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QURANIC SCIENCES

The Creator's Existence, The Essence and Signature Traits of Prophethood, and a thoroughly detailed section on the 'Iṣmah (infallibility) of the Prophets عليهم السلام

THE PROPHETIC

TRADITION

Ĥadīth in the Indian Subcontinent

"It is not befitting for anyone who possesses knowledge to cease learning." (رحمه الله Malik bin Anas)



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Qur'anic SCIENCES

BY

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QURANIC SCIENCES:

CORE THEMES OF THE QUR'ĀN

THE CREATOR'S EXISTENCE

Belief in the existence of a Creator has been a universally enduring conviction throughout human history since the beginning of time.

Nations and cultures worldwide have overwhelmingly affirmed the existence of a supreme being, despite divergent views on other aspects.

A small minority, however, has consistently rejected God's existence, particularly in modern times. This rejection lacks scholarly basis, evidence, or logical argument, revealing blatant ignorance.

The primary reason atheists deny God is their inability to find empirical evidence within the scientific realm among perceivable objects, reflecting their limitations in knowledge. Some foolish scientists mistakenly label the non-existence of their evidence as "evidence of non-existence."

Often, scientists irrationally overlook the fundamental reality that the essence of the Creator is beyond the realm of all of creation. The inability to find God's Transcendent Being among perceivable objects does not justify denying His existence. Would it be logical to dismiss the existence of sea creatures like fish simply because they're not found among land-dwelling species? Similarly, if a terrestrial creature like a chameleon isn't found in oceans or rivers, would it be reasonable to reject its existence entirely?

Professor Lettre, a renowned science advocate, notes: *“Since we remain uncertain about the universe's origin and fate, we lack the authority to deny the existence of an eternal, ever-living being, just as it's not our role to affirm it.”*

The author of al-Kalām cites:

“Those who solely rely on materialism disconnect themselves from the First Intellect (a philosophical term for the Creator), due to their lack of understanding. We neither refute nor confirm divine wisdom. Our role is to avoid both negation

and affirmation. Nonetheless, the vast majority of scientists acknowledge the essence of a Creator.”

Isaac Newton wrote:

“The intricate arrangement, complexity, and adaptability found in the specks of the universe, despite countless changes over time and space, defies explanation without a singular, all-knowing, and omnipotent being behind it — the absolute First Cause.”

Herbert Spencer, one of the more renowned physicians and scientists of this age, observes:

“All the secrets that grow deeper in ambiguity with deeper inquiry reveal, to the extent of their intricacy, an eternal, ever-living power beyond human comprehension — the source of all existence.”

Camille Flammarion, a French scholar, notes:

“Teachers struggle to grasp how existence originated and persists. This enigma compels them to acknowledge a Single Creator, whose influence and authority endure eternally.”

Professor Leni writes:

“The Powerful and Wise Lord reveals Himself through astonishing achievements, leaving me in awe. Every minor detail showcases extraordinary power, wisdom, and ingenuity.”

Fournier's Encyclopedia states:

“Physics' primary purpose is not to satiate intellectual curiosity, but to direct our gaze toward the universe's Creator, humbling us before His majesty and greatness.”

THE THREE KEY OBJECTIONS ABOUT GOD

Three key objections commonly obstruct the path to divine recognition, frequently posed by prominent American atheists. These arguments are:

1. Knowledge is acquired either through senses or instinct; neither channel provides evidence for God's existence.

2. God's essence transcends human imagination, making it impossible to establish the reality of a being beyond our cognitive grasp.

3. Believing in God raises the paradox of evil: attributing a universe containing evil to an all-wise deity seems implausible.

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [1]

The Creator's essence is affirmed by both human senses and instinct. A compelling proof lies in the overwhelming consensus among humanity, affirming God's existence.

Those who deny His existence comprise a minority with flawed instinct. Just as external senses can be impaired, internal senses and instinct can also be defective.

A flawed instinct hinders discernment, much like impaired vision limits sight. Likewise, a corrupted instinctive faculty struggles to grasp instinctual truths.

God's existence transcends sensory perception, but this doesn't negate His reality. Consider taste and smell: though invisible, their existence is undeniable.

The limitation lies not in God's existence but in human senses' scope. The Creator's essence exceeds creation's boundaries, but is accessible through instinct and intellect.

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [2]

We often believe in concepts beyond our full comprehension. So, why hesitate to believe in God?

As Shaykh Nadīm al-Jasr notes in *Qiṣṣat al-Īmān bayn al-Falsafah wal-'Ilm wal-Qur'ān*, scientists acknowledge the existence of matter, soul, and life, despite unclear definitions.

Similarly, the nature of intellect and its interplay with sensory perception remains unknown. Yet, we accept these phenomena without hesitation.

By acknowledging the mysterious aspects of our reality, we dissolve the pretext for rejecting God's existence.

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [3]

Even if evil exists in the universe, its relationship to God's divine wisdom may remain unclear to us for now. However, it's possible that time will reveal this interconnectedness.

Our current inability to understand how divine wisdom interacts with apparent evil does not preclude future discovery.

Consider the numerous laws of nature that remained unknown to humans for millennia, only to be uncovered in later ages.

Similarly, the interplay between divine wisdom and evil events may currently elude us, but it's conceivable that future insight will illuminate this relationship as human understanding evolves further.

ANSWER [2]

Apparent evil in a universal event may stem from our limited perspective, where we fail to see the status of its unfolding under the complete sequence of events.

Unaware of the broader context, we misjudge certain occurrences as evil.

However, if we grasped the entire chain of events, our perception would shift, revealing what seemed evil to be ultimately good.

ANSWER [3]

According to Ibn Sīnā, the world's condition can be categorized into three possibilities:

1. Exclusively good
2. Exclusively evil
3. Predominantly good with some evil

Nature considered these options. The first was undoubtedly ideal, while the second was unequivocally undesirable, which is why a world filled solely with evil was never created.

The third scenario, however, is subject to debate: should nature have created a world with significant good and a little bit of evil?

If such a universe hadn't been created, only a few evils would be avoided, but an abundance of good would also be forfeited. In other words, avoidance of minimal evil would have resulted in deprivation from substantial good.

Fire brings benefits, such as cooking, warmth, and heating, yet risks the potential to destroy a structure and harm the body. Yet, its advantages far outweigh its drawbacks. Water is essential for life, but can also cause harm if it takes the form of a devastating flood. Air, vital for existence, can become destructive in extreme gusts,

forming storms, hurricanes, and tornadoes and leaving disaster in its wake.

Despite potential harm, nature's balance favors the greater good. The benefits of these elements are infinite, while their negative consequences are relatively rare.

This raises a question: couldn't the harmful aspects be separated from the beneficial ones, leaving only pure good? Unfortunately, this is impossible.

Fire's capacity to cook requires its inherent ability to burn. It cannot selectively produce heat for culinary purposes without posing a risk to structures or fabrics. To eliminate the risk would negate fire's fundamental nature.

ANSWER [4]

Ibn Rushd states that no bad in the world is literal. All bad is contextual, and arises from interconnectedness with something good. In other words, all bad is extrinsic, and is intrinsically linked to a greater good.

Anger, typically viewed as negative, motivates self-defense and protection of one's dignity. Without anger, individuals might fail to defend themselves from attack or respond to threats. Lust, though often vilified or stigmatized, is crucial to the survival and propagation of the human species.

This paradox also applies to natural elements like fire, water, and air, which, despite potential risks, provide essential benefits.

EVIDENCE OF GOD THROUGH ENLIGHTENMENT

Having addressed the concerns of atheists, we now proceed to establish the existence of the Creator through rational enlightenment.

[1] THE EVIDENCE OF INTENTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

The universe's existence can be explained by three possibilities: (1) the Creator, (2) intentional matter in motion, or (3) unintentional matter in motion. Neither theists nor atheists support the second scenario, as materialists universally acknowledge matter's lack of inherent intent.

This leaves the third scenario open for debate: attributing the universe's existence to matter's

unintentional movement, driven by coincidence. This perspective is fundamentally flawed due to the universe's remarkably wise and orderly structure, evident in multiple manifestations of cosmology, such as the laws of nature, elemental and compound arrangements, plant and animal creation, seasonal cycles, day-night alternation, and the intricate design of transportation modes, both natural (animals) and artificial (human-made vehicles).

The complexity and precision of these immaculate arrangements render coincidence an implausible explanation.

Imagine writing numbers 1 to 10 on separate pieces of paper, placing them in a bag, and asking a blind child to draw them in sequence. Despite countless attempts, the chances of success are zero.

Or, write each word of a poem on individual pieces of papers, and ask the child to draw them in the correct order. Even after a million years, the probability of success remains impossible.

How then can such an intricately arranged universe emerge from the random, unintentional motion of inert matter? How can blind chance account for such a complex yet perfectly-integrated existence? This illustrates that the rational conclusion is the first scenario: the universe's existence is attributable to the will and intent of an all-Wise Creator. (See *Qiṣṣat al-Īmān bayn al-Falsafah wal-'Ilm wal-Qur'ān* by Ibn an-Nadīm al-Jasr)

[2] THE EVIDENCE OF EMERGENT LIFE

Modern and ancient philosophies concur: the universe's material composition lacks knowledge, perception, and life. Yet, the universe harbors creatures bearing life, knowledge, and perception. Humans possess life, knowledge, and perception, and all other living beings possess life and perception – even plants, as modern research reveals, possess some level of sensory capabilities.

This raises a fundamental question: How can life, perception, and knowledge emerge from inert, insentient matter? It defies logic that a cluster of positives should arise from a negative.

Sentience cannot be derived from inert; life cannot spring from void. Therefore, the universe's source of life must be a Living, Knowing Being — attributes quintessentially describing God, the Ever-Living, All-Knowing, and All-Wise.

[3] THE EVIDENCE OF ENHANCED PERCEPTION

The crowning hallmark of humanity is its heightened capacity for thought and perception. Perception is the apex of human existence. Interestingly, perception exists in plants, albeit subtly, grows progressively complex among animals, and reaches its zenith in humans, where it yearns for elevated understanding.

This incremental evolution of perception necessitates a fundamental explanation. Renowned biologist Dr. Laid Margin posits:

“The emergence of this evolutionary trajectory confirms the existence of a purposeful Creator, namely God, as evolution implies a directed destination. The pursuit of knowledge dictates that lower-level ambiguities are resolved through higher-level understanding. Physics' enigmas find clarity in biology, biology's mysteries yield to psychological insights, and psychology's complexities resolve through logical analysis and causal reasoning. Ultimately, the ambiguities of these disciplines find resolution in spiritual understanding.”

[4] THE EVIDENCE OF INTELLECTUAL CULMINATION

The human mind exhibits a remarkable capacity for abstraction, by transcending individual entities to encompass collective realities, as its imagination continues to be enhanced through experiential learning.

This cognitive process yields broader concepts: the human identity emerges from individual persons, diverse species coalesce into the animal kingdom, plant families are extracted from varied flora, and ultimately, the concept of the universe is distilled from the vast expanse of animate and inanimate components.

This philosophical ascent culminates in the rational conclusion of a unified Creator, the convergence point for existence's multifaceted tapestry. It is through this focal concept of a Creator that the vast diversity of creation finds absolute coherence.

EVIDENCE OF GOD THROUGH VOICES OF THE PAST

[1] HOPE IN A SINKING SHIP

Imām Ja'far Ṣādiq رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was asked to prove Allāh's existence. He posed a question:

“Imagine being stranded on a sinking ship in the middle of the ocean, with no aid, no lifeline, no plank to hold on to, and no swimming skills. Would you still hold onto hope?”

The questioner replied,

“Yes, hope would remain.”

Imām Ja'far Ṣādiq رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ concluded,

“Even in the absence of external means, hope persists solely due to the inherent recognition of God within the human psyche.”

[2] THE UNMANNED SHIP

Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ arrived late to a debate with atheists, prompting them to inquire about the delay. He posed a thought-provoking question:

“If I told you that I crossed a river using a boat that formed itself from fallen tree trunks, without any human intervention, would you believe me?”

Alternatively, he asked:

“Would you credibly accept a ship sailing across a river, unaided and unmanned, reaching its destination without human guidance?”

The atheists emphatically rejected these scenarios as impossible. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ then presented his argument:

“If a single vessel cannot navigate a river without human direction, how can such an intricately complex universe govern itself flawlessly without divine guidance?”

He concluded, *“It is self-evident that the universe has a governing Being, and that Being is Allāh.”*

[3] THE MULBERRY LEAF

Imām Shāfi'ī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was asked to demonstrate Allāh's existence. He illustrated,

“Observe the mulberry leaf's transformation. Consumed by a goat, it becomes ordinary droppings. Eaten by a silkworm, it's converted into exquisite silk. And when a bee ingests it, the result is sweet, golden honey.”

He concluded, *“This paradox of one substance yielding three distinct outcomes through three different creatures — bespeaks the existence of the Omnipotent Being we reverence as God.”*

[4] THE UNIQUENESS WITHIN UNITY

When queried about Allāh's existence, Imām Mālik رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ offered a profound observation:

“Among humans, no two voices are identical, and no two faces are exactly alike. This astonishing diversity of voices and faces, within the billions of a single species, testifies to the existence of the Immense Power we call God.”

[5] THE HEN'S INSTINCT

A chick develops within a hen's egg, nurtured by divine design. As it prepares to emerge, the chick breaks through the eggshell's sturdy fortress and tentatively extends its head. Until then, the hen diligently incubates her eggs, providing warmth and protection.

The hen's intuitive knowledge is remarkable: she knows when to sit, when her chicks will hatch, and when they'll break free to greet the world. This intricate understanding stems not from learned experience but from divine inspiration.

The Source of this inspiration is Allāh, the One who has guided the hen since the beginning, imparting vital instincts that ensure the chicks' safe passage into the world.

[6] THE FLORAL SIGNATURE

The poet Abū Nawās presented a compelling argument for Allāh's existence, citing the diverse leaves

and exquisite flowers that spring from the earth. He observed that despite sharing a common origin — water and earth — each plant and flower uniquely blossoms into distinct forms and vibrant hues.

This symphoning diversity bespeaks the hand of an Immense Power. That Power, Abū Nawās asserted, is none other than Allāh. Sa'dī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writes:

برگ درختاں سبز در نظرِ ہوشیار
ہر ورقِ دفترے است معرفتِ کردگار

*Green leaves on trees, to discerning eyes
Reveal the Creator's wisdom, leaf by leaf*

[7] THE SOURCE OF LANGUAGE

Today, thousands of languages exist worldwide, passed down through generations. Children learn from their parents and community, who learned from their own

ancestors, creating an unbroken chain of linguistic heritage. However, this raises a profound question: where did the very first human acquire language?

Logically, the first speaker had no human teacher. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the first language was divinely inspired. The ultimate source of human speech and language is none other than God.

Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ has documented most of these evidences in the first volume of his seminal work, *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. We have reimagined the arguments here to distill their essence.

EVIDENCE OF GOD THROUGH PHILOSOPHY

We now proceed to provide philosophical arguments to establish the existence of God.

[1] THE EVIDENCE OF DERIVED EXISTENCE

The universe comprises two fundamental aspects: matter and the entities formed from it. These entities, directly or indirectly, exhibit two inherent states: motion and stillness. When matter or its derivatives occupy multiple positions simultaneously, it's in motion; when confined to a single position, it's at rest. Motion and stillness are mutually exclusive, meaning that the presence of motion in an area demands the absence of stillness and vice versa, indicating that their existence is actually derived.

Given that all matter and its derivatives are inescapably tied to either motion or stillness, it follows that matter itself and its creations also have a derived existence. As created entities require a Creator, an infinite regress of creators is illogical. Therefore, we must acknowledge a singular Creator unbounded by beginning or end — God.

[2] THE EVIDENCE OF POSSIBLE EXISTENCE

The existence of any entity can be classified under one of three possible conditions:

1. **Impossible existence (mumtani' al-wujūd):** Its existence is inherently impossible, such as two times two equalling five.
2. **Necessary existence (wājib al-wujūd):** Its existence is inherently essential and unavoidable.

3. **Possible existence (mumkin al-wujūd):** Its existence is possible but not necessary, nor is its non-existence necessary. For instance, water's color is not inherent; any apparent hue is due to external factors, demonstrating the possible existence of color in water.

The universe cannot be mumtani' al-wujūd (essentially impossible) since we experience its existence firsthand. The non-existence of something that currently exists is inherently impossible.

Nor is the universe wājib al-wujūd (necessarily existent), for if it were, none of its components would ever cease to exist. However, our senses and intellect confirm that various aspects of the universe are susceptible to dissolution and eventual non-existence.

Therefore, the universe falls under the category of mumkin al-wujūd (contingently existent), i.e., its existence is possible but not necessary.

This means that by its essence, the universe is ontologically neutral, requiring neither existence nor non-

existence. Its existence or non-existence depends on external influences. For instance, water's color is determined by external factors, not its inherent nature.

Consequently, the universe's existence stems from an external cause; not its own essential demand. However, if this external cause is also contingently existent (*mumkin al-wujūd*), it would necessitate another external factor, leading to an infinite regress — which is again an implausible scenario.

Therefore, the ultimate cause of the universe's existence must be necessarily existent (*wājib al-wujūd*), self-sustaining and essential. This necessary existence is inherently God, whose being is unavoidable, essential, and independent of external factors.

[3] THE EVIDENCE OF INSEPERABILITY

When attributing one thing to another, two possibilities arise:

1. The second entity is inherently and inseparably linked to the first, such as the attribution of heat to fire. Heat is an essential, permanent aspect of fire's essence. It exists solely through fire's existence and is indistinguishable from its nature. This is termed *mā biz-zhāt* (inherent existence).
2. Alternatively, the second entity is non-essential and separable from the first. This is designated as *mā bil-'arḍ* (contingent existence). For instance, heat is not intrinsic to water; it can be separated from it. Water acquires heat through external influence, such as a fire's effect, and loses it due to lapse of time or without the fire's influence.

Contingently existing entities prompt inquiry into their causal factors because their existence depends on external influences. For instance, "Why is the water hot?" elicits the response, "It was heated by fire." This curiosity

arises from the separable nature of contingent attributes — in this case, the separable nature of heat from water.

In contrast, inherently existing entities don't inspire such inquiry since their existence isn't attributable to external factors. Consider fire's heat: we don't ask, "Why is fire hot?" because heat is an essential, inseparable aspect of fire's nature.

This distinction underscores the rational limits of inquiry. Questioning inherent existents would be unnecessary, as their essence is self-explanatory. We simply acknowledge that fire is inherently hot.

According to this principle, the universe's existence is contingent (*mā bil-'arḍ*) since its constituents are subject to origination and cessation. This contingency warrants inquiry into its causal basis, analogous to questioning why water is hot.

Rationally, we can ask, "Why does the universe exist?" and the simple answer is, "It exists because God caused it to exist."

More precisely, the universe exists because of a Being whose essence is existence itself, from whom existence is inseparable and essential. This Being is Allāh, the Lord of the realms.

Ultimately, this answer is terminal, as querying God's existence itself is irrational, just as asking why fire is hot is unwarranted.

This argument affirmatively demonstrates the existence of both God's essence and attributes.

Humans possess attributes like life, knowledge, authority, hearing, seeing, speaking, and intent. However, to humans, these attributes are non-essential and transient, categorizing them as *mā bil-'arḍ* (contingently existent).

By necessity, every contingent existence (*mā bil-'arḍ*) depends on an inherent existence (*mā biz-zhāt*).

Consequently, humanity's contingent attributes imply the existence of an inherently existent, necessary Being whose essence encompasses these attributes.

In summary, our contingent attributes originate from God's inherent, necessary attributes, just as our contingent existence stems from God's inherent existence.

Ultimately, God's inherent existence and attributes serve as the primary source of all contingent existences and attributes within the universe.

[4] THE EVIDENCE OF NATURE'S ENDLESS LAWS

The universe operates according to profound laws, enabling us to distinguish causes from effects and factors from results. These laws form an infinite, boundless continuum, with humanity's current scientific understanding representing merely a fraction of the vast, unexplored expanse of natural laws. Indeed, known laws are but a drop in the ocean of unknown ones.

This infiniteness fuels scientific progress, ensuring ongoing advancements.

If natural laws were finite, discovery would stagnate, as science essentially entails uncovering these laws.

The existence of these infinite, wise, and perfectly-integrated laws points to an all-Wise Author who possesses absolute authority over every aspect of the universe — God. This cannot be attributed to inert matter, which is completely devoid of life, perception, knowledge, and wisdom.

[5] THE EVIDENCE OF COMPLETE LOVE

The universe is permeated by love. Shāh Rafī'uddīn رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ explores this concept in depth in his treatise *Asrār al-Mahabbah*. He states that humanity experiences the highest form of love, categorized into two types:

1. Incomplete love, directed towards oneself, children, people, and possessions.
2. Complete love, reserved for God's essence.

The universality of divine love across religions underscores its inherent presence in human nature.

For love to exist, a beloved must exist. Just as we love tangible entities which demand incomplete love like ourselves, children, and riches, the beloved of complete love must also exist. This necessity establishes God's existence as the beloved of complete love.

The term “complete love” stems from the willingness to sacrifice lesser loves (self, children, possessions) for the sake of Allāh. Man's selfless devotion testifies to the existence of God, the most complete of loves.

[6] THE EVIDENCE OF SUPPLICATION

The world is beset by widespread oppression. Victims have vastly outnumbered the perpetrators of their oppression throughout the annals of human history.

In times of despair, when external solutions seem elusive, human nature instinctively seeks solace in a higher power. This universal impulse drives individuals to

establish a connection with an Omniscient, Omnipotent Being capable of transforming circumstances.

To salvage hope from hopelessness, people implore this supreme authority to plead for deliverance from their suffering.

The ubiquity of supplication and invocation in dire circumstances across religions testifies to the existence of God.

[7] THE EVIDENCE OF ARRANGEMENT

The universe exhibits an intricately profound order, evident in the cyclical patterns of day and night, seasonal transitions, the balance of heat and cold, the precise movements of planets within solar systems in galaxies across the universe, and the nurturing processes of plants and animals.

These arrangements collectively attest to the existence of an all-Wise, Omniscient Being, for the very concept of arrangement implies an arranger.

Just as the deliberate structure of words in a poetic epic bespeaks the expertise of its author, the universe's arrangement reveals the mastery of its Creator. As such, order and structure in the cosmos itself serves as compelling evidence for the existence of God's essence.

[8] THE EVIDENCE OF CONCEPTION

The universe is a majestic, intricately designed structure. Every speck and element, from the smallest particle to the vast expanse, bears testimony to profound wisdom and purpose in its conception and craftsmanship.

The notion that random, unguided matter could conjure such sophistication is fundamentally illogical.

Suppose two travelers stumble upon a majestic citadel deep in the jungle. As they explore its meticulously arranged rooms, they find every essential neatly in place, the floors perfectly tiled, and carpets elegantly laid out — yet, surprisingly, no one is present.

The first traveler attributes the fortress's origin to sheer coincidence: “soil particles randomly fell into water,” he explains, “magically transformed into cement, and somehow assumed the forms of bricks. Coal then fortuitously heated them, solidifying the structure. Over time, these bricks coincidentally assembled into this grand citadel.” For the carpets he suggests: “livestock hairs chaotically detached, merged in the air, and fell into colored water, miraculously becoming vibrant carpets.”

In stark contrast, the second traveler proposes a deliberate design. He attributes the fortress's sophisticated architecture to the expertise of a skilled engineer, supported by a team of talented builders and architects. This engineer first envisioned the blueprint, procured necessary resources, and then oversaw construction according to plan.

When subjected to rational scrutiny, the two explanations reveal stark contrasts. Reason dictates that the first man's attribution of chance sounds more like the

gibberish of an idiot, while the second man's argument for deliberate design is eminently rational.

Similarly, in the court of reason, the materialists' theory of the universe's origin crumbles as absurdism, whereas the explanation offered by believers in One Creator stands as sage and rational.

Rational inquiry necessitates the existence of God as the intelligent Designer behind the universe's intricate structure. The cosmos itself serves as compelling evidence for God's essence, attributes, and perfections.

[9] THE EVIDENCE OF LIFE

The universe teems with life and vitality, testifying to the existence of a primal source of life. This ultimate reality, the Real and Ever-Living Being, serves as the essential center of life, sustains the cosmos, and imbues the universe with vitality.

[10] THE EVIDENCE OF REMEMBRANCE

The remembrance of Allāh yields profound traces of immense pleasure, deep attraction, spiritual expanses, heartfelt contentment, and inner transformation. Though intangible, these sensations resonate deeply. It is impossible for such transformative experiences to arise from contemplating a non-existent entity. The presence of these heartfelt responses in Allāh's remembrance conclusively establishes the existence of the Divine Being.

[11] THE EVIDENCE OF INFINITY

The concept of restriction inherently implies the existence of boundlessness, as limitation denotes the delineation of a finite entity within an infinite or vast context.

For instance, confining individuals to a specific area presupposes a broader, unrestricted expanse from which this limited space is derived.

The universe and its constituents are all characterized by inherent limitations, circumscribed by time, space, and other constraints.

Given the finite nature of cosmic entities, an infinite, transcendent reality must exist, unbound by temporal or spatial constraints. This Infinite Being, the Lord of all realms, exists above and beyond the confines of finite reality.

THE QUR'ĀN ON THE CREATOR

The Qur'ān asserts that recognizing God is an inherent aspect of human nature. Anthropologists universally acknowledge that in humanity's primal state, prior to the emergence of arts, sciences, and civilization, the worship of God was instinctive.

Renowned researcher Max Müller observed that our ancestors instinctively bowed to the Divine, even before having a set name for God.

Idolatry and the deification of physical structures arose only when humanity's natural inclination towards God became obscured by layers of representation.

Recorded history reveals that belief in God has been ubiquitous across cultures. Ancient civilizations — including the ancient Assyrians, Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Chaldeans, Hebrews, and Veneti — uniformly shared a profound conviction in the existence of God.

Plutarch states that surveying the world reveals numerous regions devoid of fortresses, politics, knowledge, industry, professions, and wealth, yet none exist where God's presence is not acknowledged.

The esteemed French scholar Voltaire, a denier of divine revelation and inspiration, noted that Zoroaster, Manes, and Socrates all revered a Singular Authority, a Singular Upholder of justice — One God.

The Qur'ān alludes to this innate nature to recognize God in multiple contexts:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ
أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ شَهِدْنَا ۗ﴾ الأعراف: ١٧٢

“And when your Lord took from the children of Ādam — from their loins — their descendants, and made them testify of themselves, 'Am I not your Lord?' They said, 'But of course, we have testified.'” (7:172)

﴿أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ﴾ إبراهيم: ١٠

“Can there be doubt about Allāh, Creator of the heavens and earth?” (14:10)

Since our innate nature to perceive God is often clouded by external factors, the Qur'an supplements it with rational arguments, leveraging sensory experiences and empirical evidence to reaffirm Divine existence.

Humans naturally recognize order and structure as hallmarks of intelligence. From the dawn of intellectual maturity, a child intuitively associates order with intelligence and chaos with coincidence.

Provide a layperson with individual words of a poem on separate sheets of paper. Despite possessing the words and letters, they will be unable to reconstruct the verse, highlighting the higher form of intelligence the poet possessed with the same components at his disposal.

Similarly, the universe's intricate balance and structure defy spontaneous emergence. Its precision and harmony necessitate an Intelligent Designer.

The Qur'ān calls toward God through such phenomena. For instance, it states:

﴿صَنَّعَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ﴾ النمل: ٨٨

“...the work of Allāh, who perfected everything...” (27:88)

﴿مَا تَرَى فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِنْ تَفَوُّتٍ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَى مِنْ فُطُورٍ﴾

الملك: ٣

“...you will not see in the creation of the Most Merciful any inconsistency — so return [your] vision; do you see any breaks?” (67:3)

﴿وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا﴾ الفرقان: ٢

“...and He created each thing, and determined its measure with precision.” (25:2)

﴿ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ﴾ الروم: ٣٠

“...no change is bound to be in the creation of Allāh...”
(30:30)

﴿ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لِسُنَّةِ اللَّهِ تَبْدِيلًا ﴾ الأحزاب: ٦٢

“...and you will not find in the way of Allāh any change.”
(33:62)

These and similar verses emphasize three fundamental attributes of the universe:

1. Its perfection and completeness, devoid of deficiency.

2. Its intricate order, where every element is created in balance and proportion.
3. Its governance by laws that are immutable and unalterable.

In light of the numerous modern discoveries and the unveiling of the universe's secrets, prominent philosophers and thinkers, through deep contemplation, propose this argument as evidence of God's existence. Aristotle acknowledged the existence of God, affirming His unity and even recognizing the Day of Judgment.

Million Edward observes:

“It's astounding that, despite the wonders unfolding before our eyes, some attribute these marvels to mere randomness and coincidence.”

He argues that such theories, masquerading as “scientific insights,” can be thoroughly debunked by genuine knowledge. “Anyone well-versed in physics,”

Edward asserts, “cannot sincerely entertain such blasphemous notions.”

Herbert Spencer observes:

“All the secrets that grow deeper in ambiguity with deeper inquiry reveal, to the extent of their intricacy, an eternal, ever-living power beyond human comprehension — the source of all existence.”

Professor Leni writes:

“The Powerful and Wise Lord reveals Himself through astonishing achievements, leaving me in awe. Every minor detail showcases extraordinary power, wisdom, and ingenuity.”

ONE GOD

All arguments affirming God's existence simultaneously affirm His unity. The universe, despite its diverse components, forms a cohesive whole. Consider humanity: multiple organs—hands, feet, ears, eyes—yet, fundamentally, one entity. Similarly, the Supreme Being governing and managing the universe is singular, not plural; one omnipotent force, not multiple. There is no multiplicity within God. He is Eternally One.

The existence of multiple gods is unnecessary and implausible. If one God can manage the system, the rest are useless. And if multiple gods are required, it implies that one is incompetent without the other, and incompetence contradicts the essence of divinity.

Apart from that, if multiple gods are supposed to manage a single system, the universe would collapse, and if they are supposed to govern separate systems, the universe would still collapse.

This is because every element in the universe possesses a distinct essence, which makes it distinct from other components of the universe, and a distinct existence, which causes it to generate results distinct from those of other existences. The relationship between essence and existence is akin to a container and its contents.

In a multi-god scenario, each god granting existence to an essence would create conflicting infusions, causing the essence to disintegrate. This is analogous to forcing multiple feet into a single shoe, which would result in its destruction.

This demonstrates that multiple gods governing one system would incinerate the universe.

Now, if we suppose that one god governs the universe while the others remain idle, the inactive gods would be useless and unworthy of divinity.

Moreover, multiple gods would either cooperate or conflict in managing the universe. Conflict would obviously yield chaos. Cooperation, on the other hand, would betray omnipotence. This is due to the fact that the

concept of cooperation presupposes susceptibility to harm, as cooperation is needed only in the face of potential risk. A god cannot be susceptible to harm, which means he doesn't need to cooperate with anything or anyone. Furthermore, the need to cooperate is, essentially, a need, and a god, by definition, cannot have needs, because needs and limitations are also incompatible with godhood. That being said, if gods cannot conflict, they cannot cooperate either. This ultimately leads us to the conclusion that in a multi-god case, each god among multiple gods would independently have to claim absolute authority over the universe, which is again an implausible scenario.

In short, if two gods' influences clash, the universe collapses. If they cooperate, they forfeit their divinity.

Take a grain bag designed to hold exactly 200 kg of grain. If two men attempt to stuff a single grain bag with 200 kg each, it would rip apart, whether they conflict or cooperate.

The Qur'ān articulates this argument in the words:

﴿لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا﴾ الأنبياء: ٢٢

“Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allāh , they would have collapsed.” (21:22)

Monotheism is a common thread among religions. Even polytheistic faiths recognize a supreme, omnipotent entity.

﴿وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُم مَّنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ﴾ لقمان: ٢٥

“And if you asked them, "Who created the heavens and earth?" they would most certainly say, “Allāh.” (31:25)

Christians profess a Trinity, asserting that though there are three separate deities, all three are essentially one. Regardless of how wrong this is, it reveals that even those considered polytheists don't literally believe in separate godheads. Rather, their deviation from pure monotheism

(tauḥīd) stems from associating divine attributes, actions, and worship with entities alongside Allāh.

Islam is the only religion in the world which singularly maintains an uncompromising commitment to tauḥīd, as it obliterates every literal trace and influence of shirk from its clarion concept of One God.

STRICTURES ON SHIRK

1. Shirk, or associating partners with Allāh, is the sole transgression deemed eternally unforgivable.

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

النساء: ١١٦

“Surely Allāh does not forgive association with Him, but He forgives what is less than that for whom He wills.” (4:116)

2. Those who commit shirk are barred from entering Jannah.

﴿إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ﴾

المائدة: ٧٢

“Surely he who associates others with Allāh — Allāh has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge is the Fire.” (5:72)

3. All virtuous deeds performed by one who engages in shirk are rendered null and void.

﴿وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴿٦٥﴾﴾ الزمر: ٦٥

“And it was already revealed to you and to those before you that if you should associate [anything] with Allāh, your work would most surely become worthless, and you would most surely be among the losers.” (39:65)

4. Supplicating on behalf of individuals who commit shirk is strictly prohibited.

﴿ مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ
كَانُوا أُولِي قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ ﴾ ﴿١١٣﴾

التوبة: ١١٣

“It is not for the Prophet and those who have believed to ask forgiveness for the polytheists, even if they were relatives, after it has become clear to them that they are companions of the Blaze.” (9:113)

Even the mushrikān (polytheists) acknowledge Allāh's singular essence and role in creating the universe. However, as Shāh Waliullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ notes in *Hujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, they associated partners with Allāh in three aspects:

1. Attributes: attributing divine qualities to others
2. Actions: assigning supernatural feats to entities beyond Allāh
3. Worship: sharing devotion with others besides Allāh

Islam and the Qur'ān uniquely eradicate every vestige of shirk from tauhīd, affirming the Lord's essence as the

sole source of benefit and harm beyond physical means. The Qur'an emphasizes the singularity of Allāh in several contexts, such as:

❖ Omnipotence:

﴿قُلْ لَا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٨

“Say, 'I hold no power of benefit or harm, except as Allāh wills.'” (7:188)

❖ Omnipresence:

﴿وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ﴾ الحديد: ٤

“And He is with you wherever you are.” (57:4)

❖ Knowledge of the unseen:

﴿ قُلْ لَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ الْغَيْبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ﴾ النمل: ٦٥

“Say, “None in the heavens and earth knows the unseen except Allāh.” (27:65)

❖ Supplication and imploration:

﴿ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا ﴾ الجن: ١٨

“So do not invoke anyone with Allāh.” (72:18)

❖ Worship and seeking extraphysical help:

﴿ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴾ الفاتحة: ٥

*“It is You we worship, and it is You from whom we seek help.”
(1:4)*

❖ Prostration, which was previously permitted to beings other than Allāh

﴿ وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ ﴾ الجن: ١٨

“And that the places of prostration belong to Allāh.” (72:18)

Additionally, Islam prohibited making vows and taking oaths in names other than Allāh's, and forbade circumambulation (ṭawāf) around anything other than the Ka'bah, the house of Allāh, thus sealing all avenues of shirk.

True transformation of the heart through devotion to God requires an unwavering commitment to tauḥīd. Only then can one experience the full spectrum of obedience, compliance, humility, tranquility, contentment, self-sufficiency, trust, and sincerity. This profound transformation occurs when one has unshakeable conviction in the fact that the center of all needs,

necessities, hopes, expectations, aspirations, and objectives — is none other than that One God.

Similarly, authentic freedom, courage, fearlessness, and independence stem from an unblemished affirmation of tauhīd. Any deviation from this conviction will ultimately lead one to bow his head down before every influence that comes his way.

NUBUWWAH (PROPHETHOOD)

The Arabic terms for prophethood and prophet are nubuwah (نُبُوَّة) and nabī (نَبِيّ), respectively.

Etymologically, nabī has three possible origins:

1. It is derived from نَبَأ (naba'), i.e., “news.” This refers to the fact that a prophet conveys divine revelation to humanity.
2. It stems from نُبُوٌّ (nubuww), i.e., “loftiness.” This highlights a prophet's elevated status in relation to all others.

3. It originates from the Arabic word “nabī,” i.e., “path.” This implies that a prophet is a path in the sense that he guides people to Allāh.

From a morphological perspective:

- The first origin categorizes nabī as mahmūz al-lām (hamzah as the third root letter).
- The latter two classify it as mu'tal al-lām (wāw or yā' as the third root letter).

Imām Rāghib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ explores the first two origins in *al-Mufradāt*.

Terminologically, the ashā'irah define a nabī, as cited in *al-Mawāqif*, as:

مَنْ قَالَ لَهُ اللَّهُ: أَرْسَلْتُكَ إِلَى قَوْمٍ أَوْ إِلَى النَّاسِ جَمِيعًا.

“One to whom Allāh says, 'I have sent you to a nation or to all people.'”

SIGNATURE TRAITS OF PROPHETHOOD

Prophets are distinguished by distinct signature traits that set them apart from the rest of humanity. These traits are as follows:

[1] DIVINE SELECTION

The appointment of a prophet is exclusively God's prerogative, a divine honor that cannot be self-attained. Given Allāh's omniscience, He selects individuals with exceptional potential and capability for this esteemed rank. As the Qur'ān states:

﴿اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ﴾ الأنعام: ١٢٤

“Allāh is most knowing of where He places His message.”

(6:124)

[2] DIVINE ILLUMINATION

A prophet's knowledge is divinely bestowed, not acquired through human instruction. Unlettered in worldly sciences, they receive heavenly wisdom from a celestial teacher. Imām Ghazālī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (Iḥyā' al-'Ulūm, Vol. 1) notes that intellectual capacities vary:

- Some struggle to acquire knowledge despite having received education.
- Others excel through learning.
- Select individuals, the prophets, receive knowledge through spiritual illumination, unaided by any sort of formal education.

[3] PHYSICAL AND MORAL BEAUTY

Prophets embody both outer and inner beauty:

- Exceptional physical appearance and proportions.
- Exemplary morals and character, distinct from others.

As narrated in Bukhārī and other traditions:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ خَلْقًا وَخُلُقًا.

“The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was the most noble of people in appearance and character.”

[4] PERFECTION IN KNOWLEDGE AND APPLICATION

Prophets embody perfection in both knowledge and its implementation. This dual perfection ensures:

- Infallible knowledge, devoid of error
- Flawless actions, aligning precisely with their knowledge, without sin or transgression against the commands of Allāh

Prophets are immaculate, untainted by sin. As role models for the Ummah, they exemplify ideal behavior.

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ﴾ الأحزاب: ٢١

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent pattern.” (33:21)

Logically, if one provides precise specifications to a tailor, errors are avoided. Similarly, Allāh's intention to make prophets role models precludes mistakes or sin.

[5] PERFECTION IN GUIDANCE

Those who bring faith in a prophet, follow him rigorously, and embrace their teachings, attain perfection in knowledge and action. They are exposed to a faultless understanding, impeccable conduct, and distinction in knowledge and action.

[6] COLLECTIVE FOCUS

A prophet's teachings and lifestyle exemplify the universal applicability of wisdom, prioritizing the greater good over individual interests.

[7] MORAL CONSISTENCY

A prophet's lifestyle and moral character remain consistent, whether in wealth or poverty. Their simplicity, humility, and modesty are never altered by power or position. Their attire, diet, and dwelling remain unchanged, regardless of status. They harbor a consistent humility and calm demeanor in speech and conduct, which persists despite the changes in their surroundings. Their selflessness promotes them to sacrifice personal interests for the greater benefit. Their moral integrity is never affected by dominion or empire.

The Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ history, along with other prophets', testifies to this unwavering commitment. Their god-given purity of heart and soul remains immune to environmental influences and distinguishes their nature from others.

[8] SELFLESSNESS

A prophet's life is devoid of pretension, ostentation, and self-aggrandizement. Their love and hatred are solely for Allāh's sake, not personal interests. They forgive personal transgressions but remain steadfast in upholding Allāh's rights.

[9] INGRAINED OBEDIENCE

Prophets exemplify divine obedience, consistently pleasing Allāh regardless of circumstances. Their commitment remains unwavering, whether alone or in public, in private or in view, among friends or foes, in joy or in sorrow. Fluctuations in their surroundings, circumstances, and emotions do not compromise their steadfastness. Obedience to Allāh and the Sharī'ah is ingrained in their nature.

[10] MU'JIZĀT

Mu'jizāt, or miracles, are supernatural phenomena that demonstrate a prophet's divine appointment. To qualify as a mu'jizah, seven conditions must be met, as outlined in Sharḥ al-Mawāqif. A mu'jizah must be:

1. Directly attributed to Allāh's action
2. Contrary to natural laws
3. Unreplicable and unparalleled
4. Emanating from a claimed prophet
5. Consistent with the prophet's claim
6. Not originating from a prophet's rejecter or disbeliever
7. Occurring prior to or after the claim to prophethood

Mu'jizāt are categorized into two types:

- Intangible mu'jizāt: catering to those with deeper understanding
- Tangible mu'jizāt: accessible to the general populace

The Prophet ﷺ exemplified both:

- Intangible: The miraculous Qur'ān
- Tangible: The splitting of the moon, extraordinary provision, and communication with animals, plants, and minerals.

MU'JIZAH, KARĀMAH, AND SIĤR

Allāh manifests His power through two forms of supernatural acts: mu'jizah and karāmah. Mu'jizah is a miraculous feat that occurs through a prophet, while karāmah is a miraculous feat that occurs through a righteous servant or friend of Allāh who is not a prophet. Both are beyond human control, involuntary, and unaffected by human effort or knowledge.

The sole cause of mu'jizah and karāmah is Allāh's will.

In contrast, siĥr (magic) is a human act, defined by linguists and mufassirīn as "something with an

ambiguous or hidden cause." This broad definition encompasses some scientific innovations as well.

Siĥr is acquired through learning, practice, and experience, and is under human control.

Beyond these three categories, all other events are natural occurrences with evident causes, such as ordinary manufacturing and professions.

When an individual falsely claims prophethood and performs extraordinary feats, they are not considered mu'jizāt (miracles). Instead, these acts fall under siĥr (magic) or istidrāj (deception), whose causes may be hidden, whether material or non-material. Such abilities can be acquired through training or mastery.

Historical figures like 'Abdullāh bin al-Muqaffa' and Zoroaster exemplify this phenomenon. Shaykh al-Ishrāq and Sakkāki demonstrated supernatural occurrences without claiming prophethood, and their events are documented in historical records. Similarly, individuals like Abū aṭ-Ṭīb al-Mutanabbi, who temporarily claimed

prophethood, exhibited skills attributable to sihr and istidrāj.

For instance, Shaykh al-Ishrāq seemingly dislocated and reattached a shepherd's arm using a shawl trick. Sakkāki apparently extinguished fires in Baghdad, preventing stoves from igniting. These feats are classified as sihr, not mu'jizāt.

Notably, Ṭāsh Kubrā Zāda Rūhī mentions that Ibn Sīnā attributes supernatural phenomena to a number of natural causes in the latter sections of his al-Ishārāt.

Similarly, Shāh Waliullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ classifies apparent supernaturalities as advanced causes in his at-Tafhīmāt:

إِنَّمَا الْمُعْجَزَاتُ وَالْكَرَامَاتُ أُمُورٌ أَسْبَابِيَّةٌ غَلَبَ عَلَيْهَا النُّبُوغُ، فَبَايَنَتْ سَائِرَ الْأَسْبَابِيَّةِ.

“Mu'jizāt and karāmāt operate through the same causal principles, but their underlying causes possess an extraordinary level of complexity, distinguishing them from ordinary events.”

These statements intend to contextualize supernaturalities within an intellectual framework, without implying that they can be attained through practice or experience like mundane occurrences.

PERSPECTIVES ON PROPHETHOOD

The nature of prophethood remains known only to Allāh and the prophets themselves. Nevertheless, diverse interpretations and perspectives offer valuable insights and shed some light on this profound concept. Below, we will present key evidences that facilitate a deeper understanding.

[1] THE EVIDENCE OF QUALITATIVE EXCELLENCE

Imām Rāzī's *رحمة الله* al-Maṭālib Āliyah posits that humans possess two inherent powers: the capacity for good and evil, and the ability to act virtuously and refrain from wickedness. These powers correspond to two faculties: awareness (perception of right and wrong) and implementation (execution of virtuous actions).

Based on these dual powers, individuals can be categorized into three types:

1. Those deficient in these attributes
2. Those complete in these attributes but unable to guide others to completion
3. Those complete in these attributes and capable of guiding others to completion

Perfection in these attributes exists on a spectrum. The pinnacle of awareness is reached when one's discernment between good and evil becomes infallible. Conversely, the apex of implementation is achieved when virtuous actions become instinctive and the possibility of evil is eliminated.

An individual who embodies the highest levels of both awareness and implementation is, by definition, a prophet.

[2] THE EVIDENCE OF PERCEPTUAL HIERARCHY

Imām Ghazālī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ، in his works *Ma'ārij al-Quds* and *al-Munqizh min ad-Dalāl*, provides a framework for understanding prophethood. He explains that humans are born in a state of ignorance, and gradually develop cognitive faculties through sensory experiences.

Initially, the sense of touch emerges, enabling recognition of textures and temperatures. Vision follows, enhancing tactile awareness and facilitating perception of tangible objects without physical contact. Subsequent development of hearing and taste allows distinction between various sounds and flavors, marking the culmination of sensory perception.

A new cognitive phase begins with the emergence of understanding (around age seven), enabling comprehension of abstract concepts beyond sensory reach. This includes recognizing family and strangers, edible and non-edible items, and personal autonomy.

The next stage, intellectual discernment, enables differentiation between possibility and impossibility, right and wrong.

Transcending intellect, a higher level of perception exists, facilitating insight into the unseen. Just as senses cannot grasp intellectual concepts, intellect cannot access this superior level.

This elevated realm is prophethood. It grants access to transcendent knowledge and information beyond intellectual boundaries, acquired only through divine revelation.

[3] THE EVIDENCE OF DISTINCTION

Imām Ghazālī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ presents an alternative perspective on prophethood. He posits that not all actions are equally valuable, with some deserving implementation and others rejection.

The crucial question arises: Can individuals discern between actions worthy of pursuit and those worthy of abandonment? Three possibilities emerge:

1. Everyone can differentiate.
2. No one can differentiate.
3. Some can differentiate, while others cannot.

The first two options are self-evidently flawed. Therefore, the third possibility stands: certain individuals possess the capacity to distinguish between virtuous and reprehensible actions.

These discerning individuals are, by definition, prophets of God and bearers of divine law.

[4] THE EVIDENCE OF SUBTLE INFLUENCE

In my humble opinion, the effects of intangible realities like faith, disbelief, obedience, and disobedience transcend intellectual comprehension, much like abstract

concepts evade sensory perception. Their consequences cannot be fully grasped through rational inquiry alone.

However, understanding the impacts of these subtle phenomena is crucial, as their benefits and drawbacks far surpass those of tangible entities like poison and antidotes. Subtle things directly influence the soul, amplifying their effects.

Even within physical matter, subtle elements possess remarkable potency. Consider steam, a seemingly insubstantial entity, yet capable of propelling massive trains, locomotives, and ships with ease.

Reason dictates that there must be a means to access knowledge of the benefits and harms governing human destiny, which lies with Allāh, Lord of the realms, the All-Aware, All-Knowing.

The vast disparity between God's transcendence and human limitations creates a formidable divide. Bridging this gap requires an intermediary agency, connected to both divine and human realms, facilitating inspiration

and guidance. This agency is prophethood, embodied by sacred individuals known as the *anbiyā'* (prophets).

For instance, consider the inherent dichotomy between fire and water. The disparity between both elements prevents direct heat transfer from fire to water. A middle point is required, neither excessively hot and volatile like fire, nor cold and fluid like water. This intermediary is the cauldron. The cauldron serves as a vessel, containing water while suspended over a heat source, allowing the warmth of the fire below to be transmitted to the water within.

Similarly, prophethood serves as the conduit for divine love and exclusive sciences to reach nations and masses. Prophets possess a dual nature. They harbor angelic properties and an enhanced spirituality, yet are essentially human and mortal.

This unique position grants prophets an intrinsic connection both to Allāh and humanity, enabling the transmission of divine guidance from the Ultimate Source of Inspiration to its humble recipients.

[5] THE EVIDENCE OF COSMIC HIERARCHY

Shāh Waliullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in *Ĥujjatullāh al-Bālighah*, establishes prophethood by highlighting the unique traits of each plant and animal species, shaped by their taxonomic structures. Each species' distinguishing characteristics enable its survival and adaptation.

In animals, instincts are largely innate and divinely inspired, stemming from their taxonomic builds. Humans, possessing both refined bodies and souls, have natural instincts for physical needs, supplemented by a higher perceptual faculty.

This faculty, known as self-attainable knowledge, emerges through experience, contemplation, and inductive reasoning. It empowers humans to engage in various professions: trade, commerce, manufacturing, agriculture, and more. All of these sciences pertain to the physical conditions of a human being.

In addition to physical faculties, humans possess a second perceptual capacity, rooted in their spiritual nature

and infused with angelic qualities. This innate ability prompts a higher sense of inquiry: "What is the purpose of creation?" "Who created me?" "Who sustains all existence?" and "Why was I created?"

Pondering these questions, individuals become convinced of a Higher Power's existence and begin demonstrating humility, modesty, and obedience through outward and inward submission.

However, the fulfillment of these spiritual aspirations requires divine guidance to establish clear boundaries for pleasing the Supreme Being. To address this need, God periodically selects exemplary individuals, embodying His divine pleasure, to manifest obedience to this inherent law.

These chosen individuals are prophets of God. They serve as models of devotion and conduits for divine instruction.

[6] THE EVIDENCE OF LAW

Three attributes of Allāh — dominion, power, and wisdom — are universally acknowledged across cultures and nations.

All three of these attributes necessitate that Allāh establish a divine law for His creation. A kingdom or dominion without laws is inherently flawed, and a sovereign's authority and wisdom also demand a legal framework to govern subjects effectively.

Dissemination of law is as important as its existence. Unawareness of laws renders them futile.

To communicate divine law, two scenarios emerge: general revelation or selective intermediation. The first, where Allāh individually informs each person, is incongruous with His majesty. Considering even human authorities delegate law dissemination, and don't go door to door personally to deliver laws to each subject, it is implausible for the Supreme Authority to do otherwise.

Thus, the second scenario prevails: Allāh communicates through chosen intermediaries.

These select individuals, known in Islamic terminology as *anbiyā'* (prophets, plural of *nabī*), convey divine law to humanity, facilitating felicity in worldly needs, spiritual growth, justice, and awareness of deeds' consequences.

[7] THE EVIDENCE OF LOVE

Human nature encompasses two fundamental aspects: physical and spiritual. Physically, humans harbor love for essential needs like nourishment, hydration, companionship, and marriage. Spiritually, they harbor an innate love for the Divine, with Allāh representing the pinnacle of spiritual elevation.

Throughout nations and cultures, places of worship reflect this universal longing for the divine. These sacred spaces manifest either rightly or wrongly, depending on their alignment with truth or falsehood.

Places of worship grounded in the religion of truth reflect the correct expressions of this love, while those rooted in false ideologies represent misguided expressions. Nonetheless, the diversity of worship scenarios universally underscores humanity's profound and unrelenting love for Allāh.

Allāh, the heartbeat of human love, inspires an innate desire to attain divine pleasure. This longing stems from the fundamental nature of love, where every lover loves to please the beloved.

Pleasure, an intangible sentiment, can only be conveyed through expression. To please a person, for example, it's essential to understand their preferences and aversions, which they must communicate.

Discerning the pleasure and displeasure of the transcendent Divine Being, distinct from all creation, surpasses human intellect. The boundaries of what pleases and displeases Allāh remain unknown until He Himself reveals them through revelation.

In the language of Shari'ah, divine pleasures and displeasures are denoted by distinct terms. In creed ('aqīdah), they are referred to as al-'aqā'id al-ḥaqqah (orthodox beliefs) and al-'aqā'id al-bāṭilah (heretical doctrines). In ethics (akhlāq) and self-purification (tazkiyah), they are categorized as al-akhlāq al-maḥmūdah (virtuous traits) and al-akhlāq al-mazhmūmah (vicious traits). In jurisprudence (fiqh), they are designated as ḥalāl (lawful) and ḥarām (unlawful).

This divine lexicon is revealed to esteemed and sacred individuals, known as prophets (anbiyā', pl. nabī) or messengers (rusul, pl. rasūl), through inspired speech. The existence of this revelation, its teachings and guidelines, and the prophets who receive it, are all manifestations of humanity's innate love for the divine.

[8] THE EVIDENCE OF JUSTICE

Human existence relies on four fundamental needs: three essential for individual survival — food, water, and

shelter — and a fourth one vital for the continuation of the human species: companionship through marriage. These universal necessities are sought by all individuals.

The innate property of human desire promotes one to strive to harbor these essentials. This inevitably sparks competition, leading to conflicts, disputes, and opposition. The property of anger then emerges, provoking the instinct to secure these needs for oneself and defend them from others.

To alleviate these conflicts and ensure harmonious coexistence, a just and equitable law is crucial. This law must safeguard the rights of every individual, balancing individual interests with collective well-being.

A just law can be established by either human or divine authority. However, when humans create laws, whether individually or collectively, they often fall short of achieving true justice. This is because several essential conditions must be met to establish a just system:

1. Omniscience and wisdom are required to accurately distinguish between good and evil, thereby preventing errors in setting moral boundaries.
2. Mercy and compassion are necessary to prevent injustices that may arise from biased or discriminatory clauses, often rooted in hatred or animosity towards certain individuals or groups.
3. Complete impartiality and equality are essential to ensure that no individual's rights are compromised for the benefit of others, whether due to favoritism towards one's own nation, community, or personal relationships.

Human beings inherently lack all three of these attributes. Their knowledge is incomplete, their compassion is limited, and their impartiality biased. As individuals, humans are inevitably bound by their

affiliations to specific races, nations, or hometowns, which can lead to biases and favoritism. In stark contrast, God embodies these attributes in the most perfect of their forms. His omniscience eliminates any possibility of error, while His mercy and compassion are unwavering and unrelenting. As the Creator of all, God treats all individuals with equal dignity, regardless of their racial, national, or geographical backgrounds. Unencumbered by personal biases or affiliations, God's laws are inherently just, true, and universal. To convey these laws, God appoints reliable representatives, known as prophets (nabī) or messengers (rasūl).

[9] THE EVIDENCE OF INTERMEDIATION

All religions affirm that divine guidance is essential for humanity to recognize and worship God. However, the chasm between humans and God is vast, with the average person existing at a profoundly humble level, while the Creator of the universe occupies an infinitely elevated plane. To bridge this divide, a select few individuals are

chosen through divine inspiration to serve as intermediaries, receiving revelation from Allāh, the Almighty, and conveying it to humanity. Although these chosen individuals share a physical bond with humans, being inherently human themselves, they possess a profound spiritual connection with Allāh, forged through their exceptional purity and spirituality. In essence, they function as vessels for divine inspiration, facilitating the transmission of divine knowledge from the Creator to humanity, and guiding the descendants of Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام toward spiritual enlightenment.

To illustrate the concept of transmission, consider the challenge of imparting the heat of fire to water to create a culinary dish like curry. Fire and water are fundamentally incompatible, with inherent properties that cannot be altered: fire is characterized by heat and dryness, while water is marked by coldness and fluidity. To bridge this gap, an intermediary is required — one that can facilitate the transfer of heat from fire to water without compromising the essential nature of either element. This

intermediary is exemplified by a cauldron, which contains water and is then heated over a flame. The cauldron's compatibility with both fire and water, despite their disparate properties, enables it to serve as an effective intermediary.

Or, as Shāh Waliullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ puts it, human beings possess two distinct types of souls: the divine soul, also known as the human soul, which is unique to humans, and the bestial soul, a fundamental aspect of all living beings, which is generated through the pumping of blood and permeates the entire body.

The human soul is extremely subtle and intangible, the bestial soul is slightly less intangible, and the human body is entirely tangible. Given the vast disparity between the divine human soul's extreme intangibility and the human body's complete tangibility, Allāh established the bestial soul as an intermediary, facilitating the connection between the divine human soul and the human body. This enables the divine human soul to exert its influence on the

body, allowing the limbs to benefit from its presence through the agency of the bestial soul.

Similarly, prophets serve as intermediaries between God and humanity, providing guidance and wisdom. This form of communication is uniquely befitting of Allāh's majesty and greatness.

In contrast, the notion of Allāh assuming human forms, such as the Christian belief in the divinity of Christ or the Hindu belief in the divine incarnation of Ram Bishan Mahadiyo, is fundamentally flawed and contradicts natural order. This is due to the following five reasons:

1. The notion of an infinite, unlimited Being assuming a finite, limited form is fundamentally irrational.
2. If God were to take on human form, His divine nature would be compromised, and He would be subject to the same needs and limitations

inherent to humanity, such as nourishment, hydration, shelter, urination, defecation, and intercourse.

3. In such a scenario, God, in human form, would serve as the guide; however, His actions would be perceived as divine, rendering Him an impractical role model for humans. Every human will excuse himself from doing anything He does, justifying that we simply cannot do what a god can do. Humans require guidance from someone who shares their humanity, as this enables them to emulate and relate to the guide's actions.
4. The notion of God incarnating as a human being is inherently futile and useless. If God were to assume a human form, such as Christ or Ram Chandar, His direct connection would be limited to that individual, while all other humans would have only an indirect connection. No one believes

that God would incarnate in every human being worldwide.

Instead of God humbling Himself by taking on human form to guide humanity, it is far more rational and efficacious for God to appoint a specific individual as an intermediary, conveying His inspiration through their words and actions. This intermediary would serve as a guiding model for others.

An analogous scenario can be observed in worldly systems, where a human monarch does not personally visit every doorstep to enforce their laws, nor do they assume alternate forms. Rather, they appoint trusted representatives to convey their decrees.

The Islamic perspective on prophethood presents the most rational and natural approach, aligning with universal order.

5. If anthropomorphism is understood as manifestation, implying that the divine is embodied in a particular form, as seen in Christian beliefs about Christ or Hindu beliefs about Ram Chandar, then such manifestation is not exclusive to these individuals anyway. In reality, all human beings, as well as all celestial, terrestrial, and extraterrestrial creations, are manifestations of the divine.

[10] THE EVIDENCE OF CONSECRATION

Three essential components are necessary for engaging with divine commands: cognition, conviction, and implementation. Cognition of these commands necessitates guidance from a teacher, while embracing them with conviction requires a profound sense of reverence and sanctity. Implementing these commands demands a virtuous exemplar, thereby ensuring the perpetuation of the divine religion through education, affirmation, and practical application. Failure to maintain

continuity in these aspects would inevitably lead to the decline and eventual termination of the religious trajectory.

For a religion to endure and remain vibrant, it must be anchored in a tangible, exemplary personality whose exceptional qualities of greatness, holiness, and love are deeply ingrained in the hearts of followers, inspiring perpetual devotion. Such a personality can only be embodied by a prophet. As such, the prophetic perspective is indispensable for the continuation of the divine religion, as the enduring legacy of the prophet's love and sanctity serves to illuminate and nourish the spiritual path.

'IṢMAT AL-ANBIYĀ' — THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE PROPHETS عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

A unanimous consensus exists among all Muslim factions, including Sunnis, Shia, Khawārij, Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah, Mu'tazilah, and others, affirming that all prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ possess the quality of 'iṣmah (infallibility), rendering them immune to sin.

In stark contrast, the now-defunct Ḥashawīyyah sect, as well as Christians, contend that prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ are not ma'ṣūm (infallible). To substantiate their claim, Christians argue that sin is an inherent aspect of human nature, and that this inherent propensity for sin is inescapable. They cite the example of Adam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ transgression in eating from the forbidden tree, asserting that this sin was transmitted to his progeny, including all subsequent prophets.

However, this argument is self-contradictory, as Christians themselves acknowledge Jesus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as a human being, descended from Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ according to all four Gospels. Consequently, if Jesus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is indeed human, he should not be considered ma'şūm. Yet, Christians also believe Jesus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to be divine or the son of God, which would imply his inherent infallibility. This dichotomy represents a logical contradiction, as Jesus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ cannot simultaneously be both human (and thus fallible) and divine (and thus infallible). The inherent invalidity of this contradiction underscores the fallacy of the Christian assertion that prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ are not ma'şūm, as that which necessitates invalidity itself is invalid.

DEFINITION OF 'IŞMAH

Imām Rāghib Işfahānī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ observes that the Arabic term 'iṣmah (عِصْمَةٌ) possesses a dual linguistic significance, connoting both (1) the act of grasping or holding onto

something firmly, and (2) the notion of protection or safeguarding. Derivatives of the word are employed in both senses in the Qur'ān:

﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ﴾ آل عمران: ١٠٣

“And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh.” (3:103)

﴿لَا عَاصِمَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾ هود: ٤٣

“There is no protector today from the decree of Allāh.” (11:43)

From a terminological perspective, there are three distinct opinions regarding the meaning of 'iṣmah:

(1) Imām Rāghib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ defines it in the following words:

حَفِظَ اللهُ إِيَّاهُمْ لَصَفَاءِ جَوْهَرِهِمْ وَفَضَائِلِهِمْ الْجِسْمِيَّةِ وَالرُّوحِيَّةِ وَتَثِيَّتِ أَقْدَامِهِمْ
بِإِنزَالِ السَّكِينَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَالتَّوْفِيقِ لَهُمْ بِتَتَابُعِ الْوَحْيِ إِلَيْهِمْ.

“Allāh's providential protection of the prophets, ensuring the purity of their essence, physical and spiritual virtues, and inspiration through divine revelation.” (Mufradāt al-Qur'ān)

(2) Abul-Ĥasan Ash'arī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ posits that 'iṣmah signifies:

أَلَّا يَخْلُقَ اللهُ فِيهِمْ ذَنْبًا.

“Allāh's prevention of sin within the prophets.”

(3) Philosophers, on the other hand, conceptualize 'iṣmah as:

مَلَكَتْهُ تَمْنَعُ الْفُجُورَ لِلْعِلْمِ بِمَثَالِبِ الْمَعَاصِي وَمَنَاقِبِ الطَّاعَاتِ.

“An intrinsic property that precludes sin, arising from the prophets' profound understanding of the consequences of disobedience and the virtues of obedience.” (Sharḥ al-Mawāqif)

'IṢMAH AND MAḤFŪZIYYAH

The terms 'iṣmah and maḥfūziyyah are often employed to convey the notion of infallibility, with 'iṣmah typically associated with prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ and maḥfūziyyah with companions, saints, and other righteous individuals رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. Although both terms essentially connote infallibility, they have distinct implications. Notably, the theological works of the mutakallimīn (theologians) do not explicitly delineate the differences between 'iṣmah and maḥfūziyyah. However, Shāh Waliullāh رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, in a handwritten letter published in 1965, provides a nuanced distinction:

الْعِصْمَةُ التَّحْفُظُ مِنَ الذُّنُوبِ وَلِزُومِ الْمَحْذُورِيَّةِ الشَّرْعِيَّةِ.

“'iṣmah refers to the protection from sins and all reprehensible acts according to the Shari'ah.”

Given that the Shari'ah mandates adherence to prophetic guidance, it is imperative that prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ be safeguarded against any behavior deemed reprehensible within the Shari'ah, even if it does not constitute a sin. In contrast, the Shari'ah does not obligate followers to emulate the saints of Allāh, and thus, it is conceivable that they may engage in behavior considered reprehensible within the Shari'ah. As such, 'iṣmah implies protection from intentional reprehensible acts, whereas maḥfūziyyah does not provide the same guarantee.

ESTABLISHING INFALLIBILITY

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his seminal work *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, articulates a nuanced framework for understanding reprehensible acts emanating from human beings. He posits that reprehensible acts can be categorized into two primary groups: those that constitute *kufr* (disbelief) and those that do not. The latter category can be further subdivided into greater sins (*kabā'ir*) and lesser sins (*ṣaghā'ir*). Both types of sin can occur either prior to or following the attainment of prophethood. Furthermore, all six of these instances of sin can arise either intentionally or unintentionally. Regarding the prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ، the prevailing opinion within the *Ahl as-Sunnah wal-Jamā'ah* is that they are divinely protected from all reprehensible acts, except for unintentional lapses. This perspective is shared by the *Imāmiyyah* sect. In contrast, the *Mu'tazilah* maintain that *'iṣmah* (infallibility) is necessary only after the attainment of

prophethood, and not prior to it, as they consider 'iṣmah an essential concomitant of prophethood. However, their stance lacks empirical evidence, rendering a response unnecessary.

The Qur'ān suggests that the appointment of prophethood occurs within a carefully chosen vessel, wherein an individual beloved to Allāh is selected by Him and subsequently endowed with the mantle of prophethood. As the Qur'ān explicitly states:

﴿اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ﴾ الحج: ٧٥

“Allāh chooses messengers from among the angels and from among the people.” (22:75)

This divine selection process necessitates that the chosen individual possess the quality of being ma'ṣūm (infallible) prior to their appointment, for it does not make sense for prophethood to be conferred upon one

who is not ma'şūm. This inherent requirement establishes that a prophet is ma'şūm before their prophethood as they are after their prophethood.

Parwez says that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has two aspects: (1) the aspect of being a prophet (2) the aspect of being a human being; whatever action he performs as a prophet is obligatory to follow, and whatever he does as an average human being is not obligatory to follow.

Sir Sayyid says that what he does as religion has to be followed, and what he does as part of worldly life does not have to be followed.

The statements of both are flawed and incorrect, as it is impossible to differentiate between the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ actions in this manner. Moreover, there is no empirical evidence to support such a distinction, and it was never implemented by the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ or mentioned in their historical accounts. Therefore, attempting to introduce this distinction is a misguided and blasphemous endeavor. In reality, every worldly action can be categorized under one of the six canonical stances

in Islamic jurisprudence: mubāḥ (permissible), farḍ (compulsory), wājib (mandatory), mustaḥabb (recommended), makrūh (discouraged), or ḥarām (reprehensible). As such, every worldly action is religious in nature, depending on the circumstances.

GENERAL TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

1.

﴿فَإِذَا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَن تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ

يَحْزَنُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ البقرة: ٣٨

“So if a guide comes to you from Me, whoever follows My guide — there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.” (2:38)

In this context, the term "guide" denotes a prophet, and an individual cannot be considered a guide in the fullest sense of the word unless they possess the quality of

being ma'şūm (infallible). It is therefore a fundamental principle that all prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ are indeed ma'şūm.

2.

﴿أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ فَبِهِدَاهُمُ آقْتَدَةٌ﴾ الأنعام: ٩٠

“Those are the ones whom Allāh has guided, so follow their guidance.” (6:90)

This verse appears in the context of a series of prophetic mentions, whereupon Allāh instructs the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to emulate the guidance of the preceding prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ. This divine directive establishes the ma'şūmiyyah (infallibility) of prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ, for it would be inconceivable for Allāh to command adherence to their guidance if they were not inherently ma'şūm.

SPECIFIC TEXTUAL EVIDENCE

1.

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ﴾ الأحزاب: ٢١

*“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allāh
an excellent model.” (33:21)*

The pivotal question arises: Are prophets عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ ma'sūm (infallible) in their beliefs and actions? If, hypothetically, they were not ma'sūm — may Allāh protect us from such a notion — then the divine appointment of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a role model to be emulated would be rendered invalid. However, this is a logical contradiction, as a divine statement cannot be inherently invalid. Conversely, if prophets are indeed considered ma'sūm, then the verse's implications become clear, and rejecting their infallibility would translate to irrationality.

2.

﴿ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ ﴾ النساء: ٥٩

“Obey Allāh and obey the Messenger.” (4:59)

In this verse, Allāh enjoins obedience to the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Obedience entails emulating his words and actions. Allāh's command here is general and all-encompassing. No distinction has been made between any of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ words and actions. This unconditional directive implies that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is ma'sūm (infallible) in all aspects of his life, thereby rendering obedience to him obligatory.

3.

﴿ مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ ﴾ النساء: ٨٠

“He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allāh.” (4:80)

In this verse, Allāh explicitly equates obedience to the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with obedience to Himself. This divine endorsement validates every word and action of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, as it would be incongruous for Allāh to mandate obedience to him if his words and actions were not already sanctioned by the Divine.

4.

﴿قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحِبُّكُمْ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ﴾ آل

عمران: ٣١

“Say, “If you should love Allāh , then follow me — Allāh will love you and forgive for you your sins.” (3:31)

In this verse, Allāh explicitly conditions His divine love upon obedience to the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, thereby establishing a profound causal relationship between the two. This means that adherence to the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ guidance is a necessary precursor to attaining Allāh's love.

The intrinsic bond between cause and effect implies that a person can only become a beloved servant of Allāh by diligently obeying the Messenger ﷺ. This relationship establishes the infallibility of every word and action of the Prophet ﷺ, rejection of which is tantamount to rejecting the Qur'ān itself.

INTELLECTUAL EVIDENCE

[1] THE EVIDENCE OF MORAL CHARM

Rational consideration dictates that prophets must be utterly sinless and possess an irresistible moral charm, enabling them to guide people from misguidance to righteousness. If a prophet were to commit a sin, people would inevitably distance themselves, thereby undermining the very purpose of prophethood. When an ordinary individual becomes aware of another person's sinful behavior, they instinctively develop a sense of aversion and maintain a safe distance. Given the vastly superior rank of prophethood, the supposed commission of a sin by a prophet would not only hinder their ability to draw people closer to their Creator but also render any meaningful relationship between the prophet and the public impossible. Consequently, the fundamental purpose of prophethood — guiding humanity toward their Creator — would be compromised. Thus, both reason and revelation establish that prophets must be

ma'şūm (infallible). The rank of prophethood can only be maintained if the prophet's 'iṣmah (infallibility) is deeply ingrained in the hearts and minds of the people.

[2] THE EVIDENCE OF CREDIBILITY

Reason necessitates that a prophet's words possess inherent influence and authority. This requisite can only be fulfilled if the prophet is ma'şūm (infallible), for if they were not, their words would be susceptible to contradiction by their actions. A non-ma'şūm prophet may prohibit a reprehensible action with their words yet commit it themselves, thereby creating a discordance between their words and deeds. This inconsistency would inevitably undermine the prophet's credibility, rendering their speech ineffective and potentially destroying the very foundation of prophethood.

[3] THE EVIDENCE OF INCOMPATIBILITY

Considering a prophet as fallible and non-ma'ṣūm would imply that they are susceptible to sinning. Sins can be categorized into two types: (1) ta'zīrī, which incur punishment, and (2) ghair ta'zīrī, which do not incur punishment. If a prophet were to commit a ta'zīrī sin, they would be liable to punishment, whereas committing a ghair ta'zīrī sin would compromise their credibility as a witness in a court of law, as dictated by Islamic jurisprudence. Both scenarios are incompatible with the exalted rank of prophethood. It is, therefore, essential to affirm that prophets are ma'ṣūm (infallible) both prior to and following their prophetic commission.

[4] THE EVIDENCE OF HATE

It is imperative that a prophet be a beloved servant of Allāh, rather than one who incurs divine displeasure. If a prophet's actions were to contradict their words, it would inevitably lead to their being despised and rejected, both

in the eyes of human societies and according to divine law.
As Allāh explicitly states:

﴿ أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ﴾

البقرة: ٤٤

“Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture?” (2:44).

Being an object of hate and displeasure would be entirely antithetical to the fundamental nature of prophethood.

[5] THE EVIDENCE OF DIVINE WRATH

Rejecting the concept of 'iṣmah (infallibility) implies affirming that prophets can commit sins. However, both divine and human laws concur that sinning incurs the wrath of Allāh, the Almighty. Furthermore, divine wrath necessitates accountability, which ultimately leads to

condemnation to the Hellfire. It is self-evident that being consigned to the Hellfire is irreconcilable with the noble status of prophethood.

[6] THE EVIDENCE OF SELF PURIFICATION

If prophets are considered susceptible to sin, it implies that their inner selves are not entirely pure. A genuinely pure self would be impervious to sin. This presents a paradox, as one of the fundamental responsibilities of prophets is to purify the selves of others. The Qur'ān succinctly captures this role, describing prophets as those who "recite to them His verses and purify them." (62:2) It is logically inconsistent to expect a prophet to purify the inner selves of others if their own inner self is not pure.

[7] THE EVIDENCE OF MORAL SUPERIORITY

Every prophet serves as a ruler for their people, albeit the fact that he rules through moral authority and willing

compliance, rather than coercion or force. This form of leadership is only possible when a prophet possesses a unique superiority over their people. This sense of superiority is derived from their infallibility (ma'şūmiyyah). In contrast, if a prophet and their nation are equally susceptible to sin (ghair ma'şūm), the necessary sense of superiority and moral authority would be absent. As a result, the concept of prophethood would be compromised. Therefore, it is theologically imperative that prophets be considered ma'şūm, and it is obligatory for every Muslim to affirm the infallibility of all prophets.

OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE 'IṢMAH OF PROPHETS عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

PROPHET ĀDAM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

THE OBJECTION OF THE FORBIDDEN TREE

The first objection pertinent to Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام revolves around the narrative of the forbidden tree, an incident that epitomizes sin and disobedience. This account is also documented in the Book of Genesis in the Torah. Several clauses comprise this objection, which are as follows:

1. Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was explicitly prohibited from partaking of the tree's fruit. Allāh decreed:

﴿ وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ ﴾ البقرة: ٣٥

“And do not approach this tree.” (2:35)

However, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام contravened this divine prohibition, and since violating a divine command

constitutes sin, breaching a divine prohibition equally constitutes sin.

2. Allāh designates Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ action as *zhulm* (wrongdoing), stating:

﴿ فَتَكُونُوا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴾ البقرة: ٣٥

“Otherwise you will be among the wrongdoers.” (2:35)

It is obvious that wrongdoing constitutes sin, and the causation of sin is, in itself, sinful.

3. Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself acknowledges committing a sin by supplicating:

﴿ رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا ﴾ الأعراف: ٢٣

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves.” (7:23)

This admission of wrongdoing serves as conclusive evidence of the commission of sin.

4. Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ subsequent taubah (repentance) and his supplication for Maghfirah (forgiveness) from Allāh underscores the gravity of his actions. As Allāh recounts:

﴿فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ﴾ البقرة: ٣٧

“Then Adam received from his Lord words, and He accepted his repentance.” (2:37)

Moreover, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ heartfelt plea, as cited by Allāh, demonstrates his acute awareness of the consequences of his sin:

﴿ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾ الأعراف: ٢٣

“If You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers.” (7:23)

5. The consequences of Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions were severe, resulting in his expulsion, along with Ḥawwā', from the realm of bliss to the realm of trial. As Allāh decrees:

﴿ قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا ﴾ البقرة: ٣٨

“We said, 'Go down from it, all of you.'” (2:38)

This punitive measure establishes that Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions constituted a sin.

6. According to ḥadīth, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ will harbor profound regret for his transgression until and even on the Day of Judgement. This enduring remorse clearly underscores the sinful nature of his actions. The details of this regret are elaborated upon in the aḥādīth pertaining to shafā'ah (intercession).

ANSWER [1]

According to the Mu'tazilah, the incident of Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ eating from the forbidden tree occurred prior to his prophethood. They argue that subsequent to his prophetic commission, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ remained sinless, thereby negating any objections to his 'iṣmah (infallibility).

ANSWER [2]:

This event transpired before Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ nomination as a prophet, at a time when the concept of Shari'ah laws was nonexistent. As this incident occurred

in the heavens, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his progeny were not yet subject to divine legislation. The chain of divine commands and prohibitions commenced only after their descent to earth. Consequently, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the forbidden fruit did not constitute a violation of Sharī'ah law, which is a crucial factor in determining 'iṣmah. 'Iṣmah, by definition, entails adherence to divine commands and prohibitions within the framework of a legitimate Sharī'ah.

ANSWER [3]:

According to Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ exposition in *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, the prohibition against eating from the tree constitutes an-Nahy at-Tanzīhī, or an expression of disapproval, rather than an-Nahy at-Taḥrīmī, a strict prohibition. Transgressing an an-Nahy at-Tanzīhī merely entails deviating from the preferred course of action, which does not constitute a sin. Consequently, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the forbidden fruit did not compromise his 'iṣmah (infallibility) in any way.

ANSWER [4]:

Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the forbidden fruit resulted from an error in his ijtihād (independent judgment). Specifically, when instructed to "not approach this tree" (2:35), Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mistakenly assumed the prohibition referred to a specific tree, rather than the entire species. Consequently, he ate from a tree of the same group, believing it was not the specified tree. This misunderstanding highlights the distinction between the divine prohibition's intended scope and Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ limited understanding.

A similar instance is illustrated in a ḥadīth, where the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ held up a piece of silk in one hand and a nugget of gold in the other, declaring, "Both of these have been made ḥarām (forbidden) upon my Ummah." In this context, the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ statement referred to the collective species of silk and gold, whereas the apparent reference was to the specific items in his hands.

Notably, in cases of mistaken ijtihād, the mujtahid (the one who exercises independent judgment) still receives reward. A ḥadīth states:

إِذَا حَكَمَ الْحَاكِمُ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَصَابَ فَلَهُ أَجْرَانِ، وَإِذَا حَكَمَ فَاجْتَهَدَ ثُمَّ أَخْطَأَ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ.

“If a ruler makes a decision based on independent judgment and is correct, he receives two rewards; if he makes a decision based on independent judgment and is incorrect, he receives one reward.”

This principle underscores that reward is contingent upon righteous intentions. Therefore, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام actions, although mistaken, were rooted in obedience and righteousness, earning him reward. It is illogical to assume that an act meriting reward would compromise 'iṣmah (infallibility).

ANSWER [5]:

As the author, I humbly propose that the prohibition against eating from the tree was not an-Nahy at-Tashrī'i (a canonical prohibition implying sinfulness), but rather an-Nahy at-Tashfiqī (a prohibition rooted in compassion and concern for well-being). Transgressing a canonical prohibition constitutes a sin, whereas violating a prohibition of compassion does not.

A paradigmatic example of an-Nahy at-Tashfiqī is a medical expert advising a patient to abstain from certain items that may exacerbate their condition or trigger adverse symptoms. This guidance does not imply a strict, legally binding prohibition; it doesn't imply that certain edibles are now illegal for him to consume and that he may face charges if he consumes them. Rather, it is a compassionate recommendation intended to promote the patient's well-being.

ANSWER [6]:

The Qur'ān describes Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the forbidden fruit as an act of error and disobedience. Allāh states:

﴿ وَعَصَى آءَادَمُ رَبَّهُ وَفَغَوَى ﴿١٢١﴾ طه: ١٢١ ﴾

“And Ādam disobeyed his Lord and erred.” (20:121)

As previously noted, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself characterized his actions as *zhulm* (wrongdoing) and subsequently repented, acknowledging the gravity of his mistake.

The response to this objection lies in the distinction between intentional and unintentional transgressions. In both divine and human law, breaking a command or prohibition is considered sinful only when accompanied by deliberate intent. Absent intent, the action does not constitute a sin. This principle is reflected in both religious and secular jurisdictions.

For instance, intentionally breaking one's fast during Ramaḍān without valid reason is considered a sin, punishable by 60 consecutive days of fasting (kaffārah). Conversely, unintentional infractions, such as eating or drinking due to forgetfulness, do not incur sin or punishment.

Similarly, in human law, premeditated murder warrants severe punishment, including capital punishment. However, unintentional homicide, such as that resulting from a car accident, is treated differently, and the perpetrator is not subject to the same punitive measures.

Following this introduction, it becomes evident that when Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumed the forbidden fruit, he did not intentionally seek to contravene Allāh's injunction. Rather, his actions were the result of mistake and forgetfulness, devoid of deliberate intent. Allāh Himself attests to this:

﴿ فَنَسِيَ وَلَمْ نَجِدْ لَهُ عَزْمًا ﴾ طه: ١١٥

“But he forgot; and We found not in him deliberation.”

(20:115)

This verse clearly establishes Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ forgetfulness in consuming the fruit and negates any notion of intent or deliberation.

The whispers of Shayṭān, who insinuated that eating from the tree would grant them angelic status or eternal residence in Jannah, influenced Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions. However, it is crucial to note that Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the fruit occurred while he was oblivious to Allāh's prohibition, having become distracted amidst the blessings of Jannah.

On a side note, the Qur'ān does not specify the type of tree. Various narrations suggest it may have been a grape, olive, or wheat tree. Ultimately, the tree's identity remains unspecified, and it is described simply as bearing a tantalizing and delightful fruit.

As for the Qur'ān's characterization of Ādam's actions as "error" and "disobedience," it pertains to the outward appearance of his actions, rather than their inherent nature. This distinction is rooted in the difference between the apparent image of disobedience and its actual reality. The former encompasses actions that resemble disobedience, even if unintentional, whereas the latter specifically refers to deliberate and intentional disobedience. As previously established, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ transgression was unintentional.

The Qur'ān occasionally employs terminology based on the apparent, perceived image of an action. For instance:

﴿فَمَنْ أَعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فَأَعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا أَعْتَدَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾ البقرة: ١٩٤

“So whoever has transgressed against you, then transgress against him in the same way that he has transgressed against you.” (2:194)

In this phrase, the initial transgression referred to is genuine, whereas the subsequent "transgression" is, in reality, an act of retribution and retaliation, rather than an actual transgression. Similarly, Allāh states:

﴿وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا﴾ الشورى: ٤٠

“And the retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it.”

(42:40)

Here, the first "evil" refers to malevolence in its essence, whereas the second "evil" denotes the image of evil, as it represents retribution, which is not inherently malevolent.

ANSWER [7]:

The linguistic connotation of zhulm (ظُلْم) is "to decrease" or "to place something in an incorrect position."

This understanding is supported by a Qur'ānic phrase employing the same root word:

﴿ وَلَمْ تَظْلِمِ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ﴾ الكهف: ٣٣

“And they did not fall short thereof in anything” (18:33).

Consequently, the verse "otherwise you will be among the wrongdoers" (2:35) can be interpreted to mean "otherwise you will be among those who shorten their stay" in Jannah. Indeed, Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ shortened their stay in Paradise by consuming the forbidden fruit, thereby forfeiting their opportunity to remain there eternally.

From a terminological perspective, the word *zhulm* does not inherently imply wrongdoing. Notable scholars, including 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* and Ibn Ḥazm al-Undulusī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in *al-Faṣl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'n-Niḥal*, define *zhulm* as:

وَضَعُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فِي غَيْرِ مَحَلِّهِ.

“The placement of something in an area other than its rightful place.”

In this context, the verse would suggest that consuming the forbidden fruit constitutes a misapplication of the prohibition, whereby one utilizes it in an incorrect manner. The correct application of the prohibition would involve refraining from eating from the forbidden tree altogether, whereas the incorrect application would involve eating from the tree or misinterpreting the prohibition's general scope.

The word *zhulm* also connotes the notions of wronging, destruction, or usurpation of a right. In this context, the implication would be that Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ wronged their own selves by consuming the forbidden fruit, thereby subjecting themselves to adversity. The Qur'an explicitly warns Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

﴿فَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ إِنَّ هَذَا عَدُوٌّ لَكَ وَلِزَوْجِكَ فَلَا يُخْرِجَنَّكَمَا مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ

فَتَشَقَّى ﴿١١٧﴾ طه: ١١٧

“So We said, 'O Adam, indeed this is an enemy to you and to your wife. Then let him not remove you from Paradise so you would suffer.'” (20:117)

The suffering alluded to in this verse is precisely the *zhulm* incurred by Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ through their actions, as they wronged themselves by inviting suffering upon themselves. This notion of self-inflicted wrong is captured in their own words:

﴿رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنفُسَنَا ﴿الأعراف: ٢٣﴾﴾

“Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves” (7:23).

ANSWER [8]:

Undoubtedly, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumed the forbidden fruit, subsequently acknowledged his mistake, and declared his dissociation from the action, seeking forgiveness through taubah. However, not every instance of taubah necessarily implies the commission of sin. The term taubah (توبة) originates from the root word "tāba" (تاب), meaning "to turn back" or "to return." This concept applies to both humans and Allāh.

In the context of human taubah, the Qur'ān instructs:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا تُوبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَّصُوحًا﴾ التحريم: ٨

“O you who have believed, turn back to Allāh with sincere repentance” (66:8).

Conversely, when describing Allāh's response to repentance, the Qur'ān states:

﴿ فَتَلَقَّىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ ۖ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴾ البقرة:

٣٧

“Then Ādam received from his Lord words, and He turned to him (i.e., accepted his repentance). Indeed, it is He who is the Most Accepting of repentance, the Most Merciful” (2:37).

When used in relation to humans, taubah signifies repentance and a return to Allāh. When used in relation to Allāh, taubah implies His merciful turn of attention towards the repentant individual with acceptance of his taubah.

In the case of Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, his taubah represented a repentant return to Allāh, while Allāh's taubah signified His gracious acceptance of Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ repentance.

It is essential to note that Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ taubah was not necessarily an admission of sin, but rather a gesture of repentance and a return to Allāh. Individuals of high spiritual stature often perceive even minor infractions as sinful and seek forgiveness through taubah. Allāh, in His

infinite mercy, accepts such repentance to provide solace to the individual's heart.

Pious individuals often engage in taubah as an act of devotion ('ibādah), and the more spiritually elevated they are, the more inclined they are to make taubah. Even the Prophet ﷺ, who was divinely protected from sin (ma'sūm), would frequently make taubah.

As reported in an authentic ḥadīth recorded by Bukhārī, Muslim, and Tirmizhi, the Prophet ﷺ stated: "I indeed seek Allāh's forgiveness seventy times a day." In another narration recorded by Muslim, he said: "I make taubah to Allāh a hundred times." It should be noted that the specific numbers mentioned are not literal quantities; they simply serve to convey the magnitude and frequency of his supplications.

A verse in the Qur'ān explicitly states:

﴿ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ ^ص
 فَمِنْ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١٧٣﴾ ﴾

البقرة: ١٧٣

“He has only forbidden upon you dead animals, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allāh . But whoever is forced (by necessity), neither desiring (it) nor transgressing (its limit), there is no sin upon him. Surely, Allāh is Oft Forgiving and Most Merciful.”

(2:173)

This verse clearly establishes that consuming forbidden substances in situations of dire necessity, where survival is at stake, does not constitute a sin. Nevertheless, the verse concludes by emphasizing Allāh's attributes of being Oft Forgiving and Most Merciful. This serves as a poignant reminder that, even if one perceives their actions as sinful, Allāh is still a Lord of boundless forgiveness and mercy.

In another place, the Qur'ān states:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾

التحریم: ۱ ﴿۱﴾

“O Prophet, why do you prohibit (yourself from) what Allāh has made lawful for you, seeking the approval of your wives? And Allāh is Oft Forgiving and Most Merciful.” (66:1)

In this context, the Prophet ﷺ had voluntarily abstained from something entirely permissible only to please his wives. This action was not sinful in the slightest sense. Nonetheless, Allāh highlights His attributes of infinite mercy and forgiveness.

This instance, along with numerous other examples in the Qur'ān, establishes that Allāh's forgiveness and acceptance of taubah are not solely tied to the commission of sin. Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام taubah, similarly, was not necessarily an admission of sin, but rather an expression of his desire to seek Allāh's mercy and forgiveness.

In fact, a ḥadīth states that "Allāh is much more delighted with the taubah of His servants." In this context,

Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ taubah served as a means of seeking Allāh's pleasure, rather than repenting from an actual sin, as he was ma'sūm (infallible).

This entire explanation thoroughly undermines the Christian doctrine of Atonement, which posits that sin and disobedience are inherent to human nature. According to this belief, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ descendants are inextricably linked to sin due to Ādam's alleged transgression, with the notion that this "original sin" has been transmitted through generations.

ANSWER [9]:

Undoubtedly, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ expulsion from Jannah was a direct consequence of his consumption from the forbidden tree. However, this expulsion was not a punitive measure, but rather a natural, physical outcome, just like consuming poison results in death and eating food causes satiation.

ANSWER [10]:

Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ lasting regret and remorse over consuming the forbidden fruit, persisting until the Day of Judgement, serves as a testament to his exceptional spiritual stature. His heart remained repentant and sensitive. It demonstrated the profound awareness he had of his actions. Despite recognizing that his transgression was unintentional and not deserving of punishment by the Hellfire, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ heart remained attuned to the subtlest hint of disobedience. This enduring sensitivity exemplifies nothing but the exemplary character of a true prophet of God.

OBJECTION AGAINST SHAYṬĀN'S INSINUATION

A potential objection arises regarding the mechanics of Iblīs's influence on Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ after his expulsion from Jannah. The question is posed: How could Iblīs have instilled waswasah (insinuation) into Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mind

after being banished from Jannah, while Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was still in Jannah? How can insinuation (waswasah) occur when the insinuator (Iblīs) and the insinuated (Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) are spatially separated?

ANSWER [1]:

The expulsion order in the Qur'ān 15:34-35 ("Then get out of it, for indeed, you are expelled. And indeed, upon you is the curse until the Day of Recompense.") was of a legal nature, rather than physical. Consequently, it is conceivable that Shayṭān, despite being legally prohibited, illicitly re-entered Jannah.

ANSWER [2]:

Shayṭān had been instructed to depart, but he had not yet removed his belongings. It was during this transitional period, either before his belongings were taken away or while he was gathering them, that he

instilled waswasah into Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mind, tempting him to eat from the forbidden tree.

ANSWER [3]:

On occasion, Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ would approach the entrance of Jannah. It was during one such instance that Shayṭān, lurking outside, seized the opportunity to instill waswasah into Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mind. This explanation has been cited by Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ from certain scholars.

ANSWER [4]:

To execute his plan, Iblīs allegedly transformed his appearance, enabling him to clandestinely enter Jannah disguised as someone else, thereby avoiding detection.

ANSWER [5]:

This explanation is more preferable. Eminent scholars, including 'Allāmah Maḥmūd Ālūsī Baghdādī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* and Imām Fakhr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, cite Ḥasan Baṣrī's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ assertion that physical proximity is not necessary for Shayṭān to instill waswasah. According to this perspective, an entity empowered by Allāh to induce waswasah can do so from a remote location.

This concept is more relatable in today's era of advanced communication technology. The ability to convey thoughts and ideas across vast distances with precision, as exemplified by telephones, wireless radios, and television, illustrates that physical presence is not a prerequisite for influence. By analogy, if a person in Washington can communicate flawlessly to someone in Japan or China, it is certainly conceivable that Shayṭān could instill waswasah into Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mind from outside Jannah.

THE OBJECTION OF SHIRK

A second objection raised against Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is based on the Qur'ānic verses that appear to attribute shirk (polytheism) to both Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ. The verses in question read:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَجَعَلَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا لِيَسْكُنَ إِلَيْهَا فَلَمَّا تَغَشَّاهَا حَمَلَتْ حَمْلًا خَفِيفًا فَمَرَّتْ بِهِ فَلَمَّا أَثْقَلَتْ دَعَوَا اللَّهَ رَبَّهُمَا لَئِنْ آتَيْتَنَا صَالِحًا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الشَّاكِرِينَ ﴿١٨٩﴾ فَلَمَّا آتَاهُمَا صَالِحًا جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ فِيمَا آتَاهُمَا فَتَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿١٩٠﴾﴾ الأعراف: ١٨٩ - ١٩٠

“It is He who created you from one soul and created from it its mate that he might dwell in security with her. And when he covered her, she carried a light burden and continued therein. And when it became heavy, they both invoked Allāh, their Lord, 'If You should give us a righteous [child], we will most surely be among the grateful.' But when He granted them a righteous [child], they ascribed partners to Him concerning that which He had given them. So exalted is Allāh above what they associate with Him.”(7:189-190)

This objection is further bolstered by a narration of Tirmizhī, which recounts that Shayṭān deceived Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ by suggesting that naming their son 'Abd al-Ḥārith (slave of the harvester; a name Shayṭān allegedly kept for himself) would ensure his longevity, and they allegedly acquiesced to this insinuation.

ANSWER TO THE NARRATION:

The narration mentioned above is addressed by experts in ḥadīth, who note that approximately twenty-two out of the four thousand narrations in Sunan at-Tirmizhī are weak, and this particular narration is among them. Ḥāfīzh 'Imād Ad-Dīn ibn Kathīr رَحِمَهُ اللهُ explicitly states that this narration, along with others conveying similar meanings, are entirely fabricated. Ḥāfīzh Ibn Ḥazm al-Undulusī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ, in his seminal work *al-Faṣl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'n-Niḥal*, denounces this narration in the following words:

وَهَذَا الَّذِي نَسَبُوهُ إِلَى آدَمَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ مِنْ أَنَّهُ سَمَّى ابْنَهُ عَبْدَ الْحَارِثِ خُرَافَةً
مَوْضُوعَةً، مَكْذُوبَةً، مِنْ تَوْلِيدِ مَنْ لَا دِينَ لَهُ وَلَا حَيَاءَ، لَمْ يَصِحَّ سَنَدُهَا قَطُّ.

“And this thing that they have attributed to Ādam — peace be upon him — that he named his son 'Abd al-Ĥārith, is a false myth, a baseless fabrication, and a malicious lie; a forged narrative concocted by an individual bereft of Dīn (religious integrity) and ḥayā' (moral decency); its chain of transmission has never been authenticated.”

ANSWER TO THE VERSE:

Answers to the verses which allegedly attribute shirk to Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ are as follows:

ANSWER [1]:

The most accurate and preferred interpretation of this verse is that it does not pertain to Ādam and Ḥawwā'

عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ at all. In reality, the verse is discussing Fihr, the great-grandfather of the Quraish tribe, which was the predominant tribe in Makkah during the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ time. This interpretation is universally accepted by all exegetes.

Fihr's grandfather, Naḍr, would often refer to him as Quraish. Over time, this appellation became synonymous with Fihr, eclipsing his actual name. As a result, his descendants, who stemmed from his four sons, came to be known as Banū Quraish (the sons of Quraish). As these families expanded and multiplied, they collectively formed the Quraish tribe.

The verse in question actually describes the birth of Quraish's four sons. Prior to their birth, Quraish and his wife had made a vow to Allāh, promising to be grateful if they were blessed with children. However, upon the birth of their sons, Quraish failed to express gratitude to Allāh by acknowledging their servanthood to Him or by giving them righteous names. Instead, he assigned them names that associated partners with Allāh, such as 'Abd Manāf

(slave of the idol Manāf), 'Abd al-'Uzzā (slave of the idol 'Uzzā), 'Abd as-Shams (slave of the sun), and 'Abd ad-Dār (slave of the forum). By doing so, Quraish attributed the servanthood of his sons to false deities, rather than Allāh. As the verse concludes, "So exalted is Allāh above what they associate with Him."

Mīr Sayyid Sharīf Jurjānī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, corroborates this interpretation, stating that the verse does not relate to Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ، and that this is the view shared by the majority of mufassirīn.

Apart from that, the term used for "partners" is شركاء (shurakā'), the plural form of شريك (sharīk), meaning "partner". If this verse were indeed referring to Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ، the term used would have been singular, as the objectioners claim that they allegedly committed shirk in only one name: 'Abd al-Ḥārith. This way, the verse itself highlights that it does not pertain to Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ.

ANSWER [2]:

A second approach to addressing the objection is to acknowledge that while the verse initially mentions Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ, this specific reference is limited to the creation narrative. The subsequent portion of the verse, however, assumes a general tone, encompassing all polytheistic husbands and wives who ascribe partners to Allāh in general. In essence, Allāh's statement underscores the creation of humanity from a single soul, Ādam, and his spouse Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ, highlighting how, over time, humans began to associate partners with Allāh through the names they assigned to their children.

The Holy Qur'ān employs a distinctive literary style, in which it often seamlessly transitions from specific to general themes. A paradigmatic example of this feature is found in 67:5, which states:

﴿وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصْبِيحٍ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيْطَانِ ^ص وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ

السَّعِيرِ ﴿٥﴾ **الملك: ٥**

“And We have most certainly beautified the nearest heaven with lamps (i.e., stars), and We have made them missiles to be thrown at the devils.” (67: 5)

Initially, the verse refers specifically to "lamps," denoting the shining celestial bodies we call stars, whereas the latter part of the verse mentions "missiles," encompassing not only stars but also meteorites, shooting stars, and burning planetary fragments in general, as elucidated in *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī* on the authority of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. This exemplifies the Qur'ān's propensity to transition from specific to general themes.

ANSWER [3]:

A third approach to addressing the objection is to recognize that the phrase "ascribing partners to Allāh" constitutes an instance of *الْإِسْتِفْهَامُ الْإِنْكَارِيُّ* (al-istifhām al-inkārī), a rhetorical device employed to convey the opposite of its literal meaning, thereby expressing denial and negation. By alluding to this narrative from Israelite

traditions in this style, the Qur'an effectively negates and distances itself from affirming or substantiating this allegation in any manner. (*Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*)

ANSWER [4]:

The attribution in جَعَلَا لَهُ شُرَكَاءَ (ja'alū lahu shurakā', "they ascribed partners to Him") is an instance of intellectual metaphorical attribution, wherein the act of shirk committed by Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ progeny is figuratively ascribed to Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself, given his role as the causal origin of their existence. This rhetorical device is formally known as الْمَجَازُ الْعَقْلِيّ (al-majāz al-'aqlī), i.e., intellectual metaphorical attribution.

ANSWER [5]:

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the verse directly attributes shirk to Ādam and Ḥawwā' عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ themselves. In this scenario, the correct interpretation is

that the name 'Abd al-Ĥārith derives from the root word حَرَّثَ (ĥarṭh), meaning "to harvest," "to work," or "to earn."

This meaning is consistent with the Qur'ān's usage of the term, as seen in the verse:

﴿مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ^ط وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ
الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ تَصِيبٍ ﴿٢٠﴾ الشورى: ٢٠

“Whoever desires the harvest of the Hereafter — We increase for him in his harvest. And whoever desires the harvest of this world — We give him thereof, but there is not for him in the Hereafter any share.” (42:20)

Every individual, including Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, is a harvester of deeds and an earner of rewards.

The term 'Abd, in this context, signifies a "son" or "servant" who serves and honors his father. This usage is analogous to the phrase عَبْدُ الضَّيْفِ 'abd aḍ-ḍaif,' meaning

"the server of the guest;" a commonly used term among the Arabs at the time.

Although the name 'Abd al-Ĥārith is linguistically permissible, the primary connotation of the word 'abd is "slave." Therefore, Allāh reprimands Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ for choosing this name, as it implicitly alludes to an implication that is unworthy of his exalted status. This reprimand is based on the principle حَسَنَاتُ الْأَبْرَارِ سَيِّئَاتُ الْمُقْرَبِينَ (the good deeds of the righteous are sometimes reprehensible for the closest to God), which dictates that Allāh holds His chosen servants to a higher standard of conduct. That said, this verse does not contradict the concept of 'iṣmah (prophetic infallibility) but rather serves as a testament to it. Allāh protects His chosen servants from even the slightest imperfections, just as a meticulous person carefully cleans a white garment to remove the subtlest stain. As Allāh states:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ ﴿٣٣﴾ آل

عمران: ٣٣

“Indeed, Allah chose Adam and Nūḥ and the family of Ibrāhīm and the family of 'Imrān over the worlds.” (3:33)

OBJECTION AGAINST THE ANGELS' INFALLIBILITY

The 'iṣmah of the angels is as necessary as the 'iṣmah of the prophets to acknowledge the greatness of Dīn. Angels are inherently ma'ṣūm (infallible) and incapable of disobedience. Critics of Islam often raise objections against the 'iṣmah of angels, similar to their criticisms regarding prophetic infallibility. Since the transmission of Dīn relies on the integrity of Allāh's angels and messengers, any doubt regarding the 'iṣmah of angels undermines one's appreciation for the majesty of Dīn. It is our duty to vigorously defend the 'iṣmah of angels and address the objections raised by critics, rooted in flawed

assumptions. These objections often cite the following verse:

﴿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 ﴿٣٠﴾ البقرة: ٣٠﴾

“And when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority.' They said, 'Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?' Allāh said, 'Indeed, I know that which you do not know.'” (2:30)

OBJECTION [1]:

When Allāh, in His infinite wisdom, appointed Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as a vicegerent on earth, the angels ostensibly objected to this decision, questioning Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ credibility as a trustworthy authority.

OBJECTION [2]:

The angels engaged in backbiting (ghībah) against Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his entire progeny. Backbiting is a reprehensible sin, and as such, it is incompatible with the concept of 'iṣmah (infallibility), for one who is ma'sūm cannot sin.

OBJECTION [3]:

The angels exhibited arrogance (takabbur) before Allāh, implying that they considered themselves superior. This is despite the fact that takabbur is a trait that only Allāh, the Almighty, can rightfully claim.

OBJECTION [4]:

The angels' arrogance led them to conceive jealousy (ḥasad) towards Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Jealousy is such a grave sin that a ḥadīth emphasizes:

إِنَّ الْحَسَدَ يَأْكُلُ الْحَسَنَاتِ كَمَا يَأْكُلُ النَّارُ الْحَطَبَ.

“Jealousy consumes good deeds just as fire consumes wood.”

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [1]:

The angels' inquiry, "Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" was not a challenge to Allāh's authority, but rather a question seeking to understand the wisdom behind appointing humans as terrestrial vicegerents. This query is analogous to a student's inquiry to a teacher, which is not considered a transgression.

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [2]:

Ghībah (backbiting) is defined as attributing something to a specific individual that they dislike being attributed towards them. The entire Ummah unanimously agrees that ghībah requires the specification of a particular individual, and specification requires the existence of the essence to be specified. In this context, it

is evident that when the angels posed their question to Allāh, Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his progeny did not yet exist. The angels' statement cannot be considered ghībah, as the mention of a non-existent entity does not constitute ghībah.

SUB-OBJECTION:

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said, "Do not criticize the dead" (لَا تَسُبُّوا الْأَمْوَاتَ). This ḥadīth explicitly prohibits backbiting the deceased, which, in other words, may as well be considered nonexistent. This suggests that backbiting a nonexistent entity is also be a form of ghībah.

ANSWER:

The analogy drawn between backbiting the dead and the angels' conversation about Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is flawed. In the case of the deceased, nonexistence occurs after existence, whereas in the scenario of the angels'

conversation, Ādam's existence precedes the dialogue and is yet to be determined. There is a fundamental difference between the two, and the analogy is therefore inapplicable.

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [3]:

When a question is motivated by a desire to demonstrate intellectual superiority and inflate one's ego, it constitutes takabbur, a prohibited (ḥarām) and grievous sin. In contrast, the angels' inquiry was driven by a genuine conviction that they were the most suitable candidates to serve humanity, rather than a desire for self-aggrandizement. This attitude is neither considered takabbur nor ḥarām. A similar example can be seen in the story of Prophet Yusuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who confidently presented his qualifications to become the guardian of Egypt's storehouses, saying:

﴿ قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَىٰ خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ ۗ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾ ﴿يوسف: ٥٥﴾

“Appoint me over the storehouses of the land. Surely, I will be a knowing guardian.” (12:55)

ANSWER TO OBJECTION [4]:

As previously established, the angels' question did not stem from takabbur (arrogance). Consequently, their inquiry was not motivated by *ḥasad* (jealousy) either. The term *ḥasad* refers to the desire to deprive someone of a favor they possess, with the intention of acquiring it for oneself. It is evident that only existing favors can be the subject of such desires. Since the favor in question did not exist at the time of the angels' conversation, their question could not have been driven by *ḥasad*. Instead, the angels believed themselves to be worthy of vicegerency on earth, citing the principle:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا﴾ النساء: ٥٨

“Surely, Allāh commands you to render trusts to whom they are due” (4:58).

However, they were unaware of the reason why Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was more deserving of this role. This lack of knowledge prompted them to acknowledge:

﴿ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾ البقرة:

۳۲

“Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Surely, it is You who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” (2:32)

This explanation demonstrates that the angels' question did not compromise their 'iṣmah (infallibility). Therefore, rejecting the 'iṣmah of angels constitutes heresy and a manifestation of irreligiousness.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HUMAN VICEGERENCY ON EARTH

The angels, based on their understanding, perceived certain aspects of human nature, specifically the propensity for violence and corruption, as incompatible with the responsibility of vicegerency on earth. This perception prompted their inquiry. However, as Allāh revealed, these very characteristics were, in fact, the reasons why humanity was deemed worthy of vicegerency: "Surely, I know that which you do not know." (2:30) The shedding of blood and corruption in the land allude to the human qualities of anger and carnal desire, respectively. These traits, absent in angels, are precisely the factors that make human vicegerency preferable.

Allāh's attributes include 'adl (justice), which He chose to manifest through the appointment of a vicegerent (khalīfah) on earth. The concept of khilāfah (vicegerency) in Arabic is defined as the establishment of justice on earth on behalf of Allāh. To fulfill this role, Allāh created Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with a unique combination of

elevated intellectual faculties and primal, instinctual characteristics common to beasts and animals. This distinctive blend of properties, found exclusively in humanity, rendered Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام worthy of embodying the attribute of 'adl.

All creation, aside from humanity, can be categorized into three types: (1) entities whose intellect is oriented towards good, (2) entities whose intellect is influenced by evil, and (3) entities devoid of intellect. Angels exemplify the first category, as their perception is grounded in goodness.

Jinns, on the other hand, embody the second category, with their understanding clouded by evil. The remainder of the universe, lacking intellect, falls into the third category. Since intellect and willpower are essential for manifesting 'adl (justice), entities lacking intellect are incapable of embodying justice.

Angels, although endowed with intellect, are not suited to manifest 'adl due to their lack of animal instincts, which drive individuals to pursue beneficial actions and

avoid harmful ones. Without these instincts, the establishment and practice of justice become unnecessary and incongruous. Conversely, jinns, predominantly driven by evil, are also ill-suited to embody 'adl. Consequently, humanity emerges as the most fitting candidate for divine vicegerency.

Humanity's unique combination of enhanced intellect and animal instincts renders them worthy of vicegerency. Their intellectual capacity enables them to establish justice, while their primal instincts create a need for justice, thereby providing opportunities for its exercise.

Similarly, human beings possess a unique capacity, inherent to their nature, which enables them to acquire and learn the names of various objects and concepts. This distinctive ability is absent in angels. Allāh states:

﴿ وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾ قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا ^{عَل}

إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٣٢﴾ قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ
 بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ غَيْبَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا
 تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ ﴿٣٣﴾ البقرة: ٣١ - ٣٣

“And He taught Ādam the names — all of them, then He showed them to the angels and said, "Inform Me of the names of these, if you are truthful." They said, "Exalted are You; we have no knowledge except what You have taught us. Surely, it is You who is the all-Knowing, the all-Wise." He said, "O Ādam, inform them of their names." So when he had informed them of their names, He said, "Did I not tell you that I know the unseen (aspects) of the heavens and the earth? And I know what you reveal and what you have concealed.”
 (2:31-33)

Jalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and other mufassirīn have interpreted the phrase "teaching of names" to literally mean the names of things in general, specifically referring to the Arabic language. They cite as evidence the fact that Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام language was Arabic. They

support this by two lines of poetry attributed to Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, lamenting the tragic murder of his son Hābīl:

تَغَبَّرَتِ الْبِلَادُ وَمَنْ عَلَيْهَا

وَوَجْهُ الْأَرْضِ مُغْبَرٌ قَبِيحٌ

فَوَأَسَفًا عَلَى هَابِيلَ ابْنِي

قَتِيلٌ قَدْ تَضَمَّنَهُ الضَّرِيحُ

*The lands and all their inhabitants are shrouded in grief
The earth's face is desolate, a grim and barren relief
My sorrow is boundless for Hābīl, my slain son
Claimed by the grave, his life forever undone*

A detailed exposition on this can be found in al-Kāmil by Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ.

A more thoroughly researched opinion among scholars suggests that the Arabic language originated from Ya'rib bin Qaḥṭān, rather than being the language of

Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, which is believed to have been Syriac. Hebrew, the language of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is considered an advanced form of Syriac, while Arabic is regarded as an advanced form of Hebrew. Arabic subsequently evolved to become the progenitor of numerous languages. Interestingly, even the English language incorporates thousands of Arabic words, either in slightly intact, modified, or completely distorted forms. Regarding the aforementioned poem attributed to Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, its linguistic style is significantly more modern than what would have been spoken during Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ time, rendering its attribution to him inaccurate.

The phrase "teaching the names" encompasses not only the nomenclature of things but also their inherent characteristics. Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was thus endowed with the knowledge and recognition of all aspects essential for human society. In contrast, angels lacked the capacity for such nuanced understanding. A subtle yet significant distinction is evident in the verses cited above, where Allāh employs derivatives of the word 'ilm (knowledge) in

reference to the angels, whereas derivatives of the word naba' (information) are used in relation to Ādam. The root word 'ilm implies that knowledge of an entity's essence cannot be acquired without explicit instruction. In contrast, the root word naba' suggests that information on an entity's essence can be obtained through subtle indications. Thus, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام nature inherently possessed the capacity for discerning the essence of things, a prerequisite for vicegerency on earth, whereas angels lacked this capacity. If angels had possessed the ability to comprehend the essence of things through subtle indications, they wouldn't be angels in the first place; they would be human.

A fitting analogy for this concept can be observed in the sense of hearing. The ability to hear is present in both humans and animals. However, the ability to process and interpret auditory information is significantly more complex and refined in humans compared to other animals. This same principle applies to vision. Human vision is uniquely enhanced, enabling individuals to

appreciate the aesthetic appeal of structures, whereas animal vision lacks such capacity.

Similarly, attempting to explain the pleasure and satisfaction derived from sexual intercourse to a prepubescent child is futile. This is because they are incapable of experiencing or comprehending the pleasure associated with sexual activity, unlike a postpubescent individual who can derive pleasure not only from the act itself but also from discussions about it. The reason for this disparity lies in the fact that prepubescent individuals lack the cognitive and physiological capacity to understand or experience sexual pleasure. If they were purportedly capable of grasping or experiencing this pleasure, they wouldn't really be prepubescent at all; they would be postpubescent.

It is incorrect to suggest that if angels were granted human-like understanding and taught the names and characteristics of things, they would also be worthy of vicegerency. In such a scenario, they would cease to be angels and would, in effect, become human. This

transformation would create a void in the angelic realm, necessitating the recreation of a new species of angels to fill the gap. This entire process would be redundant and inefficient, particularly when considering the human race. It would involve a two-stage process: first, imparting human qualities to angels, thereby altering their nature; and second, creating a new species of angels to occupy the vacated realm. In contrast, the creation of the human race through Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a singular, efficient act. The Creator of the universe is not prone to unnecessary or wasteful actions.

Since the creation of Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was purpose-driven, aiming to establish divine vicegerency on earth and uphold justice, it would have been incongruous with divine wisdom for him to remain in Jannah indefinitely. The brief period Ādam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ spent in Jannah, receiving nourishment and basking in its blessings, can be likened to an infant's sojourn in its mother's womb. Similarly, Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ consumption of the forbidden fruit parallels a mother's gentle weaning of her child by

applying a deterrent to her breast, thereby encouraging the child to transition to solid food. This process of weaning signifies the infant's growth and progression from one stage of life to another. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ elaborates on this in one of his writings. Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ descent from Jannah marked the inception of an eternal life of bliss in Jannah for him and his progeny. The worldly life, characterized by obedience to Allāh's commands, constitutes 'ibādah, which is unimaginable without the commission of messengers and divine scripture. Ultimately, the fruit of righteous 'ibādah would be an eternity of bliss in Jannah.

Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ attainment of eruditional and applicational perfection was contingent upon his obedience and intellectual potential, both of which were intrinsically linked to his existence on earth. This is because Jannah is ultimately a realm of bliss, blessings, bounty, and benevolence; not a domain of accountability and responsibility.

بده ساقى مسمى باقى كه در جنت نخواهى يافت

كناراب ركناباد و گلگشت مصله را

*In paradise, the wine of life remains untasted
For spiritual growth requires earthly trials and sacred spaces*

In light of this, it is accurate to assert that Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ descent to earth was, in fact, a benevolent act, devoid of any malevolent or detrimental consequences. Perceiving Ādam's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ descent as a punitive measure for partaking of the forbidden tree betrays a lack of discernment and understanding.

As the Persian proverb puts it:

مگر ملا آں باشد كه چپ نشود

“Is there any cleric who cannot be shut up?”

PROPHET NŪH عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

OBJECTION:

Before the great flood, Allāh instructed Nūh to bring only the believers aboard the ark. However, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام actions seemingly contradict the notion of 'iṣmah (infallibility) associated with a messenger: (1) He invited his disbelieving son, Kan'ān, to board the ark. (2) He prayed to Allāh to save his disbelieving son from the flood's wrath (as mentioned in Sūrah Hūd).

ANSWER [1]:

Ibn Munīr رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his commentary on al-Kashhāf, sheds light on this apparent paradox. He explains that Kan'ān, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام son, was a hypocrite who outwardly professed faith. As a human, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام knowledge was naturally limited to what was apparent; only Allāh possesses knowledge of both the apparent and the hidden.

Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, perceiving his son as a believer, instructed him to board the ark with the rest of his family in compliance with Allāh's command. When Kan'ān began to drown as the floodwaters rose, Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ implored Allāh to save him. In reality, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions were consistent with his role as a messenger, and he did not contravene the principles of 'iṣmah. This explanation is the most accurate and preferred interpretation.

ANSWER [2]:

Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statements, "O my son, come aboard with us" (11:42) and "My Lord, indeed my son is of my family" (11:45), can be characterized as al-khaṭa' al-ijtihādī — an error in independent judgment. When Allāh instructed Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to load the ark with "two mates of each (creature) and your family" (11:40), Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ interpreted "family" to refer to his biological relatives. Consequently, he invited his son to board the ark and, in his supplication to Allāh, emphasized their familial bond. However, Allāh's decree implicitly required īmān (faith)

as a condition for salvation, a detail not explicitly communicated to Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Therefore, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions do not compromise his 'iṣmah (infallibility) as a messenger.

ANSWER [3]:

Prophet Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ invitation to his son to board the ship and his subsequent supplication to Allāh for his son's salvation can be viewed as just 'not the best things to do' at the most. Since no explicit divine prohibition was revealed regarding these actions, Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ cannot be held accountable for them. Allāh's admonition to Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, "So ask Me not for that about which you have no knowledge" (11:46), pertained to future actions. Once he had received this command, Nūh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ never acted in contravention to it. Had he done so, it would have certainly provided grounds for legitimate objection. In essence, Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 'iṣmah (infallibility) remains as it is. Criticisms based on flawed assumptions do not affect the concept of 'iṣmah.

SUB-QUESTION:

Was the great flood global or local?

ANSWER:

Scholars are divided on this issue, with some advocating for a universal flood and others proposing a more limited, regional event. A reconciliatory perspective suggests that the flood was specific in that it did not engulf the entire world, yet general in that it inundated all inhabited areas. In short, it covered the entirety of the then-populated region.

During that era, human settlements were confined to the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. When the ark set sail, it carried a total of seventy-two believers, along with Nūh's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام spouse and three of his sons — Hām, Sām, and Yāfith — accompanied by their spouses. (Kan'ān, the fourth son, perished in the flood.)

The ark, a triple-decked vessel, was divided into separate compartments for humans, animals, and birds. As

the floodwaters receded, the ark came to rest on the summit of Mount Jūdī, now known as Mount Ararat, situated in the Eastern Anatolia region of modern-day Turkey.

PROPHET IBRĀHĪM عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

OBJECTION [1]:

In the Qur'an, Allāh presents the following account:

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ اللَّيْلُ رَأَى كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَا أُحِبُّ
 الْآفِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى الْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَذَا رَبِّي فَلَمَّا أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِي
 رَبِّي لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَأَى الشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَذَا
 رَبِّي هَذَا أَكْبَرُ فَلَمَّا أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ إِنِّي بَرِيءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ إِنِّي
 وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي فَطَرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ
 الْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾﴾ الأنعام: ٧٦ - ٧٩

“So when the night draped him (with darkness), he saw a star. He said, "This is my lord." But when it set, he said, "I like not those that disappear." Then when he saw the moon rising, he said, "This is my lord." But when it set, he said, "Unless my Lord guides me, I will surely be among the people gone astray." And when he saw the sun rising, he said, "This is my

lord; this is greater." But when it set, he said, "O my people, surely I am free from what you associate with Allāh. Surely, I have turned my face toward He who created the heavens and the earth, inclining toward truth, and I am not of those who associate others with Allāh." (6:76-79)

Even though the verses in question depict Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ declaring his rejection of shirk after witnessing the setting of celestial bodies, he does repeatedly refer to these entities as his lord, which constitutes an act of shirk.

ANSWER [1]:

In response to this objection, the author of *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* proposes that this incident occurred prior to Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ prophethood, which would not compromise his 'iṣmah (infallibility). However, this explanation is flawed, as it implies that Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ engaged in shirk before receiving prophethood. In reality, prophets are inherently ma'ṣūm (protected) from shirk, both before and after their prophethood.

ANSWER [2]:

The correct interpretation of Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statements in these verses is that they were uttered in the context of a debate with the Sabians, a sect that worshipped stars as gods. As recorded by Muḥammad bin 'Abd al-Karīm as-Shahristānī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in his al-Milal wa'n-Niḥal, the Sabians held specific beliefs that Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ addressed in his argument. By quoting their beliefs, Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ aimed to refute their ideology and demonstrate the absurdity of venerating stars as deities. It is essential to note that Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ words did not reflect his own beliefs, but rather served as a rhetorical device to establish a logical argument.

The Qur'ān employs derivatives of the word ufūl (to disappear) in the sense of ghurūb (to set), implying movement, whether it be the movement of the earth, sun, moon, or other celestial bodies. Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention was to illustrate that the setting of these celestial bodies indicated their movement, and since God is

transcendent and unaffected by movement, the sun, moon, and stars cannot be considered deities.

The argument presented in these verses can be logically dissected into four clauses: (1) The Sabians claim that these celestial bodies are their lord. (2) These celestial bodies are trapped in constant movement. (3) Anything trapped in constant movement cannot be God. (4) Therefore, celestial bodies cannot be considered God.

OBJECTION [2]:

A ḥadīth relates:

لَمْ يَكْذِبْ إِبْرَاهِيمُ إِلَّا ثَلَاثَ كَذِبَاتٍ: قَالَ: بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ، وَقَالَ: إِنِّي سَقِيمٌ، وَقَالَ
هَذِهِ أُخْتِي.

“Ibrāhīm never executed kizhb (lie) except on three occasions: when he said, "rather, the greatest of them did it," and when he said, "surely, I am ill," and when he said, "this is my sister.”

(This ḥadīth is narrated by Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmizhī, Nasa'ī, and Aḥmad, with slightly different wordings — translator)

To clarify, Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions were as follows: After destroying the idols himself, he cleverly deflected the people's inquiry by attributing the destruction to their largest idol, saying it was the one responsible for breaking the others. When invited to participate in a polytheistic festival, Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ feigned illness and told them he was sick to avoid compromising his faith. And, during his journey with his wife, Sārah, through the territory of the Egyptian Pharaoh, who notoriously exploited women unless they were accompanied by their brothers, Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ introduced Sārah as his sister to ensure their safe passage.

ANSWER [1]:

It is without a doubt that all three of these instances are historically accurate and established through the Qur'an and rigorously authenticated ḥadīth. Nevertheless, these incidents do not compromise Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 'iṣmah (infallibility). This is because Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ employed a rhetorical device known as tauriyah in his statements. Tauriyah involves using equivocal language that conveys an apparent, superficial meaning, while intending a deeper, truthful meaning, allowing the speaker to conceal the truth from the addressee to avoid potential conflict without falling into the malevolence of lying.

In response to the objection regarding Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statement, "Rather, the greatest of them did it," there are three possible approaches to answer the objection.

The first approach is that the Qur'an, in quoting Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, employs the pronoun هُمْ (them), which in

this case can refer to either the idols or the people. Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ audience interpreted his statement as sarcasm, assuming he meant that the largest idol destroyed the others. However, Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actual intention was to imply that he himself, as the greatest among the people, was the one who destroyed the idols. His intent was to emphasize his greater status as a monotheistic believer amidst a polytheistic community.

A subtle indication of Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ deliberate ambiguity is his specific use of the word هُمْ (hum: them), typically employed to refer to intelligent beings, such as humans, rather than inanimate objects like idols. In contrast, when referring to inanimate objects like idols in the plural form, the correct pronoun to use is هُنَّ (hunna), as exemplified in the Qur'ān, where Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is quoted to say in another instance:

﴿ رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلَّلَنَّا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ ﴾ إبراهيم: ٣٦

“My Lord, surely they (hunna; referring to the idols) have led astray many among the people.” (14:36)

The second approach to addressing this issue involves a nuanced analysis of the statement's wording: **بَلْ فَعَلَهُ كَبِيرُهُمْ** (bal fa'alahū kabīruhum hāzhā). Initially, the phrase appears to be a single sentence, conveying the meaning: "Rather, the greatest of them did it — this one." However, an alternative reading suggests that the phrase can be divided into two distinct sentences. By pausing after "bal fa'alah," for a second, and then continuing with "kabīruhum hāzhā," the translation becomes: "Rather, whoever did it, did it. The greatest of them is this one" — after which Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ challenged them, "So ask them, if they should (be able to) speak." (21:63).

The third approach to interpreting this verse offers a more straightforward explanation and requires only an apparent understanding of the complete verse. In this context, the pronoun **هُمْ** (them) indeed refers to the idols,

and there is no need to pause in the middle of the verse when reciting it.

﴿ قَالَ بَلْ فَعَلَهُ وَكَيْرُهُمْ هَذَا فَسْأَلُوهُمْ إِنْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ ﴾

الأنبياء: ٦٣

“Rather, this — the largest of them — did it, so ask them, if they should (be able to) speak.” (21:63)

Here, Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention is to challenge the people's beliefs by highlighting the absurdity of attributing the destruction of the idols to the largest idol, which remains standing with an axe on its shoulder. Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ rhetorical question, "Ask this idol and see if it can inform you of what happened," serves to underscore the idol's inability to speak, let alone cause harm or benefit. His poignant inquiry aimed to expose the illogical nature of the people's beliefs.

Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ second statement, "Surely I am sick," can be interpreted in several ways. One possible

explanation is that he was referring to a spiritual or emotional affliction, as his heart was undoubtedly troubled by the polytheistic rituals of his people, and he meant to say that he was sick and tired of their irrational rituals. Alternatively, his statement could be seen as an expression of his deep-seated aversion to participating in such blasphemous events. As a steadfast advocate of tauhīd (monotheism), Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ would have been deeply distressed by the idolatrous practices of his community.

It is essential to recognize that a messenger of God, such as Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, would have been particularly sensitive to the spiritual implications of such events. Their refined spiritual disposition would have made it impossible for them to tolerate, even for a moment, the blasphemy inherent in polytheistic rituals.

Other interpretations of Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statement suggest that he may have been acknowledging the universal human susceptibility to illness, implying that no one is completely immune to disease. Alternatively, the word "saqīm" (ill) can be understood as an ism fā'il (a

noun denoting the doer), which can also be used to indicate future possibility. In this context, Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statement could be translated as "I might become sick in the future." Another possible interpretation is that Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ declaration of illness was a strategic move, inviting those who wished him well to argue against his supposed illness, so that he, in turn, could proceed to confront them in their beliefs.

Regarding Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ reference to his wife, Sārah, as his sister, he was using the term "sister" in a spiritual sense, implying a shared bond of faith rather than a biological relationship.

Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his detailed exposition on the aforementioned ḥadīth in *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, contests its reliability, deeming it unworthy of the level of ṣiḥḥah (authenticity). Conversely, Ibn Ḥajar رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in *Fat'h al-Bārī*, vehemently disagrees with Imām Rāzī's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ assessment, citing the ḥadīth's inclusion in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and numerous other reputable ḥadīth collections.

Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ substantiates his argument by presenting a dichotomy: either the 'iṣmah (infallibility) of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ remains uncompromised, or the integrity of all the narrators of this ḥadīth is upheld. According to Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, upholding one necessarily compromises the other, and upholding the 'iṣmah of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ is much more important than upholding the integrity of a chain of narrators.

The more equitable assessment is that Imām Rāzī's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ response is entirely unfounded. In reality, it is conceivable that a scenario exists in which both the 'iṣmah (infallibility) of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and the integrity of Bukhārī's narrators can be upheld simultaneously. To reconcile this, it becomes necessary to interpret the relevant texts in a manner that preserves Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 'iṣmah. This is particularly pertinent given the Qur'ān's unequivocal portrayal of Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as a paragon of truth, as evident in the verse:

﴿ وَذَكَرَ فِي الْكِتَابِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّهُ كَانَ صِدِّيقًا نَبِيًّا ﴾ ﴿٤١﴾ مريم: ٤١

“And mention in the Book, Ibrāhīm. Surely, he was a paragon of truth, a prophet.” (19:41)

The attribute "ṣiddīq" used to describe Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ signifies an extraordinary level of truthfulness, implying an unwavering commitment to honesty. Given that Allāh Himself attests to Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ exceptional truthfulness, it is impossible to conceive of Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ uttering falsehoods.

Regarding the ḥadīth's explicit mention of "thalātha kazhibāt" (three lies), a clarifying point is that the term "kizhb" (lie) is employed here to convey an apparent, rather than actual, falsehood. In this context, "kizhb" assumes the meaning of "tauriyah," implying that Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statements, though seemingly deceptive to his immediate audience, were, in fact, truthful and congruent with reality. From Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ perspective, his words accurately reflected the underlying

circumstances, and any statement aligning with the actual unfolding of events is, by definition, the truth; rather than a lie. This has been elaborated upon earlier.

ANSWER [2]:

Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his *al-Faṣl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'n-Nihāl*, posits that not all forms of kizhb (deception) are categorically prohibited. He argues that in situations where religious or wise considerations necessitate it, or when personal safety is at risk, lying becomes jā'iz (permissible).

Imām Ghazālī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ provides further elaboration on this topic in his *Îhyā' al-'Ulūm*, specifically in the chapter dedicated to kizhb. He illustrates that in certain contexts, such as during wartime, deception is not only permissible but also justified, as supported by relevant ḥadīth. Similarly, the ḥadīth explicitly states that lying to reconcile a marital dispute or to placate an upset spouse does not constitute sinful deception.

In the case of Prophet Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, his actions were motivated by a desire to avoid harm and protect himself and his loved ones. Had he not attributed the destruction of the idols to the largest idol, he would have faced torture at the hands of his people, as evidenced by their subsequent treatment of him. Similarly, if he had not excused himself by claiming illness, he would have been compelled to participate in shirk (idolatry). Furthermore, introducing his wife as his sister was a necessary measure to protect her from potential harm. If he hadn't done so, he would have risked losing his spouse.

ANSWER [3]:

Imām Rāghib Iṣfahānī's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ exposition on ṣidq (truth) and kizhb (lie) provides the most rational and coherent framework for addressing the objection, and is considered the most preferred interpretation of the ḥadīth. Imām Rāghib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ states that the Arabic terms ṣidq and kizhb are applied to both verbal statements and

physical actions. This is evident in expressions such as قَوْلٌ (qawluḥ) physical actions. This is evident in expressions such as قَوْلٌ صَادِقٌ (qawluḥ ṣādiq: a truthful statement), قَوْلٌ كَاذِبٌ (qawluḥ kāzhib: a false statement), فِعْلٌ صَادِقٌ (fi'lun ṣādiq: a truthful action), and فِعْلٌ كَاذِبٌ (fi'lun kāzhib: a false action).

In the context of verbal statements, a "true statement" (qawluḥ ṣādiq) refers to a declaration whose implications align with reality, and a "false statement" (qawluḥ kāzhib) denotes a declaration whose implications contradict reality. With regards to physical actions, a "true action" (fi'lun ṣādiq) signifies an action that accurately reflects its intended purpose and yields the expected outcome, while a "false action" (fi'lun kāzhib) refers to an action that fails to align with its intended purpose and does not produce the desired result.

The Qur'ān employs derivatives of ṣidq (truth) and kizhb (lie) to describe actions, illustrating the nuanced application of these terms. For instance:

﴿ إِذَا وَقَعَتِ الْوَاقِعَةُ ﴿١﴾ لَيْسَ لِمَنْ لَوْقَعَتَهَا كَاذِبَةٌ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾ الواقعة: ١ - ٢

“When the Inevitable occurs, nothing can belie its occurrence.”
(56:1-2)

Here, a derivative of kizhb is used to convey the idea that nothing can contradict or deny the action of Judgement Day's occurrence.

﴿ لَقَدْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ الرُّؤْيَا بِالْحَقِّ ﴾ الفتح: ٢٧

“Certainly has Allāh made true to His Messenger the vision (in accord) with reality.” (48:27)

The term "vision" here refers to the showing of a dream, which was an action of Allāh, and ṣidq is used to describe its fulfillment.

Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were unable to participate in the Battle of Badr, made vows to themselves to demonstrate

their valor to Allāh in future battles. In the battle of Uḥud, when they fought gallantly, Allāh revealed:

﴿مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ رِجَالٌ صَدَقُوا مَا عَاهَدُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِ﴾ الأحزاب: ٢٣

“Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allāh.” (33:23)

The Arabs would say *صَدَقَ فِي الْقِتَالِ* (he was true in the fight) to describe someone who fulfilled the obligations of battle, and *كَذَبَ فِي الْقِتَالِ* (he lied in the fight) to describe someone who failed to do so. A warrior who fought with valor was titled as *صَادِقٌ فِي الْقِتَالِ* (truthful in the fight), while a coward was called *كَاذِبٌ فِي الْقِتَالِ* (a liar in the fight).

If a person applied pressure to a blade and it sliced through a surface, they would say *صَدَقَ* (it was true), indicating that the blade fulfilled its intended purpose. If the blade failed to slice through, they would say *كَذَبَ* (it

lied), suggesting that the blade did not fulfill its intended purpose.

A phrase in *al-Maqāmāt al-Ḥarīriyyah* illustrates this concept: *فَمَا كَذَبَتْ إِنْ جَاءَتْ*, which translates to, "so if it arrives, then it didn't lie." In this context, *kizhb* refers to the absence of the action of arriving, or alternatively, arrival here translates to the absence of *kizhb*.

All of these various Arabic idioms and expressions demonstrate that *ṣidq* and *kizhb* are employed to describe the fulfillment or non-fulfillment of the purpose of actions.

In a nutshell, any action that achieves its intended purpose is deemed *ṣādiq* (truthful), and any action that fails to fulfill its intended purpose is considered *kāzhib* (untruthful). *Kizhb* in statements is condemned, because it constitutes intentional deception. *Kizhb* in actions, on the other hand, is not reprehensible, as the outcome of an action lies beyond human control and is solely within Allāh's power.

Prophet Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions, including feigning illness and attributing the destruction of the idols to the largest idol, were motivated by a desire for self-preservation. Although his intention was to protect himself, his people ultimately discovered his involvement in smashing their idols and attempted to punish him by throwing him into the great fire. Similarly, when introducing his wife, Sārah, as his sister, Ibrāhīm aimed to safeguard her from the Pharaoh's advances. However, this attempt initially failed, as the Pharaoh's men took Sārah into custody. Nevertheless, through divine intervention, the Pharaoh was miraculously prevented from harming her, and she was eventually released, accompanied by a gift of a slave woman named Hājirah (Hājar), who would later on become the mother of Prophet Ismā'īl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

Despite Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intentions, his actions in these three instances did not yield the desired outcomes, and this is what the ḥadīth references.

It is also important to note that the actual ḥadīth only enumerates the three statements made by Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

The starting phrase, "Ibrāhīm never executed kizhb except on three occasions," is a paraphrased commentary by the narrator, exemplifying the concept of "riwāyah bi'l-ma'nā" (narrative conveying the intended meaning without adhering to the exact wordings of the speaker). The narrator's intention was simply to convey that there were only three instances in Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام life where his actions failed to achieve their intended purposes.

OBJECTION [3]:

Despite being a revered messenger of God, Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام doubted Allāh's power to revive the dead, prompting divine censure. The Qur'ān states:

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ قَالَ أُولَٰئِكَ ثُبُورٌ قَالَ بَلَىٰ
وَلَكِن لِّيَظْمَنَ قَلْبِي قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ أَجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ
كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ

حَكِيمٌ ﴿٢٦٠﴾ البقرة: ٢٦٠

“And when Ibrāhīm said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." (Allāh) said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Of course, but (I ask) only that my heart may be satisfied." (Allāh) said, "Then take four of the birds and commit them to yourself. Then (after slaughtering them) put on each hill a portion of them; then call them — they will come (flying) to you in haste. And know that Allāh is Exalted in Might, all-Wise.” (2:260)

ANSWER:

The aforementioned verse does not, in fact, suggest that Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ harbored doubts regarding Allāh's power to revive the dead. Quite the opposite, it actually establishes Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ conviction in Allāh's omnipotence. When Allāh inquired, "Have you not believed?" Ibrāhīm responded affirmatively, indicating that he already possessed 'ilm al-yaqīn (knowledge-based certitude) regarding Allāh's power.

Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ objective, however, was to transcend his existing 'ilm al-yaqīn (knowledge-based certitude) and attain 'ayn al-yaqīn (observation-based certitude), which

involves directly witnessing a phenomenon. Hence, he requested, "Show me how You give life to the dead." This petition demonstrates Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ desire for a tangible, visual confirmation of Allāh's power, rather than the removal of any doubt or uncertainty.

It is evident that Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ possession of knowledge-based certitude precludes the possibility of doubt. His nature remains untainted by any insinuation of doubt regarding Allāh's power to revive the dead.

Regarding the ḥadīth in Bukhārī, where the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ states, "نَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالشَّكِّ مِنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ" ("we have more right to harbor doubt in relation to Ibrāhīm"), Ibn al-Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ clarifies that this phrase is an imaginative supposition. It implies that 'Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ never actually doubted, but if he had, we would have more right to doubt than him.' The Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ statement effectively negates any possibility of doubt on Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ part.

In essence, the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ words convey that if it were permissible for a prophet to doubt, then he, as a prophet, would have more right to doubt than Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. However, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ emphatically asserts that he has absolute faith in Allāh's power to revive the dead. By extension, it is implausible to attribute doubt to Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ argument is rooted in the impossibility of him doubting Allāh's power, which, in turn, negates the possibility of Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ doubting.

This rhetorical device employed by the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ serves to underscore Ibrāhīm's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ unwavering faith. It is important to note that by comparing himself to Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not intend to establish a hierarchical distinction but rather to illustrate a comparative analogy. The phrase is akin to the Arabic proverb, الشِّتَاءُ أَبرَدُ مِنَ السَّيْفِ, ("winter is colder than summer"), where the intention is not to imply that both seasons are cold with one being

distinctly colder, but rather to highlight the relative coldness of winter in general.

A similar example can be found in the Qur'an, where it is stated:

﴿أَهْمَ خَيْرًا مِّمَّ قَوْمٍ تَتَّبِعُ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ﴾ الدخان: ٣٧

“Are they better or the people of Tubba' and those before them?” (44:37)

At first glance, this verse may appear to suggest that both the speakers and the nation of Tubba' were virtuous, with the speakers inquiring about their relative merits. However, in reality, both the speakers and the nation of Tubba' were disbelieving and corrupt. The phrase is used to illustrate their equivalence in deeming themselves to be superior and subsequently facing wrath, rather than to imply any hierarchical distinction. The verse concludes with:

﴿أَهْلَكْنَاهُمْ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ﴾ ﴿٣٧﴾ ﴿الدخان: ٣٧﴾

“We destroyed them — surely, they were criminals.” (44:37)

PROPHET LŪṬ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

OBJECTION:

When the angels, disguised as handsome men, visited Prophet Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, the people of his nation discovered their presence and approached Lūṭ's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ residence with the malicious intent of engaging in homosexual acts. In an attempt to protect his guests and deter the crowd, Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ implored them to desist, saying, as recorded in the Qur'ān:

﴿ هَؤُلَاءِ بَنَاتِي إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فَاعِلِينَ ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾ الحجر: ٧١

“These are my daughters — if you would be doers.” (15:71)

This statement suggests that Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ offered his daughters to the crowd, condoning adultery.

ANSWER [1]:

Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ explains that Lūṭ's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention was not to present his daughters as an alternative, but rather to convey the reprehensible nature of the crowd's intended actions. By saying "these are my daughters," Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ employed sarcasm to emphasize the repugnance of homosexuality, likening it to the act of committing adultery with his own daughters. The implicit message was: "You would abstain from committing adultery with my daughters, so similarly, you should abstain from attempting to engage in homosexuality with my guests."

ANSWER [2]:

Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, in *al-Faṣl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'n-Niḥal*, offers an alternative interpretation. According to him, Lūṭ's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statement was an attempt to redirect the crowd's desires towards the lawful and permissible outlet of marrying his own daughters. During that era, it was permissible for a Muslim woman to marry a non-Muslim

man. This permission continued until the early years of Islam and was later revoked, and it became forbidden for a Muslim man or woman to marry a non-Muslim.

ANSWER [3]:

Qāḍī Bayḍāwī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and Abū Sa'ūd رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ suggest that the "daughters" referred to by Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ were, in fact, the women of his nation. As a gesture of compassion and paternal concern, Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ presented these women for marriage, employing a common idiomatic expression where a chief or prominent figure refers to the women of his nation as "daughters."

ANSWER [4]:

Another perspective is that every prophet serves as a spiritual father to his nation (Ummah). Consequently, the women of his nation are considered his spiritual daughters.

ANSWER [5]:

An additional interpretation suggests that Lūṭ's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ reference to "daughters" was actually an expression of compassion and concern for the wives of the men who had gathered at his house. By addressing these women as his "daughters," Lūṭ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ appealed to the crowd to redirect their desires towards their own wives, rather than pursuing their malicious intentions.

PROPHET YŪSUF عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

OBJECTION [1]:

Despite holding a prominent position in the Egyptian government as an advisor and overseer of the storehouses, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ failed to inquire about his parents' well-being for many years, even though they were still alive in Kan'ān.

ANSWER [1]:

A plausible explanation for Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ apparent lack of inquiry is the obviously significant distance between Egypt and Kan'ān, which would have made communication extremely challenging. However, once Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ became aware of his parents' whereabouts, he took immediate action to reunite with them and invite them to live in Egypt with him. Although this response addresses the concern, it is considered somewhat

inadequate, as Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام ultimately discovered his family's whereabouts when his brothers arrived in Egypt during the drought.

ANSWER [2]:

Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام lack of knowledge about his parents' status was part of the divine plan. Once he became aware of their existence, he promptly extended an invitation for them to join him in Egypt, as narrated in the Qur'ān.

OBJECTION [2]:

While incarcerated, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام requested that a fellow inmate, who was soon to be released, intercede on his behalf by mentioning his situation to the king's advisor. As the Qur'ān narrates:

﴿ وَقَالَ لِلَّذِي ظَنَّ أَنَّهُ نَاجٍ مِّنْهُمَا اذْكُرْنِي عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ﴾ يوسف: ٤٢

“And he said to the one whom he knew would go free from among the two, 'Mention me before your master.'” (12:42)

This action constitutes reliance on intermediaries rather than Allāh, which is unbecoming of a prophet of Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام stature. Specifically, Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام reliance on others is seen in two aspects: (1) his reliance on the inmate to act as an intermediary, and (2) his reliance on the king's advisor to secure his release.

ANSWER:

There is absolutely nothing wrong or unbecoming here in the slightest bit. Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام actions constitute a legitimate reliance on worldly means, which is entirely permissible. By requesting the inmate's assistance, all he did was utilize a viable means to achieve his release.

OBJECTION [3]:

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ forgot to remember Allāh, as stated in the Qur'ān:

﴿ فَأَنسَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ ذِكْرَ رَبِّهِ ﴾ **يوسف: ٤٢**

"but Shayṭān caused him to forget the mention of his master."

(12:42)

ANSWER [1]:

The object pronoun (ḍamīr marfū' muttaṣil) in فَأَنسَهُ actually refers not to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, but to the inmate whom Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had requested to mention him to the king's advisor. By substituting all of the pronouns with the actual nouns, the verse can be retranslated as: "but Shayṭān caused the inmate to forget the mention of Yūsuf to the king's advisor."

ANSWER [2]:

Even if the pronoun is interpreted as referring to Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and "master" is understood to mean Allāh,

there is still no cause for concern. Forgetfulness, in and of itself, is not a sinful act at all.

OBJECTION [4]:

The Qur'ān implies that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام harbored illicit, sexual inclinations towards Zulaykhā, the wife of the king's advisor who had taken him in. The Qur'ān states:

﴿وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهٖ ^{بِ}وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهٖ﴾ يوسف: ٢٤

“And she certainly harbored intent about him, and he would have harbored intent about her had he not seen the proof of his Lord.” (12:24)

Harboring sexual intent toward another man's wife is extremely unbecoming of a prophet.

ANSWER [1]:

The cited verse does not establish that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had romantic or sexual feelings for Zulaykhā. Instead, it explicitly eradicates and negates this assumption by tying Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ potential inclination to his sighting of the proof of his Lord. It simply means that if he hadn't seen the proof of his Lord, he could have inclined towards her, but since he did see the proof of his Lord, he did not incline toward her. This implies that Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ faith and commitment to his Lord prevented him from harboring any improper intentions towards Zulaykhā.

ANSWER [2]:

There is a difference between the intentions of Zulaykhā and Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Zulaykhā's intention was to seduce Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, whereas Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention was to resist her advances. Zulaykhā's intent was to pull him towards her, and Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intent was to push away from her. This difference is evident in the Qur'ān's

separate mention of each intention, highlighting their distinct nature. If both intentions were identical, the Qur'an would have employed the dual verb هَمَّا (hammā; they both harbored intent), to indicate a shared intention. Furthermore, the use of the wāw (و) of 'aṭf, translating to "and," in Arabic syntax, is used to establish mughāyarah (distinction). Here, it serves to distinguish between the two intentions, emphasizing their contrasting nature.

ANSWER [3]:

Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intent refers to the innate inclination that males naturally experience towards females. This inclination is an inherent aspect of human nature and does not in any way compromise a prophet's 'iṣmah (infallibility). In the verse, Zulaykhā's intention is emphasized by the particles lām and 'qad, indicating a firm and unconditional determination to seduce Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Conversely, Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention is followed by a conditional statement, suggesting that his sighting of the

proof of his Lord prevented him from harboring any malicious intentions beyond his natural inclination.

This explanation is rooted in the explicit wording of the verse. It is not an interpretive extrapolation. It is essential to recognize that natural inclinations do not negate 'iṣmah or morality. For instance, a fasting individual may experience a natural inclination to drink water to quench their thirst, but this inclination does not compromise their moral integrity in the slightest sense. If anything, resisting one's natural inclinations to uphold divine obligations is only a means of earning reward.

Note: There are four opinions regarding the meaning of "Burhān ar-Rabb" (the proof of the Lord) in the verse. These interpretations are as follows:

- (1) When Zulaykhā attempted to seduce Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام, she, being an idol worshipper, covered an idol in the room before she advanced toward

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, due to her shame at committing the act in its presence. This subtle action served as a divine sign, prompting Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to remain conscious of Allāh.

- (2) At the moment Zulaykhā approached Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ with her intentions, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ saw in front of him a vision of his father, Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, warning him by symbolically cutting off his hand. This vision was a sign from Allāh, guiding Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to make a righteous decision.
- (3) According to another perspective, "Burhān ar-Rabb" refers to the light of prophethood that guided Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions. This opinion is deemed the most preferable by 'Allāmah Maḥmūd Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

- (4) A fourth interpretation suggests that "Burhān ar-Rabb" signifies Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ recollection of the king's advisor's favors towards him, including his nurturing and provision. This recollection made Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ realize the gravity of betraying his benefactor's trust by engaging in a relationship with his wife. He thought to himself, "How can I exploit the sanctity of my own benefactor?"

All four of these interpretations are documented in *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* and *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*.

OBJECTION [5]:

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ placed his gold measuring bowl in his brother's saddlebag and then falsely accused them of theft. This action is totally unbecoming of a prophet of Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stature.

ANSWER [1]:

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ never accused his brothers of stealing the measuring bowl. Instead, it was a governmental employee who made the accusation. As the Qur'an explicitly states:

﴿ ثُمَّ أَذِنَ مَوْذِنٌ أَيْتَهَا الْعِيرُ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَارِقُونَ ﴾ ﴿٧٠﴾ يوسف: ٧٠

“Then an announcer called out, 'O caravan, surely you are thieves.'” (12:70)

The Qur'an clearly attributes the accusation to an unnamed announcer, rather than Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Therefore, accusing Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ of an accusation in itself is an entirely heinous and invalid accusation.

ANSWER [2]:

Even if, for the sake of argument, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ were to be attributed with making the statement, it would not tarnish his integrity. A plausible explanation is that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ employed tauriyah, where he uttered a statement that conveyed a different meaning than its literal interpretation. By calling his brothers "robbers," they thought he was accusing them of robbing the measuring bowl. But in fact, he was alluding to their past transgression of robbing their father of his son, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself.

SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

Although the objection regarding Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ alleged accusation against his brothers has been addressed, another concern remains: Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ decision to place his measuring cup in his brother's saddlebag. This action, termed "kayd" (contriving) by the Qur'ān, is still

objectionable. As the Qur'ān states: "Thus did We contrive for Yūsuf." (12:76)

ANSWER:

In Arabic, "kayd" denotes secretive planning or scheming. For instance, the Qur'ān employs derivatives of the same word in the verse:

﴿ إِنَّهُمْ يَكِيدُونَ كَيْدًا ﴿١٥﴾ وَأَكِيدُ كَيْدًا ﴿١٦﴾ الطارق: ١٥ - ١٦ ﴾

“Surely, they plot a scheme, and I plot a scheme.” (86:15-16)

Planning or plotting, whether overt or covert, is not inherently condemned. The morality of a plan is contingent upon its purpose. If the objective is virtuous, the plan is deemed good; conversely, if the purpose is malicious, the plan is considered reprehensible. Therefore, it is crucial to examine Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ motivations behind

his actions to determine whether they were permissible or not.

The Qur'an's narrative and historical context both reveal that Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intentions were altruistic, aimed at benefiting his family. Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ultimate goal was to reunite with his parents and brethren, providing them with a prosperous life in Egypt and compensating them for past hardships. This righteous purpose is underscored by the Qur'an's statement:

﴿كَذَلِكَ لِنَصْرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءَ وَالْفَحْشَاءَ﴾ يوسف: ٢٤

“Thus (it was) that We should avert from him evil and immorality.” (12:24)

Through divine providence, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was protected from committing both moral and intellectual transgressions.

SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

The Qur'an recounts that when the vizier discovered Zulaykhā's attempt to conceal her intentions regarding Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, he remarked, employing the term "kayd":

﴿ إِنَّهُ مِنْ كَيْدِكُنَّ إِنَّ كَيْدَكُنَّ عَظِيمٌ ﴾ (يوسف: ٢٨)

“Surely, this is from the plotting of you women — surely the plotting of you women is great.” (12:28)

In contrast to the greatness of female scheming, another verse describes the plotting of Shayṭān as inherently weak:

﴿ فَاقْتُلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا ﴾ (النساء: ٧٦)

“So fight against the allies of Shayṭān — surely, the plot of Shayṭān has ever been weak.” (4:76)

This is a puzzling disparity, as it seems to suggest that the plotting of women is more formidable than that of Shayṭān. How is that possible?

ANSWER:

The greatness of the plotting of women is relative to the plotting of men, whereas the weakness of Shayṭān's plotting is relative to the omnipotent plotting of Allāh. In no way does the Qur'ān assert that the plotting of women is inherently more powerful than that of Shayṭān. The verses highlight the relative strengths and weaknesses of each entity's plotting within their respective contexts.

OBJECTION [6]:

Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ decision to come out before Zulaykhā and her unveiled female companions was inappropriate and unbecoming of a prophet.

ANSWER [1]:

The law of veiling the face for women, as ordained in the Islamic Shari'ah, did not exist during the time of Prophet Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. This decree was revealed thousands of years later, in the fifth year following the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ migration to Madinah, on the occasion of Zaynab bint Jahsh's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا wedding feast.

ANSWER [2]:

Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention was not to indulge in frivolous interactions with the women. He emerged only to fulfill a specific task, which was entirely permissible and devoid of any impropriety. Therefore, this objection holds no merit.

OBJECTION [7]:

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ says about himself:

﴿ وَمَا أُبْرِئُ نَفْسِي إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّي إِنَّ رَبِّي غَفُورٌ ﴾

رَحِيمٌ ﴿٥٣﴾ يوسف: ٥٣

“And I do not acquit myself — surely the self is a most persistent enjoiner of evil, except that upon which my Lord has mercy.” (12:53)

If Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ himself acknowledges his own fallibility, how can we consider him ma'sūm and infallible?

ANSWER [1]:

The first clause of the verse — in which Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ declared that he did not absolve himself, is rooted in his profound humility, as exemplified by Allāh's command:

﴿ فَلَا تُزَكُّوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقَى ﴾ ﴿٣٢﴾ النجم: ٣٢

“So do not claim yourselves to be pure; He is most knowing of who fears Him.” (53:32)

The second clause, meanwhile, refers to the inherent nature of the human self in general, which is prone to evil inclinations.

ANSWER [2]:

Even if Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ statement is interpreted literally, suggesting that his self is indeed susceptible to evil urges, this still does not compromise his integrity. Prophets are human, and human nature has both righteous and evil urges. Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ self may have been inclined towards evil, but he never acted upon those inclinations.

His ability to resist the evil promptings of his self is a testament to his exceptional character and his mastery of mujāhadah — the spiritual struggle to overcome one's base instincts. This, in fact, is the essence of human perfection.

OBJECTION [8]:

Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ made a request to the king, as stated in the Qur'ān:

﴿ قَالَ أَجْعَلْنِي عَلَى خَزَائِنِ الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنِّي حَفِيظٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴾ يوسف: ٥٥

“He said, "Appoint me over the storehouses of the land. Surely, I am a knowing guardian.” (12:55)

This statement reveals Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ aspiration to assume the role of vizier, overseeing the entire network of storehouses and treasuries. This ambition betrays three unbecoming traits in Yūsuf: (1) an inordinate greed and desire for wealth; (2) an ostentatious display of self-confidence, bordering on arrogance; and (3) a willingness to serve under a non-believing government.

ANSWER:

The notion that Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ request to oversee the storehouses was driven by greed for wealth is unfounded. In reality, Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ motivation was to safeguard the public's interests and prevent potential oppression by an unworthy individual. By assuming this role and demonstrating his qualifications, Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ aimed to establish a foundation for justice. This request, far from being a manifestation of greed, serves as a testament to Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ dedication to justice.

Regarding the concern that Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ expression of his eligibility for the position constitutes arrogance, it is essential to consider the context. In situations where one's expertise is necessary, it is not only permissible but also obligatory for individuals to step forward and assume responsibility. Arrogance is only implicated when one's intention is to boast or display superiority, which was not Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ intention.

As for the objection that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was willing to serve under a non-believing government, the king during

Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ time had, in fact, accepted Islam. However, even if we assume the king remained a disbeliever, being an employee under a non-believing government is not inherently reprehensible. The legitimacy of an employment arrangement depends on its purpose. If the purpose is malicious, the employment is impermissible; otherwise, it is acceptable. This perspective is reinforced by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ fatwā, which stipulates that employment under a non-believing government is permissible as long as the requirements of the employment do not contravene the Sharī'ah.

Ultimately, Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ assumption of the role overseeing the storehouses yielded immense benefits for the people of Egypt and beyond during the time of the great drought.

OBJECTION [9]:

The Qur'ān recounts regarding Yūsuf's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ parents and brothers, that when they met him:

﴿وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا﴾ يوسف: ١٠٠

“And they fell for him in prostration.” (12:100)

This verse implies that Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ allowed his family members to prostrate before him, and this is completely unbecoming of a prophet.

ANSWER [1]:

In the Sharī'ah of Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, prostrating to someone as a sign of respect was permissible. This practice was prohibited only in the Islamic Sharī'ah.

ANSWER [2]:

Prominent scholars such as Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in his *al-Faṣl fi'l-Milal wa'l-Ahwā' wa'n-Niḥal* and 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in his *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*, suggest that the term "sajdah" in this context does not imply the ritual prostration

prescribed in Islamic law. Rather, it denotes a slight bowing of the head as a gesture of respect, which is the literal, linguistic meaning of the term. This is the most preferred opinion. A piece of Arabic poetry, employing the exact word, reads:

بِجَمْعِ تَضِلُّ الْبُلُقُ فِي حَجَرَاتِهِ
تَرَى الْأَكْمَ فِيهَا سُجَّدًا لِلْحَوَافِرِ

*In a throng where the piebald horses are lost amidst it's
grooves*

You shall see the hillocks within bowing to their hooves

ANSWER [3]:

'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ relates from Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا that the prostration mentioned in the verse was directed towards Allāh, and an expression of gratitude for Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. His words are:

كَانَ السَّجْدَةُ لِلَّهِ وَتَشْكُرًا لِيُوسُفَ.

“The sajdah was performed for Allāh, and it was to express gratitude for Yūsuf.”

In Arabic, an object preceded by a derivative of the word "sajdah" is prefixed with a lām (ل), which indicates either the object or the cause of the prostration. Here, it enters upon Yūsuf عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who was the cause of their sajdah; not the object of it.

Regarding the word "kharrū," commonly translated as "they fell," it is essential to recognize that the intended meaning in the context is "to pass by" or "to proceed." For instance, the Qur'ān states in its description of the servants of the Most Merciful:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِّرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ لَمْ يَخْرُؤْ عَلَيْهَا صُمًّا وَعُمْيَانًا﴾

﴿٧٣﴾ الفرقان: ٧٣

“And those who, when reminded of their Lord's verses, do not fall on them deaf and blind.” (25:73)

Although the phrase is translated here and in numerous other translations literally as "do not fall on them," it actually signifies that they do not "pass by them," ignoring or disregarding the verses as if they have neither heard nor seen them.

PROPHET MŪSĀ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

OBJECTION [1]:

The Qur'an states:

﴿ وَأَصْبَحَ فُؤَادُ أُمِّ مُوسَىٰ فَارِغًا ۗ الْقَصَصُ: ١٠ ﴾

“And the heart of Moses' mother became empty,” (28:10) i.e., empty of happiness.

This verse implies that Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mother was devoid of happiness, despite Allāh's assurance, through inspiration, to refrain from fear and sorrow. Furthermore, Allāh had promised to return Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to her, as stated in the verse:

﴿ فَإِذَا خِفْتِ عَلَيْهِ فَأَلْقِيهِ فِي الْيَمِّ وَلَا تَخَافِي وَلَا تَحْزَنِي إِنَّا رَادُّوهُ إِلَيْكَ

وَجَاعِلُوهُ مِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ ﴿٧﴾ القصص: ٧

“But when you fear for him, cast him into the river and do not fear and do not grieve. Surely, We are to return him to you and make him of the messengers” (28:7).

The apparent discrepancy between Allāh's commands and promises and Mūsās' عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ mother's emotional state demonstrates that she had no trust in Allāh's words, which seems inconsistent with her noble character, given that she was the mother of Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

ANSWER:

Ibn Hāzīm رَحِمَهُ اللهُ states that the interpretation above is clearly wrong. The correct interpretation is not that her heart became empty of happiness, but that it became empty of worry. It signifies that upon receiving Allāh's command to refrain from worry and His promise to

return her child to her, her heart was instantly relieved of all grief, worry and anxiety about her son's fate.

OBJECTION [2]:

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ exhibited blatant disrespect towards both the Torah and his elder brother Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. The Qur'an recounts:

﴿وَأَلْقَى الْأَلْوَابِحَ وَأَخَذَ بِرَأْسِ أَخِيهِ يَجُرُّهُ إِلَيْهِ﴾ الأعراف: ١٥٠

“And he threw down the tablets and seized his brother by (the hair of) his head, pulling him toward him.” (7:150)

ANSWER [1]:

The translation above is corrupted. The word أَلْقَى means not to throw down, but to put down. And the reason Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ put down the tablets was to free his hands, allowing him to grasp his brother's head — which

was facing away from him, and turn him around to face him, as Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ clarifies. This gesture, far from being a sign of disrespect, was out of the informal, unpretentious, and candid relationship Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ shared with his brother.

ANSWER [2]:

I, the author, humbly offer the following response: Historical records confirm that Mūsā and Hārūn عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ were biological brothers, both of whom were messengers of Allāh, with Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ being the elder. However, Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ served as a deputy to Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. Notably, Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ affectionately referred to Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as the "son of my mother," (7:150) a term of endearment rather than disrespect.

When Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ departed for Mount Ṭūr, he appointed Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ as his substitute in charge of the people. During his absence, the people succumbed to the egregious sin of worshiping a golden calf fashioned from

their jewelry. For Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who had tirelessly endeavored to guide his immensely obstinate people towards the path of tauhīd, witnessing their indulgence in shirk was a devastating blow, evoking intense grief and anger.

In this context, Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ overwhelming anger stemmed from his profound sense of ghayrah lillāh (zeal for the sake of Allāh) and bughḍ fi'llāh (aversion to anything displeasing to Allāh). Consequently, Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ actions, including his handling of the tablets and his physical gesture towards Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, were motivated by his utmost dedication to the Dīn (religion), rather than any carnal desire.

In this scenario, where the Banī Isrā'īl succumbed to calf worship, Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was deeply distressed and explicitly prohibited them from this idolatrous act. He also admonished them to desist, but the people remained obstinate, refusing to heed his warnings.

Ideally, Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ should have immediately informed Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ of the situation and withdrawn

from interacting with the people. However, based on his independent judgment (ijtihād), Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ reasoned that leaving to inform Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ at Mount Ṭūr might raise objections regarding his responsibility to oversee the people. Consequently, he chose not to notify Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ until his return.

Upon his return, Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, who held a higher prophetic rank than his elder brother Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, reprimanded him for his handling of the situation. In response, Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ justified his actions, as expressed in the following verse:

﴿ قَالَ يَبْنَؤُمْرًا لَا تَأْخُذْ بِلِحْيَتِي وَلَا بِرَأْسِي ۖ إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ
بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْقُبْ قَوْلِي ﴿٩٤﴾ طه: ٩٤ ﴾

“He (Hārūn) said, 'O son of my mother, do not seize (me) by my beard or by my head. Surely, I feared that you would say, 'You caused division among the Children of Isrā'il, and you did not observe (or await) my word.'” (20:94)

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, exercising his independent judgment (ijtihād) and driven by his ardent zeal for Allāh's cause (ghayrah), reprimanded Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ for not informing him of the situation and for remaining among a people entrenched in idolatry. Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, also relying on his ijtihād, deemed it imprudent to abandon his post and responsibility by leaving the people unattended. Neither Mūsā nor Hārūn عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ committed any actions that could be considered objectionable or tarnish their prophetic infallibility ('iṣmah) in the least.

Regarding the tablets, even if Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did cast them to the ground, his actions were not intentional, but rather an instinctive manifestation of his righteous indignation on behalf of Allāh.

OBJECTION [3]:

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ unjustly killed an innocent Copt, a member of the Pharaoh's people, without any apparent

reason. This incident is documented in the Qur'an, which states:

﴿فَوَكَرَهُ مُوسَىٰ فَقَضَىٰ عَلَيْهِ ۖ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۖ إِنَّهُ عَدُوٌّ مُّضِلٌّ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١٥﴾
 ﴿قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي فَاغْفِرْ لِي فَغَفَرَ لَهُ ۗ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ ﴿١٦﴾﴾
 ﴿الْقَصص: ١٥ - ١٦﴾

“So Mūsā struck him and killed him. He (Mūsā) said, 'This is from the work of Shayṭān. Surely, he is a manifest, misleading enemy.' He said, 'My Lord, indeed I have wronged myself, so forgive me,' and He forgave him. Indeed, He is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most-Merciful” (28:15-16).

This incident, of murder, completely contradicts Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام prophetic infallibility ('iṣmah) and the noble stature of prophethood.

ANSWER:

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ did not intentionally kill the Copt; rather, his actions were motivated by a desire to assist an oppressed Israeli. The Copt was oppressing the Israeli, and aiding the oppressed is not only permissible but also obligatory. Although Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ knockout blow took the life out of him, his intention was to defend the innocent. Furthermore, when Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ acknowledged his wrongdoing, he was recognizing that his actions, although well-intentioned, had unintended consequences. In this context, the term ḍalāl, used in reference to prophets like Mūsā and Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ, signifies an error or a mistake rather than misguidance.

OBJECTION [4]:

In the narrative of Mūsā and Khidr عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ (18:60-82), Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ repeatedly failed to honor his promise to refrain from questioning Khidr عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, despite having made this commitment multiple times. This repeated

breach of promise contradicts the principle of 'iṣmah (prophetic infallibility).

ANSWER:

Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام objections stemmed from forgetfulness, as evident in his own words:

﴿ قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ ﴾ الكهف: ٧٣

“He (Mūsā) said, 'Do not blame me for what I forgot.'”
(18:73)

It is universally acknowledged that actions committed out of genuine forgetfulness are not considered culpable.

OBJECTION [5]:

Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ requested Allāh to reveal Himself to him (7:143), despite being aware that it is impossible to behold Allāh in the mortal realm. Moreover, such a request is considered impermissible. This is evident in the case of the Banī Isrā'īl, who made a similar request and were subsequently punished with a lightning strike (2:55, 4:153). If Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ request was permissible, then why were the Banī Isrā'īl penalized with a thunderbolt for making the same inquiry? Conversely, if the request was impermissible, then why did Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, as a prophet, engage in such behavior, which contradicts the principles of prophethood?

ANSWER [1]:

At the time that Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ made this request, there was no prohibition or scriptural evidence indicating the impossibility of beholding the divine. Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ inquiry stemmed from his intense love and devotion to

Allāh. Once the prohibition was established, Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ never repeated his request. In contrast, the Banī Isrā'īl made their demand after the prohibition had been revealed, highlighting a significant distinction between the two incidents.

ANSWER [2]:

'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ clarifies this issue by highlighting the distinct nature of Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ request compared to that of the Banī Isrā'īl.

When Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ beseeched Allāh to reveal Himself, he humbly implored:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ ارْنِي أَنْظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ﴾ الأعراف: ١٤٣

“My Lord, show me (Yourself) that I may look at You.”

(7:143)

In contrast, the Banī Isrā'il's demand, as directed to Mūsā عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, was:

﴿ أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً ﴾ النساء: ١٥٣

“Show us Allāh publicly.” (4:153)

Mūsā's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ words were inspired by profound love, fervent zeal, and eagerness. In complete contrast, the Banī Isrā'il's demand was borne out of their haughtiness, pigheadedness and stubbornness. The difference between a heartfelt, supplicate request and an imperiously obstinate demand is profound. The two incidents cannot be conflated in the slightest bit.

PROPHET YŪNUS عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

Prophet Yūnus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ was a resident of the city of Ninevah. He diligently fulfilled his prophetic duties by inviting his people to embrace the truth. However, his efforts yielded minimal impact on the populace. Allāh ordained a punishment for the nation, although the timing of this retribution remained unspecified. Prior to receiving an explicit divine command regarding the impending punishment or instructions to depart, Yūnus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, overcome with anger and disappointment, abandoned the city and made a solemn departure.

OBJECTION:

The Qur'an recounts the incident of Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ departure, stating:

﴿وَذَا التُّونِ إِذْ ذَهَبَ مُغَضِبًا فَظَنَّ أَنْ لَنْ نَقْدِرَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَادَى فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

﴿الأنبياء: ٨٧﴾

“And the one of the whale — when he went off in anger and thought that We would not hold sway upon him. And he called out within the darknesses, 'There is no deity except You; exalted are You. Surely, I have been of the wrongdoers'”
(21:87).

This narrative raises concerns regarding Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ prophetic character. Firstly, Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ anger appears to be directed towards Allāh. Secondly, he doubted Allāh's omnipotence, implying a rejection of this fundamental divine attribute. Thirdly, Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ confession acknowledges his own wrongdoing. All three of these aspects contradict the noble stature of prophethood.

ANSWER:

All parts of this objection are borne out of ignorance regarding the Arabic language.

First of all, the word قَدَرَ (qadara) comes in three meanings, based on its morphological forms. When derived from the form of نَصَرَ naṣara (قَدَرَ يَقْدِرُ قُدْرَةً), it means 'to have power over something'. When stemming from the form of ضَرَبَ ḍaraba (قَدَرَ يَقْدِرُ قَدْرًا), it means 'to decree' or 'to restrict'. Lastly, when derived from the form of فَتَحَ fataḥa (قَدَرَ يَقْدِرُ قَدْرًا), it means 'to measure' or 'to determine'. In the verse cited above, قَدَرَ is employed in the second form, which means 'to decree', or 'to restrict'. The same meaning is consistently used elsewhere in the Qur'ān, as exemplified in the following verses:

﴿اللَّهُ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ﴾ الرعد: ٢٦

“Allāh extends provision for whom He wills and restricts (it).”
(13:26)

﴿وَمَنْ قُدِّرَ عَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ فَلْيُنْفِقْ مِمَّا آتَاهُ اللَّهُ﴾ الطلاق: ٧

“And he whose provision is restricted - let him spend from what Allāh has given him.” (65:7)

Secondly, no part of the verse explicitly states the object of Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ anger. Therefore, it is inaccurate to assume that his anger was directed towards Allāh. In reality, Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ frustration was aimed at the people, who obstinately refused to heed his message.

Thirdly, regarding Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ self-description as being among the zhālimīn (those who commit zhulm), zhulm signifies placing or doing something in its incorrect place. In this context, Yūnus acknowledged that his anger was misplaced, thereby constituting an act of zhulm. (*Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*)

Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ anger and disappointment stemmed from his inability to control the unfavorable situation he faced, prompting him to migrate prematurely, before receiving divine instructions to leave. Undoubtedly, Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ anger was misplaced, and he accordingly termed it as zhulm. According to Allāh's design, Yūnus عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ should have remained with his people until receiving explicit divine guidance. His failure to do so led to Allāh's reprimand, which paradoxically underscores Yūnus's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ elevated stature as a prophet, in that he was held accountable for an action that was not inherently sinful.

PROPHET DĀWŪD عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام

Prophet Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام was a direct descendant of Yahūdā, one of the twelve sons of Prophet Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. Prior to Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام time, the Israelites had witnessed a separation of prophetic and royal authority. Prophethood had been exclusively vested in the descendants of Yahūdā, while kingship had been held by the descendants of Ifrā'il, another son of Prophet Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام. It was in Prophet Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام that both of these lines of authority converged, as he simultaneously held both prophetic and royal offices. He occupied a unique area of distinction, holding the highest echelons of both worldly authority and spiritual leadership. He was both prophet and king. During his reign, Prophet Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام kingdom spanned a vast territory, extending from the Gulf of Eilat in the south to the Euphrates in the north.

OBJECTION:

A narrative in the biblical chapter of Samuel 2 reads that once, while on the rooftop of his palace, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ espied Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite — one of his loyal soldiers, bathing, and subsequently succumbed to his desires, committing adultery with her.

Furthermore, to legitimize their union, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ conspired to have Uriah killed in battle, and once he was killed, he fetched for her to be married to him. Upon recognizing the gravity of his actions, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ repented, as evident in the Qur'ānic account: "And Dāwūd realized that We had tried him, so he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing (in prostration) and turned in repentance (to Allāh)." (38:24) This narrative attributes three egregious transgressions to Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: adultery, murder, and conspiracy — actions that flagrantly contradict the moral integrity expected of an average human being, let alone a messenger of Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stature.

ANSWER:

Ibn Kathīr رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ explicitly classifies this narrative as part of the Isrā'īliyyāt (Israeli traditions), which are completely unreliable, and at times, a buckload of vapid drivel. Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ dismisses this account as a fabrication concocted by Jewish heretics. Similarly, Imām Rāzī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr, Abū Ḥayyān رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in al-Bāḥr al-Muḥīṭ, and Shihāb ad-Dīn Khafājī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in Shifā' al-'Alīl, uniformly concur that this narrative is a fabrication.

The Qur'ānic account of Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام realization is as follows:

﴿ * وَهَلْ أَتَاكَ نَبُؤُا الْخَصْمِ إِذْ تَسَوَّرُوا الْمِحْرَابَ ﴿٦١﴾ إِذْ دَخَلُوا عَلَى دَاوُدَ فَفَزِعَ مِنْهُمْ قَالُوا لَا تَحْفَ خَصْمَانِ بَغَى بَعْضُنَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَلَا تُشْطِطْ وَاهْدِنَا إِلَى سَوَاءِ الصِّرَاطِ ﴿٦٢﴾ إِنَّ هَذَا أَخِي لَهُ تِسْعٌ وَتِسْعُونَ نَعْجَةً وَّوَلِي نَعْجَةً وَّحِدَةً فَقَالَ أَكْفَلْنِيهَا وَعَزَّنِي فِي الْخِطَابِ ﴿٦٣﴾ قَالَ لَقَدْ ظَلَمَكَ بِسُؤَالِ نَعْتِكَ إِلى نِعَاجِهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْخُلَطَاءِ لِيَبْغَى بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا

الصَّالِحَاتِ وَقَلِيلٌ مَّا هُمْ ^{فَلَمَّا} وَظَنَّ دَاوُودُ أَنَّمَا فَتَتَهُ فَأَسْتَغْفَرَ رَبَّهُ وَخَرَّ رَاكِعًا وَأَنَابَ ﴿٢٤﴾ فَغَفَرْنَا لَهُ ذَٰلِكَ ^{وَإِنَّ} لَهُ عِنْدَنَا لَزُلْفَىٰ وَحُسْنَ مَّآبٍ ﴿٢٥﴾ ص: ٢١ - ٢٥

“And has there come to you the news of the adversaries, when they climbed over the prayer chamber? When they entered upon Dāwūd and he was alarmed by them, they said, "Fear not. (We are) two adversaries, one of us has wronged the other, so judge between us with truth and do not exceed (it) and guide us to the sound path. Surely this is my brother; he has ninety-nine ewes, and I have one ewe; so he said, 'Entrust her to me,' and he overpowered me in speech." (Dāwūd) said, "He has certainly wronged you in demanding your ewe (in addition) to his ewes — and surely, many among associates undoubtedly oppress one another, except for those who believed and did righteous deeds — and few are they." And Dāwūd realized that We had tried him, so he asked forgiveness of his Lord and fell down bowing (in prostration) and turned in repentance (to Allāh). So We forgave him that; and surely, for him is nearness to Us in certain and a good place of return.” (38:21-25)

This account, known as āyāt an-na''ājah (the verses of the ewes), has one of three possible interpretations, which are as follows:

- (1) According to Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, the two individuals who breached the wall and entered Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ prayer chamber at night were actual brothers seeking to resolve a dispute.

The Qur'ān invokes Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ name to underscore his revered status and emphasize his spiritual significance. The details of the case and the arguments presented are not mentioned, as it is implicit that a ruler, particularly one who is also a prophet, would naturally hear both sides of the dispute. The Qur'ān's omission of these details is due to their obviousness.

Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ repentance and return to Allāh were prompted by a profound realization. Initially, he had believed that his kingdom, vast as it was, was a paragon of justice. However, when the two

brothers unexpectedly breached the wall of his prayer area and presented their case, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ recognized the limitations of his justice system. He understood that, despite his best efforts, shortcomings still existed, and that he needed to reevaluate the situations in his kingdom. This epiphany sparked Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to seek forgiveness, demonstrating an exceptionally high level of God-consciousness.

- (2) The second commentary is offered by Abū Muslim Iṣfahānī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، who also posits that both the claimant and the defendant who stormed his chamber were human beings. According to this interpretation, when the claimant presented his case, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ rendered a verdict without hearing the defendant's side of the story. Furthermore, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ failed to investigate the incident, neglecting to inquire about witnesses or gather additional evidence. It was this precipitous decision, made without due diligence,

that prompted Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ to seek forgiveness from Allāh.

Dāwūd's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ handling of the case was intentionally designed to encourage the public and instill within them an audacity to bring their disputes forward, rather than letting them linger unresolved. Common people harbored an awe for Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, and due to his immense prestige, they were often reluctant to approach him with their cases. Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ sought to alleviate this apprehension by demonstrating his accessibility and willingness to adjudicate.

- (3) The third interpretation, widely considered the most authoritative, is attributed to 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا and narrated by al-Ĥākim رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ in his al-Mustadrak. According to this account, Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had meticulously allocated his time, dividing each day and night into three equal parts: one third devoted to worshipping Allāh, one third

to adjudicating cases, and one third to attending to domestic responsibilities. Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ took great pride in his rigorous schedule, which he believed enabled him to optimize his time and minimize waste. However, Allāh sent two angels disguised as two brothers – one posing as a claimant and the other as a defendant – to appear before Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ during his designated worship time at night. The purpose of this unexpected scenario was to humble Dāwūd عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, making him realize that his self-satisfaction in his time management was misplaced. Instead, he should acknowledge that his accomplishments were ultimately facilitated by Allāh's taufīq (divine enablement).

PROPHET SULAYMĀN عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

OBJECTION:

The Qur'an recounts an incident involving Sulaymān عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, stating:

﴿ إِذْ عُرِضَ عَلَيْهِ بِالْعَشِيِّ الصَّافِنَاتُ الْجِيَادُ ﴿٣١﴾ فَقَالَ إِنِّي أَحْبَبْتُ حُبَّ الْخَيْرِ عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي حَتَّى تَوَارَتْ بِالْحِجَابِ ﴿٣٢﴾ رُدُّوهَا عَلَيَّ فَطَفِقَ مَسْحًا بِالسُّوقِ وَالْأَعْنَاقِ ﴿٣٣﴾ ﴾

﴿ ص: ٣١ - ٣٣ ﴾

“When the light-footed coursers (i.e., horses) of high breed were presented before him at eventide — so he said, 'Surely, I gave preference to the love of the good to the remembrance of my Lord until it disappeared into the veiling.' (He said), 'Bring them back to me,' and set about stroking the shanks and necks.” (38:31-33)

This account raises two concerns regarding Sulaymān's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ 'iṣmah (prophetic infallibility). Firstly, Sulaymān's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ preoccupation with his horses led him to neglect the remembrance of Allāh and potentially miss his evening prayers, as the Qur'ān quotes that he remained negligent of his devotions until the sun disappeared into the veiling of darkness. Secondly, Sulaymān's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ response to his mistake is questionable, as he shifts the blame to the horses, ordering them to be struck down and slaughtered as a consequence of his own error.

ANSWER [1]:

Assuming we accept the interpretation that Sulaymān عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ missed his evening devotions due to his preoccupation with the horses — and subsequently slaughtered them upon realizing his distraction, the response to the first concern raised in the objection is that Sulaymān عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ had bred these horses specifically for jihād (holy war). As such, attending to their needs was, in itself, an act of 'ibādah (worship) and not problematic.

Moreover, indulging in one form of worship does not necessarily preclude another; therefore, momentarily forgetting one act of devotion while engaging in another is not blameworthy at all.

Regarding the second concern, Sulaymān's عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ decision to sacrifice the horses can be seen as an act of devotion to Allāh. In the context of taṣawwuf (Sufism) and tazkiyah (spiritual purification), this act is referred to as ghayrah — the tendency to eliminate anything that distracts one from one's awareness of Allāh. A similar incident is recorded in the life of Ka'b bin Mālik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, a devout companion of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, who donated his entire orchard to the cause of Allāh upon realizing it hindered his focus and humility during Ṣalāh. Such an act of sacrifice was permissible even within the Sharī'ah (divine law) of Prophet Ya'qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.

ANSWER [2]:

The preferred interpretation of these verses, as articulated by 'Allāmah Ālūsī and Ibn Ḥazm رَحِمَهُمَا اللهُ, is as follows:

- (1) The particle عَنْ in the phrase عَنْ ذِكْرِ رَبِّي (to the remembrance of my Lord) denotes causality rather than comparison. Consequently, the accurate translation of the phrase would be: "Surely, I gave preference to the love of the good 'due to', or 'out of' the remembrance of my Lord." This interpretation is also reinforced by the ḥadīth:

الْخَيْرُ مَعْقُودٌ فِي نَوَاصِي الْخَيْلِ.

“Goodness is locked into the foreheads of horses.”
(*at-Targhīb wa't-Tarhīb, Aḥmad, Ṭahāwī, Ṭabarānī; with slight change in wording*)

- (2) Regarding the phrase, "it/they disappeared into the veiling," the pronoun refers to the horses, indicating that they were led into the stables. It does not make sense for the pronoun to refer to the sun, as there is no mention of the sun anywhere in the context.
- (3) The term 'veiling' in this context denotes the enclosure of the stables; not the onset of darkness.
- (4) As for 'stroking the shanks and legs', it does not mean striking their shanks and legs and slaughtering them; it is an expression of endearment, where Sulaymān عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ gently stroked their shanks and legs out of affection.
- (5) It is also noteworthy that the word "ṣāfināt", used here for the horses, specifically refers to horses that stand on three legs.

[Horses that are able to stand on three legs while lifting the fourth leg are seen to be exceptionally strong, agile, well-balanced, and sure-footed. This unique ability is often seen as a sign of excellent breeding, training, and overall quality of the horse. — translator]

THE BLESSED APOSTLE

صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

OBJECTION [1]:

Certain mufassirīn and commentators cite the narration of gharānīq, with a chain of transmission tracing back to Ibn 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. The word gharānīq is the plural form of ghirnīq, which refers to a crane — an elegant bird with a slender but solid physique, a soft, feathery white plumage, and a long, sinuous neck, commonly found near ponds or shallow bodies of water.

According to the narrative, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ once recited the following verses from Sūrah an-Najm:

﴿ أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ آلَ لَتٍّ وَعَلِزَّى ۝ (١٩) وَمَنْوَةَ الثَّلَاثَةَ الْأُخْرَى ۝ (٢٠) النجم: ١٩ - ٢٠ ﴾

“So have you considered al-Lat and al-'Uzza? And Manat, the third — the other one?” (53:19-20)

As he recited these verses, Shayṭān intervened, inserting his voice into the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and reciting the following line in the same rhythm:

تِلْكَ الْغَرَائِيقُ الْعُلَى؛ وَإِنَّ شَفَاعَتَهُنَّ لَتُرْتَجَى.

“Those are the lofty cranes; whose intercession is eagerly sought.”

In this context, Shayṭān employed the term "cranes" as a metaphor for the idols mentioned in the preceding verses, namely al-Lāt, al-'Uzzā, and Manāt. This manipulation led the polytheists to believe that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was praising their false deities, and they mistakenly assumed that he had acknowledged these idols as legitimate intercessors before Allāh.

Upon discovering the blasphemous statements attributed to him, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was deeply

distressed. To alleviate his distress, Allāh revealed the following verse:

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ وَلَا نَبِيٍّ إِلَّا إِذَا تَمَنَّى أَلْقَى الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أُمْنِيَّتِهِ فَيَنْسَخُ اللَّهُ مَا يُلْقِي الشَّيْطَانُ ثُمَّ يُحْكِمُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٥٢﴾ الْحَج: ٥٢ ﴾

“And We did not send before you any messenger or prophet except that when he spoke, Shayṭān cast into his speech (some misunderstanding). But Allāh abolishes that which Shayṭān casts in; then Allāh affirms His verses. And Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Wise.” (22:52)

This narrative contradicts the concept of 'iṣmah (infallibility) associated with prophethood. If a prophet is supposed to be infallible, Shayṭān should not be able to manipulate his words to his advantage at all.

ANSWER:

Scholars have addressed this objection in two primary ways. The first approach involves a negative response, dismissing the narrative entirely, which is the correct stance. The second approach involves affirming the narrative and then providing a correct interpretation, which also holds merit.

THE NEGATIVE ANSWER:

The rationale behind the first approach is that accepting this narrative would compromise the integrity of divine revelation. Imām Bayhaqī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ سَلَامُهُ succinctly states:

هَذِهِ الْقِصَّةُ لَا أَصْلَ لَهَا.

“This story has no basis.”

Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ سَلَامُهُ, in his work *Shifā' al-'Alīl*, notes:

لَمْ يَثْبُتْ بِسَنَدٍ صَحِيحٍ سَلِيمٍ مُتَّصِلٍ.

“This narration lacks an authentic, sound, and connected chain of transmission.”

Abū Ḥayyān, citing Muḥammad bin Is'ḥāq رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ in al-Baḥr al-Muḥīṭ, reveals:

هَذِهِ وَلَدَهَا زَنَادِقَةُ الْيَهُودِ.

“This narration was fabricated by Jewish heretics.”

A detailed analysis in *Nasīm ar-Riyāḍ fī Sharḥi Shifā'il-Qāḍī 'Iyāḍ* demonstrates that this narration is absent from all reputable ḥadīth collections, including the Ṣiḥāḥ Sittah and other prominent compilations. It is evident that enemies of Islam concocted this narrative to discredit the faith. However, Islamic scholars successfully refuted

this attempt by establishing the narrative's rejection based on Qur'ānic evidence. Some of the pertinent Qur'ānic verses cited by scholars include:

(1)

﴿ إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ إِلَّا مَنِ اتَّبَعَكَ مِنَ الْغَاوِينَ ﴿٤٢﴾ ﴾

الحجر: ٤٢

“Surely, My servants — no authority will you have over them, except those who follow you of the deviators.” (15:42)

This verse makes it evident that Shayṭān has no authority over the devoted servants of Allāh, rendering it inconceivable that he could interject his insinuations into the statements of a messenger of Allāh.

(2)

﴿لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَطْلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ۖ تَنْزِيلٌ مِّنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ ﴿٤٢﴾﴾

فصلت: ٤٢

“Falsehood cannot approach it from before it or from behind it; (it is) a revelation from One all-Wise, Praise-worthy.”

(41:42)

This verse asserts that falsehood cannot infiltrate the Qur'an from any direction, making it impossible for Shayṭān to inject his own fabrications into the words of Sūrah an-Najīm during the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ recitation.

(3)

﴿عَلِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا ﴿٢٧﴾ لِيَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ أَبْلَغُوا

رِسَلَتْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَحَاطَ بِمَا لَدَيْهِمْ وَأَحْصَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عَدَدًا ﴿٢٨﴾ ﴿الجن: ٢٦﴾

٢٨ -

“(He is) Knower of the unseen; as such, He does not disclose His (knowledge of the) unseen to anyone — except whom He has approved of as a messenger, then indeed, He sends before each messenger and behind him observers — that he may know that they have conveyed the messages of their Lord; and He has encompassed whatever is with them and has enumerated every thing in number.” (72:26-28)

These verses highlight that the revelation of the Qur'an occurs under the vigilant guardianship of angelic observers to preclude the possibility of Shayṭān introducing his own insinuations into the divine words.

On an intellectual note, scholars state that this narration is rejected due to two primary reasons.

Firstly, the narrative contradicts the fundamental purpose of prophethood, which necessitates that a prophet's words be entirely trustworthy and devoid of

ambiguity. If this narration were deemed authentic, acknowledging that Shayṭān's insinuations infiltrated a prophet's recitation, it would inevitably compromise the distinction between truth and falsehood, thereby undermining the purpose of prophethood.

The second reason is that this narrative was never presented as an objection during the Prophet's ﷺ lifetime. This omission is particularly noteworthy, given that the Prophet's ﷺ adversaries would have undoubtedly exploited such an incident to discredit him, especially considering the opposition he faced comprised the vast mass of the populace. The fact that they did not seize upon this narrative as an objection strongly establishes that it is a fabricated and false story.

SUB-OBJECTION:

A narration in the Ṣaḥīḥayn recounts that the Prophet ﷺ once recited Sūrah an-Najm during Ṣalāh, and upon concluding with the final verse, "So

prostrate to Allāh and worship (Him)" (53:62), the polytheists present, who had been listening to the recitation, prostrated alongside the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the believers.

The polytheists' act of prostrating suggests that they were delighted by what they perceived as the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ praise of their false deities.

ANSWER [1]:

Shāh Waliullāh explains that the polytheists' prostration was, in fact, a result of being overcome by jazhb (spiritual attraction). Jazhb is a state of intense emotional ecstasy, characterized by spiritual fervor or rapture. In this instance, the collective presence of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the blessings of the Qur'ān, and the spiritual aura of the gathering created an overwhelming environment that compelled the polytheists to prostrate.

ANSWER [2]:

Collective actions can exert a profound influence, drawing even those who may initially oppose to engage and participate alongside others.

To illustrate this phenomenon, I recall an incident where I stumbled upon a storyteller in the market who was regaling the crowd with tales of 'Alī's duel with a disbeliever. As he vividly portrayed the scene, he exclaimed, "The disbeliever wielded a sword weighing a thousand maunds!" The storyteller then raised his hands, urging the crowd to pray for 'Alī's victory: "make du'ā' that Allāh grants 'Alī victory!" In a moment of collective fervor, the entire crowd raised our hands in prayer. Even I raised my hands to make du'ā'.

Later, upon reflection, I realized the absurdity of the situation. "What a liar!" I thought to myself. "How does it make sense for someone to lift a sword weighing a thousand maunds? Also, even if the story was true, the event being described had occurred over a thousand years ago, so what was the point of making du'ā' now? Why did

I even raise my hands?" I couldn't help but wonder why I had instinctively joined in such an utterly absurd prayer.

However, this anecdote does underscore the power of collective influence. The polytheists' prostration can similarly be attributed to the impact of the collective prostration, rather than any perceived praise of their false deities. It is inconceivable that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would praise false deities, as this would be antithetical to his prophetic mission.

[A few more examples of collective actions that can draw people to engage and participate are as follows; note that not all actions here are appropriate:

- 1. **Sports stadium chants:** When a large crowd in a stadium chants slogans or cheers for their team, it can be infectious, drawing even those who may not be avid fans to join in.*
- 2. **Concert or music festival crowd participation:** When a performer encourages the crowd to sing along, clap, or*

dance, the collective energy can sweep up even those who may not know the lyrics or be familiar with the music.

- 3. **Protest or rally chants:** During a protest or rally, collective chants and slogans can create a sense of solidarity, drawing participants to join in and express their support for the cause.*

- 4. **Flash mobs or public performances:** Organized flash mobs or public performances, such as dance routines or singing performances, can draw in bystanders, encouraging them to join in or watch in awe.*

- 5. **Audience participation in comedy shows or theater performances:** When a comedian or performer encourages audience participation, the collective laughter and energy can create a sense of belonging, drawing even those who may be initially hesitant to join in.*

All of these examples illustrate how collective actions can exert a profound influence, encouraging individuals to participate and engage alongside others, often without fully realizing the extent of their involvement. — translator]

POSITIVE ANSWER [1]:

Assuming the legitimacy of this narration, the verses of Gharānīq, seemingly uttered by the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, were not, in fact, uttered by him. Instead, a Shayṭān, whether human or jinn, articulated these words in a voice similar to the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, leading the polytheists to mistakenly believe that their idols were being praised, prompting them to prostrate. 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ presents this explanation in *Rūḥ al-Ma'ānī*. This answer offers a sensible and stable interpretation, safeguarding the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ 'iṣmah (infallibility) from being compromised. Moreover, since these verses, attributed to Shayṭān, were not part of Sūrah an-Najm, the notion of a mixture between truth and falsehood is also nullified.

POSITIVE ANSWER [2]:

Another valid explanation is proposed by 'Allāmah Badr ad-Dīn 'Ainī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and other prominent researchers, who suggest that the verse in question was, in fact, a part of the Holy Qur'ān, but was later abrogated from recitation. In this context, the term "Gharānīq" refers not to idols or false deities, but rather to angels. The metaphor simlizes the winged and majestic appearance of cranes to that of angels. This literary device, known as Isti'ārah in Arabic, involves employing the name of one thing to refer to another, unnamed thing, based on their shared characteristics. This interpretation is particularly plausible, given the explicit mentions in authentic aḥādīth of angels interceding on behalf of certain actions and individuals before Allāh.

AN ANALYSIS:

The verb translated as "spoke" or "recited" in the verse is تَمَنَّى (tamannā), derived from تَمَنَّى (tamannī),

meaning "to wish." Although tamannā primarily connotes wishing, it is occasionally used to signify speaking or reciting, albeit rarely. The dictionary definition of tamannī is:

مَا يَقْدِرُ الرَّجُلُ حُصُولَهُ فِي الْقَلْبِ.

"A deep-seated longing in one's heart for the attainment of something."

The Qur'an employs this term in various contexts, such as:

﴿ فَتَمَنُّوا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴾ البقرة: ٩٤

"Then wish for death, if you should be truthful." (2:94, 62:6)

﴿ وَلَا يَتَمَنَّوْنَهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ﴾ الجمعة: ٧

“But they will not wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth.” (62:7)

﴿ أَمْ لِلإِنسَانِ مَا تَمَنَّى ﴾ ﴿٢٤﴾ النجم: ٢٤

“Or is there for man whatever he wishes?” (53:24)

In light of this understanding, the verse suggests that a prophet inherently wishes for guidance and the well-being of others. However, the Shayṭānic enemies of the prophets instill doubts, misconceptions, and insinuations in the hearts of people, which Allāh subsequently abolishes. The verse in Sūrah al-An'ām corroborates this notion, stating:

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَا لِكُلِّ نَبِيٍّ عَدُوًّا شَيَاطِينَ الْإِنسِ وَالْجِنِّ يُوحى بَعْضُهُمْ إِلَى بَعْضٍ زُخْرُفَ الْقَوْلِ غُرُورًا ﴾ ﴿الأنعام: ١١٢﴾

“And thus We have made for every prophet an enemy — devils of man and jinn, inspiring to one another decorative speech in delusion.” (6:112)

Allāh Himself eradicates these Shayṭānic doubts and misconceptions. For example, when the following verse was revealed:

﴿إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ﴾ الأنبياء: ٩٨

“Surely, you (disbelievers) and what you worship other than Allāh are the firewood of Jahannam,” (21:98)

and the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ recited it, Shayṭān instilled in the people a doubt: "If this is the case, then 'what you worship other than Allāh' must also include the angels and Prophet 'Isā (Jesus) عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ, as they have also been worshipped, which implies that they too will enter the Hellfire. If they are destined for Jahannam, what hope do

we have?" Allāh abolished this misconception through the following verse:

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَّا الْحُسْنَىٰ أُولَٰئِكَ عَنْهَا مُبْعَدُونَ ﴿١٠١﴾ ﴾

الأنبياء: ١٠١

“Surely, those for whom the good (reward) has preceded from Us — they are from it (i.e., Jahannam) far removed.” (21:101)

Notably, even in the absence of this explicit revelation, Shayṭān's misconception was inherently flawed. The phrase مَا تَعْبُدُونَ (what you worship) employs the particle مَا, which translates to "what" and is exclusively used to refer to non-intelligent beings, thereby excluding angels and Prophet 'Īsā from its scope anyways. Nevertheless, Allāh explicitly dispelled this doubt. And Allāh knows best.

OBJECTION [2]:

The second objection is that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ married the wife of Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, who was his adopted son, after he divorced her. This objection is based on the following verses:

﴿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 لِكَيْ لَا يَكُونَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ حَرَجٌ فِي
أَزْوَاجِ أَدْعِيَائِهِمْ إِذَا قَضَوْا مِنْهُنَّ وَطَرًا وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾﴾ **الأحزاب:**

٣٧

“And (remember, O Muḥammad), when you said to the one on whom Allāh bestowed favor and you bestowed favor, "Keep your wife and fear Allāh," while you concealed within yourself that which Allāh is to disclose. And you feared the people, while Allāh has more right that you fear Him. So when Zayd had dissolved a need from her, We married her to you in order that there not be upon the believers any

discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the command of Allāh accomplished.” (33:37)

ANSWER:

Some Western translators have attempted to misinterpret and distort the meaning of certain words in the aforementioned verse, seeking to tarnish the infallibility ('iṣmah) of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. However, a careful examination of the context reveals that the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ actions, including his marriage to the divorcee of his adopted son, were entirely in accordance with Allāh's intention. The underlying purpose of the incident referenced in these verses was to introduce a legislative ease for Muslims and simultaneously abolish an outdated pagan custom that had been deeply ingrained in Arab society for generations.

The narrative behind this verse is rooted in the story of Zaynab bint Jahsh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the paternal cousin of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Zaynab's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا mother, Umaymah

bint 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib, was the biological sister of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ father, 'Abdullāh bin 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ arranged Zaynab's marriage to Zayd bin Ḥārithah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا, a former slave who had been gifted to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ by his first wife, Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had subsequently freed Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and adopted him as his own son, earning him the title 'Zayd bin Muḥammad'. Despite Zayd's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ emancipation, the Arabs persisted in viewing him as a slave, adhering to the notion that "once a slave, always a slave." In accordance with Arab custom, it was deemed disgraceful and unacceptable for a woman of noble Quraish descent to marry a former slave. As a result, Zaynab and Zayd's marriage was unsuccessful, ultimately leading to Zayd's divorce from Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. Following the divorce, Allāh commanded the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to marry Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. The objective of this marriage was to abolish the pagan custom that equated marrying the divorcee of one's adopted son with marrying the divorcee of one's biological son.

Western critics, driven by intense animosity towards Islam, often exploit this narrative to level unfounded criticisms. These distortions can be broadly categorized into three primary sub-objections, which are as follows:

SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

The Prophet ﷺ married Zaynab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها because he was in love with her.

SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

The phrase "When you said... 'Keep your wife and fear Allāh,' while you concealed within yourself that which Allāh is to disclose" is evidence of a changing mindset and increased desire, implying a disparity between the Prophet's ﷺ outward and inward states. This is entirely inconsistent with the noble stature of prophethood.

SUB-OBJECTION [3]:

The phrase "And you feared the people" is evidence that the Messenger of Allāh prioritized fear of people over fear of Allāh. This not only contradicts the principles of prophethood but also undermines fundamental Islamic teachings.

ANSWER TO SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

The claim that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ married Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا due to romantic infatuation is a blatant manifestation of Islamophobia and a grievous slander against the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The Qur'ān unequivocally states that the purpose of this marriage was "in order that there not be upon the believers any discomfort concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them." (Qur'ān 33:37) This verse explicitly establishes that the marriage aimed to eradicate a deeply ingrained pagan custom. Apart from that, even if the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had supposedly experienced a

natural, permissible attraction towards Zaynab, this would not have been objectionable in the least.

ANSWER TO SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

The notion that the verse implies a discrepancy between the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ words and his inner thoughts is entirely unfounded and lacks any credible evidence. When the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ advised Zayd to retain Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, his words accurately reflected his genuine intentions. However, Zayd was unable to act on the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ suggestion, leading to his divorce from Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

(This incident bears a resemblance to the case of Mughīth and Barīrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, a slave couple who were married. Following Barīrah's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا emancipation by her master, she exercised her right, as dictated by divine law, to either continue or dissolve the marriage. This is known as *khiyār al-'itq*. Opting for the latter, Barīrah chose to annul the marriage. Mughīth رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ subsequently appealed to

the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ for intercession. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ endeavored to persuade Barīrah to reconsider and remain with Mughīth رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. When Barīrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا inquired whether the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ words constituted a divine command or merely a suggestion, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ clarified that he was simply advocating on Mughīth's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ behalf. Undeterred, Barīrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا maintained her decision and ultimately annulled the marriage.)

Upon Zayd's divorce from Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, her social stigma intensified, and she felt doubly ashamed: first, for having been married to a former slave, and second, for being divorced by one. Initially, Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا had only accepted this marriage out of deference to the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instruction, as it contravened both familial and tribal norms. Following her divorce, Zaynab's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا distress was palpable, and alleviating her pain, as well as that of her family, became imperative. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was acutely aware of this situation, which is alluded to in the verse "while you concealed within

yourself that which Allāh is to disclose." To resolve this predicament, Allāh presented a remarkable solution: the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ marriage to Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. It is crucial to note that if, hypothetically, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had harbored romantic feelings for Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, he could have easily married her prior to arranging her marriage to Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, without any adverse consequences. The fact that he did not pursue this course of action underscores that romance was not the motivating factor behind this marriage. Those who have leveled this grave accusation against the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ demonstrate a profound ignorance of the actual events and circumstances surrounding this marriage, exemplifying the phenomenon of "big talk from a small mouth."

ANSWER TO SUB-OBJECTION [3]:

The phrase "And you feared the people" alludes to the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ concern that if he were to marry Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا after her divorce from his adopted son, the

people might develop a misguided aversion to the faith, perceiving the marriage as a violation of the deeply ingrained pagan custom. It is natural for a guide and leader to harbor such apprehensions, as they are accountable for the well-being and spiritual guidance of their community. Therefore, this fear is not only understandable but also a prudent consideration, for which one should not be held culpable.

The objections raised by Westerners regarding the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا are all baseless and devoid of substance. An Urdu proverb aptly describes such critics: "معرض کا ناہوتا ہے" (An objector is one-eyed), implying that individuals who seek to criticize and find fault often possess a limited perspective. They tend to selectively focus on aspects that align with their preconceived notions, neglecting to consider the broader context and holistic view of the matter. In this instance, Western critics have failed to recognize the reformative aspect of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage, which aimed to eradicate an unjust and deeply ingrained pagan custom.

It is essential to note that this custom could have been abolished either through verbal condemnation or practical demonstration. However, given the entrenched nature of this tradition in Arab society, verbal statements alone would have been insufficient to effect change. A practical demonstration was necessary, and thus, upon Allāh's command, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ abolished this pagan custom through his own actions, setting a precedent that would be emulated by future generations.

This practical demonstration left no room for misinterpretation or speculation. The Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, having witnessed the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ actions, were left with no doubt regarding the permissibility of marrying the divorcee of one's adopted son. This clarity has been preserved until the present day, and no Muslim can harbor doubts about this matter until the Day of Judgement.

As for Western critics, their primary objective is to sow seeds of doubt and perpetuate misconceptions. In

light of this, it is futile to expect anything more from them.

OBJECTION [3]:

The third objection is predicated on the following verse:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ لِمَ تُحَرِّمُ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ تَبْتَغِي مَرْضَاتَ أَزْوَاجِكَ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿١﴾
التحریم: ١

“O Prophet, why do you prohibit what Allāh has made lawful for you, seeking the approval of your wives? And Allāh is Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.” (66:1)

This verse suggests that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ forbade himself from something that Allāh had permitted, ostensibly to appease his wives. The objection stemming from this verse can be bifurcated into two sub-objections:

SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

The Prophet ﷺ made unlawful something that Allāh had made lawful.

SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

The Prophet ﷺ prioritized the pleasure of his wives over the pleasure of Allāh.

ANSWER TO SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

The response to the first objection necessitates an understanding of the incident that prompted the revelation of the verse in question. To this end, we present a concise account of the events. According to Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, the Prophet ﷺ would customarily visit his wives after the 'Aṣr prayer, often beginning with Zaynab bint Jaḥsh, followed by his other spouses رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ. Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was aware of the Prophet's ﷺ fondness for sweet treats and would prepare a honey-based

drink for him, occasionally causing his visits to the other wives to be delayed.

This routine continued for several days, until 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah discovered Zaynab's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ daily offerings of honey to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. As they desired to have the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ spend more time with them, they devised a plan to ask him, upon his visit to their quarters, if he had consumed maghāfir, a sweet-tasting sap with an unpleasant odor, derived from the 'urfuṭ plant native to Africa and West Asia. The wives were aware of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ preference for pleasant aromas and aversion to foul odors, and they knew that if he gave up the honey, he would be quicker to come to their quarters.

In accordance with their plan, 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا each told the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, upon his visit:

إِنِّي أَجِدُ مِنْكَ رِيحَ الْمَغَافِيرِ.

“I can smell the scent of maghāfir from your mouth.”

The Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ clarified:

إِنِّي شَرِبْتُ الْعَسَلَ عِنْدَ زَيْنَبَ.

"I did drink honey at Zaynab's."

'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا each quipped with:

جَلَسَتْ نَحْلُهَا الْعُرْفُطَ.

"It's honeybees must've sat on the 'urfuṭ shrub."

لَا أَعُودُ.

"I won't do it again,"

was the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ response.

According to Islamic jurisprudence, prohibiting oneself from engaging in a lawful activity — in this case, consuming honey — constitutes an oath (yamīn or qasm). If an individual breaks this self-imposed promise, they are obligated to perform the kaffārah (expiation) for breaking an oath, which involves either freeing a slave, fasting for three consecutive days, or providing a day's fill of food for ten impoverished individuals each.

In the verse in question, the term taḥrīm (prohibition) does not carry its typical shar'ī (jurisprudential) connotation. Rather, it bears a linguistic, lughawī meaning. Unfortunately, the objector has misinterpreted the verse entirely. A more accurate translation of the verse would be: "O Prophet, why do you prevent yourself from what Allāh has permitted for you, seeking the approval of your wives?" Here, the Prophet ﷺ had chosen to abstain from consuming something he knew was permissible.

As 'Allāmah Ālūsī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ notes in Rūh al-Ma'ānī, "Taḥrīm refers to staying away from something." His words are:

وَالْمُرَادُ عَنِ التَّحْرِيمِ الْإِمْتِنَاعُ.

This understanding is reinforced by the Qur'ān, where derivatives of the same root word are used to convey a sense of prevention. For instance, in verse 21:95, the term "ḥarām" (prohibition) is employed to signify that the people of a destroyed city are unable to return, rather than implying a legal prohibition.

﴿ وَحَرَامٌ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٩٥﴾ ﴾ الأنبياء: ٩٥

“And it is prohibited upon (the people of) a city which We have destroyed, that they will never return.” (21:95)

Since promising oneself to abstain from a permissible activity constitutes an oath, Allāh follows the cited verse with the assurance:

﴿ قَدْ فَرَضَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ تَحِلَّةَ أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَاللَّهُ مَوْلَاكُمْ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴾ التحريم: ٢

“Allāh has already ordained for you the dissolution of your oaths. And Allāh is your Guardian, and He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.” (66:2)

OBJECTION AGAINST THE ANSWER:

If the taḥrīm mentioned in the verse is not a shar'ī prohibition, which would constitute a sin, then how can one justify the concluding phrase, "and Allāh is Oft Forgiving and Most Merciful"? The inclusion of Allāh's attributes of forgiveness and mercy seemingly implies that a sin has been committed, necessitating forgiveness.

ANSWER [1]:

It is not imperative that Allāh's attributes of al-Ghafūr (Oft Forgiving) and ar-Raḥīm (Most Merciful) be preceded by the mention of a sin. Occasionally, Allāh mentions these attributes without any prior reference to sin. A notable example can be found in the verse:

﴿ فَمَنْ أَضْطَرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴾ (١٧٣)

البقرة: ١٧٣

“But whoever is forced (by necessity, to consume what is prohibited), neither desiring (it) nor transgressing (its limit), there is no sin upon him. Surely, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving and Most Merciful.” (2:173)

In this instance, Allāh explicitly combines a negation of sin with His attributes of al-Ghafūr and ar-Raḥīm.

ANSWER [2]:

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that the mention of the attributes of al-Ghafūr and ar-Raḥīm does require the presence of disobedience in the context. However, not every instance of disobedience constitutes a shar'ī disobedience, which is defined as the contravention of a direct divine command or prohibition. Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ notes that, on occasion, Allāh may censure a prophet for actions that, although not inherently sinful, are contrary to divine will. This phenomenon is a testament to the elevated rank of the prophet and is not objectionable. In the incident in question, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ acted contrary to divine will by imposing a restriction on himself where none existed.

ANSWER TO SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

A poet expresses:

عَيْنُ الرِّضَا عَنْ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ كَلِيلَةٌ

وَعَيْنُ الْعَدَاوَةِ كُلِّ عَيْبٍ تَنْظُرُ

*“The eye of contentment sees only beauty,
While the eye of malice sees only flaws.”*

The accusation that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ prioritized the pleasure of his wives over the pleasure of Allāh is a grave and egregious allegation. Citing the aforementioned verse as evidence only serves to underscore the accuser's profound ignorance. Such individuals not only suffer from a lack of knowledge but are also oblivious to their own ignorance, thereby exemplifying a doubly compounded ignorance.

As the Persian proverb aptly puts it:

آں کس که نداند و نداند که نداند

در جهل مرکب ابد الدهر بماند

*He who knows not, and knows not that he knows not,
Shall forever remain in ignorance's darkest lot*

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ exemplified perfection by prioritizing the pleasure of his wives over his own desires. A ḥadīth narrated in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī highlights his fondness for sweets and honey:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يُحِبُّ الْحُلُوَّ وَالْعَسَلَ.

“The Messenger of Allāh — may Allāh's peace and blessings be upon him — used to love sweets and honey.”

Despite this inclination, upon getting the impression that his consumption of honey was causing 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا distress, and potentially affecting his other wives as well, he voluntarily abstained from drinking honey. This self-imposed restraint, concerning a matter not even inherent to marital rights, demonstrates the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ exceptional character. He sought to please his wives by sacrificing his personal pleasure.

به بين تفاوت راه از کجاست تا کجا

“Where is the path of distinction, from here to there?”

کمال صدق و محبت بین نه نقص و گناه

که هر که بے همتا نظر به عیب کند

*Perfection lies in sincerity and love, not in flaw and sin
But one who lacks insight will focus only on faults within*

SUB-OBJECTION:

'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا devised a scheme, and not just a scheme, but one that entailed four significant transgressions: (1) dishonesty — their assertion that they could smell maghāfir on the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ breath was a falsehood. (2) ḥasad (jealousy) — they harbored envy towards Zaynab. (3) causing distress to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ — by pressuring him to relinquish something he enjoyed, they committed a grave offense. (4) divine censure — their actions earned them censure in the

Qur'an, as expressed in the verse: فَقَدْ صَغَتْ قُلُوبُكُمَا ("for your hearts have deviated.") (66:4)

ANSWER:

This entire scheme was motivated by an ardent love for the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Since loving the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is a fundamental condition for the perfection of faith, such actions cannot be deemed blameworthy.

Also, none of the four alleged transgressions occurred in this instance. The statement regarding the scent of maghāfir on the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ breath was, in fact, truthful. In Arabia, honeybees often come into contact with the 'urfuṭ shrub, causing the honey they produce to bear a distinct scent of maghāfir. This phenomenon is analogous to the varied scents imparted to dairy products, such as curd, yogurt, and butter, produced from mountain goats that have grazed on specific plants.

Moreover, the scheme devised by 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا was not driven by ḥasad (jealousy) towards Zaynab,

but rather by ghibtah (the inclination to have what someone has). *Ĥasad* involves harboring a desire for someone's blessing to be snatched away from them and transferred to oneself, which is considered *ĥarām*. Ghibtah entails wishing to possess a blessing similar to what someone else has, which is a natural and uncontrollable sentiment. In the context of co-wives, ghibtah is even more understandable and impossible to suppress. Individuals cannot be held accountable for actions arising from feelings that are inherently natural and beyond their control.

Regarding the phrase "your hearts deviated," it is essential to recognize that this statement serves as a guiding principle for managing household affairs, rather than a rebuke or censure. When 'Abdullāh bin 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا asked 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ about the identity of the two women referred to in the verse, "your hearts deviated," 'Umar promptly responded, تِلْكَ عَائِشَةُ وَحَفْصَةُ ("Those are 'Ā'ishah and *Ĥafṣah*"). If the phrase was intended as a rebuke or censure, it is unlikely that 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would

have been so forthcoming in identifying 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا, particularly given his personal connection to Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, his own daughter.

The term صَغَتْ is derived from صَغَى, which connotes inclination or deviation. In this context, the phrase signifies that 'Ā'ishah and Ḥafṣah's رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا hearts were inclined towards gaining a deeper affection from the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, a natural sentiment for those who deeply love the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

It is crucial to note that there is no evidence to suggest that their actions caused the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ any distress. Given his resilience and his experiences of a life lived long and hard, it is unlikely that he would be perturbed by such a trivial matter. Moreover, if their actions had indeed caused him distress, it is reasonable to expect that he would have expressed his displeasure, even subtly. However, there is no record of him ever expressing discontent.

OBJECTION [4]:

The Qur'an declares:

﴿ إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا ﴿١﴾ لِيُغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِن ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ
 وَيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكَ وَيَهْدِيَكَ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا ﴿٢﴾ وَيَنْصُرَكَ اللَّهُ نَصْرًا عَزِيمًا ﴿٣﴾ ﴾

الفتح: ١ - ٣

“Surely, We have granted for you a clear victory — so that Allāh may forgive for you what preceded of your shortcoming and what will follow, and complete His favor upon you, and guide you on a straight path — and (that) Allāh may aid you (with) a mighty support.” (48:1-3)

The initial verse in this passage explicitly states that Allāh has forgiven the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ past and future shortcomings, implying that he had, in fact, committed sins. The concept of forgiveness presupposes the existence of wrongdoing, otherwise there would be no point in

mentioning it; therefore, the mention of forgiveness in this context suggests that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was not immune to sin. This, in turn, negates the notion that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was ma'sūm (infallible).

ANSWER [1]:

This verse employs a rhetorical device known as majāz bi'l-ḥazhf, where a phrase explicitly mentions one thing but implicitly refers to another, unnamed concept associated with the expressed word. In this context, the phrase "your shortcoming" figuratively denotes "the shortcomings of your Ummah (nation)," implying that the past and future transgressions of this Ummah can be forgiven.

Regarding the attribution of the term zhanb (shortcoming) to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in this verse, 'Allāmah Badr ad-Dīn az-Zarkashī رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, in *al-Burhān*, elucidates that due to the profound connection between the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his Ummah, the promise of

forgiveness was addressed directly to him. This literary technique is exemplified in another Qur'ānic verse, where Allāh states:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَطَلِّقُوهُنَّ لِعَدَّتِهِنَّ وَأَحْصُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ رَبَّكُمْ ﴾ الطلاق: ١

“O Prophet, when you (intend to) divorce women, divorce them at (the commencement of) their waiting period, and keep count of the waiting period, and fear Allāh, your Lord.”
(65:1)

Although this verse explicitly addresses the Prophet ﷺ, its intended audience is, in fact, the entire Ummah. Numerous instances of majāz bi'l-ḥazf can be found throughout the Qur'ān.

ANSWER [2]:

In this verse, the term "shortcoming" does not denote a legal, shar'ī sin, which is typically defined as a transgression against a direct divine command or prohibition. Instead, it refers to an action that falls short of the optimal choice, often described in everyday language as "not the best course of action." According to Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، due to the exalted status of a messenger in the sight of Allāh, even the slightest deviation from the ideal choice is considered a shortcoming. This underscores the majesty of a prophet's nobility and highlights the elevated standards expected of those in positions of spiritual leadership.

ANSWER [3]:

Ibn Ḥazm رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ offers an alternative explanation, suggesting that the shortcomings attributed to prophets and messengers of Allāh are, in reality, permissible actions that lie just beyond the boundaries of shar'ī disobedience.

Although these actions are legally permissible, they may still contravene the hidden dictations of divine will, or result in consequences akin to those of sinful actions. An example of this is the incident involving the ransoming of slaves captured during the Battle of Badr. Following the battle, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, exercising his independent judgment (ijtihād) in consultation with Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, decided to release the hostages in exchange for ransom, despite the objections of 'Umar bin al-Khaṭṭāb and Sa'd bin Mu'āz رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا, who firmly advocated for their execution. Notably, this decision did not violate any explicit divine revelation, as no specific guidance had been provided regarding this situation. Nevertheless, it appears to have contravened the optimal course of action preferred by divine will. Consequently, Allāh revealed the following verses 8:67-69 as a gentle admonition for the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ action.

﴿ مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيِّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَّ أَسْرَى حَتَّى يُشْخِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَضَ
الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴿٦٧﴾ لَوْلَا كِتَابٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ سَبَقَ

لَمَسَّكُمْ فِيمَا أَخَذْتُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٦٨﴾ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا غَنِمْتُمْ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴿الأنفال: ٦٧ - ٦٩﴾

“It is not (fit) for a prophet that he should have captives with him unless he has shed blood in the land. You intend the commodity of this world, while Allāh intends the Hereafter, and And Allāh is Exalted in Might, All-Wise. Were it not a decree from Allāh that preceded, a great punishment would have certainly touched you for what you took. So, eat of the spoils you have taken, lawful and pure, and fear Allāh — surely, Allāh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (8:67-69)

The Prophet ﷺ was deeply distressed by this decision, recognizing that it had fallen short of what would have been dictated by divine command. Upon the revelation of these verses, he was overcome with remorse and exclaimed that, had Allāh's punishment been to descend, only 'Umar and Sa'd would have been spared. From a shar'ī perspective, the Prophet's ﷺ decision was not inherently flawed, as no relevant law had been revealed at the time. Had the decision been contrary to

divine law, Allāh would have commanded its revocation. Instead, the decision was allowed to stand, yet the Prophet ﷺ still expressed profound regret, akin to remorse for a sin.

ANSWER [4]:

A more researched interpretation of this verse explains that the phrase لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ ("so that Allāh may forgive for you") employs the root word غَفَرَ (ghafara), which connotes the idea of becoming a veil or a barrier. This etymological connection is illustrated by the word مِغْفَرٌ (mighfar) — a derivative of ghafara, which refers to the visor of chain mail worn in battle that protects the face from sword strikes by creating a barrier.

Implications of 'ghafara' vary, depending on whether it is used in the context of prophets or non-prophets. When applied to non-prophets, ghafara signifies Allāh's mercy intervening as a barrier between a committed sin and its consequent punishment. When used in relation to

prophets, “ghafara” implies that Allāh's mercy serves as a barrier between the prophet and sin itself. The exegetes elucidate the phrase as follows:

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللَّهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَأَخَّرَ؛ أَي: لِيُظْهِرَ أَنَّ رَحْمَتَهُ وَقَعَتْ حَائِلَةً بَيْنَكَ
وَبَيْنَ الذَّنْبِ فِيمَا تَقَدَّمَ وَتَقَعُ سَاتِرًا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ الذَّنْبِ فِيهِ تَأَخَّرَ.

“So that Allāh may forgive for you what preceded of your shortcoming and what will follow, i.e., so that Allāh may make it clear that for past shortcomings, His mercy has intervened to become a shield between you and the shortcomings, while for future shortcomings, His mercy will become a preventive veil between you and between shortcomings.”

And Allāh knows best.

ANSWER [5]:

While each of the preceding explanations possesses validity within its respective context, none of these interpretations perfectly align with the context of the verses. The verses in question proclaim a decisive triumph, followed by the enumeration of three consequences contingent upon this victory: (1) maghfirah (forgiveness), (2) the completion of Allāh's favor, and (3) a mighty support. Apparently, these three consequences do not inherently depend on the victory, as each can be partially attained both prior to and following the victory. The causal relationship established by Allāh, wherein the victory serves as the cause and these three consequences as the effects, necessitates that they occur subsequent to the victory. That being the case, each of these consequences requires an interpretation that renders their dependency on the victory logical and coherent, such that they cannot be attained prior to the victory but only subsequent to it. To develop such an interpretation, it is essential to consider the surrounding circumstances at the time.

The Qur'ān explicitly designates the purpose of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mission in multiple verses. One such verse appears at the conclusion of the very sūrah whose opening verses are under discussion, stating:

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظَاهِرَهُ عَلَىٰ الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ
وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٢٨﴾﴾ الفتح: ٢٨

“It is He who sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth to manifest it over all religion. And enough is Allāh as Witness.” (48:28)

In this context, "guidance" refers to jurisprudential rulings that provide directives for everyday life, while "religion of truth" denotes the authentic doctrines (al-'aqā'id al-ḥaqqah) of Islam. This verse clearly expresses that the primary objective of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ messengership is to establish Islam as the predominant religion. Notwithstanding this purpose, the Prophet's

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ mission did not achieve this objective during the initial 19 years of his prophethood, culminating in the conquest of Makkah. This prolonged period, spanning nearly the entirety of his prophetic era, was marked by the enemies of Islam maintaining control over the religious center of Arabia, which completely hindered the realization of this objective.

It is only natural that when a messenger's mission is centered around a specific objective, yet that objective remains unfulfilled for a substantially long duration of their messengership, self-doubt may arise, prompting the messenger to question whether they have fallen short in disseminating the divine message. Even if other factors contribute to the objective's unattainment, a devoted servant of Allāh will instinctively introspect, attributing the unfulfilled objective to their own shortcomings.

After nineteen long years of tireless effort, when the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ anticipated outcomes failed to materialize, he introspectively attributed the apparent ineffectiveness to his own perceived shortcomings. It is

this self-assumed shortcoming that Allāh alludes to in the verse, "so that Allāh may forgive for you what preceded of your shortcoming and what will follow." Upon the conquest of Makkah, as numerous groups and tribes from across Arabia flocked to the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to embrace the faith, Allāh revealed:

﴿ إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾ فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾ ﴾
 النصر: ١ - ٣

“When there comes Allah’s help and the Victory — and you see the people entering into the religion of Allāh in multitudes — then glorify through praise of your Lord and ask forgiveness of Him — surely, He is ever Accepting of Repentance.” (110:1-3)

It was at this juncture that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ witnessed the fulfillment of his messengership's objective, beheld the long-awaited results he had fervently hoped for,

and recognized that any perceived shortcomings had been expiated. The forgiveness referred to in this context pertains to the attainment of these results. It is evident that such forgiveness, contingent upon the conquest and victory, was unattainable prior to the conquest of Makkah, distinguishing it from other forms of forgiveness.

By the time the Blessed Apostle صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ departed this life, a remarkable expanse of 1,000,000 square miles had been brought under the fold of Islam, an area equivalent in size to three entire Pakistans.

Twelve years later, upon the passing of 'Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, whose illustrious reign of ten years succeeded that of Abū Bakr's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ two years, the Islamic empire had expanded exponentially, with a staggering 220 million square miles now lying under its dominion, a vast territory comparable in size to ten entire Pakistans.

[At the time of this book's composition, the geographical entity of Pakistan encompassed the region now comprising modern-day Bangladesh. — translator]

OBJECTION [5]:

The Qur'an addresses the Prophet ﷺ, stating:

﴿ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴿١﴾ أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ﴿٢﴾ ﴾ عبس: ١ - ٢

“He frowned and turned away — (simply) because there came to him the blind man.” (80:1-2)

These verses convey Allāh's admonition of the Prophet ﷺ for frowning at and turning away from a blind man who had approached him. The fact that the Prophet ﷺ received this rebuke indicates that his actions were deemed blameworthy, which means that he, like all humans, was susceptible to error and not inherently infallible (ma'ṣūm). If his actions were not considered wrongdoing, there would have been no need for Allāh to issue a rebuke.

ANSWER:

To grasp the answer, it is essential to understand the context and circumstances surrounding the revelation of this verse. The narrative unfolds as follows: one day, the influential leaders of the Quraish had gathered around the Prophet ﷺ, and the Prophet ﷺ was engaged in conveying his message and elucidating the truth to them. Amidst this pivotal conversation, 'Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, a devoted blind companion, approached the Prophet ﷺ with the intention of seeking clarification on a specific ruling, oblivious to the Prophet's ﷺ engagement with the Quraish leaders. With enthusiasm, he requested, "عَلِّمْنِي كَمَا عَلَّمَكَ اللهُ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ" ("Teach me — as Allāh has taught you — O Messenger of Allāh!"). Given the high stakes of the situation, the Prophet ﷺ momentarily expressed displeasure at the interruption and turned away to resume his conversation with the Quraish leaders. It was at this moment that Allāh revealed the verses:

﴿ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴿١﴾ أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ﴿٢﴾ ﴾ عبس: ١ - ٢

“He frowned and turned away — (simply) because there came to him the blind man.” (80:1-2)

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ's decision to turn away from Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was not motivated by disdain or disrespect towards him. Rather, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, cognizant of his profound responsibility as a messenger entrusted with a divine mission, harbored a deep-seated desire to guide the influential leaders of the Quraish towards the truth of Islam. As he was engaged in a critical conversation with them, he was concerned that diverting his attention might disrupt the momentum of the discussion and potentially drive them away. Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, being exceptionally close to the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and firmly grounded in the light of faith, posed no risk of straying from the path. Because of this, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was confident that he could address Ibn Umm Maktūm's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ concern at a later time,

without compromising his rights or spiritual well-being in the least.

Apart from that, Ibn Umm Maktūm's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ inquiry pertained to a subsidiary aspect of faith, whereas the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was preoccupied with imparting the fundamental principles of faith to the chiefs. Undoubtedly, enlightening disbelievers about the core tenets of faith takes precedence over addressing a believer's question regarding a secondary aspect of faith. To illustrate, in medical practice, treating a patient suffering from a myocardial infarction takes priority over treating an individual with a minor cold or runny nose, as the former necessitates immediate attention to prevent severe consequences. Neglecting this prioritization would be a departure from the principles of compassionate healthcare. Similarly, disbelief and polytheism are insidious spiritual afflictions that warrant prompt treatment to prevent eternal peril. In conformity with this rationale, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ acted in accordance with the principles of prioritization, addressing the most

critical concerns first. No reasonable individual can deem this approach objectionable, let alone sinful or disobedient.

As for the fact that the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received a rebuke, of which he was deeply aware, is evident in his subsequent interactions with Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Following the revelation of those verses, whenever Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ approached him, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would warmly welcome him, saying, "مَرَّ حَبًّا بِالَّذِي" ("Welcome to the one through whom Allāh enlightened me!"). This rebuke, though real, was not a consequence of sin or disobedience. Rather, it was a manifestation of Allāh's perfect wisdom in the circumstances it was revealed. The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ardently desired that the Quraish leaders embrace the truth, and to achieve this goal, he presented compelling rational arguments. However, the Quraish leaders, due to their own tainted inner selves, failed to accord the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ the attention he deserved, instead dismissing his

words as absurd and the words of a madman. (We seek refuge in Allāh from such ignorance.)

On the other hand, Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, a devoted admirer of the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, cherished the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ words and held them dearer to himself than his own life due to his profound faith. In this context, the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ momentary focus on the Quraish leaders, while momentarily ignoring Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, can be likened to a medical scenario. Imagine a patient who is critically ill, but has a haughty attitude and is belittling to the doctor, while a patient with a milder condition regards the doctor's prescription as crucial to their fate. In such a situation, the doctor naturally prioritizes the more critical patient, momentarily setting aside the less urgent case. Although this approach is pragmatic and sensible given the relative severity of the conditions, it still warrants an admonition and reminder. One who actively seeks attention with earnestness and sincerity deserves attention just the same.

Allāh addressed this scenario through the following revelation:

﴿ عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى ﴿١﴾ أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَّكَّى ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنْفَعَهُ
الذِّكْرَى ﴿٤﴾ أَمْ أَمَّا مِنْ أَسْتَعْنَى ﴿٥﴾ فَأَنْتَ لَهُ تَصَدَّى ﴿٦﴾ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ إِلَّا يَزَّكَّى ﴿٧﴾ وَأَمَّا مَنْ
جَاءَكَ يَسْعَى ﴿٨﴾ وَهُوَ يَخْشَى ﴿٩﴾ فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهَّى ﴿١٠﴾ كَلَّا إِنَّهَا تَذْكِرَةٌ ﴿١١﴾ فَمَنْ شَاءَ ذَكَرْهُ
﴿١٢﴾ فِي صُحُفٍ مُكَرَّمَةٍ ﴿١٣﴾ مَرْفُوعَةٍ مُطَهَّرَةٍ ﴿١٤﴾ بِأَيْدِي سَفَرَةٍ ﴿١٥﴾ كِرَامٍ بَرَرَةٍ ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

عبس: ١ - ١٦

“He frowned and turned away — (simply) because there came to him the blind one — and you never know, perhaps he would have attained purity — or be reminded, and so the reminder would have benefited him — as for he who showed indifference — to him you are anxious to attend — though there is no blame on you if he does not attain purity — and as for he who came to you, running (in eagerness) — and he harbors fear — from him you are distracted — Never! Surely it is a reminder — so whoever wills shall remember it — (recorded) in sheets honored — exalted, purified — in the hands of (angel) scribes — honorable, dutiful.” (80:1-16)

شمشیر نیک ز آہن بد چوں کند کسی
 ناکس بہ تربیت نشود اے حکیم کس
 باران کہ در لطافت طبعش خلاف نیست
 در باغ لاله روید و در شورہ بوم و خس

A noble sword, though forged from base metal, can still be refined

But, O wise one, character cannot, through guidance, be redefined

*Rain falls gently, with a nature that's always the same,
 Nourishing gardens of rose, yet bringing thorns to the desert
 frame*

صحبت عیسیٰ بنائے خر کو انسان کس طرح
 تربیت سے واقعی نااہل دانا کب بنے

How then can the company of Jesus grant the donkey a human frame

*How then can training make the incapably foolish wise by
name*

SUB-OBJECTION [1]:

Considering the esteemed status of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ (companions of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), it is arguable that Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ should not have interrupted the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ during a conversation. How could he have interjected so abruptly?

ANSWER:

The Blessed Apostle صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had a habit of pausing often in between his speech to allow his words to settle with his audience and maximize their impact. As recorded in a ḥadīth by Bukhārī and Muslim, 'Ā'ishah and Abū Hurairah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا observed that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ articulated his words with such clarity that one could easily count them. When Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ approached the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

had just completed a sentence and was pausing. Unaware of the Prophet's صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ audience due to his blindness, Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ assumed he was alone and, driven by eagerness, promptly expressed his thoughts. This sequence of events absolves Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ of any blame for his actions.

SUB-OBJECTION [2]:

The initial verses of Sūrah 'Abas were revealed in praise of Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and it is inappropriate to mention a person's fault or disability in the context of praise. This raises the question: Why does Allāh draw attention to his disability by referring to him as "the blind one" in the verse "because there came to him the blind one"?

ANSWER:

In this context, the mention of Ibn Umm Maktūm's رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ blindness is in fact a form of praise. The revealed

verses subtly highlight that despite his physical inability to see, his heart remained perceptive, prompting him to eagerly seek guidance. In stark contrast, the Quraish leaders suffered from spiritual blindness, rendering them incapable of recognizing the fundamental truth of tauhīd, despite having a pair of peepers pitched into their sockets. By referring to Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as "the blind one," the verses aimed to underscore his spiritual superiority over the Quraish leaders, excuse his actions, and emphasize that he deserved more mercy and attention than was given to him.

SUB-OBJECTION [3]:

In the first two verses, Allāh addresses the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the third person, whereas one would expect a direct address in the second person. The verse appears to deviate from the norm by stating, "عَبَسَ وَتَوَلَّى، أَنْ جَاءَهُ الْأَعْمَى" ("He frowned and turned away — because there came to him the blind one"), instead of the anticipated, "عَبَسْتَ"

وَتَوَلَّيْتَ، أَنْ جَاءَكَ الْأَعْمَى ("You frowned and turned away — because there came to you the blind one"). However, the subsequent verses revert to addressing him in the second person, commencing with, "and you never know." What significance can be gleaned from this variation?

ANSWER:

The initial two verses aimed to explicitly convey the reason for the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reprimand, which was his dismissal of Ibn Umm Maktūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. At the same time, Allāh intended to maintain the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ esteemed status, demonstrating reverence and respect. Employing the second person in a direct address, such as "you frowned and turned away," would have entailed a more severe tone, particularly in the Arabic language.

Conversely, utilizing the third person conferred a more subdued tone, which is why the words were articulated in this manner. The deliberate shift from the third person, which softened the tone while emphasizing

the gravity of the reprimand, to the second person, which resumed a more direct tone while conveying the lighter aspects of the reprimand, exemplifies the Qur'ān's unique perfection in linguistic expression.

In essence, the set of verses strikes a balance between rebuke and the dignity of prophethood. While rebuke necessitates a tone of severity and directness, the stature of prophethood demands a tone of gentleness and reverence. The strategic employment of the third person in the initial verses acknowledges the reverence due to the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ station, whereas the use of the second person in the subsequent verses accommodates the directness required for rebuke. By prioritizing the dignity of prophethood in the initial verses, Allāh the Almighty emphasizes that the Prophet's صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ status as a prophet of God takes precedence over the corrective aspect of rebuke.

خدا مدح آفرین مصطفی بس

“O Lord! Extol the virtues of the Chosen One, forevermore.”

SUB-OBJECTION [4]:

One of the sets of verses from the aforementioned Qur'ānic passage reads:

﴿ وَمَا يُدْرِيكَ لَعَلَّهُ يَزَكِّيٰ ﴿٣﴾ أَوْ يُذَكِّرْ فَتَنْفَعَهُ الذِّكْرَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ ﴾ عبس: ٣ - ٤

“And you never know, perhaps he would have attained purity — or be reminded, and so the reminder would have benefited him.” (80:3-4)

The Arabic particle *أَوْ*, translated as "or" in English, comes between two words, clauses, or sentences to establish a distinction between what's mentioned before it and what's mentioned after. However, in this context, *أَوْ* appears to separate the seemingly synonymous phrases "he would have attained purity" and "be reminded." Since being reminded naturally leads to attaining purity, and

purity necessitates constant reminders, the use of **أَوْ** here seems unnecessary. Why not employ **وَ** (and) instead?

ANSWER:

The most debilitating afflictions of the heart and soul are ignorance and arrogance. Both of these are eradicated through the process of tazkiyah (self-purification). This crucial step serves as the foundation for personal rectification. Following tazkiyah, the next step is tazhakkur, which involves internalizing reminders and heeding guidance. Tazhakkur inherently leads to the implementation of beneficial actions. Consequently, Allāh deliberately sequences the concepts: self-purification (tazkiyah), being reminded (tazhakkur), and beneficial actions (al-'amal an-nāfi'). The distinctiveness of the first two concepts, tazkiyah and tazhakkur, is evident, and it justifies the use of **أَوْ** to separate them.

Regarding tazhakkur and al-'amal an-nāfi', the latter being a direct consequence of the former, the conjunction

employed to separate them is فَ (translated above as "and so"). This conjunction implies the meaning "and as a result," and conveys an inherent causal relationship between the two concepts.

OBJECTION AGAINST ANSWER:

The previous response suggests that tazkiyah and tazhakkur are both causal factors, with al-'amal an-nāfi' being the primary outcome. Given that al-'amal an-nāfi' necessitates both tazkiyah and tazhakkur, rendering them equally essential, why not utilize وَ (and) to convey their parity, rather than employing أَوْ (or), which implies a degree of inequality?

ANSWER:

In this context, أَوْ is not intended to imply inequality, but rather serves to convey the concept of māni'at al-khulw (a state which prevents the simultaneous absence

of both the mentioned options from generating the intended result). This indicates that the absence of both tazkiyah and tazhakkur would preclude the attainment of al-'amal an-nāfi'. Consequently, **وَأَوْ** signifies that at least one of these two elements — tazkiyah or tazhakkur — must be present for al-'amal an-nāfi' to occur. While the presence of both tazkiyah and tazhakkur can yield al-'amal an-nāfi', the presence of either one can also suffice. Conversely, the simultaneous absence of both would necessarily preclude the realization of al-'amal an-nāfi'.

OBJECTION AGAINST ANSWER:

If the intention is indeed māni'at al-khulw, then the particle **وَ** also conveys this concept. The question remains: why employ **وَأَوْ** instead of **وَ**?

ANSWER:

A distinctive characteristic of **أَوْ** is its implication that either of the two mentioned options can be chosen to achieve the desired outcome. In contrast, while **وَ** does establish equality between the options, it does not necessarily convey the possibility of selecting one option over the other. One of the primary objectives of the cited verses was to convey to the Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** that either tazkiyah alone or tazhakkur alone was also sufficient to attain al-'amal an-nāfi'. This notion can only be effectively conveyed through the particle **أَوْ**. Had **وَ** been employed instead, it would have established equality between the two options but would not have implied the possibility of choosing one option over the other. The context of the verses dictates that the Prophet's **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** attention could impart knowledge of either tazkiyah or tazhakkur (or both simultaneously). 'Abdullāh bin Umm Maktūm **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** had approached the Prophet **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** seeking knowledge of a legal ruling, which he could implement

through either tazkiyah or tazhakkur, particularly given his enhanced memory due to his lack of sight and his willingness to learn, (of which the chiefs of Quraish possessed nothing,) and as such, he truly deserved the attention he sought.

OBJECTION [6]:

Western critics often cite the Battle of Badr as evidence against the Prophet ﷺ, claiming that its initial objective was to attack and plunder the Meccan caravan traveling from Makkah to Syria via the outskirts of Madinah, even though looting and pillaging are incompatible with the noble status of prophethood.

ANSWER:

In response to this objection, some biographers of the Prophet ﷺ have attempted to reinterpret the events surrounding the Battle of Badr, suggesting alternative motivations. Renowned writer and historian

'Allāmah Shiblī Nu'mānī, in his prominent work *Sīrat an-Nabiyy*, explicitly states that the Prophet ﷺ and his companions did not intend to pillage the caravan, presenting supporting arguments for this claim. Conversely, Maulānā Idrīs Kāndhlawī (رحمة الله), the esteemed Sheikh al-Ĥadīth of *Jāmi'ah Ashrafiyyah*, Lahore, candidly acknowledges in his *Sīrat al-Muṣṭafā* that the objective was indeed to loot the caravan. However, both perspectives exhibit a degree of artificiality. A thorough examination of the actual events and circumstances reveals the accurate response to the Western critics' objection.

It is mentioned in *al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, *Sīrah Ibn Hishām*, *'Uyūn al-Athar*, and *Ṭabaqāt Ibn Sa'd*, that the disbelievers of Mecca had devised a plan to launch a decisive attack on Madinah, aiming to eradicate the Muslim community once and for all. To finance their preparations for this large-scale assault, the Meccan infidels collectively agreed to allocate the entire profit from their annual trade caravans to Syria for the

procurement of arms and armor. Both men and women participated in supporting and supplying goods for this caravan, which was destined for Syria. The caravan's cargo was valued at over fifty thousand pounds. Under the leadership of Abū Sufyān, the caravan successfully completed its journey to Syria, sold its goods, and made its way back to Makkah.

The Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his companions, the Ṣahābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, were fully aware of the Meccans' clandestine plot. A universally fundamental principle of conflict dictates that adversaries continually seek to counter each other's strategies, exploiting every viable opportunity to ensure their own security. Given the significant power disparity between the fledgling Muslim community and their formidable Meccan adversaries, it was imperative for the Muslims to prevent their enemies from acquiring the financial resources necessary to orchestrate a devastating attack. The Muslims' instinctive response was to intercept the caravan and thwart the Meccans' plans to utilize the profits against them.

Consequently, the Prophet ﷺ rallied a small contingent of companions to intercept the caravan, leveraging their knowledge of the usual trade route between Makkah and Syria, which lay in close proximity to Madinah.

However, Abū Sufyān's scouts promptly informed him of the Prophet's ﷺ plan to intercept the caravan. Upon receiving this intelligence, Abū Sufyān swiftly diverted from the usual trade route, which passed near Madinah, and instead opted for a more distant coastal route along the Red Sea. He also dispatched riders to alert Abū Jahl and other prominent Meccan leaders, urging them to hasten to his aid. Although Abū Sufyān's caravan successfully evaded capture along the way, Abū Jahl responded in Makkah by mobilizing a substantial army to annihilate the Muslims. The two forces ultimately clashed at the site of Badr, where the Meccan army had established its camp. The ensuing battle resulted in a decisive victory for the Muslims, with the Meccans suffering a crushing defeat and the loss of several prominent leaders.

The primary objective behind intercepting the caravan was not to pillage or plunder its contents, as the intent of looting is typically driven by a desire to acquire wealth, regardless of whether it belongs to the enemy or not. In contrast, the Muslims' motivation was to prevent their already powerful and well-equipped adversaries from augmenting their strength, particularly given the Meccans' intention to utilize the caravan's profits to further their own military ambitions against the Muslim community.

Indeed, upon learning of the approaching Meccan army led by Abū Jahl, some Muslims advocated for engaging the enemy in battle. This stance was entirely justified, considering the Meccans' history of aggression, which included forcibly expelling the Muslims from their homes, confiscating their belongings, and even incorporating some of these seized assets into the caravan's cargo to finance their anti-Muslim endeavors.

Critics who leverage this event to level unfounded and irrational objections against the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

tend to never keep their mouth closed. Western critics, in particular, object to the concept of war, despite its implicit mention in both the Torah and the Bible. In reality, the Muslims who advocated for war in this context are entirely justified, and their decision to engage the enemy and intercept the caravan was sound. This is evident from the fact that the Meccans utilized the financial resources garnered from the caravan to wage war against the Muslims in both the Battle of Uḥud and the Battle of Aḥzāb. The Muslims' objective was pure and righteous, and to achieve it, they deemed it essential to undermine the infidels' strength, whether through intercepting the caravan or engaging the enemy in battle. The power wielded by disbelievers constitutes a significant obstacle to the propagation of the divine faith, and Muslims are religiously obligated to exert every effort to eliminate this impediment.

سرچشمه باید گرفتن به میل

چوپر شد نخواهد گزشتن نه پیل

*One must address the source with gentle care
For once it's gone, it cannot be regained with prayer*

The context surrounding the Battle of Badr, encompassing their initial endeavor to intercept the caravan through to their ultimate triumph at Badr, can be gleaned from the following verses:

﴿ كَمَا أَخْرَجَكَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَكَرِهُونَ ﴿٥﴾ يُجَادِلُونَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ بَعْدَ مَا تَبَيَّنَ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَاقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ ﴿٦﴾ وَإِذْ يَعِدُكُمُ اللَّهُ إِحْدَى الطَّائِفَتَيْنِ أَنَّهَا لَكُمْ وَتَوَدُّونَ أَنَّ غَيْرَ ذَاتِ الشَّوْكَةِ تَكُونُ لَكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَن يُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ بِكَلِمَاتِهِ وَيَقْطَعَ دَابِرَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٧﴾ لِيُحِقَّ الْحَقَّ وَيُبْطِلَ الْبَاطِلَ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُجْرِمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ ﴾

الأنفال: ٥ - ٨

“(5) Just as when your Lord brought you out of your home in truth, while indeed, a party among the believers were in fact unwilling — (6) arguing with you concerning the truth after it had become clear, as if they were being driven toward death

while they were looking on. (7) (Recall), when Allāh promised you one of the two groups — that it would be yours — and you wished that the unarmed one would be yours. But Allāh intended to establish the truth with His words and cut the root of the disbelievers — (8) That He should make true the truth and make false the falsehood, even if the criminals disliked it.” (8:5-8)

In his exegesis of the seventh verse, "when Allāh promised you one of the two groups," Maulānā Fat'ḥ Muḥammad Khān Jālandharī offers the following insight:

“The reason for the Battle of Badr is entirely rational. It was rooted in the intense animosity harbored by the Quraish of Makkah towards the Muhājirīn (migrants) and the Anṣār (supporters) of Madīnah. The Quraish were perpetually on the lookout for opportunities to strike against them. To remain informed about the intentions and movements of his enemies, the Blessed Apostle ﷺ would periodically dispatch scouts to the outskirts of Makkah. On one such occasion, he

commissioned a contingent led by his paternal cousin, 'Abdullāh bin Jahsh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, to proceed to Nakhlah, a rather dangerous area situated between Makkah and Ṭā'if. However, the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not explicitly instruct 'Abdullāh bin Jahsh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to head to Nakhlah. Instead, as a precautionary measure, he provided 'Abdullāh with a sealed scroll, instructing him to journey in the direction of Makkah and to open the scroll only after three days had elapsed, at which point he was to act upon its contents. 'Abdullāh bin Jahsh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ complied with these instructions. Upon opening the scroll after three days of travel, he discovered that it directed him to proceed to Nakhlah, where he was to gather intelligence on the Quraish.

However, once they reached Nakhlah, things took a different turn. While they were there, 'Abdullāh bin Jahsh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his companions encountered a Quraish caravan returning from Ṭā'if with trading goods. In a departure from their original mission, they attacked the caravan, disregarding their original instructions. During the

skirmish, Sa'd bin Abī Waqqāṣ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ fatally shot 'Amr bin 'Abdullāh Ḥaḍramī, a prominent Quraish leader, with an arrow. The remaining Quraish fled, leaving behind two captives, Ḥakam bin Kaysān and 'Uthmān bin 'Abdullāh Makhzūmī, who were taken back to Madinah. The Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reprimanded 'Abdullāh bin Jaḥsh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his companions for their actions. He released the two captives and compensated for the bloodshed by paying the diyah (blood money) for 'Amr bin 'Abdullāh Ḥaḍramī.

Notwithstanding this, the incident reignited the Meccans' animosity, prompting them to assemble a formidable force of approximately 950 seasoned warriors, including 300 horsemen and 700 camel-mounted troops. Furthermore, a rumor circulated that the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ intended to attack Abū Sufyān's caravan returning from Syria. This intelligence fueled the Meccans' hostility, and they promptly set out to attack Madinah.

Meanwhile, in Madinah, the Muslims received intelligence that the Quraish were mobilizing to launch an assault on the city. In response, the Prophet ﷺ recognized the imperative to safeguard the Muslim community and promptly took measures to ensure their defense. He assembled a small contingent of 313 stalwart Muslims and set out from Madinah, with only two members possessing horses and the remainder relying on 70 camels, which were shared among three or four individuals who took turns riding. The Prophet ﷺ, 'Alī, and Zayd bin Ḥārithah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا shared a single camel. Upon arriving at Badr, the Muslims clashed with the Quraish, resulting in the deaths of 70 Quraish warriors and the capture of an additional 70. The Muslims emerged victorious and secured substantial war spoils and goods. Prominent Quraish leaders, including Abū Jahl, 'Utbah bin Rabī'ah, Shaybah bin Rabī'ah, Walīd bin 'Utbah, Ḥanzhalah bin Abī Sufyān, Nawfal bin Khuwaylid, and Abu'l Bakhtarī, were among the 24 notable fatalities. According to Ibn Hishām's accounts, 'Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ alone was responsible for the deaths of nine of these prominent

leaders. Muslim casualties totaled only 14, out of which six were from the Muhājirīn and eight were from the Anṣār.

Upon examining the verses, it becomes apparent that verse 5 alludes to a divergence of opinion among the Muslims regarding the expedition from Madinah, even before the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ departed. Some individuals were in favor of engaging in combat, while others were hesitant. Verse 6 reveals that the Muslims were initially reluctant to confront Abū Jahl's formidable army, comprised of seasoned Quraish warriors assembled specifically to attack Madinah. This trepidation is underscored by the phrase, "as if they were being driven toward death while they were looking on," which suggests that the task at hand was far more daunting than merely intercepting a caravan. Verse 7 distinguishes between two groups: the unarmed caravan led by Abū Sufyān, returning from Syria, and the armed contingent of Quraish warriors led by Abū Jahl, which boasted substantial troops and war supplies. Attacking an unarmed caravan was not in accordance with the will of

Allāh. Instead, the Muslims ultimately engaged the armed force, and in accordance with divine promise, they emerged victorious.”

THE PROPHETIC *Tradition*

BY

حفظ الله
Mufti Abdullah Maroofi

THE PROPHETIC TRADITION

HĀDĪTH IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

The land of India has undoubtedly been familiar with Hadith since the time of the Companions (Sahabah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ) when Islam and Muslims first arrived in the Indian subcontinent. The renowned historian Allāmah Balādhuri رَحِمَهُ اللهُ wrote in “*Futūh al-Buldān*” that ‘Uthmān ibn Abi al-‘Ās al-Thaqafī, who was the governor of Bahrain and ‘Oman under the Caliph ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, ordered his brother Hakam ibn Abi al-‘Ās in 15 AH to launch a military expedition towards Thāna and Bharūch. This military expedition was conducted despite the disapproval of Caliph ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

Subsequently, military expeditions to India were halted until 92 AH when, under the orders of Hajjāj ibn Yūsuf al-Thaqafī, Muhammad ibn Qāsim al-Thaqafī launched a well-prepared attack on the land of Sindh, which ultimately resulted in a Muslim victory.

Later, in 107 AH, during the caliphate of Hishām ibn Abd al-Malik, Junayd ibn Abd al-Rahmān al-Murrī took command and soon launched a military expedition in the region of Kutch in Gujarat. His forces captured Bharūch and took control of Malwa.

In 159 AH, a military force led by Abd al-Malik ibn Shihāb al-Misma'ī landed in the coastal area of Bharūch. Among this force was the famous Hadith scholar Rabī' ibn Sabīh al-Sa'adi al-Misri (d. 161 AH). The force achieved victories, but due to flooding in the river, they had to stay for some days. Suddenly, an epidemic broke out, resulting in many deaths, including this renowned Hadith scholar, who was buried in the soil of Gujarat.

Subsequent attacks continued, such as the attack by Mahmūd Ghaznawī in 416 AH, which led to the capture of Nahrwala (Patna), the attack by Sultan Shahābuddin Ghorī in 574 AH, which resulted in loss, and the attack by Qutb-ud-dīn Aibak, in the year 591 AH, which led to victory and the recapture of the Patna, after which Muslims ruled Gujarat for centuries.

The most prominent figure in Ḥadīth scholarship in the first half of the seventh century (600 AH) was Sheikh Abu'l Fadhāil Hasan bin Muhammad Al-Saghāni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 650 AH), who authored "*Mashāriq al-Anwār*" (a compendium of the two Sahihs). This work gained such popularity and acceptance that until the time of Shāh Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, "*Mashāriq al-Anwār*" and "*Mishkat*" were considered the final books of hadith in India. Sheikh Al-Saghāni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ also authored two books on fabricated hadiths ("*Ad Durr al-Multaqat fi Tabyīni al-Ghalat wa Nafyi al-Laghat*", and "*Mawdhū'āt as-Saghāni*"; some say the latter is an abridged version of the former), and another book "*Darr al-Sahāba fi Ma'rifat al-Sahāba*". In the field of lexicography, he wrote "*Al-'Ubāb al-Zākhir*," which he completed up until the letter "mīm", and was incomplete at the time of his death. It was later edited by Majd al-Din Firuzābādi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ with the help of Ibn Sīdah's "*Al-Muhkam*," and became known as "*Al-Qāmūs al-Muhīt*."

Some scholars have written that Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1052 AH) was the first to popularize the knowledge of hadith in India. However, if Gujarat is considered a province of India (which is indisputable), this claim is entirely incorrect. Even before Sheikh Abdul Haqq's time, there were already established schools of Sheikh al-Islam Zain al-Din Zakariyya, Shams al-Din Sakhāwi, and Ibn Hajar Makki's رَحْمَتُهُمُ اللَّهُ students in Gujarat, such as:

1. Maulana Nūruddin Ahmad Shīrāzi, رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ who likely came to Gujarat during the time of Ahmad Shāh 1 (d. 843 AH). His chain of transmission for Sahīh Bukhāri was so high that when it reached Hijaz and Yemen, the great hadith scholars there eagerly acquired it.
2. Allama Wajīhuddin Muhammad bin Muhammad Māliki (d. 929 AH), a student of Hafidh Sakhāwi رَحْمَتُهُمَا اللَّهُ, was given the title "Malik al-Muhaddithīn" (the king of hadith scholars) by the kings of Gujarat.

3. Jamāl al-Din Muhammad bin ‘Umar Hadrami (d. 930 AH), also a student of Hafidh Sakhāwi رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ.
4. Sheikh Abdul Mu’ti bin Al-Hasan Al-Makki (d. 983 AH) who was a student of Sheikh Al-Islam Zainuddin Zakariyya رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ.
5. Fakhr al-Muhaddithin Allāmah Muhammad bin Tāhir Patni رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (d. 986 AH) who authored the book "*Majma' Bihār Al-Anwār*," which is considered a comprehensive commentary on the Prophetic Hadiths, and "*Al-Mughni fi Dabt Al-Asma' li-Ruwat Al-Anba'*," which is an essential for every Hadith student.
6. Shihābuddin Ahmad Al-Abbāsi Al-Misri (d. 992 AH), who was also a student of Zain Zakariyya رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ.
7. Muhammad bin Abdullah Fākihi (d. 992 AH), who was a student of Allāmah Ibn Hajar Makki and Sheikh Abu Al-Hasan Bakri رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ.
8. Sheikh Saeed bin Abdullah Al-Eidrus, a student of Ibn Hajar Makki and Abdul Rahman bin Al-Rabee' Al-Shaibani رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ (d. 944 AH). He has

several writings, and his family, Al-Eidrus, still exists in Ahmedabad, with some members having converted to Shiism.

In short, the region of Gujarat has the honor of pioneering the service of Hadith, and it is from this land that Sheikh Muhammad bin Tāhir Patni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، who is rightly called Fakhr al-Muhaddithīn, belongs.

Apart from Gujarat, the regions of Deccan and Sindh were also filled with the achievements of Hadith scholars and Muhaddithin during this period. For instance, Sheikh ‘Alī Muttaqī Burhānpūri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 975 AH), Sheikh Tayyib Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 990 AH), Sheikh Mubārak Banāraṣī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 980 AH) who authored the book "*Madārij Al-Akhhār*," which collected the Hadiths of "*Mashāriq Al-Anwār*" in the order of "*Mishkāt*", Sheikh Nizāmuddin Kākori رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 981 AH), Sheikh Rahmatullāh Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 994 AH), and Sheikh Zainuddin bin ‘Abdul ‘Aziz Malibari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, among others.

With the passage of time, the caravan of Hadith knowledge continued to progress on the path of

development, with hundreds of Muhaddithin not confined to any single region of India but spread across every corner. Ḥadīth scholars radiated with excellence and perfection, serving this esteemed art in every possible way. Whether through memorization, teaching, or authorship, every aspect was being fulfilled. The market of teaching and learning was thriving, and the hobby of writing and composing was also at its peak. Dozens of texts and commentaries on Hadith were written, and such memorisers of Hadith emerged that the Sihāh Sittah (the six authentic books of Hadith) were on their tongues word by word. The students of Hafidh Ibn Hajar Haytami Makki, Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Bakri, Sheikh ‘Ali Muttaqi, and Sheikh ‘Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had created a significant stir in the scholarly atmosphere of India. When Sheikh ‘Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ arrived, he brought about such a revolution that Delhi, already the capital of the Mughal rule, also became the capital of Hadith sciences.

SHEIKH ‘ABDUL HAQQ MUHADDITH**DEHLAWI رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (D. 1052 AH)**

Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was born in Delhi in Muharram of the year 958 AH. After receiving his primary education from his esteemed father, he set out for Hijāz. In Makkah, he stayed in the service of an Indian Muhaddith, Abdul Wahhāb Muttaqi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, and obtained the certificate of Ijāzah (permission) from Qādi ‘Ali bin Jārullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and some other Hadith teachers in Madinah. Very soon, due to his natural talent and guidance from Allāh, he reached the pinnacle of excellence. His teacher, ‘Ali bin Jārullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, praised him with these words:

إِنَّهُ الْفَرْدُ الْعَلَمُ فِي الْقَطْرِ الْهِنْدِيِّ، اسْتَفَدْتُ مِنْهُ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا اسْتَفَادَ، إِنَّهُ بِالْإِفَادَةِ أَحَقُّ مِنْهُ

بِالْإِسْتِفَادَةِ.

"He is the most distinguished scholar in the Indian region; I benefited from him more than he benefited from me. He deserves more to be a teacher than a student."

Shaikh Muhaddith رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, returning to his beloved homeland as a shining sun of Hadith knowledge, took on the mission of promoting and spreading Hadith. This led to such a revolution in the scholarly horizon of India that some elders expressed the view that he was the first fortunate saint who sowed the seeds of the knowledge of Hadith in India. Although a thorough investigation apparently refutes this claim, but from an intrinsic point of view, to some extent, this claim is also correct. This is because Sheikh Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was the single great personality who first introduced the public to the amazing researches on the secrets and commandments of the Quran and Hadith. He made efforts to reconcile Fiqh and Hadith, which were distant from each other in the country, and created a disposition to substantiate Fiqh with Hadith. Since the scholars of India were generally dominated by Fiqh and Kalām, and people were accustomed to taqlīdī ‘ilm (imitative knowledge), disregarding evidence, giving lessons on Hadith in a way that Fiqh issues would align with Hadith at such a time was a reformative achievement. The common practices of

Sufism, which were misleading the public with fabricated rituals, were purified by the Sheikh and molded according to the Sunnah.

Sheikh Muḥaddith رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ began to translate scholarly treasures, that were out of the reach of the public, into the Indian Persian language and included books of Hadith in the regular curriculum. He established many such traditions in the field of Hadith that remain in the Madāris up until today. Additionally, he authored more than a dozen masterpieces in the field of Hadith. Particularly, his Arabic commentary on Mishkat, "*Lam'āt al-Tanqeeh*," and Persian commentary "*Ashi'at al-Lam'āt*" are considered to be the most unparalleled and meticulously researched amongst his works. (*Nuzhat al-Khawatir*, Vol. 5)

Sheikh Muḥaddith رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ belonged to the 11th century Hijri. During this era, a significant amount of writing, compilation, and summarization work was done in India. Besides various sciences and arts, major manuscripts were prepared on Hadith, the principles of

Hadith, and the biographies of narrators. Commentaries and annotations on Bukhāri, Muslim, Muwatta, Shamāil al-Tirmidhi, Mishkāt, and Hisn Al-Haseen were being vigorously worked on. Most notably, many commentaries on Bukhāri were written. Apart from Sheikh Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، other scholars in different parts of the country were also rendering services in the field of Hadith.

Sheikh Ya'qūb Banāni رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1098 AH), a scholar who resided in Lahore, possessed an exceptional mastery in Ḥadīth in addition to many other arts and sciences. He authored commentaries such as "*Al-Khair Al-Jarī*" on Sahih Bukhari, "*Al-Mu'lim*" on Sahih Muslim, and "*Al-Musaffā*" on Muwatta Imam Malik. (*Nuzhat Al-Khawātir, Vol. 5*)

Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi's son, Sheikh Noorul Haq Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1073 AH), focused his attention on Sahīh Bukhāri and wrote a comprehensive and complete commentary in Persian, named "*Tayseer Al-Qāri*" in six volumes. He also authored a commentary on *Shamāil Al-Tirmidhi*. (*Nuzhat Al-Khawātir, Vol. 5*)

Sheikh Muhammad Saeed Sirhindi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1070 AH) continued his teaching and writing activities, authoring a comprehensive marginalia on Mishkāt.

A scholar from Jaunpur, Muhammad bin Fazlullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1029 AH), wrote a commentary on *Shamail Al-Tirmidhi*. Jaunpur was his ancestral home, but he settled in Burhānpur and became distinguished through the influential company of ‘Ali bin Husāmuddin Muttaqi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

During this period, there were several notable Hadith memorizers in India. Gujarat, which has always been a center of knowledge, produced a scholar named Sheikh Tājuddin Gujarati رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1007 AH), who had memorized the six canonical Hadith collections word for word.

Sheikh Ahmad bin ‘Abd al-Radha Shi’ī Hyderabadī رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (was alive in the year 1086 AH) had an extraordinary memory. He knew twelve thousand Hadith texts without chains of transmission and another twelve thousand with their chains of transmission by heart.

Sheikh Dawood Mishkāti Kashmīri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1097 AH) had memorised the entire *Mishkāṭ*, which is how he earned himself the title "Mishkāti."

In Jaunpur, which Shah Jahan had titled "Shiraz of the East," a scholar named Qazi Khūbullah Jaunpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1000 AH) had memorised eighteen hundred Hadiths.

HĀDĪTH SCHOLARSHIP IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

In the twelfth century, according to the list in *Nuzhat Al-Khawātir*, the number of individuals who dedicated their lives for the service of hadith exceeded fifty.

These scholars were actively engaged in teaching and writing in various regions of India. Each of them was an ocean of knowledge, quenching the thirst of people. The work of commentary and annotation on books of hadith like the *Sihāh Sittah*, *Mishkāṭ*, *Shamāil Tirmidhi*, and others was being carried out with great enthusiasm.

Sheikh Abul Hasan Sindhi Kabīr رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1136 AH) worked on the annotation and commentary of the Sihāh Sittah. Sheikh Muhammad ‘Azam Sarhindi (d. 1144 AH), Sheikh Nooruddin Gujarati (d. 1155 AH), Maulana Ghulām ‘Ali Āzād Balgrāmi (d. 1200 AH), and Sheikh ‘Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi’s descendants, like Sheikh-ul-Islam Muhammad bin Hāfidh Fakhruddin Dehlawi رَحْمَتُهُمُ اللَّهُ, wrote commentaries on Bukhāri, creating a significant impact in the world of knowledge and among scholars. Additionally, Sheikh Yahyā bin Ameen Ilāhābadi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1144 AH) wrote a commentary on the Thulāthiyyāt of Bukhāri named "*Ighāthat al-Qāri.*" Sheikh Abu Tayyib Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ wrote an Arabic commentary on Tirmidhi (d. 1149 AH), and among the descendants of Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, Hafidh Fakhruddin wrote commentaries on Sahīh Muslim and Hisn al-Haseen. Maulana Rooh al-Amīn رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1151 AH) wrote annotations on Sahihayn.

Apart from Sihāh Sittah, significant work was also done on other books of this genre. Among those who

wrote commentaries on Mishkāt were Maulāna Muhammad bin Ja'far Gujarati (d. 1111 AH) and Maulāna Muhammad Na'eem Jonpuri (d. 1120 AH) رَحْمَهُمَا اللهُ. Additionally, Maulana Zaheeruddin Balapuri رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (d. 1141 AH) translated Mishkat, and Maulāna Ameenuddin Jonpuri رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (d. 1135 AH) summarized Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi's رَحْمَةُ اللهِ Persian commentary on Mishkat "*Ashi'at al-Lam'āt*."

Several commentaries were also written on Shamāil Al-Tirmidhi. Among the descendants of Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللهِ, Maulana Saifullah bin Noorullah رَحْمَةُ اللهِ wrote a commentary named "*Ashraf al-Wasāil*," Maulana Fādhil Surti رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (d. 1129 AH) wrote "*Mu'in al-Fadail*," and Maulana Syed Muhammad Faiz رَحْمَةُ اللهِ (d. 1130 AH) also wrote commentaries. Maulana Faydh also authored an excellent commentary on Hisn al-Haseen.

In addition to these commentaries and annotations, many manuscripts on hadith and the sciences of hadith were prepared by the esteemed scholars of India, deserving

them endless praise and admiration, such as Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Sindhi Saghīr رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1187 AH), who contributed to "*Jami' al-Usul*," and Maulana Mufti Noor al-Haq Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1073 AH), a descendant of Sheikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, who wrote a commentary on his ancestor's book "*Ma Thabata bi al-Sunnah*."

The author of "*Nuzhat al-Khawātir*" writes, referencing "*Al-Yani' al-Jani*," that Mujaddid Alf Thāni's grandson Maulāna Farkh Shāh Sirhindi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1122 AH) was a distinguished and praiseworthy figure of his time. He had reached the level of ijtiḥād in legal rulings and memorized seventy thousand (70,000) ḥadīths with their chains of transmission. He had complete knowledge of the Jarh wa ta'deel of each narrator (the knowledge of criticizing and validating narrators), indicating that the passion for seeking knowledge was so strong among the brave hearts of India that they could encompass vast collections of ḥadīth within themselves.

HĀDĪTH LECTURES IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

During this era, numerous hadith scholars were seen on teaching platforms. Besides various cities in India, they also held gatherings in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, establishing their authority in hadith scholarship and quenching the thirst of countless seekers of prophetic knowledge. When a hadith scholar from Sindh, Sheikh Muhammad Hayāt Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1163 AH), arrived in Medina, he found another great Sindhi scholar, Sheikh Abu al-Hasan Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, occupying a prominent teaching position. By staying in his service, he became such a notable hadith scholar that after his teacher's demise, people appointed him as the successor. Students from all corners of the Islamic world began to gather, including those from India, bringing back the blessings and benefits of their compatriot scholar to their homeland.

Another notable figure from Sindh, Muhammad Qāim Sindhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1157 AH), settled in the Hijaz and

continued to nurture the garden of hadith until his last breath.

During the same period, a star of hadith knowledge also rose in the land of Bihar, illuminating Bihar with its light. In the first half of this century, Maulāna Muhammad ‘Atīq bin Abdul Samī’ Bihari رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ satiated the land of Bihar by establishing a bustling center of teaching and learning. Many students were nurtured under his guidance and achieved success.

Meanwhile, in Kashmir, Sheikh ‘Ināyatullāh Kashmiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1125 AH) was seated on the platform of teaching Hadith. Throughout his life, he taught Sahīh Bukhāri multiple times. Another notable figure, Mīr Abdul Wahhāb Munawwar Ābadi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1152 AH), dedicated his life to teaching and researching the Quran and Hadith.

There was also the hadith scholar Sheikh Muhammad Afdhal Siyālkoti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1146 AH) who taught Hadith at the Madrasa Ghāziuddin Khan in Delhi,

where many benefited from him. He was also a teacher of Shah Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

In Ahmedabad, a hadith scholar named Nooruddin Gujarati رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1155 AH) was very active. A wealthy individual constructed a grand madrasa for him at the cost of one hundred and twenty-four thousand rupees, where he imparted knowledge to the people. His work, "*Nūr al-Qāri*," a commentary on Sahīh Bukhāri, has been mentioned earlier.

MUSNAD AL-HIND SHAH WALIULLAH

MUHADDITH DEHLAWI رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (1176 AH)

These were the outstanding scholarly and literary contributions of the contemporary scholars of Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi's time رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Besides them, there were many more scholars in general sciences and arts who outnumbered these hadith scholars. They took on the responsibility of teaching and spreading knowledge in subjects like grammar, rhetoric, logic,

philosophy, and jurisprudence. Despite the valuable teaching and literary contributions of around fifty to sixty hadith scholars, their influence did not extend to the general populace. Their knowledge and expertise remained confined to the classrooms and pages of books.

On the other hand, these scholars kept the public far from the true knowledge (which is the knowledge of the Book and the Sunnah) by weaving a web of jurisprudence, Greek sciences, and other instrumental and auxiliary sciences, such as grammar and syntax, to the extent that unfortunately, these sciences were no longer considered merely as tools and means for the true knowledge; rather, they were considered as the primary sciences. Efforts were even made to equate them with Socrates, Ibn Sina, and Khalil and Mubarrad.

Even scholars who were standard-bearers of jurisprudence and fatwas, and who were known as scholars of religion and jurists of Islam, held the view that any statement found in any book of jurisprudence, be it

well-known or lesser-known, was considered as having the same status as a definitive text or an authentic hadith.

Generally, the teaching of hadith did not go beyond *Mishkāt* and *Mashāriq al-Anwār*. Shah Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، in his book '*Al-Insāf*' (94-95), depicts the jurists and hadith scholars of that era in these words:

فَالْفَقِيهِ يَوْمِيذٍ هُوَ الثَّرَاثُرُ الْمُتَشَدِّقُ، الَّذِي حَفِظَ أَقْوَالَ الْفُقَهَاءِ قَوِيَّهَا وَضَعِيْفَهَا
 مِنْ غَيْرِ تَمْيِيزٍ، وَسَرَدَهَا بِشَقْشَقَةٍ شَدِيقِيهِ، وَالْمُحَدِّثُ مَنْ عَدَّ الْأَحَادِيثَ صَحِيْحَهَا
 وَسَقِيْمَهَا، وَهَذَهَا بِقُوَّةٍ لِحْيِيهِ، وَلَا أَقُولُ ذَلِكَ كُلِّيًّا مُطَرِّدًا؛ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ طَائِفَةً مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لَا
 يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ، وَهُمْ حُجَّةٌ لِلَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ؛ وَإِنْ قَلُّوا.

“In those days, a jurist was someone who was a garrulous and loudmouthed individual who could forcefully convince others (by his verbosity), had memorized the strong and weak statements of the jurists without being able to distinguish between them, and could rapidly rant out their opinions with the rattling regurgitation of his jaws. And a hadith scholar was someone who collected both authentic and weak hadiths and recited them with the strength of his maw. I am not saying this as a general rule, for among the servants of Allah,

there are always some who remain steadfast on the truth and are not harmed by those who oppose them. They are the proof of Allah on earth, even if they are few in number.”

It is the practice of the Lord of the worlds that when corruption in the Ummah increases to such an extent that there is no distinction between the common people and the elite, He blesses someone from within the Ummah with divine gifts and raises them for the reformation of the Ummah. The sacred personality of Shāh Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was created by divine power for the guidance and reformation of this blessed Ummah.

He was born on Wednesday, 16th Shawwal 1114 AH during the reign of ‘Ālamgīr. He completed his education under the service of his noble father, Shāh ‘Abdul Rahīm Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He studied parts of Sahīh Al-Bukhāri, Shamā’il Al-Tirmidhi, and Mishkāt from among the books of Hadith and also learned Hadith books from Sheikh Muhammad Afdhal Siyālkoti رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He then spent twelve years engaged in teaching and imparting knowledge.

However, since Allāh intended to use his praiseworthy personality for the guidance and reformation of both the common people and the elite, and it was not possible to acquire this ability in the turbulent environment of India, the attraction of divine guidance pulled him towards the sacred land of the Haramain (Makkah and Madinah). Shāh Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ gained knowledge from various scholars there, particularly spending a significant amount of time in the service of Sheikh Abu Tāhir Muhammad bin Ibrāhīm Kurdī Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. He studied more than half a dozen Hadith books from Sheikh Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, apart from the Sihāh Sittah, and became a distinguished scholar of his time that the renowned figures of that era gave impressions and praises no higher tribute or honor could surpass. His esteemed teacher, Sheikh Abu Tāhir Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, himself remarked, "He takes the chain of narration of Hadith from me, and I correct the meanings and interpretations from him." (*Nuzhatul Khawātir, Vol. 6*)

When Shah Sahib was returning to India and went for a farewell meeting with his teacher, Allamah Abu Tahir Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ، he recited this verse:

نَسِيتُ كُلَّ طَرِيقٍ كُنْتُ أَعْرِفُهُ
إِلَّا طَرِيقًا يُؤَدِّينِي إِلَى رَبِّعِكُمْ.

*I forgot every path I knew except the one that leads me to
your abode.*

Upon hearing this, the Sheikh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was moved to tears and was deeply affected.

In short, when Shāh Sahib came to India, he had one goal in mind: dissemination of Ḥadīth. Shāh Sahib cultivated an immensely profound legacy by sowing the seeds of Hadith. His scholarship sprung forth like a majestic tree, whose far-reaching branches have directly and indirectly nourished the homes of Muslims everywhere. Mufti ‘Ināyat Ahmed Kakorvi's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ impression in "Nuzhat al-Khawātir" is quoted as follows:

Shāh Sahib is like the tree of Tuba, whose root is in his home and whose branches are spread in every Muslim home, but most people do not know where its root is.

A Yemeni scholar described it as follows:

Shāh Waliullah is like the tree of Tūba, just as wherever the branches of Tūba are, there is paradise, and where its branches are not, there is no paradise. Similarly, wherever Shah Waliullah's ﷺ heritage is, there is paradise, and where his heritage is not, there is no paradise. (Amīr al-Riwāyāt, p. 902)

(Our esteemed colleague Maulāna Ridhwānūr Rahmān Sāhib Marūfī (May his glory increase) has written a valuable article on the subject of 'The History of Hadith Sciences in India through different eras', which was published in the quarterly magazine "*Tarjuman al-Islam Banaras*" for April, May and June of 1991. Most of the above-mentioned information, with necessary explanations, is taken from this article. For details, refer to the mentioned article. - Abdullah Marūfī)

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TEACHING THE SIX AUTHENTIC BOOKS

There is no doubt that the blessed personality of the Imam of India, Shāh Waliullah Ahmad bin ‘Abdul Rahim Muhaddith Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (1176 AH), was the one who formally established the teaching of the principles of Sunnah (the Six Authentic Books) in India. Shāh Sahib traveled to the sacred land of Hijāz with the intention of studying the Six Authentic Books and obtaining them with a connected chain of narration. He stayed there for more than a year and after acquiring the knowledge of the Six Authentic Books from Sheikh Abu Tāhir Madani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and other scholars of Hadith, returned with a new enthusiasm. He then implemented the method of teaching Hadith that was prevalent in the Arab world in India.

There were three methods of teaching Hadith in the Arab world:

1. The first method was straightforward narration: the student would read fluently from his copy, and the Sheikh would compare it with his own copy. There would be no discussion on the chain of narration or the text's explanation. However, if there were differences in the copies or narrations, the Sheikh would clarify them.

2. The second method involved discussion and deciphering: after reading the Hadith, if there were any difficult words, complex structures, or rare names in the chain, or if any questions naturally arose, they would be briefly explained before moving on.

3. The third method was thorough and detailed: this included a detailed study of the narrators in the chain, the status of the narrators in terms of jarh wa ta'deel (criticism and validation), an explanation of the continuity or discontinuity of

the chain (Ittisāl wa Inqitā'a), and the clarification of the linguistic and intended (Lughawi wa Ma'anawi) meanings of the words in the Hadith. It also involved determining the purpose of the speech (the intent of the Shār'i lawgiver), discussing the jurisprudence of the Hadith, reconciling conflicting Hadiths, determining preference, and deciding the chronology of abrogation, among other things. In short, every aspect of each word would be explained in detail.

Upon returning to India, Shah sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ continued the series of teaching hadith, implementing the second and third methods, and in chapters where discussion was not necessary, he would suffice with a brief reading (implementing the first method).

Shāh Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was not only elevated in scholarly stature but also held a high position in spirituality. He possessed the quality of Ijtihād, reaching conclusions independently by contemplating the texts of Hadith.

Contrary to the general inclination of the country towards the Hanafi school of thought, Shāh Sahib رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ sometimes preferred the opinions of other Imams in his teachings but adhered to the Hanafi practice in his actions. This is clarified in the manuscript of Sahīh Bukhāri by one of Shāh Sahib's students, Muhammad bin Pīr Muhammad Balgrāmi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, which is preserved in the Khuda Bakhsh Library in Patna. Shāh Sahib's words are:

كَتَبَهُ بِيَدِهِ الْفَقِيرُ إِلَى رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ الْكَرِيمِ الْوَدُودِ، وَلِيِّ اللَّهِ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْعُمَرِيُّ نَسَبًا، الدَّهْلَوِيُّ وَطَنًا، الْأَشْعَرِيُّ عَقِيدَةً، الصُّوفِيُّ طَرِيقَةً، الْحَنْفِيُّ عَمَلًا،
وَالْحَنْفِيُّ وَالشَّافِعِيُّ تَدْرِيسًا.

"Written by the hand of the one in need of the mercy of the gracious and loving Allāh, Waliullah Ahmad bin Abdul Rahim, an 'Umari by lineage, a Dehlawi by residence, an Ash'ari by creed, a Sūfi in spiritual path, a Hanafi by practice, and a Hanafi and Shafi'i in teaching." (Al-'Awn Al-Kabeer Sharh Al-fawz Al-Kabīr, by Maulana Mufti Saeed Ahmad Palanpuri, May his soul be sanctified.)

The reason for this was that although in a particular issue, he deemed the Shafi'i opinion to be dominant, the

Hanafi opinion was not without evidence. On the other hand, there was a strong possibility of the public being led into discord by abandoning the Hanafi school, and protecting the public from discord was more important than acting on the dominant opinion. Maulāna Ashraf ‘Ali Thānwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ expressed this in his *book "Al-Iqtisād fi Bahth al-Taqleed wal-Ijtihād"* by stating:

"If an erudite scholar finds that the opinion of another imam is dominant in a particular issue based on strong evidence, and there is also evidence from the texts of the Quran and Hadith for the opinion of his own Imam, and there is a fear that abandoning the less dominant opinion for the dominant one would lead the public into confusion, then it is preferable to act on the less dominant opinion."

The aforementioned behavior of Shāh Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ led some scholars to misunderstand and they labeled Shah Sahib as a non-conformist (Ghair muqallid), thereby justifying their own non-conformity. However, a study of Shāh Sahib's two monumental books, *"Al-Insāf fi*

Bayān Sabab al-Ikhtilāf" and *"Iqd al-Jīd fī Bahth al-Ijtihād wa al-Taqlēd,"* reveals that Shāh Sahib considered such intellectual freedom to be a source of misguidance for the common people.

The intellectual legacy of Shāh Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was passed on to his illustrious son, Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1239 AH), who had complete mastery over both textual (Naqli) and intellectual ('Aqlī) sciences and was a fervent advocate of Hanafi jurisprudence. His fatwas and the exegesis *"Fath al-'Azīz"* bear testimony to this.

Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was deeply troubled by the British dominance, which led him to tirelessly work on enhancing the capabilities of scholars on one hand, and on the other hand, he devoted himself to preparing a group of Mujāhideen, and issued a fatwa declaring India as Dar al-Harb (abode of war).

Shāh 'Abdul-'Azīz رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ is known by the title "Musnad al-Hind" (the catalyst of India). Shāh Waliullāh رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, due to his profound understanding of the secrets and wisdoms of the Sharī'ah, is sometimes honored with

the title "Ĥakīm al-Ummat" (the sage of the nation), and is also known as "Imām al-Hind" (the thought leader of India).

Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ exemplary achievement was that he shook, or rather, demolished the strongholds of innovations and Shi'ism. His notable book "*Tuhfa Ithnā ‘Ashariyya*" is acknowledged by Shi'ite scholars for being unmatched in its response.

THE DEOBAND MADRASAH

The legacy of Shāh ‘Abdul ‘Azīz's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ knowledge was inherited by his grandson, Shāh Is’hāq رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ (d. 1262 AH), through whom the tradition of Hadith greatly flourished. Among Shāh Is’hāq's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ students were Shāh ‘Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ (d. 1296 AH) and Miyan Nazīr Hussain. Despite his expertise in the science of Hadith, due to his deviation from Taqlīd (adherence to a particular school of thought), Miyan Nazīr Hussain didn't remain steadfast in the footsteps of Shāh Is’hāq and Shāh

‘Abdul ‘Azīz رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. In contrast, Shāh Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi, along with his proficiency in Hadith and other sciences, was steadfast in his adherence to Taqlīd and respect for the Imāms. Alongside following the Qur’an and Hadith, he was fully committed to the Hanafi school of thought. After Shāh Is’hāq رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ migrated to Mecca, two seats of Hadith learning were established in Delhi: one by Miyan Sahib and the other by Shāh ‘Abdul Ghani رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Among Shāh ‘Abdul Ghani’s students were Maulāna Qāsim Nanotwi (d. 1297 AH), Maulāna Y’aqūb Nanotwi (d. 1300 AH), Maulāna Muhammad Mazhar Nanotwi (d. 1302 AH), and Maulāna Rashīd Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1323 AH), who were the early leaders and Imāms of the Deoband school of thought.

The spirit of Jihad and the propagation of the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, along with a balanced approach to issues and adherence to the Hanafi school while aligning them with the texts of the Qur’an and Hadith, were traits passed down from Shah ‘Abdul ‘Azīz Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ to these scholars. Allāh enabled these

individuals to undertake a revivalist effort, the fruits of which are evident in the form of a vast network of Islamic Madāris and truth-bearing groups in a country like India.

In Muharram 1283 AH, Maulāna Qāsim Nanotwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and his companions established an Islamic Madrasah (Darul Uloom) in Deoband. In the same year, in the month of Rajab, an Arabic Madrasa was founded in the Qazi neighborhood of Saharanpur by Maulāna Mazhar Nanotwi and Maulāna Sa'ādat Ali Faqih Saharanpūri رَحْمَهُمَا اللَّهُ (d. 1286 AH). Allah granted such acceptance to these schools that a network of Islamic Madāris spread throughout India. The atmosphere of the land began to resonate with the phrases "Allah said" and "the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said."

The services of Dārul-'Ulūm, Mazahir 'Ulūm, and other Madāris in the field of Islamic sciences, especially Hadith sciences, became as clear as daylight. The Deoband Madrasa also holds a distinguished position not only in teaching but also in the field of writing. Today, there is

hardly any country in the world where the influence of the Deoband Madrasa is not felt directly or indirectly.

Dārul-'Ulūm Deoband transcends its reputation as a traditional madrasah, emerging as a transformative movement that played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence, securing freedom for Muslims and non-Muslims alike to practice their faith without restraint. It evolved beyond its traditional madrasah roots to become a catalyst for India's liberation, a champion of religious coexistence, a beacon of spiritual flourishing, and a paragon of numerous other notable accomplishments that defy concise enumeration.

MAULĀNA RASHĪD AHMAD GANGOHI رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ

(1323 AH)

As mentioned, the purpose of establishing both Darul 'Ulūm and Mazāhir 'Ulūm was the same, and the founders of both institutions, having been enlightened by the same source, began their respective work. Although

Maulāna Rashīd Ahmad Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (1323 AH) was a patron of both madrasas, his scholarly influence emanated from the land of Gangoh. He aimed to revive and rehabilitate the Khanqah Quddūsiya and simultaneously spread the knowledge of Hadith. Therefore, he stayed in Khanqah Quddūsiya and engaged in both education and spiritual purification.

The study of Hadith books took place over the course of two years with Shaikh Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. Initially, he taught *Jam'i Al-Tirmidhi* with extensive explanations of the jurisprudential schools, their arguments, and technical discussions. Then, he taught Sahih Al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Sunan Abi Dawood, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah one after the other. However, when his eyesight weakened, this practice ceased. Maulāna Yahyā Kāndhalwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (1334 AH) studied various books of sciences and arts in Delhi. Despite the final year being taught at Madrasa Husain Bakhsh, and the people there also wanting Maulana Yahyā to complete his studies there, he decided to avoid the influence of Ghair Muqallidiyyat (non-conformism) and

chose not to complete his studies there but only with Maulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ.

Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahāranpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (1346 AH), who was a student and a distinguished spiritual successor of Maulana Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and held the honor of teaching Hadith at Mazahir Uloom, came to Madrasa Husain Bakhsh for examination. Maulana Yahyā رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was among those who took the exam. Seeing his answers, Maulana Saharanpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was greatly impressed and made a formal request to Gangohi to teach the final year just for Mawlawi Yahyā because such a brilliant student might rarely come or be found in the future!

Consequently, when Gangohi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ taught his last course, he taught it with complete openness and clarity. Maulana Yahyā رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ documented his lectures in Arabic. The lecture on Tirmidhi was published as "*Al-Kawkab Al-Durri*" with the annotations of Sheikh Zakariya رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ. The lecture on Bukhari was published as "*Lami'u Al-Darāri*" with his annotations. The lecture on Muslim was published as "*Al-Hall Al-Mufhim*" and the lecture on

Nasa'i was published as "*Al-Faydh Al-Samāi*". Both of these were published with the annotations of Hazrat Maulana Āqil Sahib, a Hadith teacher at Madrasa Mazahir Uloom, Saharanpur. The lecture on Abu Dawood, "*Al-Durr Al-Mandhood*," was not published, but its important discussions, which are not found in any other commentary, were recorded by Maulana Khalīl Ahmed Saharanpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ in various places throughout his commentary "*Badhl Al-Majhūd*", and he would initiate those discussions by stating:

كَتَبَ مَوْلَانَا يَحْيَى مِنْ تَقْرِيرِ شَيْخِهِ

Maulāna Yahyā noted from the lectures of his Sheikh (Sheikh Gangohi)

As such, Maulana Gangohi's teachings serve as timeless sources of inspiration for scholars worldwide.

THE DISTINCTIVE APPROACH OF DARUL ULOOM DEOBAND IN TEACHING HADITH

For centuries, the four jurisprudential schools have been universally accepted. Despite the differences in issues and evidence among them, no one had the audacity to claim that a particular school or thought was against the way of the Prophet ﷺ. Rather, followers of all four schools considered each other to be adherents of the way of the Prophet ﷺ. However, when a new group who called themselves "Ahl al-Hadith" emerged and began to spread the notion that the Hanafi school of thought was not in accordance with the Sunnah and Hadith, elders of Deoband wrote numerous treatises to prove that the Hanafi school was established on strong foundations and was in complete accordance with the Sunnah. During their lectures of Hadith, they discussed the Hadith related to those issues in more detail compared to other Hadiths.

During the time of Shāh Is'hāq Dehlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ, the movement of non-conformity (Ghair Muqallidiyat) began

to spread its influence. Shāh ‘Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ سَمِعَ this trend and exhibited greater focus on refuting it in his teachings. And so this inclination was passed on to his notable students, such as Maulāna Qāsim Nanotwi, Maulāna Rashīd Ahmed Gangohi, and Maulāna Mazhar Ali Nanotwi رَحْمَهُمُ اللَّهُ.

In Darul Uloom Deoband, Maulana Yaqub Nanotwi and Sheikh-ul-Hind رَحْمَهُمَا اللَّهُ continued this method of teaching. Sheikh-ul-Hind رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ stated that he would study the complex issues of Shah Waliullah رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ and then discuss them with Maulāna Qāsim Nanotwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, who would explain them in great detail and further mention beneficial points. Maulāna Nanotwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ had an exceptional grasp of Ilm al-Kalam (scholastic theology), and his stature in Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and Hadith (Prophetic traditions) was very high. The unparalleled marginalia which Maulana Ahmad Ali Saharanpuri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ wrote on Sahih Bukhari; Maulāna Nanotwi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ was the one who wrote its last five or six sections. He smoothly incorporated his writings with Maulāna Ahmad Ali’s

رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ writings in such a way that it became indistinguishable to tell that it is the work of two different authors. This version was first published in 1270 Hijri.

In Darul Uloom Deoband, the lectures on Jami' al-Tirmidhi held significant importance because Imam Tirmidhi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ himself elaborated on the schools of Fiqh and their evidences. Given the context in which the teaching of Hadith began, it was necessary to emphasize the various schools of Fiqh, their evidences, and the preference of the Hanafi school of thought, for which Sunan Tirmidhi was the most suitable book.

After Sheikh-ul-Hind رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ, his students, such as Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmiri (d. 1352 AH), Sheikh-ul-Islam Maulāna Hussain Ahmad Madani (d. 1377 AH), Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (d. 1369 AH), and Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Balyāwi (d. 1387 AH) رَحْمَهُمُ اللَّهُ, continued this tradition and trained their students in the same manner.

The lectures of Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmiri رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1352 AH) were particularly notable. In 1333 AH, he

was appointed as the head teacher and Sheikh-ul-Hadith at Darul Uloom Deoband. He would intensively discuss the controversial issues in which the non-conformist scholars criticized the Hanafi jurists. The Hadiths which each party would present as evidence, or any hadith which could be presented against the other stance, he would discuss it thoroughly, explaining all its related aspects and the reasons for the differences. He would mention the interpretations of the hadith commentators, describe the characteristics of these books, and if a scholar or hadith expert was mentioned, he would shed light on their scholarly status. He would also mention the research of other scholars, critique and comment on it. For reference, he would keep the six authentic collections of hadith, the two Muwattās, and other works like Tahāwi close by, and when needed, he would open the books, read the hadiths under discussion, and recite them to the students. In a nutshell, he was a vast ocean of knowledge and wisdom that was in full flow.

Apart from teaching, his writings also focused on serving the creed and religious school of thought. For example, studying the works of Allāmah Anwar Shāh Kashmiri, such as "*Faidh al-Bari*" and "*Ma'ārif al-Sunan*," reveals that they contain extensive discussions on theological issues. Logical arguments are combined with textual evidence to a satisfactory extent, fully representing the Hanafi school of thought in jurisprudential matters. By considering various hadiths related to a topic, he gauged them based on the principles of understanding and narration (*dirāyat* and *riwāyat*), attempted to reconcile them, or preferred one over the other based on stronger evidence, or identified abrogating and abrogated hadiths. Not only that, but he also substantiated and supported the Hanafi school of thought from both rational and traditional perspectives. Some discussions are so lengthy that they could be considered standalone books, such as the discussions on the hearing of the dead, recitation behind the imam, and raising the hands during prayer, which are noteworthy. Shāh Sahib's book "*Nayl al-*

Farqadayn" on the topic of raising the hands during prayer is a unique work.

Similarly, Allāmah Shabbīr Usmani's "*Fat'h al-Mulhim*" commentary on Sahih Muslim is an unparalleled work. Sheikh Zāhid al-Kawthari wrote an amazing review on this book, drawing the attention of the entire scholarly world to it. This review is included in "*Maqālāt al-Kauthari*". The introduction to "*Fath al-Mulhim*" holds a unique position among the books on the principles of Hadith due to its original, rare, and well-grounded discussions. It has also been published separately with annotations by Sheikh Abdul Fattāh Abu Ghuddah.

The same approach was followed at Mazahir Uloom Saharanpur, except that instead of Sunan al-Tirmidhi, the teaching of Sunan Abi Dawood was given more importance for two reasons:

1. In terms of authenticity, its status is higher than Jami' al-Tirmidhi because Imām Abu Dawood رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ managed to collect the most authentic Hadiths in each chapter.

2. The second reason is that Imām Abu Dawood رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ gathered all the Hadiths he found to be reliable for inference in each chapter. If there were differences in wording and chains of transmission, he narrated each version separately. This allowed students to see various narrations altogether, making it easier to understand the reality when analyzing contentious issues. Maulāna Muhammad Mazhar Nanotwi, Maulāna Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri (d. 1346 AH), and Sheikh al-Hadith Hazrat Maulāna Zakariyya Kāndhlawi رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ (d. 1402 AH) all regarded Sunan Abi Dawood as highly significant, and this importance has continued to the present day.

Among the scholars of Mazahir Uloom, the passion for writing alongside teaching Hadith is particularly prominent. Consequently, commentaries on Hadith books that were prepared there gained acceptance across various schools of thought. Mentioning Maulāna Khalil Ahmad's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ "*Badhl al-Majhūd*" and Sheikh al-Hadith

Maulāna Muhammad Zakariyya Kandhlawi's رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ
"*Aujaz al-Masālik*" and "*Al-Abwāb wa al-Tarājim*" would suffice.

As for Sahih Bukhari, due to its status as the most authentic book after the Book of Allah, it holds equal importance in both Deoband and Saharanpur. Initially, the first third of the book is taught with detailed explanation, and then the majority of it is recited straight forward and completed in a summarized manner.

