بِالْقِسْطِ الْمُسْتَقِيمِ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تَعْبَثُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ وَاتَّقُوا الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالْحَبْلَةَ الْأُولَىٰ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مِنَ الْمُسَحَّرِينَ وَمَا أَنْتَ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا وَإِنْ نَطَّلُكَ لَمِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ فَأَسْقِطْ عَلَيْنَا

كَيْسَفًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ قَالَ رَبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَأَخَذَهُمْ عَذَابٌ يَوْمَ الظُّلَّةِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً وَمَا كَانَ أَكْثَرُهُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ.

Jarir Ibn Hazm said: "God opened upon Midian a door of hell, and sent upon them a severe blast of heat that gripped their souls, so that no shade or water could help them. They escaped into the oases but found them even more scorching than the outlying areas. So they set out for the wilderness. Thereupon, God sent upon them a cloud that had a cool and good wind. The shadow gave them shade, and they found that it had coolness and a breeze. They called to one another, and when they were gathered under the cloud, God turned it into flames and fire; the earth was shaken under them, and they burned like locusts in a frying pan."

Qatada said, "God sent Shu'aib to the men of the Thicket and the people of Midian. As for the men of the Thicket, they were destroyed by the Shadow; and as for the people of Midian, they were taken by a shudder, and Gabriel bellowed at them a cry that destroyed them all." Al-Tabari said in *Jami' al-Bayan* (19:110), "God directed heat at them for seven days till their rivers boiled. Afterwards, a cloud gave them a shade under which they all gathered, and then it rained fire on them, and they were burned."

To all this, however, we say: There is no mention in the Bible of anyone named Shu'aib who was sent to Midian, nor do we read that Midian was destroyed by fire. Is it reasonable that a cloud with a cool and fresh breeze would turn into fire and consume the inhabitants of an entire city?



## 6. Human Souls in Animals' Bodies

**Question 182:** Sura al-A'raf 7:166 says: "And when they turned in disdain from that forbidding We said to them, 'Be you apes miserably slinking!'"

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٦٦، فَلَمَّا عَتَا عَمَّا نُهِوا عَنْهُ قُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ.

Al-Baidawi said:

"And when they turned in disdain from that forbidding" refers to the Jews who felt too proud to give up that which had been forbidden them. "We said to them, 'Be you apes miserably slinking!'" – is the same as His saying, "We say to a thing, when We desire it, 'Be,' and it is." The literal meaning necessitates that God gave them first a severe chastisement; afterwards they turned in disdain and were turned into apes. It is admissible, however, that the second verse is an affirmation and elaboration of the first one. It was also reported that those who did the forbidding, when they despaired that the trespassers would receive the admonishment, divided the village with a wall that had a hammered door. They awoke one day to find that none of the trespassers came out to them. So they assumed that something must have happened to them. They, therefore, went in to them and found that they had been turned into apes. So they could not recognise their relatives, but the apes could. So they [the apes] came up to their relatives to sniff their clothes and went about crying, and died after three days. Mujahid said that their hearts were transformed in their bodies.

We ask: Is it reasonable to expect to meet a man who has been turned into an ape or a hog? Doesn't nature teach us that everything gives birth to its own kind? To say that a man can turn into an ape or a hog is the same as saying that wheat can become barley, or that grapes can become figs!

## 7. The *Jinn* and the *Ifrit*

**Question 183:** We read the following verses in the Qur'an with reference to the *jinn* and *ifrit*:

"And the *jinn* created We before of fire flaming" (Sura al-Hijr 15:27).

سورة الحجر ١٥:٢٧ «وَأَلْجَانٌ خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ قَبْلُ مِنْ نَارِ السَّمُومِ».

"I have not created *jinn* and mankind except to serve Me" (Sura al-Dharyat 51:56).

سورة الذاريات ٥١:٥٦ «وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ».

"I shall assuredly fill Gehenna with *jinn* and man all together" (Sura Hud 11:119).

سورة هود ١١:١١٩ «لَأَمْلَأَنَّ جَهَنَّمَ مِنْ آجِلِيَّةٍ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ».

"We turned to thee a company of *jinn* giving ear to the Qur'an.... Then, when it was finished, they turned back to their people, warning. They said, 'Our people, we have heard a Book that sent down after Moses, confirming what was before it, guiding to the truth and to a straight path'" (Sura al-Ahqaf 46:29,30).

سورة الأحقاف ٢٩:٤٦ و ٣٠ «وَإِذْ صَرَفْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَفْرًا مِنَ الْجِنِّ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقُرْآنَ فَلَمَّا حَضَرُوهُ قَالُوا أَنصُرُوهُ فَلَمَّا قُضِيَ وَلَّوْا إِلَى قَوْمِهِمْ مُنْذِرِينَ قَالُوا يَا قَوْمَنَا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا كِتَابًا أُنزِلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ وَإِلَى طَرِيقٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ».

“Say: ‘It has been revealed to me that a company of the *jinn* gave ear, then they said, “We have indeed heard a Qur’an wonderful, guiding to rectitude. We believe in it, and we will not associate with our Lord anyone. He – exalted be our Lord’s majesty! – has not taken to himself either consort or a son. The fool among us spoke against God outrage, and we had thought that men and *jinn* would never speak against God a lie. But there were certain men of mankind who would take refuge with certain men of the *jinn*, and they increased them in vileness, and they thought, even as you also thought, that God would never raise up anyone. And we stretched towards heaven, but we found it filled with terrible guards and meteors. We would sit there on seats to hear; but any listening now finds a meteor in wait for him. And so we know not whether evil is intended for those in the earth, or whether their Lord intends for them rectitude. And some of us are the righteous, and some of us are otherwise; we were sects differing. Indeed we thought that we should never be able to frustrate God in the earth, neither be able to frustrate Him by flight. When we heard the guidance, we believed in it; and whosoever believes in his Lord, he shall fear neither paltriness nor vileness. And some of us have surrendered, and some of us have deviated. Those who have surrendered sought rectitude; but as for those who have deviated, they have

become firewood for Gehennal!” Would they but go straight on the way, We would give them to drink of water copious, that We might try them therein. And whosoever turns away from the Remembrance of his Lord, He will thrust him into chastisement rigorous” (Sura al-Jinn 72:1-17).

سورة الجن ١٧-١:٧٢ «قُلْ أُوْحِي إِلَيَّ أَنَّهُ اسْتَمَعَ نَفَرٌ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَقَالُوا إِنَّا سَمِعْنَا قُرْآنًا عَجَبًا يَهْدِي إِلَى الْرُّشْدِ فَآمَنَّا بِهِ وَلَنْ نُشْرِكَ بِرَبِّنَا أَحَدًا وَأَنَّهُ تَعَالَى جَدُّ رَبِّنَا مَا اتَّخَذَ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ يَفْقُولُ سَفِيهًا عَلَى اللَّهِ سَطَطًا وَأَنَا ظَنَّنَا أَنَّ لَنْ تَقُولَ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا وَأَنَّهُ كَانَ رِجَالٌ مِنَ الْإِنْسِ يَقُوْدُونَ بِرِجَالٍ مِنَ الْجِنِّ فَرَادُوهُمْ رَهَقًا وَأَنَّهُمْ ظَنُّوا كَمَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنَّ لَنْ يَبْعَثَ اللَّهُ أَحَدًا وَأَنَا لَمَسْنَا السَّمَاءَ فَوَجَدْنَاهَا مُلَبَّتٍ حَرَسًا شَدِيدًا وَشُهَبًا وَأَنَا كُنَّا نَقْعُدُ مِنْهَا مَقَاعِدَ لِلسَّمْعِ فَمَنْ يَسْتَمِعِ الْآنَ يَجِدْ لَهُ سِهَابًا رَصَدًا وَأَنَا لَا تَذَرِي أَشْرًا أُرِيدُ بِنِ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَمْ أَرَادَ بِهِمْ رَبُّهُمْ رَشَدًا وَأَنَا مِنَّا الصَّالِحُونَ وَمِمَّا دُونَ ذَلِكَ كُنَّا طَرَائِقَ قَدَدًا وَأَنَا ظَنَّنَا أَنَّ لَنْ نُعْجِزَ اللَّهَ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَنْ نُعْجِزَهُ هَرَبًا وَأَنَا لَمَّا سَمِعْنَا الْهُدَى آمَنَّا بِهِ فَمَنْ يُؤْمِنُ بِرَبِّهِ فَلَا يَخَافُ بَخْسًا وَلَا رَهَقًا وَأَنَا مِنَّا الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَمِمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ فَأُولَئِكَ تَحَرَّوْا رَشَدًا وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَكَانُوا لِجَهَنَّمَ حَطَبًا وَأَنْ لَوْ اسْتَقَامُوا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ لَأَسْقَيْنَاهُمْ مَاءً غَدَقًا لِنَفْسِهِمْ فِيهِ وَمَنْ يُعْرِضْ عَن ذِكْرِ رَبِّهِ يَسْلُكْهُ عَذَابًا صَعَدًا».

“And to Solomon [We gave] the wind; its morning course was a month’s journey, and its evening course was a month’s journey. And We made the Fount of Molten Brass to flow for him. And of the *jinn*, some worked before him by the leave of his Lord; and such as them as swerved away

from Our commandment, We would let them taste the chastisement of the Blaze; fashioning for him whatsoever he would – places of worship, statues, porringers like water-troughs, and anchored cooking-pots” (Sura Saba’ 34:12,13).

سورة سبأ ١٢:٣٤ و ١٣ «وَلَسَلَيْمَانَ (سَخْرًا) الرِّيحِ عُدُّوَهَا شَهْرًا  
وَرَوَّاحَهَا شَهْرًا وَأَسَلْنَا لَهُ عَيْنَ الْقِطْرِ وَمِنَ الْجِنِّ مَن يَعْمَلُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِ  
وَمَن يَزِغُ مِنْهُمْ عَنَ أَمْرِنَا نَذْفُهُ مِنْ عَذَابِ السَّعِيرِ يَعْمَلُونَ لَهُ مَا يَشَاءُ مِنْ  
مَحَارِبٍ وَتَمَائِيلٍ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ رَاسِيَاتٍ».

“And his hosts were mustered to Solomon, *jinn*, men and birds; duly disposed.... He [Solomon] said, ‘O Council, which one of you will bring me her throne, before they come to me in surrender?’ An [*ifrit*] of the *jinn*s said, ‘I will bring it to thee, before thou risest from thy place; I have strength for it and I am trusty’ ” (Sura al-Naml 27:17,38,39).

سورة النمل ١٧:٢٧ و ٣٨ و ٣٩ «وَخَشِرَ لِسَلِيمَانَ جُنُودَهُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ  
وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ فَهُمْ يُوزَعُونَ قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَلَأُ أَيُّكُمْ يَأْتِينِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ  
يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ قَالَ عِفْرِيَّتُ مِنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِنْ مَقَامِكَ  
وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ».

The Qur’an teaches about some creatures other than demons; these it calls *jinn* and the *ifrit*, which were created of the fire of Gehenna. These mythical creatures eat, drink, marry, live and die just as people do. There are even Muslim *jinn* and unbelieving *jinn*; the Muslim ones used to swarm around Muhammad whenever he recited the Qur’an! They, as Muslims

believe, were used by Solomon in building the temple, palaces and statues, etc.

But we ask: Since these so-called *ifrit* are created of fire and are spiritual beings that can go up and down the heavens, infiltrating all places, how can they marry or die?

## 8. Honey Is a Remedy for All Diseases

**Question 184:** We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:68,69: “And thy Lord revealed unto the bees, saying: ‘Take unto yourselves, of the mountains, houses, and of the trees, and of what they are building. Then eat of all manner of fruit, and follow the ways of your Lord easy to go upon.’ Then comes there forth out of their bellies a drink of diverse hues wherein is healing for men.”

سورة النحل ١٦:٦٨ و ٦٩ «وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ  
الْجِبَالِ بَيْوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ ثُمَّ كُلِّي مِن كُلِّ الشَّجَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي  
سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ».

Al-Baidawi said:

“A drink” means honey, since it is drunk. “Wherein is healing for men” means it can be swallowed either by itself, as a cure for bronchial diseases, or in combination with other remedies, as is the case with other diseases. This is attested to by the fact that there exists no elixir or medicine that does not contain honey. According to Qatada, a man came to the Messenger of God and said, “My brother complains of his abdomen.” Muhammad said, “Give him honey to drink.” The man went away, and on returning, said, “I gave him [honey] to drink, but it was of no avail.”

The Messenger said, "Go away and give him honey to drink; surely God is truthful and your brother's abdomen is the liar!"

We ask: How could the man believe Muhammad and disbelieve his brother's abdomen, since his brother was not healed? Does such an answer explain Muhammad's honesty or the truthfulness of the effect of honey as a cure-all?

### 9. The Night Journey (*al-Isra'*)

**Question 185:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:1: "Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show Him some of Our signs. He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:١ «سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ».

Al-Baidawi said:

It has been reported that the Messenger of God was asleep in Umm Hani's home after the evening prayer, and that he was taken on the Night Journey, from which he returned on the same night. He related what happened to her, saying, "The Prophets, peace and prayer be upon them, were summoned unto me, and I led them in prayer." He later returned to the Holy Mosque and told the people of Quraish about it. They wondered at the news and thought it impossible. Many of those who believed in him turned

away from him. Some men sought counsel from Abu Bakr, who said to them, "If he said that, then he must have told the truth." They asked him, "Do you believe him?" He answered, "I believe in yet more than that." Therefore Abu Bakr was called "The Believing". This transpired a year before the Hijra. It has been debated whether he was asleep or awake; with his body or with his spirit. Yet, most people believe that he was taken on the Night Journey with his body to the Further Mosque, and was taken up into heaven, and reached the *Sidrat al-Muntaha* [i.e., "The Lotus Tree of the Utmost Boundary, or of the Seventh Heaven"]. For this reason the people of Quraish were amazed and thought it impossible. This impossibility, as they thought, is refuted by facts that were proven in geometry; namely, that the distance between the opposite ends of the sun [i.e., the diameter] is about 160 times the distance between the opposite ends [i.e., the diameter] of the earth, and that its bottom end can reach the place of its upper end in less than a second. Moreover, God is certainly capable of producing such a high speed in the body of the Prophet.

We ask: Who witnessed the Night Journey and the Heavenward Ascension? Some of the conditions of a miracle are that it should be performed before witnesses, and that it be of some sort of benefit. The Night Journey and the Heavenward Ascension, however, do not meet these conditions. Moreover, the Further Mosque was not in existence at the time of Muhammad, but was built about a hundred years after his death! How could he have prayed in it, then, or described its gates and windows?

## 10. The Philosopher Hoopoe

**Question 186:** We read in Sura al-Naml 27:20-28: "And he [Solomon] reviewed the birds; then he said, 'How is it with me, that I do not see the hoopoe [*al-hudhud*]? Or is he among the absent? Assuredly I will chastise him with a terrible chastisement, or I will slaughter him, or he bring me a clear authority.' But he tarried not long, and said, 'I have comprehended that which thou hast not comprehended, and I have come from Sheba to thee with a sure tidings. I found a woman ruling over them, and she has been given of everything, and she possesses a mighty throne. I found her and her people prostrating to the sun, apart from God; Satan has decked out fair their deeds to them and he has barred them from the way, and therefore they are not guided, so that they prostrate not themselves to God, who brings forth what is hidden in heaven and earth; and He knows what you conceal and what you publish. God: there is no god but He, the Lord of the Mighty Throne.' Said he, 'Now we will see whether thou hast spoken truly, or whether thou art amongst those that lie. Take this letter of mine, and cast it unto them, then turn back from them and see what they shall return.'"

سورة النمل ٢٧:٢٠-٢٨ (سليمان) الطير فقال ما لي لا أرى  
الهُدُودَ أم كان من الغائبين لأعذبتُهُ عذاباً شديداً أو لأذبحته أو ليأتيني  
بسلطانٍ مبین فمكث غير بعيد فقال أحطت بما لم تحط به وجئتك من سبيلٍ  
بتيقنٍ إنني وجدت امرأة تملكهم وأوتيت من كل شيء ولها عرش عظيم  
وجدتها وقومها يسجدون للشمس من دون الله وزين لهم الشيطان  
أعمالهم فصددهم عن السبيل فهم لا يفتنون إلا يسجدوا لله الذي يخرج  
الخبء في السموات والأرض ويتعلم ما تحفون وما تغفلون الله لا إله إلا

هُوَ رَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ قَالَ سَتَنْظُرُ أَصَدَقْتَ أَمْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَاذِبِينَ أَذْهَبَ  
بِكِتَابِي هَذَا فَأَلْفَيْهِ إِلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّى عَنْهُمْ فَأَنْظُرْ مَاذَا يَرْجِعُونَ.

The Qur'an says that Solomon knew the language of the birds and the insects; and that the *jinn*, together with the human beings and the birds, were his soldiers. It says also that he took those soldiers of his to the valley of the ants, and an ant recognised him and knew that he was a king and an infallible prophet, and that all those [with him] were his soldiers. It, therefore, warned its fellow ants, saying, "Ants, enter your dwelling-places, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you, being unaware!"

In the above quoted text, the Qur'an says that Solomon reviewed the birds and said, "How is it with me, that I do not see the hoopoe? Or is he among the absent? Assuredly [unless he apologises] I will chastise him [by plucking his feathers] with a terrible chastisement, or I will slaughter him [to be an example for others]!" And right away the hoopoe came strutting and flaunting his superior knowledge, saying, "I have comprehended that which thou hast not comprehended, and I have come from Sheba to thee with a sure tidings," as if it were saying, "I am not your inferior; rather, your knowledge is less than mine. For here I am telling you of the queen of Sheba who worships the sun apart from God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and the Knower of all the secrets of the universe." Solomon said to him, "Take this letter of mine to her, so that I may know whether you are telling the truth or that you lied to me!" So the hoopoe took his letter and gave it to the queen of Sheba. She took counsel with her people regarding what she should give in answer to the letter and decided to send a gift to King Solomon, which he refused! Then

Solomon asked those seated with him if any of them could procure him the throne of the queen of Sheba in secrecy. And an 'ifrit of the *jinn* said to him, "I will fetch it to you before you even rise from your place; I am strong and faithful to carry and keep it safe!" And Solomon was not content, but demanded that it be brought at once. Then someone said, "I will bring it to you before you blink!" As the throne came, Solomon changed some of its markings; and when the queen of Sheba arrived, Solomon asked her, "Is this your throne?" She answered, "It seems as though it is my throne." Thereupon, the king told her to enter the palace, and she pulled up her garment in order to cross what she thought was water, but she found it was only glass. Therefore, she believed in the God of Solomon and became a Muslim [*i.e.*, one of the surrendered]!

We ask: How can a rational being imagine Solomon's retinue to consist of *jinn* and birds? How can a mere hoopoe be wiser and more knowledgeable than the wisest man of that time, or challenge him, saying, "I have comprehended that which you have not comprehended, and I have come from Sheba to you with a sure tidings"? How could a hoopoe ridicule idolatry and praise monotheism? How could a hoopoe serve as a courier? How could a hoopoe manage and direct Solomon's kingdom more efficiently than kings, ministers and philosophers?

### 11. A Beast Among the Prophets

**Question 187:** We read in Sura al-Naml 27:82: "When the Word falls on them, We shall bring forth for them out of the earth a beast that shall speak unto them: 'Mankind had no faith in Our signs.'"

سورة النمل ٨٢:٢٧ «وَإِذَا وَقَعَ الْقَوْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَخْرَجْنَا لَهُمْ دَابَّةً مِّنَ الْأَرْضِ تُكَلِّمُهُمْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ كَانُوا بِآيَاتِنَا لَا يُوقِنُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"When the Word falls on them" refers to the meaning of the word, which is the resurrection and the chastisement they had been promised. "We shall bring forth for them out of the earth a beast" refers to *al-Jassasa*, which is a creature sixty cubits long, with feathers, fluff, and four hoofs. It has no tail, but rather a beard. As for its speed, no one can escape from it, and no one pursuing it can catch up with it. It was likewise reported that the Messenger (peace be unto him) was asked about the place from which it came. He answered, "From the holiest mosque [*i.e.*, the one in Mecca]." The beast will "speak unto them". It was reported that it goes forth carrying Moses' rod and Solomon's signet. It will not leave a believer without stamping on his face a white spot with Moses' rod. [This spot] will spread over his face until his whole face turns white. And the beast will also not leave an unbeliever without stamping his face with a black spot with Solomon's signet; [and this black spot] will spread over his face until his whole face is black because of it.

We ask: Is it sensible to imagine a talking, hairy, fluffy, four-legged winged beast that resembles both mammals and birds? Not only that, it also preaches like the prophets and has the authority of Moses and the wisdom of Solomon; it even has in its possession the rod of Moses and the signet of Solomon!

## 12. A Corpse Leans on a Staff for a Year

**Question 188:** We read in Saba' 34:14: "And when We decreed that he [Solomon] should die, naught indicated to them that he was dead but the Beast of the Earth devouring his staff; and when he fell down, the *jinn* saw clearly that, had they only known the Unseen, they would not have continued in the humbling chastisement."

سورة سبأ ٣٤: ١٤ ﴿فَلَمَّا فَصَّيْنَا عَلَيْهِ (سليمان) الْمَوْتَ مَا دَلَّهُمْ عَلَى مَوْتِهِ إِلَّا دَابَّةُ الْأَرْضِ تَأْكُلُ مِنْسَأَتَهُ فَلَمَّا خَرَّ تَبَيَّنَتِ الْجِنُّ أَنْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ الْغَيْبَ مَا لَبِثُوا فِي الْعَذَابِ الْمُهِينِ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said:

"And when We decreed that he should die" refers to Solomon. "Naught indicated to them that he was dead" refers to the *jinn*. "But the Beast of the Earth" was added as an object of activity. Another reading mentions "the Beast of the gnawing" [where the Arabic word for "earth" (*ard*) was replaced with "gnawing" (*arad*)]. "Devouring his staff" refers to the staff with which he used to drive away [animals]. "And when he fell down, the *jinn* saw clearly," for at first the *jinn* were uncertain and confused. "Had they only known the Unseen," as they had claimed, "they would not have continued in the humbling chastisement," since they would have known of his death immediately when he fell down, and would not have continued for a whole year in their forced labour to him. The commentators have said that David constructed the temple in the same place where Moses' tabernacle stood, and since he perceived he was

going to die before finishing it, he committed it to Solomon, who employed the help of the *jinn* to complete it. But as the time of his death drew near, which he was told of, and the temple was not yet completed, he wanted to hide his death from the *jinn*, so that they might complete the building. So He called them to build around him a pavilion made of crystal, with no door to it. After that he stood up to pray, propped up on his staff. Then his soul was taken, being thus positioned. He remained in this position until a termite devoured the stick, and he fell down. They tried to determine the time of his death, so they put the termite on the staff, and it ate a certain amount of it during an entire night and day. On this basis they reckoned he had died a year before.

We ask: How could it be that King Solomon could die and remain dead for a whole year, without anyone taking notice of it? Where were his wives? Where were his children? Where was his retinue? Where were his people? Wouldn't any of these inquire about him? Did they really think he stood praying for a whole year, propped up on his staff – without sleeping, eating, drinking or washing? How is it that, when he died, being propped up on his staff, he did not fall down? Wouldn't his body rot and decay? Wouldn't his corpse lose its balance on the staff before the termite had eaten part of it? And if we assume that Solomon really built a pavilion of crystal to conceal his death from the eyes of the *jinn* and the people, did he know beforehand the role the termite was going to play?

### 13. A Hovering Mountain

**Question 189:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:154: "And We raised above them the Mount, taking compact with them."

سورة النساء ٤: ١٥٤ ﴿وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ مِثْقَالِهِمْ﴾.

We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:171: "And when We shook the mountain above them as if it were a canopy, and they supposed it was about to fall on them: 'Take forcefully what We have given you, and remember what is in it; haply you will be godfearing.'"

سورة الأعراف ٧: ١٧١ ﴿وَإِذْ نَسْنَا آجِبِلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظِلَّةٌ وَظَنُوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said as an exposition of the latter verse:

"And when We shook [Arabic: *nataqna*] the mountain above them" means that God uprooted the mountain and lifted it above them. The verb *nataqa* originally meant "to pull". "As if it were a canopy" means that the mountain was covering them as a shade. "Supposed" means they were certain. "It was about to fall on them," because the mountain was not stationary in the air where it was, and because it was promised them. This was due to the fact that they refused to receive the ordinances of the Torah, owing to their heaviness. Therefore God lifted the mountain above them, and it was said to them, "Receive what is in it, or else the mountain will surely fall on you."

Al-Baidawi said as an exposition of the former verse that "taking compact with them" means that they might accept it.

We ask: Is it reasonable that a mountain could be pulled out of the earth, soar into space, and hover in mid-air to intimidate the people and force them to receive the Law? Doesn't this do away with the scientific law of gravity and the moral law of divine love?

### 14. Mountains Endowed with Reason

**Question 190:** We read in Saba' 34:10: "And We gave David bounty from Us: 'O you mountains, echo God's praises with him, and you birds!' And We softened for him iron."

سورة سبأ ٣٤: ١٠ ﴿وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَا جِبَالُ أَوِّبِي مَعَهُ وَالطَّيْرُ وَالنَّكَّالَةُ الْحَدِيدَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, "'O you mountains, echo God's praises with him' means to repeat his praises and mourn over sin. This was brought about either by creating in them a voice like his, or by forcing them to praise whenever he contemplated what was in them. Or it means to walk with him wherever he walks."

We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:72: "We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the mountains, but they refused to carry it and were afraid of it; and man carried it. Surely he is sinful, very foolish."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣: ٧٢ ﴿إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, "It was held by some that, when God Almighty created the celestial bodies, He instilled reason in them and said to them, 'Behold I have issued a decree and created



paradise for those who obey Me, and hell for those who disobey Me.' Then they said, 'We are your labourers appointed for your creation; we cannot furnish any decree, and desire, neither reward nor punishment.' And when he created Adam, He offered the same to him, and Adam accepted it; and thereby committed sin against himself because he loaded himself with something that weighed him down. He was foolish because he was ignorant of the deathly consequence of his action."

Our question is: Do mountains possess reason that qualifies them to comprehend what most people do not comprehend, so as to refuse the trust that was extended to them? Do the mountains have minds, cognition and emotions, so as to repeat David's prayers, confessions and praises?

### 15. Iron Gets as Soft as Wax

**Question 191:** We read in Sura Saba' 34:10,11: "And We gave David bounty from Us: 'O you mountains, echo God's praises with him, and you birds!' And We softened for him iron: 'Fashion wide coats of mail, measure well the links.' – And do ye righteousness, for surely I see the things you do."

سورة سبأ ٣٤: ١٠ و ١١ «وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ مِنَّا فَضْلًا يَا جِبَالُ أَوِّبِي مَعَهُ  
وَالطَّيْرُ وَاللَّيْلُ لَهَ أَحَدِيدَ أَنْ أَعْمَلَ سَابِغَاتٍ وَقَدَّرَ فِي السَّرْدِ وَأَعْمَلُوا صَاحِحًا  
إِنِّي بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, " 'We softened for him iron' means that it was made to be like wax in his hands – to be handled however he wanted, without heating or hammering with tools, or by his own strength."

We ask: How can iron change in quality in David's hands, so as to lose its rigidity and become as flexible and soft as wax, without being heated or hammered? What is the point of this alleged miracle, which the Torah would undoubtedly have mentioned, had it really happened?

### 16. A Nap Lasting Three Hundred and Nine Years

**Question 192:** We read in Sura al-Kahf 18:9-26: "Or dost thou think the Men of the Cave and al-Raqim were among Our signs a wonder? When the youths took refuge in the Cave saying, 'Our Lord, give us mercy from Thee, and furnish us with rectitude in our affair.' Then We smote their ears many years in the Cave. Afterwards We raised them up again, that We might know which of the two parties would better calculate the while they had tarried. We will relate to thee their tidings truly. They were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance.... Thou wouldst have thought them awake, as they lay sleeping, while We turned them now to the right, now to the left, and their dog stretching its paws on the threshold.... And even so We raised them up again that they might question one another. One of them said, 'How long have you tarried?' They said, 'Your Lord knows very well how long you have tarried. Now send one of you forth with this silver to the city, and let him look for which of them has purest food, and bring you provision thereof.'...(They will say, 'Three; and their dog was the fourth of them.' They will say, 'Five; and their dog was the sixth of them' guessing at the Unseen.... They will say, 'Seven; and their dog was the eighth of them.' ...) And they tarried in the Cave three hundred years, and to that they added nine more. Say: 'God knows very well how long they tarried. To Him belongs the Unseen in the heavens and

in the earth. How well He sees! How well He hears! They have no protector, apart from Him, and He associates in His government no one.”

سورة الكهف ١٨: ٩-٢٦ وأم حسبت أن أصحاب الكهف والرقيم كانوا من آياتنا عجباً إذ أوى الفئدة إلى الكهف فقالوا ربنا آتينا من لذنك رحمة وهى لنا من أمرنا رشداً فصرتنا على آذانهم في الكهف سنين عدداً ثم بعثناهم لنعلم أي الحزبين أحصى لما لبثوا أمداً نحن نقص عليك نبأهم بالحق إنهم فئدة آمنوا برؤسهم وزدناهم هدى وربطنا على قلوبهم إذ قاموا فقالوا ربنا رب السموات والأرض لن ندعرك من دونه إلهاً لقد قلنا إذا شططاً هؤلاء قومنا اتخذوا من دونه إلهة لولا يأتون عليهم بشيطان بين فمن أظلم ممن افترى على الله كذباً وإذ اعتزلتموهم وما يعبدون إلا الله فأووا إلى الكهف ينشئ لكم رؤسكم من رحمته ويهيئ لكم من أمركم مرفقاً وترى الشمس إذا طلعت تزاور عن كهفهم ذات اليمين وإذا غربت تقرضهم ذات الشمال وهم في فجوة منه ذلك من آيات الله من يهد الله فمن الله فهدى ومن أضل الله فمن أضل فلن نجد له ولياً مرشداً وتحسبهم أيقاظاً وهم رقودٌ ونقلبهم ذات اليمين وذات الشمال وكلبهم باسطة ذراعيه بالوصيد لو أطلعت عليهم لوليت منهم فراراً ولألت منهم رعباً وكذلك بعثناهم ليستاءلوا بينهم قال قائل منهم كم لبثتم قالوا لبينا يوماً أو بغض يوم قالوا رؤسكم أعلم بما لبثتم فابعثوا أحدكم يبرقكم هذه إلى المدينة فلينظر أيها أزكى طعاماً فليأتكم بقرق منه وليتلطف ولا يشعروا بكم أحداً إنهم إن يظهروا عليكم يمجموكم أو يعبدوكم في مليهم ولن تفلحوا إذا أبدأ وكذلك أعتزنا عليهم ليعلموا أن وعد الله حق وأن الساعة لا ريب فيها إذ يتنازعون بينهم أمرهم فقالوا آتوا علينا بنينا رؤسهم أعلم بهم قال الذين

عابوا على أمرهم لتخذهن عليهم مسجداً سيقولون ثلاثة رابعهم كلبهم ويقولون خمسة سادسهم كلبهم رجماً بالغيب ويقولون سبعة وثامنهم كلبهم قل ربي أعلم بعدتهم ما يعلمهم إلا قليل فلا تمار فيهم إلا مراء ظاهراً ولا تستفت فيهم منهم أحداً ولا تقولن لشيء إني فاعل ذلك غداً إلا أن يشاء الله وأذكر ربك إذا نسيت وقل عسى أن يهديني ربي لأقرب من هذا رشداً وليثوا في كهفهم ثلاث مائة سنين وازدادوا تسعاً قل الله أعلم بما لبثوا له غيب السموات والأرض أبيض به وأسمع ما لهم من دونه من ولي ولا يشرك في حكمه أحداً.

Al-Baidawi said, in effect, “At the time when Diocletian persecuted the Christians, certain youths fled to a cave outside Ephesus. They remained asleep in that cave for 309 years; they turned over on their sides, but were unable to hear. Afterwards, they woke up and the people knew about them by the old currency they had with them.”

But we ask: How was it feasible for seven young men, together with their dog, to live for 309 years without eating, drinking, walking, urinating or defecating; seemingly awake, but yet asleep, turning right and left in their sleep, while their dog was stretching its paws on the threshold? What moral does this story hold for us today?

## 17. The Wind at Solomon's Command

**Question 193:** We read in Sura al-Anbiya' 21:81: “And to Solomon [We subjected] the wind, strongly blowing, that ran at his command unto the land, that We had blessed; and We had knowledge of everything.”

سورة الأنبياء ٢١:٨١ «وَلَسَلِيمَانَ (سَخَرْنَا) الرِّيحَ عَاصِفَةً تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَكُنَّا بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَالِمِينَ».

Sura Saba' 34:12 says: "And to Solomon [We subjected] the wind; its morning course was a month's journey, and its evening course was a month's journey. And We made the Fount of Molten Brass to flow for him."

سورة سبأ ٣٤:١٢ «وَلَسَلِيمَانَ الرِّيحَ عُدُوها شَهْرًا وَرَوَاحِهَا شَهْرًا وَأَسَلْنَا لَهٗ عَيْنَ الْقَطْرِ».

We read also in Sura Sad 38:36: "So We subjected to him the wind, that ran at his commandment, softly, wherever he might light on."

سورة ص ٣٨:٣٦ «فَسَخَرْنَا لَهٗ الرِّيحَ تَجْرِي بِأَمْرِهِ رُحَاءً حَيْثُ أَصَاب».

As an exposition of Sura al-Anbiya', al-Baidawi said: "The wind, strongly blowing,' drove Solomon's seat away in a short time, for God Almighty said that its morning course was a month's journey and its evening course was a month's journey. It was of a gentle and good nature. Another opinion says that it was gentle one time and blowing another time, according to his preference. 'Unto the land, that We had blessed' refers to greater Syria after the wind had carried Solomon from there in its morning course."

We ask: What is the benefit of subjecting the wind to Solomon, so that it might carry his throne wherever he wanted and whenever he wanted, growing fierce and mild according to

his preference? What is the point of all this? What would the Children of Israel or the Kingdom of God gain?

## 18. The Birds of the Sky Fight with Stones

**Question 194:** We read in the Sura al-Fil 105:1-5: "Hast thou not seen how thy Lord did with the Men of the Elephant? Did He not make their guile to go astray? And He loosed upon them birds in flights, hurling against them stones of baked clay and He made them like green blades devoured."

سورة الفيل ١٠٥:١-٥ «أَلَمْ تَرَ كَيْفَ فَعَلَ رَبُّكَ بِأَصْحَابِ الْفِيلِ أَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ كَيْدَهُمْ فِي تَضْلِيلٍ وَأَرْسَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ طَيْرًا أَبَابِيلَ وَتَرْمِيهِمْ بِحِجَارَةٍ مِنْ سِجِّيلٍ فَجَعَلَهُمْ كَعَصْفٍ مَأْكُولٍ».

Al-Baidawi said:

It has been reported that the Battle of the Elephant took place in the year of the Prophet's birth. [The story] goes as follows: Abraha al-Ashram, the king of Yemen, who reigned before Ashama the Negus, built a church in San'a and called it *Qalis* [most likely from the Greek *ecclesia*]. He hoped to turn the Pilgrims' attention to it. It happened that a man from Kinana went forth and stayed in it overnight, which angered Abraha. He, therefore, swore to tear down the Ka'ba. He went forth with his army having with him a strong elephant named Mahmud and another she-elephant. When he prepared to enter, and mobilised his army, the elephant arrived, and whenever they pointed it toward Mecca, it knelt down and remained there. But whenever they pointed it toward Yemen, or any other direction, it would trot away. So God Almighty sent birds;

each of them had a pebble in its peak, and two pebbles in its feet, bigger than a lentil and smaller than a chick-pea. They stoned them with the pebbles; each pebble entered the head of each man and exited from his rectum! Thus they all perished.

But we ask: Why did the elephant prefer to help the heathen and refrain from helping the Christians, refusing to walk whenever they pointed it toward the Ka'ba of the heathen, and trotting away whenever they pointed it toward Yemen? How did the birds comprehend this and join the heathen in war against the Christians? How did the flocks of birds understand one another, know the exact spot of the battle, bring along pebbles, carry them with their beaks and feet, and stone the army of the Christians without hitting the heathen? How could it be that God would side with the elephant, the birds and the pagan worshippers of the Ka'ba against the Christians? And finally, how could a pebble "smaller than a chick-pea" fall down from the beak of a bird onto a man's head, penetrate his skull, chest and abdomen, and exit from his rectum?

### 19. The Evil Eye

**Question 195:** We read in Sura Yusuf 12:67: "He also said, 'O my sons, enter not by one door; enter by separate doors. Yet I cannot avail you anything against God.'"

سورة يوسف ١٢: ٦٧ «وَقَالَ يَا بَنِيَّ لَا تَدْخُلُوا مِنْ بَابٍ وَاحِدٍ وَأَدْخُلُوا مِنْ  
أَبْوَابٍ مُتَفَرِّقَةٍ وَمَا أُغْنِي عَنْكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ».

Al-Baidawi said, "[These words were uttered] because [the sons] had beauty and pomp, and were known in Egypt for their

favour and honour with the king. [Joseph's father] feared that, if all of [his sons were to] go in one group, they would be stricken by the evil eye. It was because they were not known before that he did not give them this commandment in the beginning, or because he was fearful for Benjamin. The evil eye is one of the effects of the psyche. This is evidenced by the fact that the Messenger (peace be unto him) used to say on his return, "O God, I take refuge with God's perfect words against every demon and *jinn*, and against every evil eye."

But we ask: From where did the Qur'an get this story which the Bible never told? The Qur'an has actually attributed a superstition to one of God's holy prophets, and it conflicts with both science and faith in God's providence.

### 20. The Children of Israel and the Cow

**Question 196:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:67-73: "And when Moses said to his people, 'God commands you to sacrifice a cow,' they said, 'Doest thou take us in mockery?' He said, 'I take refuge with God, lest I should be one of the ignorant.' They said, 'Pray to thy Lord for us that He make clear to us what she may be.' He said, 'He says she is a cow neither old, nor virgin, middling between the two; so do that you are bidden.' They said, 'Pray to thy Lord for us, that He may make clear to us what her colour may be.' He said, 'He says she shall be a golden cow, bright her colour, gladdening the beholders.' They said, 'Pray to the Lord for us, that He may make clear to us what she may be; cows are much alike to us; and, if God will, we shall then be guided.' He said, 'He says she shall be a cow not broken to plough the earth or to water the tillage, one kept secure, with no blemish on her.' They said, 'Now Thou hast brought the truth';

and therefore they sacrificed her, a thing they had scarcely done. And when you killed a living soul, and disputed thereon – and God disclosed what you were hiding – so We said, ‘Smite with part of it’; even so God brings to life the dead, and He shows you His signs, that haply you may have understanding.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ٦٧-٧٣ وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَى لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُورًا قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ قَالُوا آذِغْ لَنَا رَبِّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا فَارِضَ وَلَا بَكْرَ عَرَّانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ قَالُوا آذِغْ لَنَا رَبِّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا لَوْنَهَا قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ صَفْرَاءُ فَاقْعَ لَوْنَهَا تَسْرُ الْأَنْظِيرِينَ قَالُوا آذِغْ لَنَا رَبِّكَ يُبَيِّنْ لَنَا مَا هِيَ إِنَّ الْبَقْرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقْرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولَ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْقِي الْحَرْثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتَ بِالْحَقِّ فَذَبَحُوهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ وَإِذْ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَآذَرْتُمْ فِيهَا وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجُ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا كَذَلِكَ يُخَيِّبُ اللَّهُ الْمُؤْتَى وَيُؤْيِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ.

Al-Baidawi said: “There was a well-off elderly Israelite. His nephews killed his son because they were greedy for his inheritance. They dumped him at the city gate. Then they acted as if they came to seek revenge. God commanded them to slay a cow and strike him with a part of it so that he might come to life and tell who killed him.”

If we study the history of the Israelites, we do not find any trace of this story. Probably Muhammad got the idea of the story from the book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament:

If anyone is found slain, lying in the field in the land

which the Lord your God is giving you to possess, and it is not known who killed him, then your elders and your judges shall go out, and they shall measure the distance from the slain man to the surrounding cities. And it shall be that the elders of the city nearest to the slain man will take a heifer which has not worked and which has not pulled with a yoke; and the elders of that city shall bring the heifer down to a valley with flowing water, which is neither ploughed nor sown, and they shall break the heifer’s neck there in the valley. Then the priests, the sons of Levi, shall come near, for the Lord your God has chosen them to minister to Him and to bless in the name of the Lord; by their word every controversy and every assault shall be settled. And all the elders of that city nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley. Then they shall answer and say, “Our hands have not shed this blood, nor have our eyes seen it. Provide atonement, O Lord, for Your people Israel, whom you have redeemed, and do not lay innocent blood to the charge of your people Israel. And atonement shall be provided on their behalf for the blood. So you shall put away the guilt of the innocent blood from among you when you do what is right in the sight of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 21:1-9)

This is the commandment of the Torah, which demonstrates the horror of murder and the method of finding out who the murderer is. Moreover, it reveals the ignorance of the elders of the people as to the identity of the murderer; washing their hands on the sacrifice was a symbol of their innocence. They would ask forgiveness for that sin, whose perpetrator was not discovered. All this is within the boundary of reason. But is it reasonable that

a piece of meat taken from a calf would cause a dead man to return to life and talk when he was struck with it?

## 21. Is Thunder an Angel?

**Question 197:** We read in Sura al-Ra'd 13:13: "The thunder proclaims His praise, and the angels, in awe of Him."

سورة الرعد ١٣:١٣ ﴿وَيَسْبُحُ الرَّعْدُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ مِنْ خِيفَتِهِ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, "Ibn 'Abbas reported that, 'The Prophet was asked about the thunder. He answered, "It is an angel entrusted with the clouds. He has entwined shreds of fire with which he drives the clouds and the angels."'"

Al-Tirmidhi brought out, quoting Ibn 'Abbas: "The Jews came to Muhammad and said, 'Tell us about the thunder. What is it?' He said, 'One of the angels who is entrusted with the clouds. He has entwined shreds of fire with which he drives the clouds wherever God wills.'"

Ibn Abi Hatim brought out the following, on the authority of Muhammad Ibn Muslim: "We were told that thunder is an angel with four faces; one of a man, one of a bull, one of an eagle, and one of a lion. If it flaps its wings, then it is thunder."

Ibn 'Abbas said, "The Jews came to Muhammad and said, 'Tell us about the thunder. What is it?' He said, 'One of the angels who is entrusted with the clouds. He has entwined shreds of fire with which he drives the clouds wherever God wills.' They said, 'What is this sound, then, which is heard?' He said, 'It is his rebuke to the clouds, that they should stop where they have been commanded.'"

Another hadith claims that "thunder is an angel who rebukes the clouds. Thunder is a superior angel called Rufil"; yet another hadith says that it is "an angel entrusted with the clouds; he gathers the far sides of the hill and joins them together. He has a spindle [or a sword] in his hand; when he raises it there is lightening, and when he brandishes it there is thunder."

We ask: Since thunder and lightening are natural phenomena resulting from the collision of positively and negatively charged ions in cold and hot air, how can some say that they come from angels?

## 22. Vulnerability to Magic

**Question 198:** We read in Sura al-Falaq 113:1-5: "Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of Daybreak from the evil of what He has created, from the evil of darkness when it gathers, from the evil of the women who blow on knots, from the evil of an envier when he envies.'"

سورة الفلق ١١٣:١-٥ ﴿قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said:

"From the evil of the women who blow on knots" refers to the sorcerers who tie knots in threads and blow on them. The verb *nafatha* means to blow on with saliva. It was revealed because of a Jew who cast a spell on the Prophet in eleven knots, which he wove on a cord and stuffed in a well. The Prophet fell ill. Suras al-Falaq [113] and al-Nas [114] were then revealed. Gabriel told Muhammad where the spell [or magic] was, and he sent 'Ali, who brought it

and recited the two suras over him. And it came about that when he recited a verse a knot would come loose, and a little vigour would return to Muhammad. This, however, does not mean that the unbelievers were correct when they said he was bewitched, since they meant he had been driven crazy by magic. Another opinion says that blowing on knots means to discourage men's determination; as if it is borrowed from the idea of softening the knots by blowing saliva on them so as to ease their loosening. *Al-naffathat* received a definite article, since every blower is evil, unlike every daybreak and every envier.

We read also in Sura al-Baqara 2:102: "And they followed what the devils recited over Solomon's kingdom. Solomon disbelieved not, but the devils disbelieved, teaching the people sorcery, and that which was sent down upon Babylon's two angels, Harut and Marut; they taught not any man, without saying, 'We are but a temptation; do not disbelieve.' From them they learned how they might divide a man and his wife, yet they did not hurt any man thereby, save by the leave of God, and they learned what hurt them, and did not profit them, knowing well that whoso buys it shall have no share in the world to come; evil then was that they sold themselves for, if they have but known."

سورة البقرة ١٠٢:٢ «وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَكِينَ بِبَابِلَ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ

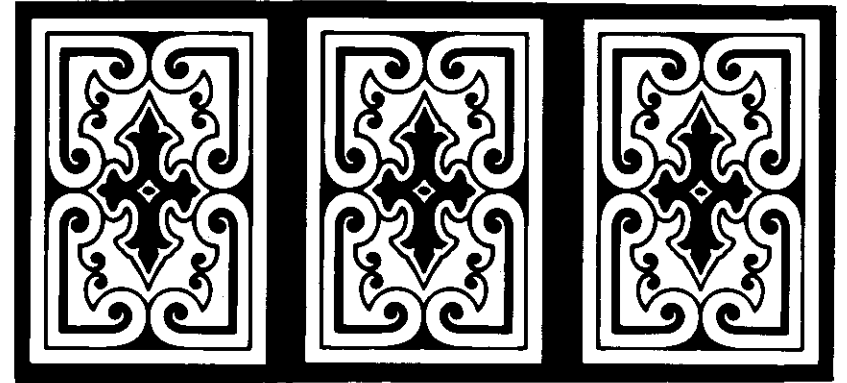
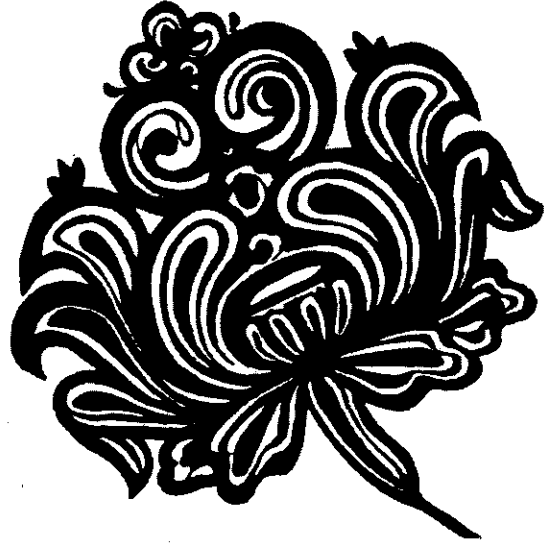
أَشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَاقٍ وَلَبِئْسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ».

Al-Baidawi said, "By 'sorcery' is meant that through which one gains favour with Satan in order to obtain something; however, what is acquired cannot be used independently. This is possible only for those who suit him [probably Satan] in witness [or confession] and ill-will. For suitability is the condition for co-ordination and co-operation. This, then, is what distinguishes the sorcerer from the prophet or the saint."

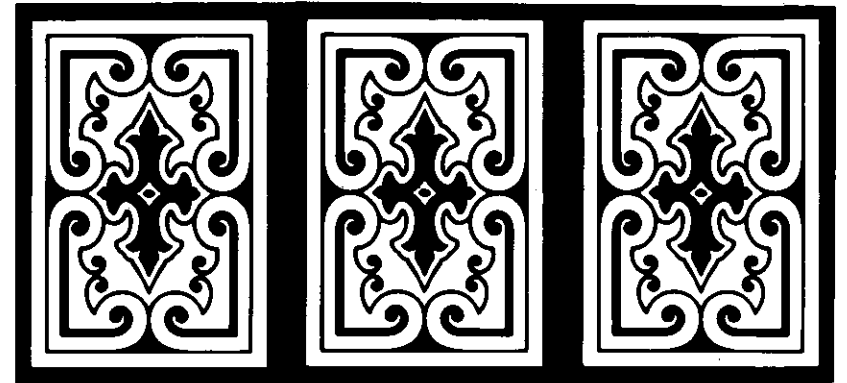
Our question is: How can a believer who is guarded by God's providence be affected by magic? The Law of God explicitly forbids magic: "You shall not learn to follow the abomination of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, or one who practises witchcraft, or a soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. For all who do these things are an abomination to the Lord" (Deuteronomy 18:9-12). The apostle Paul verbally attacked a sorcerer named Bar-Jesus, saying, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time.' And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand" (Acts 13:9-12). In addition, the apostle Peter said to Simon the sorcerer, "Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see, you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity" (Acts 8:22,23).

*Part Eight*

This is the true Law of God, and these are the true apostles of God, who rebuked the sorcerers and brought their evil deeds to naught. The power of God is indeed greater than the powers of sorcery!



*Part Nine*  
*Lexical Questions*





## 1. Useless Words

**Question 199:** There are some useless, meaningless words that appear in the openings of 29 suras in the Qur'an. Following is a grouping of these words with their references in the Qur'an:

*Alif Lam Ra:* Yunis 10, Hud 11, Yusuf 12, Ibrahim 14, al-Hijr 15; *Alif Lam Mim:* al-Baqara 2, Al Imran 3, al-'Ankabut 29, al-Rum 30, Luqman 31, al-Sajda 32; *Alif Lam Mim Ra:* al-Ra'd 13; *Alif Lam Mim Sad:* al-A'raf 33; *Ha Mim:* al-Mu'minun 40, Fussilat 41, al-Zukhruf 43, al-Dukhan 44, al-Jathiya 45, al-Ahqaf 46; *Ha Mim 'Ain Sin Qaf:* al-Shura 42; *Sad:* Sad 38; *Ta Sin:* al-Naml 27; *Ta Sin Mim:* al-Shu'ara' 26, al-Qasas 28; *Ta Ha:* Ta Ha 20; *Qaf:* Qaf 50; *Kaf Ha Ya 'Ain Sad:* Maryam 19; *Nun:* al-Qalam 68; *Ya Sin:* Ya Sin 36.

Our question is: Considering that only God knows the meaning of these words, as Muslims claim, what do they benefit us? God never inspires a man with profitless words; His words are clear and His oracles are a guidance to the people.

## 2. Foreign Words

**Question 200:** The following verses in the Qur'an attest to the fact that the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic:

"Truly it is the revelation of the Lord of all Being, brought down by the Faithful Spirit, upon thy heart, that thou mayest be one of the warners, in a clear, Arabic tongue" (Sura al-Shu'ara' 26:193-195).

سورة الشعراء ٢٦: ١٩٣-١٩٥ «نَزَلَ بِهِ الرُّوحُ الْأَمِينُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنذِرِينَ بِلِسَانٍ عَرَبِيٍّ مُبِينٍ».



“An Arabic Qur’an, wherein there is no crookedness”  
(Sura al-Zumar 39:28).

سورة الزمر ٢٨:٣٩ ﴿قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا غَيْرَ ذِي عِوَجٍ﴾.

“Now we have made it easy by thy tongue, now that haply they may remember” (Sura al-Dukhan 44:58).

سورة الدخان ٥٨:٤٤ ﴿إِنَّمَا يَسَّرْنَا بِلِسَانِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ﴾.

“And We know very well that they say, ‘Only a mortal is teaching him.’ The speech of him at whom they hint is barbarous; and this is speech Arabic, manifest” (Sura al-Nahl 16:103).

سورة النحل ١٠٣:١٦ ﴿وَلَقَدْ نَعَلِمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ﴾.

But we ask: How can the Qur’an be “Arabic, manifest,” when it contains many foreign words from the Persian, Assyrian, Syriac, Hebrew, Greek, Egyptian, and Ethiopian languages, to mention but a few. Of these we list the following:

The Word	The Reference	The Language
Abariq (ewers)	al-Waqi'a 56:18	Persian
Abraham	al-Nisa' 4:4	Assyrian
Adam	al-Baqara 2:34	Akkadian
Allah (God)	al-Fatiha 1:1	Hebrew ( <i>Eloah</i> ) and Syriac ( <i>Ilaha</i> )
Ara'ik (couches)	al-Kahf 18:31	Persian
'Adn (Eden)	al-Tawba 9:72	Syriac
Firdaws (Paradise)	al-Kahf 18:107	Pahlavi
Fir'awn (Pharaoh)	al-Muzammil 73:15	Syriac
Ghassaqan (pus)	al-Naba' 78:25	Persian
Habr (rabbi)	al-Tawba 9:31	Hebrew ( <i>Haver</i> )
Harut	al-Baqara 2:102	Aramaic
Huri	al-Rahman 55:72	Pahlavi
Injil	Al Imran 3:48	Greek
Istabraq (brocade)	al-Kahf 18:31	Persian ( <i>Istabar</i> )
Jahannam (Gehenna)	al-Anfal 8:36	Hebrew ( <i>Gey Hinnom</i> )
Jinn	al-Dhariyat 51:56	Persian
Maqalid (keys)	al-Zumar 39:63	Pahlavi
Marut	al-Baqara 2:102	Aramaic
Ma'un (charity)	al-Ma'un 107:7	Hebrew
Mishkat (niche)	al-Nur 24:35	Ethiopian
Sabt (sabbath)	al-Naml 27:124	Hebrew
Sakina (shekinah)	al-Baqara 2:248	Aramaic
Sijjil (baked clay)	al-Fil 105:4	Perisan
Sirat (path)	al-Fatiha 1:4	Latin
Sura	al-Tawba 9:124	Syriac
Suradiq (pavilion)	al-Kahf 18:29	Persian
Tabut (ark)	al-Baqara 2:247	Egyptian
Taghut (idols)	al-Baqara 2:257	Syriac ( <i>Teghutha</i> )
Tawrat (Torah)	Al Imran 3:50	Hebrew
Zakat (freewill offering)	al-Baqara 2:110	Syriac ( <i>Zkhutha</i> )
Zanjabil (ginger)	al-Insan 76:17	Pahlavi

### 3. Contradictory Accounts

**Question 201:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:82: "What, do they not ponder the Qur'an? If it had been from other than God surely they would have found in it much inconsistency."

سورة النساء ٨٢:٤ أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا.

The problem is, we find much contradiction within the Qur'an's pages. Consider the following:

#### *Do the Words of God Change?*

**No Change:** "There is no changing the word of God" (Sura Yunis 10:64); "No man can change His words" (Sura al-Kahf 18:27); "It is We who have sent down the Remembrance, and We watch over it" (Sura al-Hijr 15:9).

**Change:** "And when We exchange a verse in place of another verse – and God knows very well what He is sending down – they say, 'Thou art a mere forger!' Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge" (Sura al-Nahl 16:101); "And for whatever verse We abrogate or cast into oblivion, We bring a better or the like of it; knowest thou not that God is powerful over everything?" (Sura al-Baqara 2:106); "God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever He will; and with Him is the Essence of the Book" (Sura al-Ra'd 13:39).

#### *How Long Is One Day?*

**One Thousand Years:** "He directs the affair from heaven to

earth, then it goes up to Him in one day, whose measure is a thousand years of your counting" (Sura al-Sajda 32:5).

**Fifty Thousand Years:** "To Him the angels and the Spirit mount up in a day whereof the measure is fifty thousand years" (Sura al-Ma'arij 70:4).

#### *Does God Permit Intercessors?*

**Intercessors Permitted:** "Surely your Lord is God, who created the heavens and the earth in six days, then sat Himself upon the Throne, directing the affair. Intercessor there is none, save after His leave [*i.e.*, except by His permission]. That then is God, your Lord; so serve Him. Will you not remember?" (Sura Yunis 10:3).

**Intercessors Not Permitted:** "Say: 'To God belongs intercession altogether. His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; then unto Him you will be returned'" (Sura al-Zumar 39:44); "God is He that created the heavens and the earth, and what between them is, in six days, then seated Himself upon the Throne. Apart from Him you have no protector neither mediator [*i.e.*, intercessor]; will you not remember?" (Sura al-Sajda 32:4).

#### *How Many Muslims in Paradise?*

**Few Muslims:** "A throng of the ancients and how few of the later folk" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:13,14).

**Many Muslims:** "A throng of the ancients and a throng of the later folk" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:39,40).

### **Who Will Be Saved?**

**Muslims and Others:** "Surely they that believe, and those of Jewry, and the Sabaeans, and those Christians, whosoever believes in God and the Last Day, and works righteousness – no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow" (Sura al-Ma'ida 5:69).

**Muslims Only:** "Whoso desires another religion than Islam, it shall not be accepted of him; in the next world he shall be among the losers" (Sura Al Imran 3:85).

### **Is Pardoning Sanctioned?**

**Pardon:** "Surely the hour is coming; so pardon thou, with a gracious pardoning" (Sura al-Hijr 15:85).

**Do not Pardon:** "O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers and hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them; their refuge is Gehenna – and evil homecoming!" (Sura al-Tawba 9:72).

### **Is Indecency Permitted?**

**Forbid it:** "And whenever they commit an indecency they say, 'We found our fathers practising it, and God has commanded us to do it.' Say: 'God does not command indecency; what, do you say concerning God such things as you know not?'" (Sura al-A'raf 7:28).

**Allow it:** "And when We desire to destroy a city, We command its men who live at ease, and they commit ungodliness therein, then the Word is realised against it, and We destroy it utterly" (Sura al-Isra' 17:16).

### **Is Hypocrisy Alright?**

**Prohibit it:** "Give thou good tidings to the hypocrites that for them awaits a painful chastisement. Those who take unbelievers for their friends instead of believers – do they seek glory in them? But glory altogether belongs to God" (Sura al-Nisa' 4:138,139); "The hypocrites, the men and the women, are as one another; they bid to dishonour, and forbid honour; they keep their hands shut; they have forgotten God, and He has forgotten them. The hypocrites – they are the ungodly. God has promised the hypocrites, men and women, and the unbelievers, the fire of Gehenna, therein to dwell forever. That is enough for them; God has cursed them; and there awaits them a lasting chastisement" (Sura al-Tawba 9:67-68); "Hast thou not regarded those who have taken for friends a people against whom God is wrathful? They belong neither to you nor to them; and they swear upon falsehood, and that wittingly. God has made ready for them a chastisement terrible; surely they – evil are the things they have been doing. They have taken their oaths as a covering, and barred from God's way; so there awaits them a humbling chastisement" (Sura al-Mujadila 58:14-16).

Al-Baidawi said, "They have taken their oaths, which they made known, as covering, that is as your action against [the shedding of] your blood and [the forfeiting of] their possessions."

**Allow it:** "The Jews say, 'Ezra is the Son of God'; the Christians say, 'The Messiah is the Son of God.' That is the utterance of their mouths, conforming with the unbelievers before them. God assail them! How they are perverted!" (Sura al-Tawba 9:30); "So the last remnant of the people who did evil was cut off. Praise belongs to God the Lord of all Being" (Sura al-An'am 6:45); "O

believers, shall I direct you to a commerce that shall deliver you from a painful chastisement? You shall believe in God and His Messenger, and struggle in the way of God with your possessions and yourselves. That is better for you, did you but know. He will forgive you your sins and admit you into gardens underneath which rivers flow, and to dwelling-places goodly in Gardens of Eden; that is the mighty triumph" (Sura al-Saff 61:10-12); "And struggle for God as is His due, for He has chosen you, and has laid on you no impediment in your religion, being the creed of your father Abraham; He named you Muslims aforetime and in this, that the Messenger might be a witness against you, and that you might be witnesses against mankind (Sura al-Hajj 22:78).

### ***Is Caprice Permissible?***

**Forbid it:** "But as for him who feared the Station of his Lord and forbade the soul its caprice, surely Paradise shall be the refuge" (Sura al-Nazi'at 79:40,41).

**Allow it:** Muhammad permitted his followers to launch religious raids and have sex with female captives without their being divorced from their husbands. The Qur'an says therefore, "And married women, save what your right hands own" (Sura al-Nisa' 4:24).

Al-Baidawi said, " 'Save what your right hands own' " of the women that were taken as captives having unbelieving husbands; these are lawful to the captors. And marriage is annulled by captivity, for Abu Sa'id, may God be pleased with him, said, 'We fell upon some women captives on the Day of Awtas who were married to unbelieving husbands, and we were averse to have sex with them. So we asked the Prophet, and this verse

was revealed! We, therefore, took them as lawful together with him.' By 'him' he meant al-Farazdaq, for he said, 'And a married woman whom we married by our swords... she is lawful to whoever enters upon her being not divorced.' "

Muhammad made his marriage to any woman who desired him, or any woman he desired, categorically and unconditionally permissible. This was in addition to his harem and concubines. For he said, "And any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for you exclusively, apart from the believers" (Sura al-Ahzab 33:50). Moreover, Muhammad made sexual relationships with women the future hope in Paradise, for he said, "*huris* [white youthful maidens], cloistered in pavilions... untouched before them by any man or *jinn*... reclining upon green cushions and lovely druggets" (Sura al-Rahman 55:72,74,76)

### ***Is Wine Allowed?***

**Forbid It:** "O believers, wine and arrow-shuffling, idols and divining-arrows are an abomination, some of Satan's work; so avoid it, haply so you will prosper" (Sura al-Ma'ida 5:90).

**Allow It:** "This is the similitude of Paradise which the godfearing have been promised: therein are rivers of water unstaling, rivers of milk unchanging in flavour, and rivers of wine – a delight to the drinkers" (Sura Muhammad 47:15); "They are given to drink of a wine sealed whose seal is musk – so after that let the strivers strive" (Sura al-Mutaffifun 83:25,26).

### What to Do with Unbelievers?

#### (1) Do not strive against them:

**Heed not the hurt:** “And obey not the unbelievers and the hypocrites; heed not their hurt, but put thy trust in God; God suffices as a guardian” (Sura al-Ahzab 33:48).

**No compulsion in religion:** “No compulsion is there in religion. Rectitude has become clear from error. So whosoever disbelieves in idols and believes in God, has laid hold of the most firm handle, unbreaking; God is All-hearing, All-knowing” (Sura al-Baqara 2:256).

**Extend money to them:** “Thou art not responsible for guiding them; but God guides whomsoever He will. And whatever good you expend is for yourselves, for then you are expending, being desirous only of God’s Face; and whatever good you expend shall be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged” (Sura al-Baqara 2:272).

**Leave them alone:** “And say to those who have been given the Book and to the common folk: ‘Have you surrendered?’ If they have surrendered they are right guided; but if they turn their backs, thine it is only to deliver the Message; and God sees His servants” (Sura Al Imran 3:19); “Had God willed, they were not idolaters; and We have not appointed thee a watcher over them” (Sura al-An‘am 6:107); “And thy Lord had willed, whoever is in the earth would have believed, all of them, all together. Wouldest thou then constrain the people, until they are believers? It is not for any soul to believe save by the leave [*i.e.*, permission] of God; and He lays abomination upon those who have no understanding” (Sura Yunis 10:99,100).

**Calling them with goodwill:** “Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way. Surely thy Lord knows very well those who have gone astray from His way, and He knows very well those who are guided” (Sura al-Nahl 16:125).

#### (2) Strive against them:

**Kill them:** “Urge on the believers to fight. If there be twenty of you, patience men, they will overcome two hundred” (Sura al-Anfal 8:65).

**Fight for the sake of religion:** “Fight them, till there is no persecution and the religion is God’s” (Sura al-Baqara 2:193).

**Exact money from them:** “Fight those who believe not in God and the Last Day and [who] do not forbid what God and His Messenger have forbidden – such men as practise not the religion of truth, being of those who have been given the Book – until they pay the tribute out of hand and have been humbled” (Sura al-Tawba 9:29).

**Persecute them:** “They wish that you should disbelieve as they disbelieve, and then you would be equal; therefore take not to yourselves friends of them; until they emigrate in the way of God; then, if they turn their backs, take them, and slay them wherever you find them; take not to yourselves any one of them as friend or helper” (Sura al-Nisa’ 4:89); “When you meet the unbelievers, smite their necks, then, when you have made wide slaughter among them, tie fast the bonds” (Muhammad 47:4); “O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers and hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them; their refuge is Gehenna – an evil homecoming!” (Sura al-Tawba 9:71).

**Call them with the sword:** “So do thou fight in the way of God; thou art charged only with thyself. And urge on the believers” (Sura al-Nisa’ 4:84). In line with this verse, Muhammad butchered his opponents; such as Ka’b Ibn al-Ashraf, Abu ‘Afk al-Shaikh, and Abu Rafi’ Ibn Abi ‘Aqiq. The blood of these men will testify against him until the Day of Judgement!

### *What Happened to Pharaoh?*

**He was delivered:** “And We brought the Children of Israel over the sea; and Pharaoh and his hosts followed them insolently and impetuously till, when the drowning overtook him, he said, ‘I believe that there is no god but He in whom the Children of Israel believe; I am of those that surrender.’ ‘Now? And before thou didst rebel, being of those that did corruption. So today We shall deliver thee with thy body, that thou mayest be a sign to those after thee’” (Sura Yunis 10:89-92).

**He was drowned:** “‘And, Pharaoh, I think thou art accursed.’ He desired to startle them from the land; and We drowned him and those with him, all together” (Sura al-Isra’ 17:102,103); “Therefore We seized him and his hosts, and cast them into the sea; so behold how was the end of the evildoers!” (Sura al-Qasas 28:40).

### *Was Earth or Heaven Created First?*

**Earth was first:** “Say, ‘What, do you disbelieve in Him who created the earth in two days, and do you set up compeers to Him? That is the Lord of all Being. And He set therein firm mountains over it, and He blessed it, and He ordained therein its diverse sustenance in four days, equal to those who ask. Then

He lifted Himself to heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth, “Come willingly, or unwillingly!” They said, “We come willingly.” So He determined them as seven heavens in two days, and revealed its commandment in every heaven.’ And We adorned the lower heaven with lamps, and to preserve; that is the ordaining of the All-mighty, the All-knowing” (Sura Fussilat 41:9-12).

**Heaven Was First:** “What, are you stronger in constitution or the heaven He built? He lifted up its vault, and levelled it, and darkened its night, and brought forth its forenoon; and the earth – after that he spread it out, therefrom brought forth its waters and its pastures, and the mountains He set firm” (Sura al-Nazi’at 79:27-32).

### *What Is the Language of the Qur’an Like?*

**Clear language:** “And We know very well that they say, ‘Only a mortal is teaching him.’ The speech of him at whom they hint is barbarous; and this is speech Arabic, manifest” (Sura al-Nahl 16:103).

**Ambiguous language:** “It is He who sent down upon thee the Book, wherein are verses clear that are the Essence of the Book, and others ambiguous. As for those in whose hearts is swerving, they follow the ambiguous part, desiring dissension, and desiring its interpretation; and none knows its interpretation, save only God. And those firmly rooted in knowledge say, ‘We believe in it; all is from our Lord’; yet none remembers, but men possessed of minds” (Sura Al Imran 3:7).

#### 4. Repetitive Words

**Question 202:** In Sura al-Rahman 55, whose verses number 78, the question, "O which of your Lord's bounties will you and you deny?" is repeated 29 times. It appears in verses 16, 18, 21, 23, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 45, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67, 69, 71, 73, 75, and 77.

In addition to the manipulated rhyming of the Qur'an's stanzas described earlier, the Qur'an is full of repetitive phrases, whether verbal as in Sura al-Rahman 55, or thematic as in the stories of the prophets. The story of Adam, for example, is repeated in Suras al-Baqara 2, Sad 38, Ta Ha 20, and al-A'raf 7. The story of Noah is repeated in Suras al-A'raf 7, Yunis 10, Hud 11, al-Anbiya' 21, al-Furqan 25, al-Shu'ara' 26, al-'Ankabut 29, al-Saffat 37, Nuh 71, al-Qamar 54, and al-Mu'minun 23.

The story of Abraham is repeated in Suras Al Imran 3, al-Anbiya' 21, Maryam 19, Ibrahim 14, Hud 11, al-Hijr 15, al-Dharyat 51, al-An'am 6, and al-Saffat 37.

The story of Lot is repeated in Suras al-Saffat 37, al-A'raf 7, al-Nahl 16, al-'Ankabut 29, al-Shu'ara' 26, al-Anbiya' 21, al-Qamar 54, and Hud 11.

The story of Moses is repeated in Suras al-Qasas 28, Ta Ha 20, al-Shu'ara' 26, al-A'raf 7, al-Baqara 2, Yunis 10, and al-Nisa' 4.

The story of Solomon is repeated in Suras Sad 38, al-Baqara 2, al-Nahl 16.

The story of Jonah is repeated in Suras al-Anbiya' 21, al-Saffat 37, al-Qalam 68, and Yunis 10.

The story of Jesus is repeated in Suras Al Imran 3, Maryam 19, al-Nisa' 4, al-Ma'ida 5, al-Hadid 57, al-Saff 61, Ya Sin 36, and al-Zukhruf 43.

The story of the creation of Adam and God's commanding the angels to worship him is repeated in five suras. The story of Noah and the Flood is repeated in ten suras. The story of Abraham warning his people in vain and being brought the good tidings of Isaac is repeated in eight suras. The story of Lot warning his people in vain and the consequent destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is repeated in nine suras. The story of Joseph takes up an entire sura. The story of Moses being sent from God to Pharaoh is repeated in 12 suras.

We ask: Isn't this repetition a defect that promotes boredom and impatience? Doesn't this prove that the Qur'an is far from being eloquent.

#### 5. Plagiarism

**Question 203:** We read in Sura al-Furqan 25:5,6: "They say, 'Fairy-tales of the ancients that he has had written down, so that they are recited to him at the dawn and in the evening.' Say: 'He sent it down, who knows the secret in the heavens and the earth; He is All-forgiving, All-compassionate.'"

سورة الفرقان ٢٥:٥ و٦ «وَقَالُوا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ أَنْكَبَهَا فِيهِ نُمَلَىٰ عَلَيْهِ  
بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا قُلْ أَنْزَلَهُ الَّذِي يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ إِنَّهُ كَانَ  
غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا».

This verse indicates that the Qur'an descended upon Muhammad by the revelation of God. Yet his contemporaries did



not find anything new in it, but said that he merely took the fairy-tales of the ancient people that he had heard and wrote them down in what is called the Qur'an. Thus, the Qur'an is not by revelation! Indeed, Muhammad quoted from the poetry of Imru' al-Qais, the sayings of 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, the books of unlearned Jews and Christians, the books of the Persians, the books of the Hunafa', and others. Here are some examples:

***From the Poems of Imru' al-Qais***

Imru' al-Qais is one of the pre-Islamic poets who died in A.D. 540 (30 years before the birth of Muhammad). He composed a famous poem, from which the Qur'an quotes several lines. These are indicated in italics below:

*The hour has drawn nigh: the moon is split,*  
 Revealing a doe that hunted my heart and bolted  
 away.  
 She has white and black eyes;  
 Her features never cease to amaze me;  
 She has sleepy eyes  
 With stark contrast between black and white.  
 She passed by me on the feast-day in her adornment;  
*Shot me, took in hand, and hamstrung [me],*  
 With arrows of deadly glances,  
*And left me as the wattles of a pen-builder.*  
 If she stays away from me for an hour,  
 This hour would be the most distressing and  
 afflictive.  
 Beauty has been engrossed upon her cheeks  
 With musk-powder as a brief line.  
 It is the routine of the moons to travel by night,

But I saw the night travelling by the moon.  
*By the white forenoon and the brooding night,*  
 Distinguished by light, what a blooming thing!  
 When I saw her embarrassment, I said,  
*"The hour has drawn nigh, the moon is split."*

The first part of the first sentence and the last line occur in Sura al-Qamar 54:1, where it says, "The hour has drawn nigh: the moon is split." The second line of the third sentence is found in Sura al-Qamar 54:29, where it says, "Then they called their comrade, and he took in hand, and hamstrung her." The fourth line of the third sentence is found in Sura al-Qamar 54:31, where it says, "And they were as the wattles of a pen-builder." The first line of the seventh sentence is found in Sura al-Duha 93:1,2, where we read: "By the white forenoon and the brooding night." Imru' al-Qais also wrote:

She came forward; and the lovers from behind,  
 As though they slide down out of every slope.  
 And she came on the feast-day in her adornment;  
 So for the like of this let the workers work.

The second line of this poem is found in Sura al-Anbiya' 21:96, where it says, "When Gog and Magog are unloosed, and they slide down out of every slope." The last line of this poem is found in Sura al-Saffat 37:61, where it says, "For the like of this let the workers work."

***From the Words of 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab***

(1) 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab had a piece of land in the upper section of Medina, and the only way he could get to it was through a *beit midrash* ("house of prayer") that belonged to

the Jews. So it was that whenever he was there, he would sit down and listen to what they had to say. Once they said to him, "There is none among Muhammad's friends that is dearer to us than you, and we have ambitions for you." 'Umar said, "By God, I have not come to you out of love for you, or because I am doubtful of my religion; rather I come to you to gain more insight about Muhammad." They said, "Who of the angels is Muhammad's friend that comes to him?" He answered, "Gabriel." They said, "That is our enemy." 'Umar said, "Whosoever is enemy to God and His angels and His Messengers, and Gabriel, and Michael – surely God is an enemy to him." When Muhammad heard of it, he said that it was so revealed to him, and recorded it in his Qur'an in Sura al-Baqara 2:98. Later on Muhammad said to 'Umar, "Your Lord was in agreement with you, 'Umar."

We ask: Wouldn't it have been more correct for Muhammad to say that 'Umar was in agreement with his Lord, and not the other way around? What strikes us as even more strange is the fact the Muhammad plagiarised the sayings of 'Umar and claimed that they were revealed! In that case, is 'Umar to be considered an inspired prophet, or did Muhammad plagiarise the sayings of another and claim them as revelation?

(2) Al-Bukhari and others reported that 'Umar said, "I was in agreement with my Lord on three things: When I said, 'O Messenger of God, I would that you take Abraham's station for a place of prayer.' [Muhammad took the words from his mouth and had them recorded in his Qur'an in Sura al-Baqara 2:125: "Take to yourselves Abraham's station for a place of prayer."] And when I said, 'O

Messenger of God, both the righteous and the unrighteous come in to your wives; why not order them to use a curtain.' [Muhammad took the words from 'Umar's mouth and had them recorded in Sura al-Ahzab 33:53.] And in the incident of jealousy [over 'Aisha], where his wives were gathered against him. Therefore 'Umar said to them, 'It is possible that if he divorces you, his Lord will give him in exchange wives better than you.' [Muhammad also took these words verbatim and had them recorded in Sura al-Tahrim 66:5.]

We ask: Are God's words taken from the mouths of mere men?

#### ***From the Books of Unlearned Jews***

Following is a list of the themes Muhammad wove into the Qur'an. The corresponding Qur'anic verses and references in the original Jewish writings are also provided:

(1) Cain learns how to bury his brother from a raven (Sura al-Ma'ida 5:30-35); found also in *Pirquei Rabbi Eliezer*, chapter 21.

(2) Nimrod casts Abraham into the fire, but the fire could not burn him (Suras al-Baqara 2:260, al-An'am 6:74-84, al-Anbiya' 21:52-72, Maryam 19:42-50, al-Shu'ara' 26:69-79, al-'Ankabut 29:15-16, al-Saffat 37:81-95, al-Zukhruf 43:25-27, and al-Mumtahina 60:40); found also in *Midrash Rabba*, chapter 14, section on Genesis 15:17.

(3) King Solomon consults with *jinn*, birds and an *ifrit*. Also, a hoopoe delivers news about the queen of Sheba and how her throne was brought to Solomon (Sura al-Naml

27:17-45); found also in the *Second Targum on the book of Esther*.

(4) Implanting lust in the two angels Harut and Marut, and their drinking wine, fornicating, killing and teaching sorcery to the people (Sura al-Baqara 2:96); found also in *Midrash Yalkot*, chapter 44.

(5) A mountain is raised above the Jews' heads (Sura al-A'raf 7:170); found also in *Avodah Zarah*, chapter 2.

(6) A golden calf that lows (Suras al-A'raf 7:157 and Ta Ha 20:91); found also in *Pirqei Rabbi Eliezer*, chapter 45.

(7) The seven heavens and the seven gates of Gehenna (Suras al-Isra' 17:46,48 and al-Hijr 15:44); found also in the *Hagiga* (section 9, chapter 2) and *Sefir Ha-Zohar*, chapter 2.

(8) A throne on the water (Sura Hud 11:9); found also in the exegesis of Rashi on Genesis 1:2.

(9) The battlements, which are meant to be the fine partition between paradise and hell (Sura al-A'raf 7:44); found also in the *Midrash* on the exposition of Ecclesiastes 7:14.

(10) A flood consisting of boiling water (Sura Hud 11:42); found also in the books *Rosh Hashana* (16:2) and *Sanhedrin* (108).

(11) A guarded tablet (Sura al-Buruj 85:21,22); found also in *Pirqei Avot*, section 5, chapter 6.

### **From the Books of Unlearned Christians**

(1) The men of the cave, or the seven sleepers (Sura al-Kahf 18:8-26); found also in Gregorius' *The Book of the Glory of the Martyrs*, vol. one, chapter 95.

(2) The story of Mary: how she vowed herself to God, how Zechariah took charge of her, and how the angels provided her with food (Sura Al Imran 3:31,32,38-42); found also in the books *Yerut Euangelion* (chapters 3,4,5,7,8,9,11,15) and *The Death of Our Father, the Old Carpenter* (chapter 3, on the life of Mary).

(3) Mary's withdrawal from her family to a distant place, and the falling down of ripe dates by the command of her Baby (Sura Maryam 19:23,24); found also in *The Book of the Story of Mary's Birth and the Childhood of the Saviour*, chapter 20.

(4) Christ creates birds out of clay (Sura al-Ma'ida 5:110); found also in the Greek book, *The Book of Hooma the Israelite*, chapter 2.

(5) The denial of Christ's crucifixion and His likeness being cast upon another (Sura al-Nisa' 4:157); this is in line with Basilides' heresy, which maintains that Christ cast His likeness upon Simon of Cyrene, so that he was crucified in His place; followers of this heresy assumed this is what happened, for they held that Christ had no real body, but took upon Himself only the likeness of a body.

### **From the Books of Unlearned Persians**

The Qur'an testifies that al-Nadr Ibn al-Harith used to rebuke

Muhammad for merely copying the sayings of the Persians and receiving nothing by revelation. It is a matter of common knowledge that the Persians ruled over a large number of Arabian tribes before and during Muhammad's lifetime. Therefore, the stories of their kings, beliefs and legends circulated among the Arabs and left their stamp on Muhammad, who recorded many of them in his Qur'an. Al-Nadr Ibn al-Harith, too, used to relate the accounts of the Persian kings to the people, and would often say, "By God, Muhammad has nothing better to relate than I do; and his narration is nothing but the fairy-tales of the ancients that he has had written down, just as I have." To which Muhammad answered, "When Our signs are recited to him, he says, 'Fairy-tales of the ancients'" (Sura al-Qalam 68:15). Muhammad even went so far as to curse al-Nadr in the Qur'an, saying, "Woe to every guilty impostor who hears the signs of God being recited to him, then perseveres in waxing proud, as if he has not heard them; so give him the good tidings of a painful chastisement" (Sura al-Jathiya 45:7,8).

We ask: How could Muhammad curse al-Nadr, when he knew that he had quoted a great deal of the Persian legends in his Qur'an, such as the ascension of Artioraf Namak and the description of paradise with its wide-eyed *huris* and lads? Moreover, Muhammad made his instructor, Salman the Persian, one of the Companions! Consider the following subjects, which Muhammad copied from Persian sources:

- (1) The ascension of Artioraf Namak. The original story (written roughly 400 years before the Hijra) says that the Magi sent Artioraf's spirit to heaven while he was in a trance. The purpose of this ascension to heaven was to acquire knowledge of what was there and to bring news of

it back. So Artioraf ascended to heaven by the guidance of an archangel and wandered about from one level to another, gradually ascending higher and higher. Having acquired knowledge of everything, the good god Ahura Mazda ordered him to return to earth and tell the Zoroastrians about what he saw. Muhammad apparently took the story of the ascension of Artioraf Namak and turned himself into the main character, saying, "Glory be Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque the precincts of which We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs. He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing" (Sura al-Isra' 17:1).

In his account of the Night Journey, Muhammad said, "I was brought a white beast smaller than a mule and larger than a donkey, called al-Buraq; it would place its hoof at a distance equal to the horizon. I sat upon it and Gabriel took off with me till he reached the lower heaven. He called upon God for help and I saw Adam. Then he brought me up to the second heaven and I saw Jesus and John [the Baptist]; then he brought me up to the third heaven and I saw Joseph; then he brought me up to the fourth heaven and I saw Idris. After that he brought me up to the fifth heaven and I saw Aaron. Then he brought me up to the sixth heaven and I saw Abraham. After that I returned to the lotus tree in the seventh heaven [*Sidrat al-Muntaha*] and saw four rivers, among them were the Nile and the Euphrates. Afterwards, I was brought a vessel of wine, a vessel of milk, and a vessel of honey, and I took the milk. He said, 'This is the instinct which you and your people have'" (*Mishkat*, pp. 518-520).

(2) Paradise: its *huris* and youths. Muhammad took the belief in the existence of the *huris* in paradise from the Zoroastrians, who said that in heaven will be found the spirits of luminous, young, and pretty girls, and that the reward of war heroes will be an eternity with the youths and *huris*. The Indians likewise believed in the *huris*. As for the word *huri*, its meaning can be traced to the Avestan and old Persian languages, in which it refers to the sun and its light. It is the same as the Pahlavic word *hour*, which developed in modern Persian into *hur*. (See also *The Book of the Laws of Manwa*; chapter 5, verse 89.) So in keeping with this Persian belief and expression, the Qur'an refers to "*huris*, cloistered in cool pavilions" (Sura al-Rahman 55:72), and "wide-eyed *huris* as the likeness of hidden pearls" (Sura al-Waqi'a 56:22,23).

(3) Muhammad's instructor: Salman the Persian. The Qur'an testifies that it was Salman the Persian who dictated the Persian stories to Muhammad. We read in the Qur'an: "And We know very well that they say, 'Only a mortal is teaching him.' The speech of him at whom they hint is barbarous; and this is speech Arabic, manifest" (Sura al-Nahl 16:103).

Salman was a Persian who converted to Islam. He also became one of the Companions. It was he who advised Muhammad to dig a trench at the time when Medina was under siege, which advice Muhammad readily took. It was he also who advised Muhammad to use catapults in the invasion of Banu Tha'qif in al-Ta'if. The Arabs accused Muhammad of receiving assistance from him when compiling the Qur'an, and of falling back on him as a

source for many stories and phrases. Although Muhammad said that Salman was barbarous (a non-Arab) and that the Qur'an was Arabic, this does not rule out the fact that the contents and intention may have come from Salman, whereas the Arabic style of phraseology may have come from Muhammad!

### *From the Books of the Hunafa'*

(1) Muhammad's praise of the Hunafa'. We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:125: "And who is there that has a fairer religion than he who submits his will to God being a good-doer [Arabic: *hanif*], and who follows the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith?" We also read in Sura Al Imran 3:95: "Say: 'God has spoken the truth; therefore follow the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith [Arabic: *hanif*] and no idolater.'" And in Sura al-An'am 6:161 we read: "Say: 'As for me, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, a right religion, the creed of Abraham, a man of pure faith [Arabic: *hanif*].'"

In both Hebrew and Syriac, the word *hanif* means "profane, defiled, or a renegade". Arabs have stigmatised all those who left the worship of idols and turned their backs on the religion of their forefathers with this infamous word. Those people who grew weary of the gods of the Arabs were Muhammad's forerunners, whose opinions were incorporated and confirmed as tenets of his own religion; this we can gather from the obvious intention of the Qur'anic statements about them.

(2) The rise of the Hunafa'. The following is a quotation from the *Sirat* of Ibn Hisham:

Ibn Ishaq said, "The Quraish were gathered one day on one of the feasts of a certain idol of theirs, which they venerated and worshipped. They made pilgrimages to it and circumambulated it. They used to celebrate this feast on a certain day every year. Four of them became intimate friends with one another. The first was Waraqa Ibn Nawfal Ibn Asad Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza Ibn Qusay Ibn Kilab Ibn Murra Ibn Ka'b Ibn Lu'ay. The second was 'Ubaidallah Ibn Jahsh Ibn Ri'ab Ibn Ya'mur Ibn Sira Ibn Murra Ibn Kabir Ibn Ghanam Ibn Dawran Ibn Asad Ibn Khuzaima. His mother was Umaima Bint 'Abd al-Muttalib. Next was 'Uthman Ibn al-Huwairith Ibn Asad Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza Ibn Qusay. And last of all was Zaid Ibn 'Amr Ibn Nufail Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza Ibn 'Abdallah Ibn Qart Ibn Rabah Ibn Razah Ibn 'Adi Ibn Ka'b Ibn Lu'ay. They said to one another, 'You know it for certain that your folk stand on nothing [firm]. They have missed the religion of Abraham their father. No rock that we go around hears, sees, does harm or does good. O people, see for yourselves! For, by God, you stand upon nothing [firm]!' So they were scattered in the lands seeking the truth."

(3) The destiny of the Hunafa'. Waraqa Ibn Nawfal became deeply established in Christianity and followed the Scriptures until he possessed a certain amount of knowledge from the people of the Book. 'Ubaidallah Ibn Jahsh remained as confused as he was before, until he adopted Islam and migrated with the Muslims to Abyssinia

with his Muslim wife Umm Habiba Bint Abi Sufyan. On arriving in Abyssinia, he adopted Christianity, gave up Islam and died a Christian. Thereupon, Muhammad sent for his widow Umm Habiba and married her. 'Uthman Ibn al-Huwairith went to Caesar, the Roman Emperor, became a Christian, and was treated well by him. Zaid Ibn 'Amr, however, adopted neither Judaism nor Christianity, abandoned his people's religion and kept away from idolatry, forbade the killing of young girls [Arabic: *Wa'd al-Bana'*], and used to say, "I worship the God of Abraham." He often addressed his people harshly, telling them of the error they were in. He was in the habit of declaring his doctrines publicly in the Ka'ba; and therefore his uncle Khattab drove him out of Mecca and forced him to stay on Hira' which stands opposite that city. He never gave him permission to enter Mecca.

As is known, Muhammad used to go to Hira' and spend a month there every year. There Zaid influenced his ideas and direction greatly.

(4) The effect of Zaid Ibn 'Amr's words on the Qur'an. On leaving his people's religion, Zaid Ibn 'Amr wrote (as recorded in *Sirat* by Ibn Hisham; chapter on Zaid's poetry about leaving idolatry):

Is it to One Lord or a thousand lords

That I should pay homage when matters are divided?

I abstained from both al-Lat and al-'Uzza,

And thus should every patient and steadfast man.

I pay no homage to either 'Uzza or her two daughters,

Nor do I visit the two idols of Banu Amr.  
 I do not pay homage to Hubal, either;  
 It being a lord in age past when my dream was easy.  
 I wondered, and nights have things to wonder at,  
 As the days, too; which only the discerning knows.  
 It is that God destroyed many a man,  
 Who lived a dissipated life-style.  
 And saved others by the righteousness of some,  
 So that the little child among them grew chubby.  
 As the person felt unsatisfied, he repented  
 Just as the winded-driven twig fluctuates.  
 But I worship my Lord the Compassionate One,  
 So that the forgiving Lord may forgive my guilt.  
 So keep the godliness of God your Lord,  
 Which, when you keep, you shall not perish.  
 The righteous have paradise for a dwelling-place,  
 But the unbelievers have the heated Fire,  
 Shame in this life, and when they meet their death,  
 They find things that bosoms cannot bear.

This poem sets out the tenets of the Hunafa' by which Muhammad was affected, and which he incorporated into the pillars of his religion. This poem from Zaid declares the following: the rejection of idolatry, a confession of the unity of God, the promise of paradise, a warning of the chastisement in the heat of Gehenna, the names of God (the Compassionate, the Lord, the Forgiving), the call to the religion of Abraham.

In summary, Islam has taken its major tenets from the Hunafa', as taught by Zaid Ibn 'Amr to Muhammad.

### From the Inspired Scriptures

We read in Sura al-A'la 87:18, 19: "Surely this is in the ancient scrolls, the scrolls of Abraham and Moses."

سورة الأعلى ٨٧:١٨ و ١٩ «إِنَّ هَذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ صُحُفِ  
 إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ».

This is a blatant confession that many of the accounts in the Qur'an, except for the stories of Muhammad's women and invasions, are taken from the Bible. From the book of Genesis he quoted the stories concerning creation, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Lot, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. From the book of Exodus he adopted the stories concerning Moses, Pharaoh, the pillar of cloud, the manna and the quail, the rock, the Ten Commandments, the golden calf, the two tablets, and the ark of the covenant. From the book of Leviticus he took the law of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, and the blood sacrifices. From the book of Numbers he took the stories concerning the spies, Korah, the red heifer and Balaam. From the book of Deuteronomy he adopted Moses' receiving the Torah and the priests keeping it. From the book of Joshua he took the Israelites' entering the Promised Land. From the book of Judges he took the story of Gideon. From the two books of Samuel he took the stories concerning Saul, David and Goliath, and David's repentance. From the books of the Kings and Chronicles he took the stories concerning Solomon and the queen of Sheba, Elijah, Elisha and the captivity in Babylon. The account of Job is taken from the book of Job. He quoted also some verses from the book of Psalms, Isaiah and Ezekiel. The story of Jonah is taken from the book of Jonah. The stories of

Zechariah, John, Mary, the birth of Christ, His miracles, death and ascension are all taken from the gospels. From the Acts of the Apostles he derived all the information regarding the spread of Christianity, the council of Jerusalem and the ordaining of bishops. He likewise quoted some verses from the apostle Paul's epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, Thessalonians, and from the epistle to the Hebrews. He quoted also from the epistles of James and Peter, and from the Revelation of Jesus Christ to the apostle John.

## 6. The Disconnectedness of the Qur'an

**Question 204:** It is written in Sura al-Isra' 17:106: "And a Qur'an We have divided, for thee to recite to mankind at intervals, and We have sent it down successively."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:١٠٦ «وَقُرْآنًا فَرَقْنَاهُ لِتَقْرَأَهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ عَلَى مُكْثٍ وَنَزَّلْنَاهُ تَنْزِيلًا».

Al-Baidawi said, " 'A Qur'an We have divided' means it was sent down in divisions and sections. The verb is often stressed [Arabic: *mushaddad*] for the fact that it was sent down within a little over twenty years. 'For thee to recite to mankind at intervals' means slowly and leisurely, for it is thus easier to commit to memory and less difficult to understand.... 'And We have sent down successively' means according to the events."

We read in Sura al-Furqan 25:32: "The unbelievers say, 'Why has the Qur'an not been sent down upon him all at once?' Even so that We may strengthen thy heart thereby."

سورة الفرقان ٢٥:٣٢ «وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الْقُرْآنُ جُمْلَةً وَاحِدَةً كَذَلِكَ لِنُثَبِّتَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ».

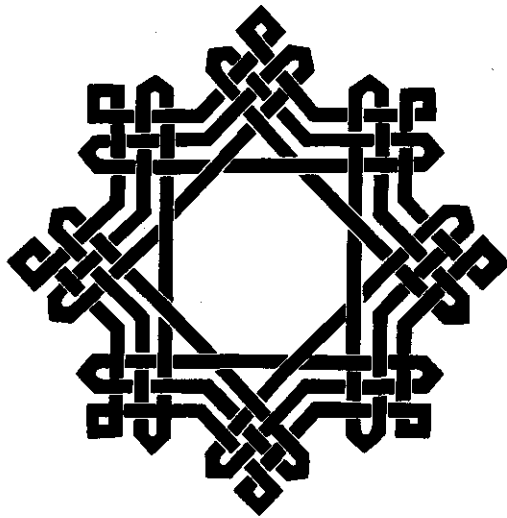
Al-Baidawi said:

"The unbelievers say, 'Why has the Qur'an not been sent down upon him all at once?' is a futile objection; for the miraculous nature [Arabic: *'i'jaz*] of the Qur'an is not affected by its being sent down all at once or in divisions. Yet its being divided has some benefits. Among these is the fact referred to in the following sentence: "Even so that We may strengthen thy heart thereby." This refers to the strengthening of the heart in memorising it; for the Prophet (peace be unto him) was illiterate, whereas the prophets that preceded him knew how to write. Had it been sent down upon him all at once, he would have been overburdened with the task of memorising it, and perhaps he would not have been able to do it. For the receiving of it was possible only because it came a little at a time. Moreover, the fact that it was sent down according to the events necessitates more insight and delving into the meaning. Also, its coming in intervals gave him the chance to challenge the unbelievers with every portion so that they could not contradict him, which made his heart stronger. Again, the fact that Gabriel brought it down time after time established his heart. Of these [benefits] is the recognition of the abrogating and the abrogated verses, the ability to join the current contexts [or circumstances] to the lexical significance; for this aids in eloquence.... "And We have chanted it very distinctly" means it was recited to him little



by little, slowly and leisurely, in the span of twenty or twenty-three years.

We ask: How can the Qur'an be inspired if it was given to the people sporadically and in pieces, parts of it having been given at a certain time, and others having been delayed? Muhammad was always disappointed whenever the Arabs, the Christians, and the Jews asked him about it; he sometimes even replied that Gabriel was delayed in coming to him, owing to some dogs!



## 7. Unfamiliar Words

**Question 205:** The Qur'an includes many unfamiliar words. Below is a list of some of them:

The Word	Possible English Meaning	The Sura
Abba	pastures	'Abasa 80:31
Ghislin	pus	al-Haqqa 69:36
Hanan	tenderness	Maryam 19:12
Awwah	compassionate	Hud 11:75
al-Raqim	inscribed tablet	al-Kahf 18:9
Kalala	direct heir	al-Nisa' 4:12
Mublisun	sorely confounded	al-Mu'minun 23:77
Akhbatu	humbled themselves	Hud 11:23
Hanidh	roasted	Hud 11:69
Hashasa	be discovered	Yusuf 12:51
Tafayya'u	to cast	al-Nahl 16:48
Sariyya	rivulet	Maryam 19:24
Masjur	swarming	al-Tur 52:6
Qimtarir	inauspicious	al-Insan 76:10
'As'as	to swarm	al-Takwir 81:17
Sijjil	clay	Hud 11:82
Naqur	trumpet	al-Muddaththir 74:8
Faqira	calamity	al-Qiyama 75:25
Istabraq	brocade	al-Rahman 55:54
Mudhammatan	green	al-Rahman 55:64

'Umar Ibn al-Khattab once recited from a platform, "And fruit, and pastures...." Then he said, "The fruit [Arabic: *fakiha*] we know; but what are pastures [Arabic: *abba*]?" On second thought, he said, " 'Umar, it means nothing but passion." Ibn 'Abbas said, "I do not know the meaning of *ghislin*, *hannan*, *'awwah*, and *al-Raqim*."

We ask: Aren't these unfamiliar words contrary to sound scholarship and the art of composition?

### 8. The Abrogating and Abrogated Verses

**Question 206:** It is written in Sura al-Baqara 2:106: "And for whatever verse We abrogate or cast into oblivion, We bring a better or the like of it; knowest thou not that God is powerful over everything?"

سورة البقرة ٢:١٠٦ ﴿مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾.

We read also in Sura al-Nahl 16:101: "And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse – and God knows very well what He is sending down – they say, 'Thou art a mere forger!' Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge."

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠١ ﴿وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا نُنزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾.

The Qur'an says in Sura al-Ra'd 13:39: "God blots out, and He establishes whatsoever he will; and with Him is the Essence of the Book."

سورة الرعد ١٣:٣٩ ﴿يَمْحُو اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيُنْبِئُ وَعِنْدَهُ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ﴾.

And in Sura al-Hajj 22:52 we read: "God annuls what Satan casts."

سورة الحج ٢٢:٥٢ ﴿فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ﴾.

The Qur'an, of all other religious books, is characterised by its abrogating and abrogated verses; yet the true words of God should not include such things. Consider the following:

### Problems with the Abrogating and Abrogated Verses

(1) Abrogation in God's words goes against His wisdom, truthfulness and foreknowledge. It is the short-sighted man that issues laws and replaces them according to situations and circumstances. The almighty God, however, knows about all things before they come to pass. How then could it possibly be said about God that He changes, exchanges, abrogates and blots out? Isn't it more appropriate to exalt God high above all this calumny and say, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent" (Numbers 23:19)?

(2) The idea of abrogation does not exist in Judaism or Christianity. Christ said, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled" (Matthew 5:17-19).

(3) Abrogation opens the gate wide for lying and false assertions; for if a false prophet says something that is later proven wrong, or if the listeners object to it, he could then say his

statement is abrogated, and tell them something else that would suit them: "God annuls what Satan casts" (Sura al-Hajj 22:52). The god of Muhammad has indeed even abrogated parts of the Qur'an, which he sent down upon Muhammad (Sura al-Baqara 2:106)!

### Questions about the Abrogating and Abrogated Verses

(1) Why did Muhammad abrogate not approaching women during the fast? We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:187: "Permitted to you, upon the night of the Fast, is to go into your wives; they are a vestment for you, and you are a vestment for them. God knows that you have been betraying yourselves, and has turned to you and pardoned you. So now lie with them."

This abrogating verse came after the confession of Muhammad's Companions, including 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab, that they betrayed the regulations of the fast by having intercourse with their wives after the evening prayer. So this abrogating verse legalised what had been forbidden, and it permitted what had been prohibited!

(2) Why did Muhammad abrogate what he himself had forbidden, thereby breaking his oath? We read in Sura al-Tahrim 66:1,2: "O Prophet, why forbiddest thou what God has made lawful to thee, seeking the good pleasure of thy wives? And God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. God has ordained for you the absolution of your oaths. God is your Protector, and He is the All-knowing, the All-wise."

Muhammad uttered this verse after he had brought Mary the Copt to the house of his wife Hafsa, 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab's daughter, while she was not there. But Hafsa could not bear this,

so Muhammad tried to please her and said to her, "Keep my secret, and I will consider Mary the Copt unlawful to me." But Hafsa told 'Aisha, and Muhammad became angry and divorced Hafsa.

How could Mary be made lawful once again, after she had been declared forbidden? And how could Hafsa be brought back? Abrogation was useful in solving the problem; it made the one lawful, and absolved Muhammad from his oath concerning the other! God "commanded" him to resume intercourse with Mary, who had previously been declared forbidden, and to restore Hafsa, who had been divorced!

(3) Why did Muhammad abrogate the destruction of enemies' trees during wartime? We read in Sura al-Hashr 59:5: "Whatever palm-trees you cut down, or left standing upon their roots, that was by God's leave, and that He might degrade the ungodly."

When Muhammad laid siege to the Jews of Banu al-Nadir in the vicinity of Yathrib, he had their palm trees cut down. So they called to him from their fortresses, "Muhammad, you forbade corruption and find fault with all who do it, so why then do you cut down our palm trees and burn them?" Some of the Companions, therefore, doubted the legitimacy of this deed and were impressed with Banu al-Nadir's protest. Then abrogation occurred to sanction these corrupt deeds by God's permission!

(4) Why did Muhammad abrogate praying for dead non-Muslims? We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:84: "And pray thou never over any one of them when he is dead, nor stand over his grave, they disbelieved in God and His Messenger, and died while they were ungodly."

This verse came after Muhammad had finished praying over the corpse of the deceiver 'Abdallah Ibn Salul; he stood near the grave till the burial was complete. 'Umar, however, disagreed with praying over the man for his deception, but Muhammad did not stop. Yet, in order to please 'Umar, this abrogating verse came to counteract the effect of the prayer.

### 9. Ambiguous Speech

**Question 207:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:7: "As for those in whose hearts is swerving, they follow the ambiguous part, desiring dissension, and desiring its interpretation; and none knows its interpretation, save only God. And those firmly rooted in knowledge say, 'We believe in it, all is from our Lord.'"

سورة آل عمران ٧:٣ «فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ  
ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ  
يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا».

The Qur'an itself claims to contain clear, intelligible verses that require no further explanation; these also do not allow several possible interpretations. But it states also that it has ambiguous ones whose meanings are not clear, either because they are too brief or because their literal meaning is not compatible with the context. Supposedly, only God knows the interpretation of these, and the faithful have merely to accept them.

We ask: Is not the occurrence of such ambiguous verses a defect in the Qur'an's supposed eloquence and clarity? How can we be sure of the verses whose interpretation God alone

knows? The Bible says: "Test all things; hold fast what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Is the Qur'an capable of being put to the test?

### 10. Words Resembling the Words of Others

**Question 208:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:88: "Say: 'If men and jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they would never produce its like, not though they backed one another.'"

سورة الإسراء ١٧:٨٨ «قُلْ لَئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ  
هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا».

We ask: Are not the seven pre-Islamic poems (Arabic: *mu'allafat*) and the pieces of rhythmic prose of al-Hariri more eloquent than the Qur'an? Isn't Imru' al-Qais more expressive than Muhammad? Aren't the poems of al-Mutanabbi, al-Farid, and the speeches of Quss Ibn Sa'ida just as eloquent as the Qur'an – so much so that the Qur'an can no longer be regarded as a miracle? In fact the Qur'an is not miraculous at all, since a miracle is an event that happens contrary to nature and its laws. For example, the death of a living creature cannot be considered a miracle, since this happens according to the laws of nature. But to bring back to life something that has died, through prayer or by a command, is considered a miracle. Compiling a book, however eloquent or verbose it may be, cannot be considered a miracle; it is merely an extraordinary human work. So if we consider the Qur'an to be a miracle, based on its lofty eloquence and rhetorical style, then we will also have to consider many of the poems and speeches of the Arabs as miracles, too! And if the

Qur'an challenges all people with its eloquence, then any Muslim who reads the famous poems and eloquent speeches of the Arabs will have to declare courageously the plain truth that Muhammad was equal in literary skill to any of those Arabs – possibly even less gifted.

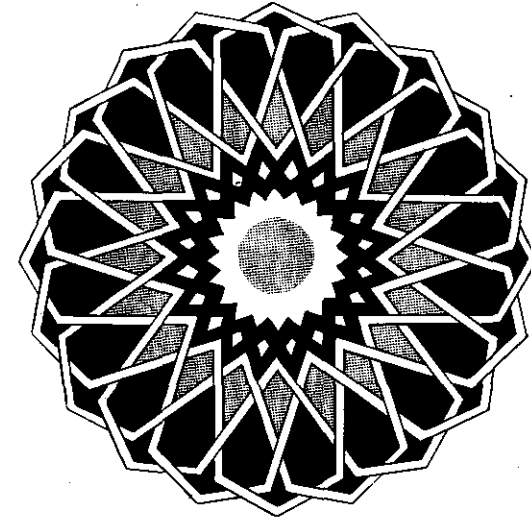
There are a great number of Jewish authors who wrote in Hebrew, Hellenic authors who wrote in Greek, and Roman authors who wrote in Latin; these men cannot be matched, for every language has its own men of letters. As for the knowledge contained in the Qur'an, it is not excelled by that of the Arabs, Persians, or Christians to whom it turned for information.

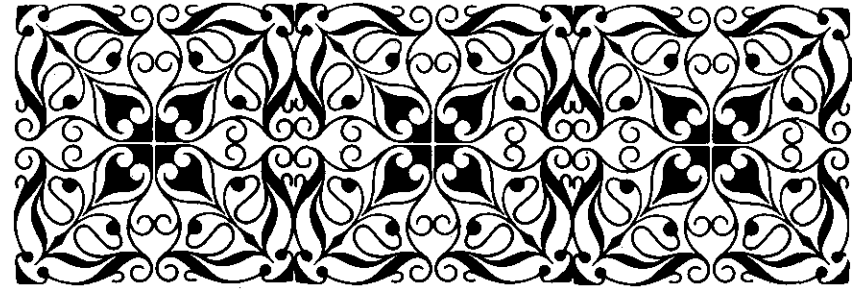
### 11. Variant Readings

**Question 209:** Muhammad is reported to have said, "The Qur'an has been brought down to you in seven letters [*i.e.*, languages or manners], so read it in whatever way is convenient to you."

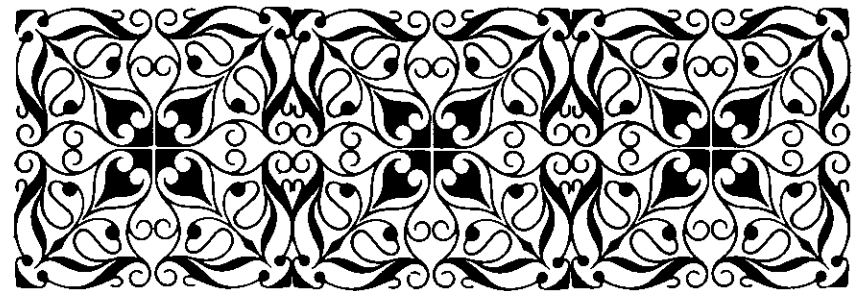
It is an established fact that the Qur'an was given in seven letters (languages or manners) so that it is now difficult for anyone to issue a correct judgement on any of its phrases because no one is sure anymore to which reading he should refer. The story behind these words of Muhammad goes like this: 'Umar heard Hisham Ibn Hakim recite Sura al-Furqan in a way that was different from Muhammad's own recitation. So he grabbed Hisham Ibn Hakim by the neck and brought him to Muhammad. 'Umar said, "O Prophet of God, I have heard this man recite Sura al-Furqan in a manner unlike yours." Muhammad said, "Recite it, Hisham." So Hisham recited it in the manner that 'Umar had recited it. Muhammad said, "It has thus

been brought down, for this Qur'an has been brought down in seven letters; so read it in whatever way is convenient to you." Expositors said, "'Seven letters' means seven different ways or readings." Thus, the variation in Qur'anic readings has often led to differences in opinion.





*Part Ten*  
*Questionable Aspects of*  
*Muhammad's Life*



## 1. His Wives

**Question 210:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:50,51,53: "O Prophet, We have made lawful for thee thy wives whom thou hast given their wages and what thy right hand owns, spoils of war that God has given thee, and the daughters of thy uncles paternal and aunts paternal, thy uncles maternal and aunts maternal, who have emigrated with thee, and any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers – We know what We have imposed upon them touching their wives and what their right hands own – that there may be no fault in thee.... It is not for you to hurt God's Messenger, neither to marry his wives after him, ever; surely that would be, in God's sight, a monstrous thing."



سورة الأحزاب ٣٣:٥٠ و ٥١ و ٥٣ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَخْلَلْنَا لَكَ أَزْوَاجَكَ  
الَّذِينَ آتَيْتَ أَجْرَهُنَّ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ يَمِينُكَ بِمَا آفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ وَبَنَاتِ عَمِّكَ  
وَبَنَاتِ عَمَّاتِكَ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَكِ وَبَنَاتِ خَالَاتِكَ اللَّاتِي هَاجَرْنَ مَعَكَ وَأَمْرَأَةً  
مُؤْمِنَةً إِن وَهَبْتَ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَنْتَحِبَهَا خَالِصَةً لَكَ مِنْ  
دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَدْ عَلِمْنَا مَا فَرَضْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِي أَزْوَاجِهِمْ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُمْ  
لَكِنِّي لَا يَكُونُ عَلَيْكَ حَرَجٌ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُوراً رَحِيماً تَرْجِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ  
وَتُؤَيِّرِي إِلَيْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَمَنْ أَيْتَعَيْتِ مِنْ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ... وَمَا  
كَانَ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَنْ تَنْكِحُوا أَزْوَاجَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَبَدًا إِنَّ  
ذَلِكَ كَانَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَظِيماً.

We ask: Why did Muhammad make lawful for himself what he had forbidden others? Didn't he appoint four wives for Muslim men when he said, "Marry such women as seem good to you,

two, three, four; but if you fear you will not be equitable, then only one, or what your right hands own; so it is likelier you will not be partial" (Sura al-Nisa' 4:3)?

Why did Muhammad throw off restraint only for himself and marry more women than Islamic law permitted? He allowed himself the option of marrying anyone who gave herself to him – provided of course that he desired her. By the time he died he was married to nine wives and had two concubines, Maryam and Raihana. Al-Baidawi said, "The women who gave themselves to the Prophet were: Maimuna Bint al-Harth, Zainab Bint Khuzama the Ansarite, Umm Sharik Bint Jabir, and Khawla Bint Hakim!" Isn't it strange, however, that Muhammad commanded the Muslims to be impartial to their wives, and yet permitted himself to show partiality to his own wives? He said, "Thou mayest put off whom thou wilt of them, and whom thou wilt thou mayest take to thee, and if thou seekest any thou hast set aside there is no fault in thee"!

Why did he give the right to all widows to remarry, and yet deprive his own wives of the same thing, commanding that no man should marry them after his death? Al-Baidawi said, "'And any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers' was an announcement that this was an exclusive privilege for his prophethood and an admission that he was worthy of honour."

We ask: If sexual relationships with many women was a privilege exclusively reserved for Muhammad, owing to his prophethood, why then didn't any other true prophet of God receive the same right?

## 2. His Raids

**Question 211:** We read in Sura al-Anfal 8:39,65: "Fight them, till there is no persecution and the religion is God's entirely; then if they give over, surely God sees the things they do.... O Prophet, urge on the believers to fight."

سورة الأنفال ٨: ٣٩ و ٦٥ «وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ... يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ».

We ask: Is God in need of violence and swords to spread His will? In fact, Muhammad made lawful for himself what had already been forbidden, in that he urged his followers to kill and fight, and commanded them to engage in invasion and holy wars for the sake of religion; yet while he was still in Mecca he said, "No compulsion is there in religion" (Sura al-Baqara 2:256) and, "Call thou to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and good admonition, and dispute with them in the better way. Surely thy Lord knows very well those who have gone astray from His way, and He knows very well those who are guided" (Sura al-Nahl 16:125). He used to say that God said to him, "It is thine only to deliver the Message, and Ours the reckoning" (Sura al-Ra'd 13:40). But when he grew stronger in Medina after the Hijra, and found himself surrounded by followers who wielded sharp swords, he attacked the Jews near Medina, killing most of them and commanding the Muslims to fight all those who disagreed with him, so that all people would be his followers. Yet, he overlooked the fact that God does not reign by cruelty and harshness but by love, for God is love.



### 3. Forbidding What God Made Lawful

**Question 212:** We read in Sura al-Tahrim 66:1,2: "Why forbiddest thou what God has made lawful to thee, seeking the good pleasure of thy wives? And God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. God has ordained for you the absolution of your oaths. God is your Protector, and He is the All-knowing, the All-wise."

سورة التحريم ١:٦٦ و ٢ «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ».

We read in *Al-Sira al-Halabiya* that Muhammad was once in the house of Hafsa, 'Umar's daughter, who was one of his wives. She took leave of him to visit her father, and he gave her permission. Immediately, Muhammad sent for Mary, one of his concubines, and brought her into Hafsa's house, and slept with her. Hafsa came back and saw Mary with him in her own house, so she did not go in until Mary left. Then she went in and said to him, "I saw who was with you in the house." She also got angry and cried and said to him, "You have done to me what you have not done with any of your wives. On my day, in my house and on my bed!" Therefore he said to her, "Keep silent. Will it please you if I declare her forbidden for me and never touch her anymore?" She said yes. So he took an oath that he would never touch her. However, when his desire for Mary returned, he broke his oath and used the so-called "revelation from God" to prevent Hafsa from objecting to his behaviour.

### 4. His Kinsmen, the Inhabitants of Hell

**Question 213:** We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:113,114: "It is not for the Prophet and the believers to ask pardon for the idolaters, even though they be near kinsmen, after that it has become clear to them that they will be the inhabitants of Hell. Abraham asked not pardon for his father except because of a promise he had made to him; and when it became clear to him that he was an enemy of God, he declared himself quit of him."

سورة التوبة ٩:١١٣ و ١١٤ «مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ وَمَا كَانَ آسْتِغْفَارُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ لِأَبِيهِ إِلَّا عَنْ مَوْعِدَةٍ وَعَدَهَا إِيَّاهُ فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ أَنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ لِلَّهِ تَبَرَأَ مِنْهُ».

Al-Baidawi said, "It has been reported that Muhammad said to Abu Talib when the latter was on his deathbed, 'Say a word which I can use in my argument with God for you.' But Abu Talib refused. Muhammad said, 'I will continue asking pardon for you unless I would be forbidden to do that.' And then this verse descended. It was also said that when he conquered Mecca, he went out and visited his mother's tomb. He stood up, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'I have taken leave from my Lord to visit my mother's tomb and he gave me leave, and have taken leave to ask pardon for her but he gave me no leave, and brought down on me these two verses.'"

Qatada said, "Muhammad said, 'Surely I will ask pardon for my father as Abraham asked pardon for his father.' And then this verse was revealed." Expositors are in agreement that Muhammad used to ask pardon for his father 'Abdallah, his

mother Amina, and his uncle Abu Talib, and that God forbade him and rebuked him so strongly that he wept, for they were idolaters and inhabitants of hell. What a vast difference between the parents of Muhammad and those of Christ!

### 5. Revelation from Satan

**Question 214:** We read in Sura al-Hajj 22:52: "We sent not ever any Messenger or Prophet before thee, but Satan cast into his fancy, when he was fancying; but God annuls what Satan casts, then God confirms His signs – surely God is All-knowing, All-wise."

سورة الحج ٥٢:٢٢ «وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى  
أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيهِ فَيَنْسُخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ  
وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ».

The expositors say that when Muhammad was gathered in the midst of the Quraish, he recited Sura al-Najm 53, and on reaching "...and Manat the third, the other," he added, "These most high deities whose intercession is to be sought" (53:20). The idolaters listening to Muhammad therefore rejoiced at his words and even knelt down to pray with him when he knelt, and said, "Muhammad made the best mention of our gods. We know that Allah gives life and puts to death, but our gods intercede for us to him."

Yet, we ask, How could Muhammad renounce the unity of God in such a way, praising the gods of the Quraish in order to win them over to his side and ultimately gain power over them by means of satanic utterances? What is the difference then be-

tween a true prophet and a false one, if Satan can speak through either of them?

### 6. They Were Near to Seducing Him

**Question 215:** We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:73: "Indeed they were near to seducing thee from that We revealed to thee, that thou mightest forge against Us another, and then they would surely have taken thee as a friend."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:٧٣ «وَإِنْ كَادُوا لَيَفْتُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِي أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ  
لِنَفْتَرِي عَلَيْهَا غَيْرُهُ وَإِذَا لَا تَخَذُوكَ خَلِيلًا».

We also read in the same sura, verse 39: "Set not up with God another god, or thou wilt be cast into Gehenna, reproached and rejected."

٣٩ «وَلَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللَّهِ إِلَهًا آخَرَ فَتُلْقَى فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَلُومًا مَذْحُورًا».

In Sura al-Ahzab 33:1 are the words: "O Prophet, fear God, and obey not the unbelievers and the hypocrites. God is All-knowing, All-wise. And follow what is revealed to thee from thy Lord; surely God is aware of the things you do."

سورة الأحزاب ١:٣٣ و٢ «يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَلَا تُطِعِ الْكَافِرِينَ  
وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا وَأَتَّبِعْ مَا يُوْحَىٰ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ».

In Sura al-Zumar 39:56 we read: "If thou associatest other gods with God, thy work shall surely fail and thou wilt be among the losers."

سورة الزمر ٦٥:٣٩ «لَئِن أَسْرَكْتَ لَيُخْبِطُنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ».

In Sura al-Ma'ida 5:67 the Qur'an says: "O Messenger, deliver that which has been sent down to thee from thy Lord; for if thou dost not, thou wilt not have delivered His Message."

سورة المائدة ٦٧:٥ «يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ».

We ask: Doesn't this verse indicate that Muhammad had a tendency to ingratiate himself with the idolaters and praise their gods? Later, he apologised by saying that God rebuked him and forbade him from doing that anymore!

### 7. He Married His Daughter-in-Law

**Question 216:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:37,38: "When thou saidst to him whom God had blessed and thou hadst favoured, 'Keep thy wife to thyself; and fear God', and thou wast concealing within thyself what God should reveal, fearing other men; and God has better right for thee to fear Him. So when Zaid had accomplished what he would of her, then We gave her in marriage to thee, so that there should not be any fault in the believers, touching the wives of their adopted sons, when they had accomplished what they would of them; and God's commandment must be performed."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٧:٣٣ و ٣٨ «وَإِذْ تَقُولُ لِلَّذِي أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْسِكْ عَلَيْكَ زَوْجَكَ وَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ وَتُخْفِي فِي نَفْسِكَ مَا اللَّهُ مُبْدِيهِ وَتَخْشَى النَّاسَ وَاللَّهُ أَحَقُّ أَنْ تَخْشَاهُ فَلَمَّا قَضَى زَيْدٌ مِنْهَا وَطَرًا زَوَّجْنَاكَهَا

لَئِن لَّا يَكُونَنَّ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا مَا كَانَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ مِنْ حَرَجٍ فِيمَا فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَهُ سِنَّةَ اللَّهِ فِي الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ قَدْرًا مُقَدَّرًا».

Most expositors agree that this verse speaks of Zainab, Zaid's wife, whom Muhammad saw dressed in a chemise with a veil over her face when he went to Zaid one day on certain business. She was fair, and her physical appearance was perfect among the women of the Quraish, so that he was bewitched by her beauty. Then he said, "Praise be to Him, who changes hearts!" and left. When Zaid arrived home, she told him, and he looked into the matter diligently. He came to Muhammad and said, "I want to leave my wife." Muhammad said to him, "What is the matter with her? Did she do anything to make you suspicious of her?" Zaid said, "No, by God. All I saw in her was good. But she treats me as inferior on account of her nobility, and hurts me with her tongue [*i.e.*, with what she says]." So Muhammad said, "Keep thy wife to thyself, and fear God" [that is, "Do not leave her"]. Yet, after this, Muhammad said that God rebuked him and said to him, "Why did you say, 'Keep thy wife to thyself?' Were you afraid the people would find fault with you and say, 'He ordered a man to divorce his wife and afterward he himself married her'? Muhammad, do not fear the people." But thanks to Gabriel, Muhammad did not have to fear the people and was able to announce his desire to take her from his son; not only that, but now all Muslims can also marry the wives of their adopted sons as long as the latter have accomplished what they wanted from them. How could Muhammad allow himself to lust after Zaid's wife, who was his next of kin? How could he lie to the Arabs and tell them things other than what he really had in mind,

and turn Gabriel into an enemy of Zaid so as to deprive him of his wife and take her for himself? Instead of repenting and asking for forgiveness, he praised God and said, "Praise be to Him, who changes hearts!" Is it consistent with the holiness of an arch-angel like Gabriel to condone Muhammad's lustful desire and turn this wrong act into a law, thus removing all shame for those believers who commit such lawlessness? It was for this moral principle that Zainab used to boast to Muhammad's other wives and say, "It was your fathers who gave you in marriage, but it was God himself who gave me in marriage."

### 8. A Bewitched Prophet

**Question 217:** We read in Sura al-Falaq 113:1-5: "Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of the Daybreak from the evil of what He has created, from the evil of darkness when it gathers, from the evil of women who blow on knots, from the evil of an envier when he envies.'"

سورة الفلق ١١٣:١-٥ «قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا خَلَقَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ غَاسِقٍ إِذَا وَقَبَ وَمِنْ شَرِّ النَّفَّاثَاتِ فِي الْعُقَدِ وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ».

We read in Sura al-Nas 114:1-6: "Say: 'I take refuge with the Lord of men, the King of men, the God of men, from the evil of the slinking whisperer who whispers in the breast of men of *jinn* and men.'"

سورة الناس ١١٤:١-٦ «قُلْ أَعُوذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ مَلِكِ النَّاسِ إِلَهِ النَّاسِ مِنْ شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ الَّذِي يُوَسْوِسُ فِي صُدُورِ النَّاسِ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ».

Al-Baidawi said, "From the evil of the women who blow on

knots" refers to the sorcerers who tie knots in threads and blow on them. The verb *nafatha* means "to blow on with saliva". It was especially revealed because of a Jew who cast a spell on the Prophet with eleven knots, which he tied in a string and hid in a well. The Prophet fell ill, and Suras al-Falaq 113 and al-Nas 114 were revealed."

In *Al-Sira al-nabawiya al-malkiya* (p. 200) we read:

It has been narrated that Labid Ibn al-'A'sam, the Jew, cast a spell on the Prophet. So the Prophet imagined he had done things which in fact he had not. These things had nothing to do with the revelation, such as eating, drinking, or having intercourse with women. He remained in that condition for a year, or six months, until Gabriel came and told him about that spell and where it was hidden. So the Prophet sent someone, who brought the spell and loosened the knots. Then the magic over Muhammad was broken. Later Gabriel cast a spell over him to protect him against magic. (The same story is told in *al-'Iqd al-Farid* and Bukhari.)

We ask: How could Muhammad be a prophet and yet submit to the power of Satan? On one occasion he lost his mind, and another time he received satanic verses, such as the ones he uttered in Sura al-Najm 53! For this reason his enemies accused him of being crazy. He tried to repel this accusation in many verses, such as the following: "By the Pen, and what they inscribe, thou art not, by the blessing of thy Lord, a man possessed.... The unbelievers wellnigh strike thee down with their glances, when they hear the Reminder, and they say, 'Surely he is a man possessed'" (Sura al-Qalam 68:1,2,51). How strikingly

different is he from Moses who prevailed against all the sorcerers of Egypt! How altogether "other" is he from Christ who drove out demons and raised the dead! If Gabriel could really neutralise the magic and heal him, why did he leave him for over six months in that helpless situation? How can such a man be trusted as a mediator of God's revelation? Is that why his god said to him, "We shall make thee recite, to forget not" (Sura al-A'la 87:6)?

### 9. He Honoured the Stone

**Question 218:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:21: "You have had a good example in the God's Messenger." Umar Ibn al-Khattab said concerning the black stone, "Yes by God, I know that you are a mere stone that does neither harm nor good. But for seeing God's Messenger kissing you, I would not have kissed you!"

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣:٢١ «لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ».

We ask: Why did Muhammad incorporate kissing the black stone as one of the rites of the pilgrimage, as the idolaters were used to doing? Is this really a good example? Why did he seek the favour of idolatrous Arabs by honouring the stone together with God?

### 10. The Incident of Slander

**Question 219:** We read in Sura al-Nur 24:11: "Those who came with the slander are a band of you; do not reckon it evil for you; rather it is good for you. Every man of them shall have the sin that he has earned charged to him; and whosoever of them took

upon himself the greater part of it, him there awaits a mighty chastisement."

سورة النور ٢٤:١١ «إِنَّ الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا بِالْإِفْكِ عُصْبَةٌ مِنْكُمْ لَا تَحْسَبُوهُ شَرًّا لَكُمْ بَلْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ مَا اكْتَسَبَ مِنَ الْإِثْمِ وَالَّذِي تَوَلَّى كِبْرَهُ مِنْهُمْ لَهُ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, "The slander is the sheer lie that was said about 'Aisha. This was when the Prophet took her in his company on some of his raids, and one night he gave permission to the people to stop and return. She went off to do something and when she came back she found that her necklace, which was of onyx, had broken off. So she went back to look for it. The one in charge of her *houda* thought she had come back, so he kept on going. When she finally did come back, however, she found none of the people. She sat down, so that someone would find her after missing her. Now Safwan Ibn al-Mu'attal al-Sulami had camped behind the army. He walked by night and reached her by morning. When he reached her he recognised her, so he had his camel kneel down, and she mounted it. He led her to where they found the army, and she was accused of having slept with him. Among the band who accused her were: 'Abdallah Ibn Ubay, Zaid Ibn Rifa'a, Hassan Ibn Thabit, Mistah Ibn Athatha, Hamna Bint Jahsh and all those who helped them.

We ask: Was Muhammad's marriage to 'Aisha a blessing or a curse? Ibn Hisham said, "Muhammad married 13 women, among whom was 'Aisha, who was six years old when he married her and nine when he consummated the marriage with her." Why would an old man like Muhammad marry a nine-year-old child? If this was the habit of his contemporaries, why didn't

he correct them rather than practise it with them? Why did he take her with him on his travels and wars, thus giving people a chance to talk maliciously about her and about men like Safwan Ibn al-Mu'attal in the raid of al-Mustaliq? 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib was wise in the advice he gave to him, saying, "Why would God restrict you, whereas there are many women other than her?" But 'Ali did not know how dear she was to his old heart; for he used to say about her that she was among women as porridge [*i.e.*, the most delicious] among other foods. So Muhammad went to her and said, "I have heard about you what I have heard; if you are innocent, then God will acquit you. But if you are guilty, then ask God for forgiveness and repent, because if a servant confesses his guilt to God and repents of it, God returns to him." But Gabriel promptly brought him a divine oracle that absolved 'Aisha and cursed those who accused her. The testimony and curses of Gabriel occupy 18 verses of Sura al-Nur 24.

Ibn 'Abbas said, "If you search the threats in the Qur'an, you will find no harsher ones than those revealed on account of the incident of the slander of 'Aisha."

Can't a rational thinker see that Muhammad filled his Qur'an with his own as well as his wives' personal affairs? If 'Aisha were really innocent, why didn't Muhammad acquit her immediately? Why did the revelation linger for so long, leaving her in her father's house while Muhammad suspected her loyalty to him?

### 11. He Killed His Opponents

**Question 220:** We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:217: "They will question thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say:

'Fighting in it is a heinous [*lit.*: monumental] thing, but to bar from God's way, and disbelief in Him, and the Holy Mosque, and to expel its people from it – that is more heinous in God's sight; and persecuting is more heinous than slaying.'"

سورة البقرة ٢:٢١٧ «يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشُّهُرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ  
كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ  
عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ».

The pre-Islamic traditions prohibited fighting during the holy months, as does the Qur'an in Sura Muhammad 47:4. Yet, Muhammad broke with all this in order to take revenge on his enemies treacherously. He sent his cousin 'Abdallah Ibn Jahsh with a battalion in the Jumada al-Akhira, a month before the Battle of Badr, and made him leader of the battalion. He wrote him a letter, saying, "Go in the name of God and do not read the letter except after you have walked for two days." So 'Abdallah walked two days. Later he opened the letter and read it. It said the following: "In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. Go with the blessing of God with the friends accompanying you till you reach Batn Nakhla. There you will spot camels that belong to the Quraish; perhaps you can bring us some good from them." He obeyed, as did his friends with him, who were eight in number. None of them stayed behind, and they all reached Batn Nakhla, which is between Mecca and al-Ta'if. The people in charge of the camels were Amr Ibn al-Khudari, al-Hakim Ibn Kaysan, 'Uthman Ibn 'Abdallah Ibn al-Mughira and Hiraql Ibn 'Abdallah. When they saw Muhammad's friends, they feared them, since they were assembled in their neighbourhood. 'Abdallah Ibn Jahsh said, "The people are in a

panic; so let one of you shave his head and expose himself to them. If they see him shaven, they will feel safe and say, 'These are native people who will do us no harm.'" This took place on the last day of the second Jumada, and they thought it was in Rajab. The people counselled with one another and said, "If we leave them tonight, they will enter into the holy place and will be safe from you." So they unanimously decided to fight the people. Thereupon, Waqid Ibn 'Abdallah al-Sahmi shot 'Amr Ibn al-Khadhrami with an arrow and killed him; he was the first one to fall in the ranks of the unbelievers. Al-Hakim Ibn Kaysan and 'Uthman were captured, and they became the first captives in Islam. As for Nawfal, he ran away and they were unable to capture him. So the Muslims drove the camels and the two captives back to Muhammad. The Quraish then said, "Muhammad profaned the holy month, shed blood, and carried away our possessions." The inhabitants of Mecca ridiculed the Muslims in it for this. When Muhammad heard about it, he said, "I have not commanded you to fight in the holy month." The camels and the two captives stood there and he refused to take any of them. The people who were in the battalion thought it too great a thing (to be done) and spoke with him about it, so he declared what they did as legal, applied the Qur'anic verse, took the camels and set apart one-fifth. This was the first fifth in Islam and the first battle spoil divided. The rest was divided among the people of the battalion.

We ask: How can God make fighting lawful when the idolaters held it to be unlawful? As if God is more violent than the idolaters! Following are some accounts of the opponents whom Muhammad had killed:

(1) The murder of Asma' Bint Marwan: Muhammad sent

'Umair Ibn 'Adiy to Asma' Bint Marwan and ordered him to kill her because she spoke ill of him. He was blind, so he went to her in the night and entered her home. Some of her children were there, sleeping, and she was holding a baby that she was nursing. He felt her, moved the baby away from her, and thrust his sword into her chest, which went through to her back. Then he went to the mosque and prayed! He told Muhammad what had happened, and Muhammad said, "Let no two goats butt heads with one another for her sake!" He commended 'Umair profusely and went out to the people, saying, "If someone desires to look at a man who helped God and His Messenger, let him look at 'Umair Ibn 'Adiy."

(2) The murder of Abu 'Affaq the Jew: Muhammad sent Salim Ibn 'Umair to assassinate Abu 'Affaq. Abu 'Affaq was 120 years old at that time, and he used to ridicule Muhammad in his poetry. So on a hot night Abu 'Affaq slept in the courtyard of his house, and Salim knew this. He went up to him and drove his sword into his liver, and killed him.

(3) The murder of Ka'b Ibn al-Ashraf: On learning that Ka'b Ibn al-Ashraf ridiculed him and was stirring up the Quraish against him, Muhammad sent five men to kill him, among whom was Na'ila, his foster brother. Muhammad went with them as far as Baqi' al-Farqad, and instructed them, saying, "Go on in the name of God! O God, assist them." Then he returned home on that moonlit night. As for the men, they kept going until they arrived at the place where Ka'b and his forces were stationed.

[Ka'b had recently been married and was asleep in his tent.] Abu Na'ila called out, and Ka'b was startled under his blanket but went out confidently once he recognised the voice. So the men took Ka'b by treachery, murdered him, cut off his head, and returned until they reached Baqi' al-Farqad. Then they magnified God. When Muhammad heard them magnifying God, he also magnified God, for he knew that they had killed Ka'b. The men approached Muhammad while he was praying, and he asked, "How successful was the mission?" They answered, "What you wanted was accomplished, O Messenger of God," and threw Ka'b's head in front of him!

(4) The murder of Abu Rafi' Ibn 'Abdallah: Muhammad sent 'Abdallah Ibn 'Atik, together with four men to kill Abu Rafi' Ibn 'Abdallah for his enmity toward Muhammad. When all voices subsided, they came to his house, took one step up the staircase, and moved 'Abdallah Ibn 'Atik to the front because he spoke Hebrew. So 'Abdallah spoke up and said, "Abu Rafi', I brought you a gift!" The man's wife opened the door for him, but on seeing the weapons, she wanted to shout. But they waved the swords at her, and she kept silent. They went in, stabbed Abu Rafi' with their swords, and killed him.

(5) The murder of Salam Ibn Abi al-Haqiq: Muhammad ordered Salam Ibn Abi al-Haqiq to be killed, as Ibn Ishaq mentioned. He said, "The Aws and al-Khazraj tribes competed with one another in their zeal for Islam. Al-Aws claimed that they killed Ka'b Ibn al-Ashraf. Al-Khazraj said that they would not have this as an advantage over them.

So they tried to recall someone who was as antagonistic to Muhammad as Ibn al-Ashraf. They remembered Ibn Abi al-Haqiq, who was in Khaybar. They got permission from the Messenger of God to take five men from Banu Salma to help them; these were 'Abdallah Ibn 'Atik, Mas'ud Ibn Sinan, 'Abdallah Ibn Anis, Abu Qatada, Ibn Rab'i and Khuza'a Ibn Aswad. The Messenger of God made 'Abdallah Ibn 'Atik their leader, and forbade them from killing a child or a woman. They went out, and when they came to Khaybar, they went toward the house of Salam Ibn Abi al-Haqiq by night, and closed all the rooms in the house. It was said that he was in an upper room with a ladder leading up to it. So they went up the ladder, and when they stood at his door, they announced their presence. His wife came out to them and said, 'Who are you?' They said, 'We are nomads looking for provision.' She said, 'Here is your friend, enter in to him.' When they entered in, they closed the door on her and them, for fear that there should be anything to keep them from killing him. His wife cried out, and this made their presence known. So they took him while he was yet on his bed and struck him with their swords. The only thing that indicated his presence in the darkness of the night was his white skin which looked like cotton lying on the bed. When his wife shouted at them, each of them pointed his sword at her, but they remembered the forbidding of the Messenger and did not strike. But for this, they would have finished her off that night. So once they had stabbed him with their swords, 'Abdallah Ibn Anis moved in closer and stabbed him with



his own sword in the belly, which went through his body, and then they went out.

Now 'Abdallah Ibn 'Atik had poor vision, and he fell off a ladder, and his hand [or possibly his foot] was badly sprained. So they carried him and looked for a place to hide him. The people kindled fire and examined every face. The men carried their friend and came to the Messenger of God to tell the news of killing his enemy. They disputed as to who among them had killed Salam Ibn Abi Haqiq; each one of them claimed to be the one. The Prophet said, 'Bring forth your swords.' They all brought their swords, and he looked them over, pointed to the sword of 'Abdallah Ibn Anis and said, 'This killed him; I can see on it the traces of food.'" [Adapted from *Sirat* by Ibn Hisham; section on the killing of Salam Ibn Abi al-Haqiq.]

(6) The murder of Umm Qirfa: Shortly prior to the murder of Ibn Abi al-Haqiq, Umm Qirfa was killed at the command of Zaid. The people tied her legs to two camels and forced them to walk in opposite directions until Umm Qirfa's body was ripped apart. Muhammad congratulated Zaid for his work and did not censure him for this bestial cruelty.

(7) The murder of Ibn Sunayna: Muhammad once said, "Kill any Jewish man you meet." Mahisa Ibn Mas'ud jumped on Ibn Sunayna, who was a Jewish seller of cloth and garments, and killed him. There was a non-Muslim named Huwaisila who reprimanded Mahisa for what he did. So Mahisa said to Huwaisila, "By God who commanded me to kill, if He commands me to kill you I will strike your neck off." Huwaisila was afraid of getting

killed, so he embraced Islam. This was reported by Ibn Ishaq.

(8) The slaughter of Banu Quraiza: When Muhammad attacked the Jewish tribe of Banu Quraiza and besieged them, they agreed to surrender on the condition that he should spare their lives for the sake of the tribe of Banu Aws. Muhammad delegated the decision on this issue to Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh, who decided to kill the men and distribute the possessions, the children and the women. Muhammad found that judgement agreeable. He commanded Banu Quraiza to be brought into the city, and a huge ditch was dug for them in the market place. Muhammad sat with his friends, and the Banu Quraiza were brought out to him; and six hundred of them were beheaded before his eyes.

(9) Seeking revenge for his uncle Hamza: When his uncle Hamza was killed in the Battle of Uhud, Muhammad was so angry that he swore to take revenge on the Quraish and kill seventy people in place of his uncle.

(10) The impact his spirit of treachery left on Muslims: There were numerous fights, instances of treachery, and heinous murders that took place throughout the history of the Muslims, according to the model of behaviour their Prophet left for them to follow. It suffices to quote here what Ali Ibn Abi Talib said: "Sword and dagger are our basil; fie the narcissus and the myrtle. Our drink is the blood of our enemies; our flask, but a human skull."

## 12. He Despised a Blind Man

**Question 221:** We read in Sura 'Abasa 80:1-10: "He frowned and turned away that the blind man came to him. And what should teach thee? Perchance he would cleanse him, or yet remember, and the Reminder profit him. But the self-sufficient, to him thou attendest though it is not thy concern, if he does not cleanse himself. And he who comes to thee eagerly and fearfully, to him thou payest no heed."

سورة عبس ٨٠:١-١٠ عبس وَتَوَلَّى أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلُّهُ  
يُرْسِي أَوْ يَذْكُرُ فَتَفَعَّهُ الذُّكْرَى أَمَا مِنْ أَسْتَغْنَى فَأَنْتَ لَدَّ تَصَدَّى وَمَا عَلَيْكَ  
أَلَّا يَزُكِّيَ وَأَمَا مِنْ جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى وَهُوَ يَخْشَى فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى.

It has been reported that Ibn Umm Maktum came to Muhammad while the latter was talking with the nobility of the Quraish, and said to him, "Recite to me and teach me what God taught you." Muhammad, however, paid him no heed and turned away from him, and said to himself, "Those mighty men say that only the boys, the slaves, and the scum of society follow him." So Muhammad frowned and turned away from him in disdain, and continued talking to the honourable people.

We ask: How could Muhammad attend to the influential people and reject the poor, the needy, and, in this instance, the blind? How far he is from Christ, who acted compassionately and tenderly when a blind man came to him – and restored his sight!

## 13. He Drove Away the Poor

**Question 222:** We read in Sura al-An'am 6:52: "And do not

drive away those who call upon their Lord at morning and evening desiring His countenance; nothing of their account falls upon thee, and nothing of thy account falls upon them, that thou shouldst drive them away, and so become one of the evildoers."

سورة الأنعام ٥٢:٦ «وَلَا تَطْرُدِ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ  
يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ مَا عَلَيْكَ مِنْ حِسَابِهِمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَمَا مِنْ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ  
شَيْءٍ فَتَطْرُدَهُمْ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ».

It has been told that al-Aqra' Ibn Habis al-Tamim and 'Uyaina Ibn Hisn the Fazarite came to Muhammad and found him seated with Suhaib, Bilal, 'Ammar and Khabab along with a group of lowly believers. When those men saw the poor people around him, they despised them and said to Muhammad, "Why don't you sit here in front of the people and banish those men and the stench of their garments; then we would follow you. We would prefer it if you took your seat among us as a sign of our superiority over the Arabs. Arab delegations will come to you and we will be ashamed to be seen with those [black] slaves. So when we come to you, banish them from our presence, and when we finish [talking with you] you can seat them wherever you want." He agreed, and they said, "Then write us a contract in this respect." So he brought a sheet and asked 'Ali to write, but on second thought he perceived it was a trap, so he claimed that Gabriel forbade this.

Ibn 'Abbas said: Some poor folk were with the Prophet. Some of the nobility said, "We believe in you, but when we come to pray, put those men behind us." He was near to agree to their request, but when he perceived the injustice in it, he said that God forbade him from doing this.

## 14. Satan's Relationship with the Revelation

**Question 223:** We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:200-202: "If a provocation from Satan should provoke thee, seek refuge in God; He is All-hearing, All-seeing. The godfearing, when a visitation of Satan troubles them, remember, and then see clearly; and their brothers they lead on into error, then they stop not short."

سورة الأعراف ٧: ٢٠٠-٢٠٢ ﴿وَإِذَا يَنْزَعُكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا إِذَا مَسَّهُمْ طَائِفٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ تَذَكَّرُوا فَإِذَا هُمْ مُبْصِرُونَ وَإِخْوَانُهُمْ يَمُدُّوهُمْ فِي آلَمِي نَوْمٍ لَا يُفْصِرُونَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'If a provocation from Satan should provoke thee' means to goad or cast doubt, so as to make one act contrary to what he has been commanded, which can be a transport of fear or thought. There is a simile between Satan's provocation and allurement to men to commit transgressions and the way a driver goads or spurs his beast onward. 'Seek refuge in God; He is All-hearing' means that He will hear your cry for help. 'All-seeing' means that He perceives what is good for you and makes you do it. Or maybe it means He hears the sayings of the one who hurt you, and knows his works, and is going to repay him, and thus keep you from taking revenge and joining the ranks of Satan."

A hadith says: "Satan goads every son of Adam at his birth, so that he cries out in fear, but for the son of Mary; when he [Satan] came to goad him, he goaded the cover."

We ask: If the devil was able to goad Muhammad and drive him in such a manner, how could Muhammad then be a prophet? Even the Muslims themselves admit the great difference

between Muhammad and Christ in the Qur'an's fabricated account about the birth of Jesus. Christ said about himself, "The ruler of the world is coming and he has nothing in me" (John 14:30). The apostle Peter also said about him that He "went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

## 15. A Burden That Weighs the Back

**Question 224:** We read in Sura al-Sharh 94:1-3: "Did We not expand thy breast for thee and lift from thee thy burden, the burden that weighed down thy back?"

سورة الشرح ٩٤: ١-٣ ﴿وَأَلَمْ نَشْرَحْ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ وَوَضَعْنَا عَنكَ وِزْرَكَ الَّذِي أَنقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'And lift from thee thy burden, the burden that weighed down thy back' refers to the burden that weighed heavily on Muhammad before he was made a prophet, or maybe it refers to his ignorance of the judgement or the judgements, or possibly even to his perplexity."

We read in Sura al-Fath 48:1-2: "Surely We have given thee a manifest victory, that God may forgive thee thy former and thy latter sins."

سورة الفتح ٤٨: ١ و ٢ ﴿إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'Thy former and thy latter sins' refers to everything that you have committed, for which you should be otherwise punished."

We ask: Could Muhammad's claim to be the intercessor for his nation be true when he himself is guilty of sin?

### 16. He Wrote Down the Words of His Scribe

**Question 225:** We read in Sura al-An'am 6:93: "And who does greater evil than he who forges against God a lie, or says, 'To me it has been revealed', when naught has been revealed to him, or he who says, 'I will send down the like of what God has sent down'?"

سورة الأنعام ٦:٩٣ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ قَالَ أُوحِيَ إِلَيَّ وَلَمْ يُوحَ إِلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ وَمَنْ قَالَ سَأُنزِلُ مِثْلَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'To me it has been revealed', when naught has been revealed to him" refers to 'Abdallah Ibn Sa'd Ibn Abi Sarh, who used to write for God's Messenger. The verse (Sura al-Mu'mininun 23:11) that says, "We created man of an extraction of clay" was revealed, and when Muhammad reached the part that says, "...thereafter We produced him as another creature" (23:14), 'Abdallah said, "So blessed be God the fairest of creators!" in amazement at the details of man's creation. The Prophet said, "Write it down; for thus it has been revealed." 'Abdallah doubted and said, "If Muhammad is truthful then I receive the revelation as much as he does, and if he is a liar, what I said was as good as what he said."

In *Al-Sira*, by al-'Iraqi, we read:

The scribes of Muhammad were 42 in number. 'Abdallah Ibn Sarh al-'Amiri was one of them, and he was the first Quraishite among those who wrote in Mecca before he turned away from Islam. He started saying, "I

used to direct Muhammad wherever I willed. He would dictate to me 'Most High, All-wise', and I would write down 'All-wise' only. The he would say, 'Yes, it is all the same.' On a certain occasion he said, 'Write such-and-such,' but I wrote 'Write' only, and he said, 'Write whatever you like.'" So when this scribe exposed Muhammad, he wrote in the Qur'an, "And who does greater evil than he who forges against God a lie, or says, 'To me it has been revealed', when naught has been revealed to him." So on the day Muhammad conquered Mecca, he commanded his scribe to be killed. But the scribe fled to 'Uthman Ibn 'Affan, because 'Uthman was his foster brother [his mother suckled 'Uthman]. 'Uthman, therefore, kept him away from Muhammad. After the people calmed down, 'Uthman brought the scribe to Muhammad and sought protection for him. Muhammad kept silent for a long time, after which he said yes. When 'Uthman had left, Muhammad said, "I only kept silent so that you [the people] should kill him."

We ask: How could Muhammad be a prophet and at the same time prefer the words of his scribe to his own, and command them to be written down as though they were revealed? How could he be a prophet when he assured the scribe that he would not be killed, and then incited the people to do so instead?

### 17. He Was No Worker of Miracles

**Question 226:** The Jews and the Arabs tried many times to get Muhammad to perform a miracle with which he could confirm his claim to be a prophet. But Muhammad admitted his absolute

inability, and made many excuses for this failure. Here is some of what he said in this respect:

(1) We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:59: "Naught prevented Us from sending the signs but that the ancients cried lies to them."

سورة الإسراء ١٧:٥٩ ﴿رَمَّا مَتَّعْنَا أَنْ نُرْسِلَ بِالْآيَاتِ إِلَّا أَنْ كَذَّبَ بِهَا الْأَوْلُونَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'Naught prevented Us from sending the signs' means that nothing prevented the sending of miracles that the Quraish suggested. 'But that the ancients cried lies to them' means that the ancients, such as 'Ad and Thamud, did not believe them, for the Quraishites were just as these folks were. So if God sent them the signs, they would disbelieve them just as the ancients did."

We ask: If the signs were utterly useless for those who had received them in the past, why did God send them in the first place? What kept God from performing miracles through Muhammad when he had performed them through all the true prophets, such as Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and the Lord Jesus Christ? This is nothing but an excuse from Muhammad. If miracles are withheld because of people's unbelief, then the communication of the message itself should be withheld from the unbelieving people as well!

(2) We read in Sura al-'Ankabut 29:50,51: "They say, 'Why have signs not been sent down upon him from his Lord?' Say: 'The signs are only with God, and I am only a plain

warners.' What, is it not sufficient for them that We have sent down upon thee the Book that is recited to them? Surely in that is a mercy, and a reminder to a people who believe."

سورة العنكبوت ٢٩:٥٠ و ٥١ ﴿وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَإِنَّمَا أَنَا نَذِيرٌ مُبِينٌ أَوْ لَمْ يَكْفِهِمْ أَنَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ يُتْلَى عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَرَحْمَةً وَذِكْرَى لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said, " 'Why have signs not been sent down upon him from his Lord?' as [was the case with] the she-camel of Salih, the rod of Moses and the table of Christ Jesus. 'Say: The signs are only with God,' who sends them down to whomever He wills. I do not possess them, so as to be able to perform what you suggest. 'I am only a plain warners'; I have nothing to do but to warn."

We ask: Since miracles are with God, why didn't He allow Muhammad to perform them to confirm his prophethood, if Muhammad was really in a relationship with Him as were the true prophets and the apostles?

(3) We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:108: "Or do you desire to question your Messenger as Moses was questioned in former time?"

سورة البقرة ٢:١٠٨ ﴿أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَى مِنْ قَبْلُ﴾.

The Jews said to Muhammad, "Bring us a complete Book from heaven as Moses brought us the Torah. Or

break forth rivers for us, as Moses did, so that we might follow you and believe you.” They often asked him this question, and he was never able to perform any miracle. So he said to them, “Or do you desire to question your Messenger?”

We ask: Didn't the Jews have the right to ask him? How could Muhammad consider himself a prophet when he had nothing in common with the prophets of old?

(4) We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:118: “And they that know not say, ‘Why does God not speak to us? Why does a sign not come to us?’ So spoke those before them as these men say; their hearts are much alike.”

سورة البقرة ٢: ١١٨ «وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ».

Rafi' Ibn Khuzaima said to Muhammad, “If you are a messenger of God, as you say, tell God to speak to us so that we might hear His voice, or perform a sign so that we should believe in you.” Muhammad answered him, “The Jews asked Moses to show them God openly.” This answer, however, is wrong since the Jews asked Moses for quite the opposite. They said to Moses, “You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exodus 20:19).

We ask: Doesn't everyone have the right to examine every message claimed to be from God?

(5) We read in Sura al-An'am 6:109: “They have sworn by

God the most earnest oaths if a sign comes to them they will believe in it. Say: ‘Signs are only with God.’ What will make you realise that, when it comes, they will not believe?”

سورة الأنعام ٦: ١٠٩ «وَأَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ لَئِنْ جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ لَيُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهَا قُلٌ إِنَّمَا الْآيَاتُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَمَا يُشْعِرُكُمْ أَنَّهَا إِذَا جَاءَتْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ».

The Quraish said, “Muhammad, you tell us that Moses had a rod with which he struck the rock and twelve springs broke forth, and you tell us that Jesus raised people from death, and that Thamud had a she-camel for a sign. Perform a miracle for us, then, so that we may believe you and believe in you.” Muhammad said, “What thing do you wish?” They said, “To turn for us Al-Safa [a mountain] into gold, or bring back from death some of our dead folk to ask them whether what you say is true or false. Show us also the angels testifying to you.” Muhammad said, “If I do some of what you say, will you believe me?” They answered, “Yes, by God, if you do, we shall follow you all together.” Muhammad stood up and prayed to God to turn Al-Safa into gold. But Gabriel came to him and said, “You have whatever you wish: if you wish, it will be gold, but if they do not believe you we will cast them away, and if you wish we will leave them until the ones destined to repent repent.” Muhammad said, “I wish that they repent.” And so Muhammad worked his way out of having to perform a miracle!

(6) We read in Sura al-Isra' 17:90-93: “They say, ‘We shall not believe thee till thou makest a spring to gush forth from

the earth to us, or till thou possessest a garden of palms and vines, and thou makest rivers to gush forth abundantly all amongst it, or till thou makest heaven to fall, as thou assertest, on us in fragments, or thou bringest God and the angels as a surety, or till thou possessest a house of gold ornament, or till thou goest up into heaven; and we will not believe thy going up till thou bringest down on us a book that we may read. Say: 'Glory be to my Lord! And I aught but a mortal, a Messenger!'

سورة الإسراء ١٧: ٩٠-٩٣ «وَقَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّى تَفْجُرَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ يَنْبوعاً أَوْ تَكُونَ لَكَ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَجِيلٍ وَعَنْبٌ فَتَصْجُرَ الْأَنْهَارَ خِلالِهَا تَفْجيراً أَوْ تُسْقِطَ السَّمَاءَ كَمَا زَعَمْتِ عَلَيْنَا كَسفاً أَوْ تَأْتِيَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ قِيلاً أَوْ يَكُونَ لَكَ بَيْتٌ مِنْ زُخْرُفٍ أَوْ تَرْقَى فِي السَّمَاءِ وَلَنْ نُؤْمِنَ بِرَبِّكَ حَتَّى تُنَزِّلَ عَلَيْنَا كِتَاباً نَقْرؤه قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي هَلْ كُنْتُ إِلَّا بَشِراً رَسُولاً».

We ask: Were not Moses, Elijah, Elisha and Daniel also mortals, and messengers? Yet, they performed miracles. If Muhammad was really a mediator of a heavenly message, why didn't heaven back up his message?

(7) We read in Sura al-Baqara 2:145: "Yet if thou shouldst bring to those that have been given the Book every sign, they will not follow thy direction; thou art not a follower of their direction, neither are they followers of one another's direction. If thou followest their caprices, after the knowledge that has come to thee, then thou wilt surely be among the evildoers."

سورة البقرة ٢: ١٤٥ «وَلَيْنَ آتَيْتِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبَلَتَكَ وَمَا أَنتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبَلَتَهُمْ وَمَا بَغُضُّهُمْ بِتَابِعِ قِبَلَتِكَ بِغُضِّ لَيْنٍ آتَيْتِ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِنَّكَ إِذَا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ».

(8) We read in Sura al-Ra'd 13:27: "The unbelievers say: 'Why has a sign not been sent down upon him from his Lord?' Say: 'God leads astray whosoever He will, and guides to Him all who are penitent.'"

سورة الرعد ١٣: ٢٧ «وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُصَلِّ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي إِلَيْهِ مَنْ أُنَابَ».

(9) We read in Sura al-Ra'd 13:31: "'If only a Qur'an whereby the mountains were set in motion, or the earth were cleft, or the dead were spoken to – nay, but God's is the affair altogether.' Did not the believers know that, if God had willed, He would have guided men all together?"

سورة الرعد ١٣: ٣١ «وَلَوْ أَنْ قُرْآنًا سُيِّرَتْ بِهِ الْجِبَالُ أَوْ قُطِعَتْ بِهِ الْأَرْضُ أَوْ كَلِمَةٌ بِهِ أَلْمُوتَى بَلْ لِلَّهِ الْأَمْرُ جَمِيعاً».

(10) We read in Sura al-An'am 6:124: "And when a sign came to them, they said, 'We will not believe until we are given the like of what God's Messengers were given.' God knows very well where to place His Message; and humiliation in God's sight shall befall the sinners, and a terrible chastisement, for what they devised."

سورة الأنعام ٦: ١٢٤ «وَإِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ حَتَّى نُؤْتَىٰ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِيَ رُسُلُ اللَّهِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ سَيُصِيبُ الَّذِينَ أَجْرَمُوا صَغَارٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَعَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَمْكُرُونَ».

(11) We read in Sura al-An'am 6:37: "They also say, 'Why has no sign been sent down upon him from his Lord?' Say: 'Surely God is able to send down a sign, but most of them know not.'"

سورة الأنعام ٦: ٣٧ «وَقَالُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ قُلْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَادِرٌ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ آيَةً وَلَٰكِنْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ».

(12) We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:203: "And when thou bringest them not a sign, they say, 'Why hast thou not chosen one?' Say: 'I follow only what is revealed to me from my Lord; this is a clear testimony from your Lord, guidance, and mercy for a people of believers.'"

سورة الأعراف ٧: ٢٠٣ «وَإِذَا لَمْ تَأْتِهِمْ بِآيَةٍ قَالُوا لَوْلَا آخِذْتُمْ بِهَا قُلُوبَنَا إِنَّمَا تَتَّبِعُ مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيْنَا مِنْ رَبِّهِ هَذَا بَصَائِرٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ».

(13) We read in Sura al-Ra'd 13:7: "The unbelievers say: 'Why has a sign not been sent down upon him from his Lord?' Thou art only a warner, and a guide to every people."

سورة الرعد ١٣: ٧ «وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْلَا نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ آيَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ».

In all these verses the Qur'an professes that Muhammad

never performed a single miracle. As for the reasons and the evasions he used, they are invalid. The miracles and wonders that the prophets performed before the eyes of the ancient peoples caused some to believe, while some refused them. So the excuse that "the ancients cried lies to them [disbelieved them]" is not valid. Were the Qur'an a miracle, it would have said, "and here is the Qur'an, a miracle," but instead it says, "Naught [nothing] prevented Us from sending the signs." In short, Muhammad did not bring a single sign to prove that he was a messenger or a law-giver.

## 18. He Was Criticised by His Contemporaries

**Question 227:** The Arabs criticised Muhammad and censured him for many things. He mentioned those things in the Qur'an, together with answers to them. They said he was:

(1) Demon-possessed (mad). We read in Sura al-Hijr 15:6,7: "They say: 'Thou, upon whom the Remembrance is sent down, thou art assuredly possessed! Why dost thou not bring the angels unto us, if thou speakest truly?'"

سورة الحجر ١٥: ٦ و ٧ «وَقَالُوا يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِي نُزِّلَ عَلَيْهِ الذِّكْرُ إِنَّكَ جُنُونٌ لَوْ مَا تَأْتِينَا بِالْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنْ كُنْتَ مِنَ الصَّادِقِينَ».

Sura al-Qalam 68:51 says: "The unbelievers willnigh strike thee down with their glances, when they hear the Reminder, and they say, 'Surely he is a man possessed!'"

سورة القلم ٦٨: ٥١ «وَإِنْ يَكَادُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَيَنْزِقُونَكَ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ لَمَّا سَمِعُوا الذِّكْرَ وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّهُ لَمَجْنُونٌ».



Also, we read in Sura al-Saffat 37:36: "Saying, 'What, shall we forsake our gods for a poet possessed?'"

سورة الصافات ٣٦:٣٧ «وَيَقُولُونَ إِنَّا لَنَرِيكَو آيَاتِنَا لِشَاعِرٍ مَجْنُونٍ».

So then, the people accused Muhammad of madness, and attributed these delusions about the revelation and the angels to his confused state of mind.

(2) A Forger. We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:101: "And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse – and God knows very well what He is sending down – they say, 'Thou art a mere forger!' Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge."

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠١ «وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَنْزِلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ».

Sura al-Furqan 25:4 says: "The unbelievers say, 'This is naught but a calumny he has forged, and other folk have helped him to it.'"

سورة الفرقان ٢٥:٤ «وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا فِكْ أَفْتَرَاهُ وَأَعَانَهُ عَلَيْهِ قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ».

The Qur'an says in Sura al-Shura 42:24: "Or do they say, 'He has forged against God a lie?'"

سورة الشورى ٤٢:٢٤ «أَمْ يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا».

The people perceived that Muhammad commanded his

followers certain things and afterwards forbade them the same things, and then gave them other commands. He would say something one day, and would change his mind the next day. Therefore they said, in effect, "What you say is of you, because if this were the word of God it would not have been altered or replaced; for the word of God is steadfast, unchangeable."

(3) Bewitched. We read in Sura al-Furqan 25:7,8: "They also say, 'What ails this Messenger that he eats food, and goes in the markets? Why has an angel not been sent down to him, to be a warmer with him? Or why is not a treasure thrown to him, or why has he not a Garden to eat of?' The evildoers say, 'You are only following a man bewitched!'"

سورة الفرقان ٧:٢٥ و ٨ «وَقَالُوا مَا لِهَذَا الرَّسُولِ يَأْكُلُ الطَّعَامَ وَيَمْشِي فِي الْأَسْوَاقِ لَوْلَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ فَيَكُونُ مَعَهُ نَذِيرًا أَوْ يُلْقَى إِلَيْهِ كَنزٌ أَوْ تَكُونُ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ يَأْكُلُ مِنْهَا وَقَالَ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا».

Sura al-Isra' 17:47 says: "We know very well how they listen when they listen to thee, and when they conspire, when the evildoers say, 'You are only following a man bewitched!'"

سورة الإسراء ١٧:٤٧ «نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَسْتَمِعُونَ بِهِ إِذْ يَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِذْ هُمْ نَجْوَى إِذْ يَقُولُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِن تَتَّبِعُونَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا مَسْحُورًا».

The people saw him sick, forgetful, ailing, and complaining of the witches who blew upon knots. After

he charmed himself against a spell, they said, "No doubt he is bewitched and out of his mind!"

(4) An Ear. We read in Sura al-Tawba 9:61: "And some of them hurt the Prophet, saying, 'He is an ear!'"

سورة التوبة ٩:٦١ «وَمِنْهُمْ الَّذِينَ يُؤْذُونَ النَّبِيَّ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ أُذُنٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, "Saying he was an 'ear' meant that he heard all that was said to him and believed in it. He [Muhammad] was called *al-Janiha* due to his propensity for exaggeration, just as through the excess of his listening he became an instrument of hearing; similarly he was called a spy. It has been reported that they said, 'Muhammad is a hearing ear; we say whatever we like to him, and he believes what we say.'"

### 19. He Was Killed by Poison

**Question 228:** We read in Sura Al Imran 3:144: "Muhammad is naught but a Messenger; Messengers have passed away before him. Why, if he should die or is slain, will you turn about on your heels?"

سورة آل عمران ٣:١٤٤ «وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ أَفَإِنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ».

We read in Sura al-A'raf 7:188: "Had I knowledge of the Unseen I would have acquired much good, and evil would not have touched me."

سورة الأعراف ٧:١٨٨ «وَلَوْ كُنْتَ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبِ لَاسْتَكْتَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ».

Al-Baidawi said:

"If he should die or be slain, will you turn about on your heels?" [refers to the incident in which] 'Abdallah Ibn Qami'a al-Harithi threw a rock at God's Messenger that broke four of his front teeth and gashed his face. Mus'ab Ibn 'Umair, who was the standard-bearer defended [Muhammad]. So Ibn Qami'a killed [Mus'ab], assuming that he killed the Prophet. Then, as it is reported, he said, "I killed Muhammad." Someone cried out, "Behold, Muhammad has been killed, and the people turned on their heels." Then the Messenger cried out, "Come to me, servants of God." Thirty of his followers joined him and protected him until they scattered the unbelievers. Some hypocrites said, "Had he been a prophet, he would not have been killed. Go back to your brothers and your religion." Anas Ibn Nadr, the uncle of Anas Ibn Malik, said, "O people, if Muhammad is slain, Muhammad's Lord is alive, and dies not; what shall you do if you live after him? So fight for what he fought for," and added, "O God, I acquit myself of what they say and exonerate myself from it." He then clasped his sword firmly and fought till he was killed, and the verse was revealed.

When Khaybar was conquered, and the people felt secure, Zainab Bint al-Harith, Salam Ibn Mishkam's wife, went about asking which part of the lamb was Muhammad's favourite to eat. People told her, "It is the front leg, for it is the best part and the farthest from harm." So she took a lamb, slaughtered it, and cut it up. Then she took a deadly poison that kills instantly and poisoned the lamb, putting more poison in the leg and shoulder. When the sun set, Muhammad led the people in the evening

prayer. When he finished, he wanted to go, but she was sitting at his feet. He asked about her, and she said, "O Abu al-Qasim, here is a gift I have for you." Muhammad ordered some of his friends to take it from her, and it was put before him in the presence of his friends, among whom was Bishr Ibn al-Bara' Ibn Ma'rur. Muhammad said, "Come near and be seated." Muhammad took the leg and ate, too. When Muhammad had swallowed his bite, Bishr swallowed his, and the rest of the people ate of it. Muhammad said, "Raise your hands; this leg and this shoulder tell me they are poisoned." Bishr said, "By the One who honoured you, I found the same in my morsel, but nothing kept me from spitting it out except that I would spoil the pleasure of your food. When you ate that which was in your mouth, I did not desire my own soul more than yours, and wished that you had not swallowed it." [One opinion has it that] Bishr died then and there. A part of the lamb was thrown to a dog, and the dog died. Another opinion says that his [Bishr's] colour turned black and his pain lasted two years, after which he died. It was also said that Muhammad took a bite of the lamb, chewed it, and spit it out, whereas Bishr swallowed his morsel. Then Muhammad sent for this Jewess and asked her, "Have you poisoned this lamb?" She said yes. He asked, "What prompted you to do that?" She said, "You have acquired certain powers with which you judge those who are loyal to you. You killed my father, my uncle and my brother.... So I said, 'If he is a king, then I would be relieving us of him, and if he is a prophet, he will be able to perceive.'" It was said that he pardoned her, while others say he commanded her to be put to death and crucified. When Muhammad fell ill just before his death, he said to 'Aisha, " 'Aisha, I still feel the effect of the poisoned food I ate; this is the

time of my demise by that poison." When Bishr's sister entered his room during the time of his last sickness, he said to her, "This is the time of my demise by the meal I ate with your brother in Khaybar."

## 20. His Strange Manner of Receiving Revelation

**Question 229:** Following are some of the peculiar ways in which the Prophet Muhammad received revelation:

(1) In a robe. We read in Sura al-Muzammil 73:1-5: "O thou enwrapped in thy robes, keep vigil the night, except a little [one half of it, a little more or a little less], and chant the Qur'an very distinctly. Behold, We shall cast upon thee a weighty word."

سورة المزمل ٧٣:١-٥ «يَا أَيُّهَا الْمَزْمُولُ قُمْ اللَّيْلَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا نِصْفَهُ أَوْ أَنْقِضْ مِنْهُ قَلِيلًا أَوْ زِدْ عَلَيْهِ وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا».

Al-Baidawi said, " 'O thou enwrapped in thy robes' is the way the Prophet was referred to; it described the state he was in, for he was asleep or trembling when the revelation first came to him while he was wrapped in a velvet robe. 'We shall cast upon thee a weighty word' refers to the Qur'an, which was weighty to receive. 'Aisha said, 'I saw the revelation descend on a bitter cold day, and by the time it departed from him, his forehead was dripping with perspiration.'"

We read in Sura al-Muddaththir 74:1,2: "O thou shrouded in thy mantle, arise, and warn!"

سورة المدثر ١:٧٤ و ٢ «يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ».

Al-Baidawi said, " 'O thou shrouded in thy mantle' refers to the incident in which the Prophet said, 'I was in Hira' and heard a voice calling me, so I looked around, but saw nothing. Then I looked up and saw it was on a throne between heaven and earth [*i.e.*, he saw the angel], so I was terrified and returned to Khadija and said, 'Shroud me with a mantle,' and Gabriel came and said, 'O thou shrouded in thy mantle.' So this was the first sura to be revealed."

(2) Like a drunk man. We read in the trustworthy hadiths that whenever the revelation came down upon him, he would faint, and his state would drastically change, so that his appearance was that of a drunk man. Muslim scholars claimed that he was being transported from the earth.

(3) He snorted like a camel. Abu Huraira reported that Muhammad would start to tremble whenever the revelation came down upon him. Another report says: He would be in anguish because of it [*i.e.*, the revelation] and his mouth would foam and his eyes would shut, and he would snort like a young camel.

(4) He buzzed like a bee. 'Umar Ibn al-Khattab reported, "Whenever the revelation would come down on him, there would be heard near his face the buzzing of bees."

(5) The revelation came to him like the ringing of a bell. 'Aisha said: "God's Messenger was once asked, 'How does the revelation come to you?' He said, 'Sometimes it comes to me in the form of the ringing of bells; this is the hardest way it comes. At other times, an angel appears to

me in the form of a man talking to me, and I comprehend what he says.'"

(6) He was soaked with perspiration. 'Aisha said, "I saw it coming down on him on an exceptionally cold day, and when it departed from him, his forehead was wet with perspiration" (al-Bukhari, *Bad' al-Wahy*).

(7) He heard voices. We read in the Hadith that Muhammad said to Khadija, "When I retire, I hear the voice of someone calling, 'Muhammad, Muhammad.'" In another report he said, "I see light while I'm awake, not dreaming, and I hear a voice, so I fear that this is something harmful." Another report says, "I am afraid I am a diviner, and that the one calling me is a familiar spirit." Yet another report says, "I am afraid that I am demon-possessed (mad)."

(8) He trembled. Abu Huraira reported that no one could bear looking upon the Messenger of God whenever the revelation came upon him; they had to wait until it was over. Some say that Abu Huraira reported that henna used to be put on his head because of the accompanying headache that afflicted him (*Kitab mir'at al-ka'inat*).

All these facts raise a question: What sort of revelation is it that renders a man unconscious, or that makes him faint, appear as a drunk man, snort like a young camel, causes his eyes to become bloodshot, makes him perspire profusely, have a headache, and feel a buzzing in his ears and a tingling in his head? It is worthy to note that he had the same symptoms before he professed prophethood. Ibn Ishaq reported that he used to be protected by magic against the evil eye in Mecca before he

received the Qur'an. When the Qur'an descended on him, the same symptoms he had earlier returned. Before he received the Qur'an he used to tremble, shut his eyes, change his features, snort like a young camel, and then lose consciousness. Khadija said to him, "Shall I bring you someone to cast a spell over you?" He said, "No, not now." Muslim scholars determined that Amina, Muhammad's mother, protected him by magic against the evil eye. It was said that when she was pregnant with him, the angels came to her and said to her, "When you have given birth to him, say, 'I guard you by God against the envy of all that envy.'"

### 21. He Attempted Suicide

**Question 230:** We read in Sura al-Duha 93:3: "Thy Lord has neither forsaken thee nor hates thee."

سورة الضحى ٣:٩٣ ﴿مَا وَدَّعَكَ رَبُّكَ وَمَا قَلَى﴾

Al-Baidawi said, "...It was reported that the revelation did not come to him for several days, and the idolaters said that Muhammad's Lord left him and hated him. The verse came in answer to what they said."

Muslim scholars said that when Muhammad stopped receiving the revelation, after the death of Waraqa Ibn Nawfal, he grieved so deeply that he once went early in the morning to Yathbur, and then later to Hira', wanting to throw himself down, but Gabriel appeared to him and said, "Muhammad, you are truly God's Messenger." He then calmed down, was relieved and returned. But when the revelation would cease for a longer time, he would repeat the same scenario. Annalists were undecided as to the duration of time; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, in *Fath*

*al-Bari*, determined that it was three years, whereas Abu al-Qasim al-Suhaili said, "It is mentioned in some documented hadiths that this duration lasted for two and a half years." Hafiz al-Suyuti said it was for two years.

We ask: How can a prophet attempt suicide? The Qur'an addresses Muhammad reproachfully when it says, "Yet perchance... thou wilt consume thyself!" (Sura al-Kahf 18:6).

### 22. Khadija Confirmed the Revelation for Him

**Question 231:** We read in Sura al-Mu'minun 23:25: "He is naught but a man bedevilled; so wait on him for a time."

سورة المؤمنون ٢٣:٢٥ ﴿إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا رَجُلٌ بِهِ جِنَّةٌ فُتِرُوا بِهِ حَتَّىٰ حِينٍ﴾

If you examine the Hadith, which is as important in Islam as the Qur'an in terms of doctrine and practice, you will see that Muhammad was not certain about his revelation. It is reported that Isma'il Ibn Abi Hakim quoted Khadija saying to Muhammad, "Can you tell me about this friend of yours when he comes?" He said yes. So when Gabriel came to him, he said, "Khadija, here is Gabriel, he has come to me." She said, "Stand up, my cousin, and sit on my thigh." He stood up and sat on her thigh. She asked him, "Do you see him?" He said yes. She said, "Then turn around and sit on my lap." Muhammad turned around and sat on her lap. She asked, "Do you see him?" He said yes. So she cast down her veil as Muhammad was seated in her lap, and asked him, "Do you see him?" He said no. She said, "O my cousin, be sure and rejoice; by God, he is an angel, not a devil."

Khadija uncovered her head in order to know whether that which haunted him was caused by the same carrier of revelation

who came to the prophets before him, or if it was merely unconsciousness caused by demon possession. Otherwise, she thought, he would be a priest, not a prophet – the very thing that caused him to fear for himself. Muslim scholars agree that Muhammad suffered from [unconsciousness] prior to the revelation coming to him. Because the symptoms ceased until she put her head-covering on again, Khadija knew for certain that the bearer of revelation was an angel, and no devil, for an angel cannot look upon the uncovered head of a woman, unlike the devil! So it was Khadija, then, who concluded that he whom Muhammad received was the same bearer of revelation that used to come to the prophets!

We ask: Was Khadija reared among the prophets? Was there any prophet in her family who experienced the same symptoms so as to compare Muhammad to him? How could she come up with the odd rule that an angel does not look upon a woman's uncovered head, whereas the *jinn* can? Which prophet before Muhammad sat on his wife's lap until she assured him that it was Gabriel who came to him?

### 23. Why Should They Be Jealous of Him?

**Question 232:** We read in Sura al-Nisa' 4:54: "Or are they jealous of the people for the bounty that God has given them?"

سورة النساء ٤:٥٤ «أَمْ يَخْشَدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ».

Muslim scholars have said that Muhammad used to make the rounds among his wives [*i.e.*, have intercourse with them], who were eleven at the time, all in one hour, be it night or day. Qatada Ibn Di'ama asked Anas Ibn Malik once, "How could he bear

making the rounds among them?" Anas answered, "It was reported that he has been given the strength of thirty (according to another narration, forty) men of the men of paradise." Muhammad also said in the Hadith, "I have been given the strength of four men in assault and sex." The men of paradise are said to have a hundred-fold strength in eating, drinking, intercourse, and lust. Ibn al-'Arabi said about Muhammad, "He, beyond comparison, surpassed all beings in strength for sexual intercourse." It was reported by Ibn Sa'd, quoting Anas, that he went about having intercourse with all of his wives in one night. Muhammad himself said, "Gabriel brought me a pot, and after I ate of its contents I was given the strength of forty men of paradise." Muhammad once complained to Gabriel about his lack of desire. Gabriel smiled, till Muhammad's seat glistened on account of the brilliance of Gabriel's four front teeth. Then Gabriel said to him, "What is that which you eat, compared to *harisa* [a dish of meat and bulghur]?" (*Sahih Muslim*, section on 'Aisha's bounty; *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd*, section on Muhammad's wives and 'Aisha's bounty; *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, section on marriage).

### 24. If She Gives Herself to the Prophet

**Question 233:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:50: "And any woman believer, if she give herself to the Prophet and if the Prophet desire to take her in marriage, for thee exclusively, apart from the believers."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣:٥٠ «وَأَمْرًاؤةٌ مُؤْمِنَةٌ إِنْ وَهَبَتْ نَفْسَهَا لِلنَّبِيِّ إِنْ أَرَادَ النَّبِيُّ أَنْ يَنْتَكِبََهَا خَالِصَةً لَكَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ».

Ibn Sa'd brought out, quoting Munir Ibn 'Abdullah al-Duali, that Umm Shuraik al-Dusiya, who was a very beautiful woman, offered herself to the Prophet, and he accepted her. Then 'Aisha said, "It is a worthless woman that offers herself to a man!" When Umm Shuraik learned of it, she said, "Well, I am such a woman then." Therefore, Muhammad called her *mu'mina* [i.e., a believer], and that is why the verse says "any woman believer [*mu'mina*]". When Muhammad said this verse, 'Aisha said to him, "Indeed, God hastens to do what you desire!" (*Asbab al-nuzul* by al-Suyuti).

## 25. He Treated His Wives Unfairly

**Question 234:** We read in Sura al-Ahzab 33:51: "Thou mayest put off whom thou wilt of them, and whom thou wilt thou mayest take to thee; and if thou seekest any thou hast set aside there is no fault in thee. So it is likelier they will be comforted, and not sorrow, and every one of them will be well-pleased with what thou givest her."

سورة الأحزاب ٥١:٣٣ «تُرْجِي مَنْ تَشَاءُ مِنْهُنَّ وَتُؤَيِّ إِلَيْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ  
وَمَنْ أَبْتَعْتِ مِنْ عَزَلْتَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكَ ذَلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ أَنْ تَقَرَّ أَعْيُنُهُنَّ وَلَا  
يَخْزَنَ وَيَرْضَيْنَ بِمَا آتَيْتَهُنَّ كُلَّهُنَّ».

Al-Hasan said, "This verse means that God granted him the freedom of choosing to refrain from having intercourse with whomever he wills of his women, or to engage in intercourse with whomever he wills of them."

Al-Bukhari and Muslim stated out that 'Aisha said, "Should not a woman be ashamed to give herself to a man?" Then

Muhammad uttered the above-mentioned verse. Therefore 'Aisha said, "Indeed, God hastens to do what you desire." Muhammad took to himself 'Aisha, Hafsa, Umm Salama and Zainab; these he slept with on a regular basis. He "put off" five of his women: Umm Habiba, Maimuna, Sawda, Juwairiyya and Safiyya; these he slept with whenever he liked.

Muhammad issued a decree that his wives should not marry after he died. He said, "It is not for you to hurt the Messenger of Allah, neither to marry his wives after him" (Sura al-Ahzab 33:53). The reason for the revelation of this verse is that Talha said that he would marry his cousin 'Aisha after Muhammad's death. Muhammad brought down this verse as a revelation!

## 26. He Quoted from Both Jews and Christians

**Question 235:** We read in Sura al-Nahl 16:103: "And We know very well that they say, 'Only a mortal is teaching him.' The speech of him at whom they hint is barbarous; and this is speech Arabic, manifest."

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠٣ «وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُمْ يَقُولُونَ إِنَّمَا يُعَلِّمُهُ بَشَرٌ لِّسَانُ  
الَّذِي يُلْحِدُونَ إِلَيْهِ أَعْجَمِيٌّ وَهَذَا لِسَانٌ عَرَبِيٌّ مُبِينٌ».

Al-Baidawi said, "They meant Jabr, the Roman page of 'Amir Ibn al-Hadhrami. Others said they meant Jabr and Yassar, who were sword-makers by trade in Mecca and who used to read the Torah and the Injil. Muhammad used to pass by them and listen to them as they were reading [or reciting]. Still others said that it was 'Aish, the slave of Huwaitib Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza, who was a man versed in the Scriptures and who converted to Islam. Still others said that it was Salman the Persian."

The Arabs of Mecca said that Muhammad was only taught these stories and annals by another man, who was a mortal like himself, and not by God as he claimed. They disagreed as to who that man was! Al-Qurtubi reported, on the strength of Ibn 'Abbas, that Muhammad knew a blacksmith in Mecca called Bal'am, who was a Christian. The idolaters saw Muhammad going in and out to him, so they said, "It is only Bal'am that teaches him." 'Ikrima said, "Muhammad used to entertain a slave of the Mughirites called Ya'ish, who could read the Scriptures. Therefore the Quraish said, 'He is teaching him.'" It was also said that "As far as I know, Muhammad often sat at the Marwa with a Roman Christian slave, owned by the Hadramites, whose name was Jabr, and he could read the Scriptures." 'Ubaidallah Ibn Maslama said, "We had two slaves from the people of 'Ain al-Tamr; one was called Yassar, whose surname was Abu Fakiha, and the other's name was Jabr. They worked in Mecca as sword-markers, and used to read the Torah and the Injil. They would read, and Muhammad would sit with them and find rest in their words whenever the unbelievers hurt him. The idolaters said therefore that Muhammad was learning from them." Al-Farra' said, "The Arabs said that Muhammad was learning from 'Aish, a slave owned by Huwaitib Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza, who was a non-Arab Christian converted to Islam." Others said, "It was 'Addas, the slave of 'Utba Ibn Rabi'a " (see al-Suyuti's *Asbab al-Nuzul* of this verse).

We ask: If the Arabs accused Muhammad of learning from others and attributing this knowledge to himself, claiming that he received it by divine revelation, why did he not bring a proof that he received it from God directly? The answer he gave, namely that the one he listened to was a non-Arab, is a confession. He

took what he heard and put it in his own eloquent Arabic. In fact, accounts of the stories from the Old and the New Testament were in poetry before Muhammad's time. For example, Umaiya Ibn al-Salt described the story of Abraham and Isaac in the following poem:

Praise the King every morning,  
 On which the sun rises,  
 And in every night.  
 Abraham who fulfilled his vow has considerations,  
 And was a receiver of bounties.  
 He would not keep his first-born,  
 If he saw him in the company of the flesh.  
 And he has a knife that cuts into the flesh  
 A curved scar like a crescent.  
 "O my son, I have vowed you unto God, a sacrifice,  
 So bear up; I am your ransom."  
 The boy answered, saying:  
 "Nothing given to God is claimed as possession."  
 "My son, your reward is God,  
 Whom you fear in all situations.  
 Then fulfil your vow unto God,  
 but keep the blood from touching my garment.  
 Tighten the straps; I will not avert the knife,  
 As does the shackled prisoner."  
 As he took the clothes off him,  
 His Lord ransomed him with a spotless lamb.

Other Arab poets have written poetry describing biblical stories. Al-Samaw'al described what happened to Moses in the wilderness. He based his poem on the book of Exodus. Al-Nabigha mentioned the name of King Solomon in a poem he



recited to commend his king, al-Nu'man. There is also poetry about Jonah and how the great fish swallowed him, and how God saved him.

In Muhammad's day, Christianity was quite widespread in Arab lands, and there were renowned churches like the "Ka'ba" of Najran. There were also learned bishops like Quss Ibn Sa'ida, famous for his eloquent speeches. The Prophet Muhammad heard him at Suq 'Ukaz. Among the Christians there were innocent martyrs like the Yemenite Christians against whom some Jewish people revolted, killing them by throwing them into a trench which they set on fire. Muhammad alluded to them in Sura al-Buruj 85:4-7, saying, "Slain were the Men of the Pit, the fire abounding in fuel, when they were seated over it and were themselves witnesses of what they did with the believers." The Qur'an also praises priests, monks and Christians for their piety in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:82, saying, "Thou wilt surely find the most hostile of men to the believers are the Jews and the idolaters; and thou wilt surely find the nearest of them in love to the believers are those who say 'We are Christians'; that, because some of them are priests and monks, and they wax not proud."

## 27. Returning Insult for Insult

**Question 236:** In Sura al-Kawthar 108:1-3, we read: "Surely We have given thee abundance; so pray unto thy Lord and sacrifice. Surely he that hates thee, he is the one cut off."

سورة الكوثر ١٠٨:١-٣ «إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحِرْ إِنَّ شَانِكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ».

The reason for the revelation of this sura is that one of

Muhammad's sons by Khadija had died, and al-'As Ibn Wa'il had said that Muhammad was without any offspring at all. Muhammad answered, "Verily, the one who hates thee, he is the one cut off [or without offspring]," meaning al-'As. Because people had insulted the Prophet for having no offspring, he declared that those who hated him would be without offspring!

In Sura al-Masad 111:1-5 we read: "Perish the hands of Abu Lahab, and perish he! His wealth avails him not, neither what he has earned; he shall roast at a flaming fire and his wife, the carrier of the firewood, upon her neck a rope of palm-fibre."

سورة المسد ١١١:١-٥ «بِئْسَ يَدَا أَبِي لَهَبٍ وَتَبَّ مَا أَغْنَىٰ عَنْهُ مَالُهُ وَمَا كَسَبَ سَيَضَلَّىٰ نَارًا ذَاتَ لَهَبٍ وَأَمْرَأَتُهُ حَمَّالَةَ الْحَطَبِ فِي جِيدِهَا حَبْلٌ مِّن مَّسَدٍ».

The reason for the revelation of this sura is that Muhammad had invited his relatives in order to warn them, but his uncle Abu Lahab had told him: "May thou perish! Is this why thou invited us?" And he took up a stone and threw it at him, so Muhammad cursed him, saying, "Perish the hands of Abu Lahab and perish he," meaning "Let his soul enter the fire to be roasted on it." He also cursed his wife, saying that she would be the carrier of the firewood which would burn her in hell, and that she would have a rope around her neck by which to be hanged. The Prophet cursed all those who opposed him likewise! How far Muhammad is from Christ, for "when He was reviled, He did not revile in return" (1 Peter 2:23). The Bible clearly tells us to emulate Christ and follow His teaching when it says, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse" (Romans 12:14).

## 28. He Incited His Followers to Fight

**Question 237:** In Sura al-Anfal 8:65 we read: "O Prophet, urge on the believers to fight."

سورة الأنفال ٨:٦٥ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ حَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَى الْقِتَالِ.

Muhammad certainly did as he was told! He participated in 29 raids: Widan, Buwat, al-'Ashira, Safwan (or "The First Raid of Badr"), the greater Badr, Banu Sulaim, Banu Qainuqa', al-Suwaiq, Qarqarat al-Kidar, Ghatafan (which is the raid of Dhu Amr), Bahran in the Hijaz, Uhud, Hamra' al-Asad, Banu al-Nadir, Dhat al-Riqa' ("The Raid of Folly", which is the raid of Muharib and Banu Tha'laba), the final Badr (which is also called "The Raid of the Promise"), Dumat al-Jandal, Banu al-Mustaliq (also called "The Dreadful"), al-Khandaq ("The Ditch"), Banu Quraiza, Banu Lihyan, Hudaibiya, "The One with Ticks", Khaybar, Wadi al-Qura, "The Pilgrimage of the Judges", The Conquest of Mecca, Hunain and al-Ta'if, and Tabuk.

The "raids by proxy" [*i.e.*, those in which the Prophet did not participate personally, but sent his friends instead] are 47 in number. It is even said that they numbered as many as 70. This brings the total number of raids to about a hundred, which means that Muhammad was responsible for an average of one raid per month! In the Qur'an, many of them are recorded, of which we can mention the following:

### *The Raid by Proxy on Ibn al-Khadhrami*

In Sura al-Baqara 2:217 we read: "They will question thee concerning the holy month, and fighting in it. Say: 'Fighting in it is a heinous [*lit.*: monumental] thing.'"

سورة البقرة ٢:٢١٧ «يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ قِتَالٌ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ».

Muhammad had sent out 'Abdallah Ibn Jahsh at the head of a raiding party consisting of 80 men. When they arrived at a place called Batn Nakhla they ambushed a caravan of the Quraish. 'Amr Ibn al-Khadhrami was in the caravan, and he was killed as the first of the unbelievers. Al-Hakim Ibn Kaysan and 'Uthman were taken captive as the first prisoners of war of Islam. The Muslims drove the caravan and the prisoners back to Muhammad, who grew angry because his friends had raided and taken booty during the holy month. Afterwards, he made it lawful and allotted fixed portions of the booty to himself and his friends.

### *The Raid of Uhud*

In Sura Al Imran 3:140 we read: "And that God may know who are the believers, and that He may take witnesses from among you."

سورة آل عمران ٣:١٤٠ «وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ».

Muhammad was fighting the Arabs, having 700 men with him at Uhud. At first the Arabs were put to flight, but then they turned around and won the day, having broken Muhammad's nose and his four front teeth and gashed his face. As they continued to harass him, his friends scattered. He went to a rock and tried to lift it, but he couldn't, so he sat down under an acacia tree. Hind and the women who were with her stayed in order to mutilate the dead bodies of Muhammad's friends, cutting off their ears and

noses. She also tore up Hamza's liver. Then one of the Arabs approached, wanting to kill Muhammad, whose standard-bearer defended him, but was killed. The Arab then shouted, "I have killed Muhammad!" after which the Arabs withdrew. This made Muhammad call out, "Come and help me, God's servants, come and help me, God's servants!" Thirty men then gathered around him and bathed him with the greatest difficulty. He began to curse those who had routed him and tried to encourage those who had been vanquished, saying, "And that God may know who are the believers, and that He may take witnesses from among you."

There is a story about this expression: When the women had waited long for Muhammad, they went out to inquire about him, when suddenly two men came up, riding on a camel. When one of the women asked, "What about Muhammad?" The men said, "He is alive." The woman then said, "I do not care; God has taken witnesses from among His servants." Muhammad quoted this expression of hers, considering it inspired, as a consolation over what had happened at Uhud.

### ***The Lesser Raid of Badr***

In Sura Al Imran 3:123 we read: "And God most surely helped you at Badr, when you were utterly abject."

سورة آل عمران ١٢٣:٣ ﴿وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said in his commentary, "Badr is a watering-place between Mecca and Medina. It belonged to a man called Badr and was named after him. In the raid of Badr the Muslims killed seventy men and captured seventy others."

### ***The Raid of Hunain***

In Sura al-Tawba 9:25 we read: "God has already helped you on many fields, and on the day of Hunain."

سورة التوبة ٢٥:٩ ﴿لَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي مَوَاطِنَ كَثِيرَةٍ وَيَوْمَ حُنَيْنٍ﴾.

Al-Baidawi says in his commentary: "Hunain is a valley between Mecca and al-Ta'if. The Messenger of God and the Muslims fought there, twelve thousand in number. Ten thousand of them had been present at the conquest of Mecca and the other two thousand were Meccans of the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif, who were released after the conquest and swelled the ranks of the Muslims. When they met, the Prophet, admiring their vast number, said, 'We shall not win insignificantly.' They fought a fierce battle, but were put to flight, while the Messenger of God stayed where he was, having no one with him except his uncle al-'Abbas and his cousin Abu Sufyan. The servants of God called him, 'O ye of the tree, O ye of the cow.' Then they came, saying, 'At thy service, at thy service.' The battle grew even more fierce, and finally the unbelievers were routed, and on that day Muhammad captured six thousand souls and took so many camels and heads of small cattle that they could not be numbered.

### ***The Raid of Badr***

In Sura al-Qamar 54:44,45 we read: "Or do they say, 'We are a congregation that shall be succoured?' Certainly the host shall be routed, and turn their backs."

سورة القمر ٥٤:٤٤ و٥٥ «أَمْ يَقُولُونَ نَحْنُ جَمِيعٌ مُنتَصِرُونَ سَيُهْزَمُ الْجَمْعُ وَيُوَلُّونَ الدُّبُرَ».

Al-Baidawi said: " 'Umar – may God exalted be pleased with him – said that when it was revealed, he replied, 'I do not know what this is,' and when the day of Badr came, I saw the Messenger of God wearing his coat of mail, saying, 'The host shall be routed.' Then I knew."

### *The Raid of Nadir*

In Sura al-Hashr 59:2, we read: "It is He who expelled from their habitations the unbelievers among the People of the Book at the first mustering. You did not think that they would go forth, and they thought that their fortresses would defend them against God; then God came upon them from whence they had not reckoned, and He cast terror into their hearts as they destroyed their houses with their own hands, and the hands of the believers; therefore take heed, you who have eyes!"

سورة الحشر ٥٩:٢ «هُوَ الَّذِي أَخْرَجَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ لِأَوَّلِ الْحَشْرِ مَا ظَنَنْتُمْ أَنْ يَخْرُجُوا وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُمْ مَانِعَتُهُمْ حُصُونُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فَأَتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَمْ يَحْتَسِبُوا وَقَدَفَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الرُّغْبَ يُخْرِبُونَ بُيُوتَهُمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَيْدِي الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَاعْتَبِرُوا يَا أُولِيَ الْأَبْصَارِ».

Al-Baidawi said:

It is told that when [Muhammad] arrived at Medina, he made peace with the tribe of Banu Nadir on the condition that they would be neutral towards him. When the day of Badr appeared, they said that he was the Prophet

described in the Torah as the Helper. Then when the Muslims were routed at Uhud, they began to have misgivings and revoked the agreement, and Ka'b Ibn al-Ashraf set out for Mecca with forty mounted men in order to form an alliance with Abu Sufyan. Then Muhammad commanded Ka'b's foster brother to be killed and accompanied them with the cavalry, besieging them until they agreed to emigrate. Most of them then emigrated to Syria. One group of them reached Khaybar and Hira. "It is He who expelled from their habitations the unbelievers among the People of the Book at the first mustering" refers to their first mustering on the Arab peninsula, since no such humiliation had ever befallen them before. A mustering is the moving of a multitude from one place to another. "You did not think that they would go forth" – because of their strong courage and power. "They destroyed their houses with their own hands" – in order to spare the Muslims.

### *The Raid of Tabuk*

In Sura al-Tawba 9:73,74 we read: "O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers and hypocrites, and be thou harsh with them; their refuge is Gehenna – an evil homecoming! They swear by God that they said nothing, but they indeed said the word of unbelief and disbelieved, after they had surrendered. They purposed what they never attained to, and they took revenge only that God enriched them, and His Messenger, of His bounty. So if they repent it will be better for them; if they turn away God will chastise them with a painful chastisement in this world and the next; on the earth they have no protector or helper."

سورة التوبة ٧٣:٩ و ٧٤ ﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ جَاهِدِ الْكُفَّارَ وَالْمُنَافِقِينَ وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَأْوَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَنِيسَ الْمَصِيرِ يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ مَا قَالُوا وَلَقَدْ قَالُوا كَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ وَكَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِسْلَامِهِمْ وَهُمْ بِمَا لَمْ يَتَّالُوا وَمَا تَعْمُرُوا إِلَّا أَنْ أَغْنَاهُمْ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ فَإِنْ يَتُوبُوا يَكُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَإِنْ يَتُوبُوا يَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ اللَّهُ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ﴾.

Al-Baidawi said:

“O Prophet, struggle with the unbelievers” – with the sword – “and be thou harsh with them” – in doing so and do not favour them above others. “They swear by God that they said nothing”; it is told that the Prophet stayed for two months at the raid of Tabuk as the Qur’an was being revealed to him, reproving those who were left behind. Al-Julus Ibn Suwayd said, “If what Muhammad says to our brothers is true, we are worse than donkeys.” This reached the ears of the Prophet, so he summoned him. When he came, he swore by God to witness what he had said. Then the sura was revealed, and al-Julus repented in the best manner. “They purposed what they never attained to” – namely, to kill the Messenger. Fifteen of them had actually planned to push Muhammad from his camel into the valley when he would be climbing the steep mountain road by night on his return from Tabuk. So ‘Ammar Ibn Yasir took the halter of the camel to lead it, and Hudhayfa went behind him to steer it. They were proceeding like this, when suddenly Hudhayfa heard camel hoofs and the rattling of weapons. He said, “Away, away with you, ye enemies of God”, so they fled. “They took revenge only...” – that is, they did not reject or find

what was inherited by their revenge. “Only that God had enriched them, and His Messenger, of His bounty” – for most of the people of Medina were poor, leading a wretched life, and when the Messenger of God arrived, they received booty.

## 29. The Killing of the Dogs

**Question 238:** In Sura al-Ma’ida 5:4 we read: “They will question thee what is permitted them. Say: ‘The good things are permitted you; and such hunting creatures as you teach, training them as hounds.’”

سورة المائدة ٥:٤ ﴿يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُمْ مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلَّبِينَ﴾.

Al-Tabari tells us, on the authority of Abu Rafi’:

“Gabriel came to Muhammad, asking his permission to enter into his house. Muhammad allowed this, but Gabriel did not enter, so Muhammad said: ‘We have already been given permission concerning thee, O Messenger of God, yes, but we do not enter a house where there is a dog.’ Abu Rafi’ said: ‘So he ordered me to kill all the dogs in Medina, which I did until I came to the house of a woman who had a dog that was barking at her, so I left it alone, taking pity on her. Then I came to Muhammad and told him, but he ordered me to kill this last one, too.’ Then ‘Adi Ibn Hatim and Zaid Ibn al-Muhalhal came, saying: ‘O Messenger of God, we are people who hunt with dogs and falcons, and the dogs of the clan of Dhuraih hunt cows, donkeys and gazelles, so what is lawful for us?’ So he answered with the

words mentioned. And he declared hunting dogs and dogs for herding lawful after he had killed them all!"

We ask: If Gabriel did not enter Muhammad's house because of the dog in it, why was it not enough for Muhammad to kill only the dog in his own house? Why did he order the killing of the poor woman's dog, yet allow the rich people's hunting dogs to live? Moreover, dogs had been in Muhammad's house and in Medina before the decree was given to kill them, so how could Gabriel have entered Muhammad's house prior to that time? If Gabriel hated dogs, are we not justified in saying that the one who used to come to Muhammad prior to the decree was someone other than Gabriel?

### 30. The Torah Did Not Prophesy about Him

**Question 239:** In Sura al-Saff 61:6 we read: "And when Jesus son of Mary said, 'Children of Israel, I am indeed the Messenger of God to you, confirming the Torah that is before me, and giving good tidings of a Messenger who shall come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad.' Then, when he brought them the clear signs, they said, 'This is a manifest sorcery.'"

سورة الصف ٦١:٦ وَإِذْ قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِنِّي رَسُولُ  
اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَمُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي  
أَسْمُهُ أَهْمَدُ فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ قَالُوا هَذَا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ.

The Qur'an testifies that the Torah had been preserved without error or falsification up until the days of Christ, as we read in Sura Al Imran 3:48-49: "And He will teach him the Book, the Wisdom, the Torah, the Gospel, to be a Messenger to the

Children of Israel saying, 'I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. I will create for you out of clay as the likeness of a bird; then I will breathe into it, and it will be a bird, by the leave of God. I will also heal the blind and the leper, and bring to life the dead, by the leave of God.'" Furthermore, the Qur'an testifies in many places that the Torah remained without falsification from the time of Christ until the time of Muhammad, as we see from Sura Al Imran 3:93: "Say: 'Bring you the Torah now, and recite it, if you are truthful.'" The Qur'an also testifies that the Gospel is intact, as we see in Sura al-Ma'ida 5:47: "So let the People of the Gospel judge according to what God has sent down therein. Whosoever judges not according to what God has sent down – they are the ungodly."

So the Bible is true, unfalsified, unchanged; nothing has been added to it, neither is anything missing from it. There is no indication whatsoever that Muhammad was to come as a prophet. Where then did Muhammad get the idea that Jesus had prophesied about him?

Christ said that after His ascension He would send the Holy Spirit upon His disciples. In the original Greek it refers to the *paraclete*, which means "comforter". This word is close in pronunciation to another Greek word which means "famous"; the Arabic equivalent of this word is *mamduh*, so Muhammad thought that this *mamduh*, whom Christ would send, was none other than himself! The origin of this error is that these two Greek words were interchanged, so that the Arabs understood something other than Christ had intended.

It is no secret that Mani, the well-known impostor who emerged from Persia and claimed to be a prophet, said, "I am

the Paraclete, and Christ has witnessed about me.” But the Christians refuted his claims by their intimate knowledge of the truth of the Gospel and by their knowledge that Christ did not prophesy about the coming of another prophet after Himself. Moreover, they knew that Christ had sealed the Law by His disciples (Isaiah 8:16). Christ also warned His followers about false prophets, saying, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” (Matthew 7:15).

### 31. The “Illiterate” Prophet

**Question 240:** In Sura al-A‘raf 7:157-158 we read: “Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk.... Believe then in God, and in His Messenger, the Prophet of the common folk.”

سورة الأعراف ٧: ١٥٧ و ١٥٨ وَالَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ...  
فَأْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ.

The reason Muhammad is called “the Prophet of the common folk” is that he did not appear among the Jews, but among the Gentiles. (This description can also be translated as “the illiterate Prophet”.) The Jews were used to calling all non-Jews *gentiles*, or “common folk”, just as the Arabs used to call all non-Arabs *‘ajam*. The Qur’an refers to Jews and Christians as “People of the Book” and others “the common folk”, which is what all Arabs were called according to the Qur’an: “It is He who has raised up from among the common people a Messenger from among them, to recite His signs to them” (Sura al-Jum‘a 62:2); “And say to those who have been given the Book and to

the common folk: ‘Have you surrendered?’” (Sura Al Imran 3:20); “And of the People of the Book is he who, if thou trust him with a hundred weight, will restore it thee; and of them is he who, if thou trust him with one pound, will not restore it thee, unless ever thou standest over him. That, because they say, ‘There is no way over us as to the common people.’ They speak falsehood against God and that wittingly” (Sura Al Imran 3:75).

Therefore, Muhammad was called the Prophet of the common people, because he was a stranger to the Jewish nation, the chosen people, from whom God had raised up all the prophets; and God made His Word, Christ, the Saviour of the world, the final seal of all the prophets. Muhammad was also called “the Prophet of the common folk” because, as it is claimed, he did not know how to read and write. They consider it a miracle that he could recite the Qur’an, being illiterate. Many Jews and Christians followed Muhammad and embraced Islam. Ibn ‘Abbas and al-Suyuti relate in their commentaries that a certain ‘Ubaidallah Ibn Sallam, who was a Jewish priest, converted to Islam. The Qur’an says about him: “And a witness from among the Children of Israel bears witness to its like” (Sura al-Ahqaf 46:10).

### 32. Compulsion and Non-Compulsion

**Question 241:** In Sura al-Nahl 16:101 we read: “And when We exchange a verse in the place of another verse – and God knows very well what He is sending down – they say, ‘Thou art a mere forger!’ Nay, but the most of them have no knowledge.”

سورة النحل ١٦:١٠١ «وَإِذَا بَدَلْنَا آيَةً مَكَانَ آيَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يُنزِّلُ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُفْتَرٍ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ».

In the Qur'an there are two separate messages, as if by two different prophets that fight each other, and the second one defeats the first, takes it prisoner, and neutralises its message! The first one forbids doing harm to those who do not believe in Muhammad: "And say to those who have been given the Book and to the common folk: 'Have you surrendered?'" (Sura Al Imran 3:20); "And if thy Lord had willed, whoever is in the earth would have believed, all of them, all together. Wouldst thou then constrain the people, until they are believers? It is not for any soul to believe save by the leave of God" (Sura Yunis 10:99,100); "It is thine only to deliver the Message, and Ours the reckoning" (Sura al-Ra'd 13:40); "And obey not the unbelievers and the hypocrites; heed not their hurt, but put thy trust in God" (Sura al-Ahzab 33:48); "And We have sent thee not, except good tidings to bear, and warning" (Sura al-Isra' 17:106).

However, the second message abrogates the application of these verses, even though their text has not been erased from the Qur'an. They are kept there for reciting only. Muhammad adopted a new way in his exile in Medina: the way of war, violence and fighting! How does the Muslim reconcile these verses, the Meccan and the Medinan ones, the peaceful and the warlike ones?

### 33. Nearer the Believers than They Themselves

**Question 242:** In Sura al-Ahzab 33:36 we read: "It is not for any believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair. Whosoever

disobeys God and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error."

سورة الأحزاب ٣٣:٣٦ «وَمَا كَانَ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنَةِ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُبِينًا».

Al-Baidawi says:

"It is not for any believer, man or woman" means that absolutely no one has a right; "when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter," – that is, when God's Messenger has decreed it. God is mentioned in order to exalt the Prophet and declare that his decree is God's decree, because it was revealed concerning Zainab, the daughter of Jahsh and his aunt Umayma, the daughter of 'Abd al-Muttalib. The Messenger of God had engaged her to Zaid Ibn Haritha, but she and her brother 'Abd Allah refused! It is said that Umm Kulthum, daughter of 'Uqba, gave herself to the Prophet, but he gave her in marriage to Zaid! "To have the choice in the affair" means that they themselves could choose anything instead of letting their choice be subservient to the choice of God and His Messenger."

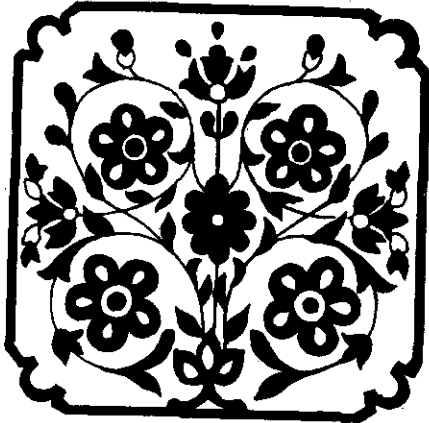
In his commentary to Sura al-Ahzab 33:37, al-Baidawi says, "'And conceal what is within thyself'" – that is, to marry Zainab if Zaid would divorce her, or if the Prophet wanted him to divorce her. 'Fearing other men' means their condemning of you for doing so or fearing people's gossip."

In his commentary on the same sura, verse 6 ("The Prophet is



nearer to the believers than their selves") al-Baidawi says, "It is told that he wanted to raid Tabuk and commanded the people to set out. But some people said, 'Let us ask our parents' permission,' so the Qur'anic verse descended."

From these verses and their interpretation we see how Muhammad imposed his absolute will. If he wanted to give Zainab in marriage to his son Zaid, she would have to submit, even if she and her brother objected. And if Muhammad wanted Zainab, Zaid would have to renounce being her husband! And if he wanted to raid, the young men would have to obey without asking their parents' permission!



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## Quiz

### *Is the Qur'an Infallible?*

If you have read this book carefully, you can easily answer the following questions. We are prepared to send you one of our other books as a prize in recognition of your efforts. Do not forget to write your full name and address when you send your answers to us.

1. There are ten categories of questionable texts in the Qur'an. What are these ten categories?
2. List five of the geographical mistakes described in this book.
3. The author has mentioned 54 historical questions in the Qur'an. Write out ten of these questions and explain three of them.
4. The Qur'an permits nine sins; which are they? Which one do you find most offensive?
5. The author raises 29 theological questions in the Qur'an. From these, explain the following:
  - a) The Muslim *jinn*
  - b) The dubious revelation
  - c) God wills unbelief
  - d) A dog invalidates the revelation
  - e) There is no prophet descended from Ishmael
6. The writer has found 24 grammatical mistakes in the Qur'an. Explain questions 108, 110, 112, 114 and 122.
7. The author has found 26 things which he considers to be

*Quiz*

legal questions. Write why he found the following subjects questionable:

- a) Cutting off a thief's hand
- b) Marrying another husband
- c) Polygamy
- d) Permitting concubinage
- e) Killing an apostate

8. The author has found 21 social questions in the Qur'an. Write why he found fault with:

- a) A woman's testimony being worth half that of a man
- b) Beating one's wife
- c) Constraining to prostitution
- d) Blood revenge
- e) The Muslims' interpersonal conflicts

9. The writer questions 22 scientific matters in the Qur'an. Why does he question the following items?

- a) The magic ring
- b) The *jinn* and the *'ifrit*
- c) Honey as a cure-all for every disease
- d) A corpse that leans on a stick for a year
- e) Muhammad's vulnerability to magic

10. The writer has found 33 questionable areas in the life of the Prophet of Islam. Name the one you think is worst and explain why. Then list those areas which you do not consider shameful, and defend your viewpoint.