



THE HOLY QURAN

Commentary - Tafsir By
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Surah 1 to 5



xkp

Tafsir of Holy Quran - Surah 1 to 5

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Chapter 1

Tafsir Surah al-Fatihah (The Opening)

{ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ } 1}

BISMILLAHIR-RAHMANIR-RAHIM, as the first verse, is the part and parcel of al Fatihah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The Holy Prophet said:

LA SALATA ILLA BIFATIHA TUL KITAB WA BISMILLAHIR RAHMANIR RAHIM MIN AYATIHA

There is no prayer (*salat*) without al Fatihah, and *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* is one of its verses. The Ahl ul Bayt (the thoroughly purified members of the family of the Holy Prophet), and the scholars, who follow their teachings, time and again, had verified this saying of the Holy Prophet. So according to Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* is a verse by itself, which, if not recited as a part of al Fatihah, the prayer is rendered null and void. It is not only the component of al Fatihah but also of every surah except al Bara-at.

In the light of the clear decisions and evidences of the practical acts of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, the arguments of the dissenting scholars carry no weight. According to the Holy Prophet and his divinely chosen Ahl ul Bayt *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* is the first of the seven verses of al Fatihah. And when Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad have said so, there remains no doubt whatsoever. Any opinion contrary to the verdict of Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad is pure conjecture.

Abu Hanifa, founder of the Hanafi school, gave permission to his followers to recite *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* quietly, with al Fatihah, in prayers, because the Holy Prophet used to recite al Fatihah with *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* in his prayers, yet in his (Abu Hanifa's) opinion it was not a part of the surah. (Tafsir Kabir - Abdul Hayy) There are some scholars who admit that al Fatihah consists of seven verses but to insist on their misconceived notion that *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* is not included in it they split the last verse into two separate verses, although the meaning and the construction of the verse does not justify it.

According to the Holy Prophet any deed begun without reciting *bismillah* goes bad and lacks effectiveness. As *al salat* is known as the best deed (*khayrul amal*) and al Fatihah is the inaugurator of the book it is logical that *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* is the first verse of al Fatihah.

Once a man offered prayers in presence of the Holy Prophet without saying *bismillahir rahmanir*

rahim in his recitation of al Fatihah. The Holy Prophet told him:

You have rendered your prayer null and void by omitting *bismillah* from Fatihah. Do you not know that *bismillah* is the part of al Fatihah? (Durrul Manthur by Suyuti)

On one occasion, Mu-awiyah, while leading a prayer in Madina, recited al Fatihah without *bismillah*. At the end the participating pray-ers, made a hue and cry. To pacify the protestations he prayed the same prayer again and recited al Fatihah with *bismillah*. This event bears out the fact that those who saw and heard the Holy Prophet, prior to the influx of alterations, knew that if in any prayer al Fatihah is recited without *bismillah*, it is rendered null and void. (Fakhruddin Razi and Kanzul Ummal)

Bismillahir rahmanir rahim, in addition to al Fatihah, is also the part of al Naml:

Verily, it is from Sulayman; and it is 'In the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful'. This is the beginning of the letter prophet Sulayman wrote to the queen of Shiba.

Whatever be the point of view of the dissenting scholars, it has been decisively established that the Holy Prophet always recited *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* as the part of al Fatihah, therefore, we all should follow him.

BISMILLAH

To start any good deed with "(I begin) in the name of Allah, the beneficent, the merciful" means a supplication unto Allah for successful completion of the work. It also means that the supplicant undertakes the job in the name of and on behalf of Allah to serve the good in the work as well as achieve his own legitimate purpose. In other words he dedicates his life to Allah and employs his self-interest-oriented activity in the service of overall goodness. He admits his helplessness and relies on the truth that ability to make any work fruitful is exclusively with Allah, and with no one else. By invoking Allah in the name of His beneficence and mercy he prays for His aid to achieve success in his undertaking. It is quite logical to believe that the divine beneficence and mercy would bless such a faithful. It does.

It is a fact that nothing exists or takes effect outside the course of Allah's will. The will of Allah governs the scope of every activity but does not determine the desires and methods of any created being. Anything that happens or exists without seeking Allah's pleasure, is covered by the will of Allah, but is not blessed with His grace. Should an individual begin any work without saying *bismillah*, it may be completed but without earning the divine pleasure. The desires and actions of an individual shall be blessed only when he surrenders them to Allah's pleasure. The Holy Prophet has made it known that anything done without invoking the divine grace by reciting *bismillah* is not approved by Allah.

As said earlier anyone can begin any work, without invoking Allah with *bismillah*, and it will be executed, if the divine will allows it. However, in this event, it does not earn the divine pleasure, but on the contrary is liable to be punished according to the degree of evil involved, the intention of the

individual, the nature and the effect of the work. Even if it is not evil in its nature, disciplinary action can be taken because the individual has relied upon his ability and will which is as bad as setting oneself against the almighty Lord.

The very act of any one starting his work in the name of Allah whom he remembers as beneficent and merciful, eloquently speaks of the individual's obedience to the supreme being, who in return would automatically be reciprocal to the devotee's expectation in seeking His pleasure and mercy. In starting a work in the name of Allah, the reciter demonstrates the undernoted aspects of fundamental importance :

1. Acknowledgement of the supreme being as his Lord master.
2. Confession of his own helplessness.
3. Belief in Allah as the ever-living and all-knowing - almighty.
4. Reliance on the supreme being, seeking His pleasure and mercy, and invoking Him with His mercy-invoking attributes.
5. Conviction at heart and confidence that if called, the beneficent and the merciful Allah will certainly not deny him His mercy.

The words of *bismillah* i.e., in the name of Allah, have wide and discernible implications. The words may mean not only 'in the name of' but also:

1. For the sake of
2. To the service of

These and many other implications will serve the supplicant when he sincerely turns to Allah for obtaining His mercy and blessings.

One of the many unique features and distinguishing factors about the originality of Islam is *bismillah* which was never before used by or known to any of the other corrupted or falsified creeds of the world. Rodwell, wrongly informed, states that *bismillah*, in its Quranic form, was taught to the Quraysh for the first time by the poet Umayya (of Tayf). This claim of Rodwell is contradicted by unimpeachable evidence of historic authenticity that the term was totally unknown to the Quraysh to such an extent that they even resented the use of it (see verse 60 of al Furqan). Besides, even till as late as in the 6th year of Hijra, the Quraysh did not allow the term *bismillah*, as used in the Quran, to be used in the treaty drawn between the Muslims and the Makkans at Hudaibiyah. At the use of the term *bismillahir rahmanir rahim* Suhayl bin Amru, the delegate of the Quraysh, objected that he did not know what it meant. Ultimately the term used was *bis-mika-allahumma* which was then current among the Quraysh. There is no evidence in the usage of the people of other creeds to show that this term was borrowed by the Holy Prophet. Moreover, Islam does not claim to be a new religion preached for the first time to mankind. Islam's claim is that the truth was revealed to mankind, one and all, in various stages, in many languages; the difference is in the presentation of the truth in its

fullness, in all its details.

We never sent a messenger save with the language of his people. (IBRAHIM: 4)

ALLAH

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

There is no fitting equivalent, in the English or any other language, to convey and express the essential essence of the word ALLAH. In the earlier times the idea of a "supreme being" was conveyed to man by the prophets of Allah, but due to the general low level of knowledge, a single word, containing the all-embracing sense and significance of the supreme, universal and absolute being, was not made known.

"Father" may imply creativeness but, in no way, refers to compassion, beneficence and mercy. The word father implies that the father of the universe had a father and a mother who gave birth to him, because it does not indicate that the father of the heaven and the earth had no father or mother to bring him into being. It also fails to establish his uncreated self-existing eternity, unless explanatory words are added. The word Allah is a compound of the definite article *al* and the noun *ilah*, meaning "that God". The literal meaning of *ilah* is "puzzling" if *waliha* is the source, and "referred to" if it is derived from *aliha*; in either sense, it can be used for the supreme being unto whom man must surrender.

Known to every one, there is only one universal ultimate whom all human beings devotedly worship; and upon whom they depend and rely. He is undefinable, beyond the reach of human intelligence, unknowable to knowledge, unimaginable, yet recognised by one and all.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq pointed to the spirit and vision of the word Allah to an atheist, in the course of a discussion. He said:

"When you are in a ship, sailing in the middle of an ocean, and a wind-storm comes on from every side, and there is no conceivable means of rescue, yet, in this hopeless situation, you make efforts, in hope of deliverance; this ultimate faith is Allah, referred to by Allah in verse 22 of Yunus."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word Allah points to that which is already in the consciousness, but cannot be arrested by comprehension, or conceived mentally. It is universal, because it is connected with the whole as well as with the part. Whether the word Allah is a proper noun or a common noun, because of the article *al*, is a solvable controversy. The common noun *ilah*, appropriating definite sense with the definite article *al*, referring to that which is universally known and recognised by every conscious being, unconfined to form or concept, never to be two or more save one, becomes a proper noun.

So it is concised in the word Allah, giving it the unique unity of the sense of a proper noun. It must

be noted that as the absolute can never be perceived by consciousness, so it cannot be defined by any name. One can refer to Him by personal pronouns, of which "He" (*huwa*) is the most suitable. The word Allah stands for the absolute self, the greatest name (*ism azam*), the one perfect total of all good and excellence with no defect.

In contemporary commentaries it is speculated that the word Allah might have been derived from the Hebrew *uluhim*. *Allahumma* is closer to *uluhim* than Allah, because the infidels, very intimate associates of the Jews, were more familiar with *Allahumma* than Allah, which was a new development. At any event what has been said earlier is further substantiated by the argument put forward to indicate the etymological development of the word.

In the process of evolution, the intellect of man began to make adjustments in the man-god relationship. He had been bowing in adoration to the powerful, useful, harmful, or unintelligible manifestations of nature which, step by step, developed into worship of imaginary deities. As the pantheon of man-made gods grew, man, in desperation, began to seek a supreme being, over the heads of the mini-gods, serving the chief to administer the destiny of man, in one way or other. So gradually man started to seek a supreme being with all comprehensive authority. The word Allah, more suitable than the other words, became popular among the people.

The two possible words *ilah* is derived from, are *alaha* and *walah* meaning astonishment and wonder. The word Allah is formed by adding the definite article *al* to *alah*, which means the one who is beyond the reach of conception, or even imagination, and out of the range of knowledge.

The quest for knowledge about Allah comes to a close when the seeker in astonishment confesses that with all his sincere efforts supported by intellect and insight he cannot know Him.

Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir said:

Observe and examine the creation of Allah, do not pry into the being of Allah because no one knows what He is except He.

Imam Ali ibn abi Talib said:

He! O He whom none knows what He is, nor how He is, nor where He is, nor in what respect He is, but He. (Al Mashlul)

The name Allah stands for the supreme one who encompasses everything in the universe but nothing can encompass Him. He is the ever-living allknowing almighty. He has no equal. There is none comparable to Him. He has no associate or partner. All goodly names and ideal attributes belong to Him. He owns and controls that which is in the heavens and that which is in the earth and that which is in between them, the kingdom of the universe. It is only His will that is done. He is the all-seeing, all-hearing, all-just, all-merciful. He is eternal, in

{ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ } 2

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:2]

AL HAMDU

Alhamdu means that (all) praise, thanks, gratitude, be to Allah alone, not to any one else, from the beginning of the universe to its end, not under compulsion, but because He alone, and none else, deserves to be praised, not only for the fulfilment of his particular desires but also, mainly, for all the bounties and blessings made available to man in his existence.

The love of the merciful for His creation is so deep and fulfilling that no compensation, even in the form of gratitude, can be offered to Him. In fact He needs no return. The divine mercy is independent of gratitude. It reaches and covers all the created beings whether the creatures show gratitude or not for the benefits and bounties they make use of and enjoy. The smallest bounty is an unconditional favour. Man does not deserve it, nor has he any right to claim any favour from the Lord. It is the all-embracing mercy of the merciful Lord which reaches one and all, whether any creature asks for it or not, whether the recipient acknowledges it or not.

A person likes to be praised if he accomplishes or acquires something extraordinary, novel or very important, after investing his best efforts, but the good in Allah is with Him. He has not acquired it.

He is goodness itself in its fullness and perfection. He is not in need of praise. In a prayer, He is praised, only to make the pray-er love and cherish the attributes which are praised, because as a matter of course, he would like to possess the attributes which he is praising.

The all-knowing Lord-nourisher is fully aware of the needs and wants of all His creatures more than they themselves know. He bestows His favours and bounties without receiving petitions from them, yet to educate, train and discipline the mankind, prayer, in which He is praised, is necessary, so that man remains attached with the merciful creator, while enjoying the divine bounties, conscious of the absolute sovereignty of the Lord of bounties and grace.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

To find out the truth in connection with the praise and the praising (*hamd*) the question as to who praises whom, must be answered. Man can praise Allah if his existence is presumed to be as eternal as Allah, whereas, in fact, it is Allah who created man and taught him how to praise. Truly, the praise as well as the praising both belong to Allah. Allah is the *hamid*, the praiser, and also the *mahmud*, the praised. There is none else other than Allah who is the subject as well as the object of the praise, and in this sense no one can share His praise. This is implied in the preposition *li* (for), which signifies the exclusive authorisation.

Hamd, adoration through praise, takes the place of gratitude to be expressed for getting favours and bounties. Man, by nature, shows his readiness to yield to love and compassion, even to the extent of unconditional surrender. To depend upon the co-operation and help of others is human. When he finds that someone, attached to him, is taking interest in his well-being, he is automatically drawn to him. His desire for a happy life makes him go after that which helps and protects, and avoid that which he finds harmful to his existence and welfare. By realising that praise, in any form or content, must be for Allah, and for no one else, and that Allah alone deserves every praise and adoration, man is freed from the fear of awesome tyranny, corruption and servitude which he presumed that the dreadful and

false gods would inflict upon him. On the contrary now he knows that his real master is the Lord of beneficence and mercy whom he approaches through His praise . He is free to get as near to Him as he likes in order to earn more and more from the bountiful benefactor who Himself is ready to bestow favours and bounties, in abundance, on the sincere seeker and on those on whose behalf He is beseeched.

The Arabic word *shukr* implies gratitude for some particular favour, whereas *hamd*, without reference to any particular quality, is an objective gratitude, for all that is good and gracious, profitable and advantageous. It may also involve the idea of free, unrestricted and unqualified admiration. But, again, admiration refers to the Arabic word *madh* which is used both for the animate as well as the inanimate objects, without necessarily implying that existence of the qualities admired depends on the conscious will of the object, in which case admiration will relate to the qualities admired, not to the possessor of those qualities. Allah is never praised in this sense. The prefix *al* confirms that *hamd* is for no one but Allah who alone, not merely on account of the manifestations of the divine attributes, but because He is the sole owner of those glorious qualities, deserves to be praised; identifying His self-existent absolute self. The qualities belong only to Him alone, to none else, and it is so for all times since eternity, and will be so till eternity. So, in this sense the English word "praise" should be understood and used as a translation of *hamd*.

Hamd (the praise) is Allah's. It has no beginning and no end. We, the created beings, do our best, within our limitations, to give expression to the "real praise" (*hamd*). His *hamd*, as His grace, is unlimited and continuous. No one can praise the merciful even for a whole life-time and say that justice has been done, because every time one gives thanks to Allah he inhales and also exhales, drawing in the good life-giving air and exhaling the bad air, two bounties he is receiving for which only once can he say "I thank the bountiful Lord". It is impossible to thank Allah for the innumerable bounties He has put at the disposal of man, right inside his body, and in the world where he lives as an individual as well as a member of the community. Even the thanks and praises he offers to the bountiful have been taught to him by the Lord of the worlds. Therefore, every creature is, all the time under the obligation of the bountiful grace of Allah.

By praising, we reach the stage where the infinite goodness of our Lord purges out of us the taste for evil and creates in us the eagerness to get nearer and nearer to Him to earn His mercy which purifies us and reflects in us the divine attributes.

RABBUL ALAMIN

Rabb in Arabic stands for nourisher, cherisher, and sustainer. According to Raghīb, an Arab lexicologist, the word *rabb* signifies "the fostering of a thing in such a manner as to make it attain one condition after another until its goal of completion".

Our Lord is He who gave unto everything its form, and then guided it aright. (TAHA; 50)

This is *rahmah*, mercy, from the *rabbul alamin*.

The love and mercy of Allah towards His creatures surpasses, in quantity and quality, the love of

both the father and mother put together. From the birth to the last breath everything in the universe depends upon the *rububiyat*, the nourishing, cherishing, sustaining and protecting aspect of the mercy of the Lord of the worlds. No single English word to give the meaning of the word *rabb* could be found, but "Lord" seems to be the only alternative if readers remember the above noted description whenever the word "Lord" appears in our text.

RUBUBIYAT

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Rububiyat speaks of another attribute - *lutf*, meaning tenderness and refinement in diffusing through every one's mind and feelings to know the needs and make available the necessary means of satisfaction. This position gives authority to exercise legislative powers which, in fact, justifies the establishment of the office of *nabuwat* and *imamat*.

By making Allah known as the *rabbul alamin*, Islam has disclosed the truth to mankind that He is the Lord of everything in the universe, be that human, animal, vegetable, mineral, perceptible or imperceptible, visible or invisible, near or far, in the earth or in the heavens, or in between them. With infinite power, able to do all things, the all-wise almighty creator of matter and meaning is a supreme sovereign in every aspect of His absolute authority. His independent will extends to and covers all kinds of the worlds created by Him.

The five "mystic" classifications of the worlds are as under:

- 1.
2. Material or physical NASUT
3. Metaphysical MALAKUT
or supernatural
4. Spiritual JABARUT
5. Divine LAHUT
6. Imperceptible and GHAYBUL GHAYUB

unknowable

The *rububiyat* begins to operate as early as the will to create a being takes effect, and continues to nurture the created being with love, care and never-ceasing vigilance, providing all its needs according to the changes it goes through. It is like a self-imposed duty to guide the creature to make conscious efforts to avoid harm and avail profit.

"Verily, We have created everything by (the right) measure". (QAMAR: 49)

Things necessary for the living beings, all over the universe, in all times, are available to satisfy various wants and needs. The quality and quantity of the "resources" have been determined according to the collective requirements of all that which has been created. Some things are rare, some things are plentiful, but at all events nothing is less or more. A thoughtful study of the complex of "things" brings the obvious fact to light that there is only one single owner master who has set the wonderfully harmonious working of the universe in motion, allowed life to be created, and in addition, enabled each and every creation to put into effect the aim of its being brought into existence.

The heat of the sun changes the water into a mass of fog and the wind takes it to the sky in the shape of rolling clouds and drives them over various parts of the earth; and when the stored water in the clouds melts on account of the solar glow, it rains all over the earth. The earth receives the water and grows "food" for all the living beings. Every being finds, all that which serves to maintain life on earth, ready, as soon as it comes into being, duly provided and arranged in the required quantity and quality. The milk, a new-born baby feeds on, is ready in the mother's breasts well in advance of its birth.

The merciful *rabbul alamin* has provided manifold bounties for the survival and happiness of the incomprehensibly large number of the members of each of the innumerable species in the universe. There is perfect harmony and undisturbable control in the continuous working of nature. Each creature, perfectly formed and fully equipped, has an inherent capacity to make use of the available "resources of the bounties", and obtain its own means of sustenance from one complete regular system. This orderly arrangement, according to the Quran, takes effect by means of *taqdir* and *hidayat*.

Taqdir means "consider a thing well; fix in measure and quantity, render possible".

Imam Ali ibn abi Talib had said:

Allah had conditioned and circumstanced the operation of all that has been created under precise (self) regulating laws, in the sphere of time and space, made their unlike, complex and diverse dispositions agree and fit well together, implanted and infused rhythm and balance and co-ordination in their nature, to give them the inbuilt discipline that follows an orderly system. (NAHJ AL BALAGHA)

The appropriate assignment of a prescribed condition is *taqdir*, a precise system of laws which cannot be tampered with or led astray outside its logical course by any force except by *almighty* Allah, who is omnipotent and able to do all things. The perfect working of the well defined plan under definite laws depends upon His justice. As the 26th verse of Ale Imran says: "In Thy hand is all good", the almighty Lord through these precise laws, governing the operation of creation, has provided the living beings all the opportunities to make effort and win success by relying upon them.

The whole complex of the immeasurable universe is working in perfect harmony, keeping the living beings inhabiting it, and the living conditions and circumstances provided for them, in co-operative

accord. No one can make the slightest attempt to disturb the "predestined nature of creation". The law of cause and effect can never be made to stop its inevitable function. The various elements can never do otherwise than as they have been directed under the divine laws of the nature. In this sense the meaning of the word *taqdir* should be understood.

Hidayat means "right guidance". All the living beings, all over the universe, are motivated to exercise their free choice and do that which is meaningful and profitable, and avoid that which is absurd and harmful, by discovering, understanding and making use of the "controlled by precise laws" environment.

Taqdir governs every natural phenomenon and *hidayat* directs all the activities of the living beings. Their combined application is universal. Every being in the universe is so perfectly designed that each fulfils its own individual needs from one and the same environment. But in order to refer to the particular aspect of sustenance and preservation which the nourishing and preserving Lord justly and mercifully supplies for the benefit of His creatures, a few typical examples are sufficient.

A newly born child at once sucks the mother's breast. The roots of the plants and trees absorb from the earth only that which helps their growth, leaving out the unessential, notwithstanding its presence in the soil. As soon as a fish is born it swims. Every creature functions under the divine guidance.

Glorify the name of your *Rabb* (the Lord) the most high;
He who creates then fashions in the proportion.
And He who has planned, then guided, (A'LA: 1, 2, 3)

The whole universe has been designed, created and guided (to function according to the divine laws) by one single authority who is eternal., almighty, all-knowing, all-just, benevolent and merciful.

The perfect u
3} {الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ
[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:3]
RAHMANIR RAHIM

[See previous commentary]

4} {مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ
[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:4]
MALIKI YAWMID DIN

Allah is the master of the day of faith, or the day of the final judgement.

He who sits in judgement is known as a judge. The Arabic word is *qadi*. Here the word *qadi* is not used because *qadi* is not the law-giver or lawmaker, but only an executor of the law made and enforced by some other authority, and therefore, is restricted by the judicial system in force. The *malik* or the master is the law-maker as well as the executor of His own laws. With the supreme

powers of a law-maker He uses His discretion not only in passing the judgement but also in carrying it out, according to the merits of each individual case and in view of His own satisfaction, in the light of explanations given by the accused. When an accused is proved guilty, the *qadi* cannot grant pardon or remission of punishment but the *malik* can grant amnesty to the petitioner at His own independent discretion which cannot be challenged.

A master, who is also the beneficent, the merciful and the Lord-nourisher, would naturally be just as well as kind and compassionate when He sits in judgement over His own created, nourished and protected creatures. The justice, strict application of law to requite according to the deeds, will be modified by blending mercy with it. Only those, found unpardonable, not deserving to receive the benefit of His benevolence, will suffer the penalty. This aspect of the nature of the master of the day of final judgement has been revealed through the holy name *rabb*, to keep man alert against the strict justice and at the same time keep him hopefully expectant of the divine mercy.

The *maliki yawmiddin* gives fair warning to mankind to anticipate strict justice, the *rahmanir rahim rabbul alamin* gives hope to expect mercy. So Islam prevents terror and cruelty and give currency to love and sympathy in order to change man's conduct for the better. The divine plan had been set in motion through the Holy Prophet as the "mercy unto the worlds".

"Say: O My servants who have been inordinately immoderate in their actions to hurt themselves, despair not of the mercy of Allah. Verily Allah forgives all sins. Verily He is the oft-forgiving, the merciful." (ZUMAR: 53)

Ali, the first holy Imam, has composed several prayers, masterpieces of literature, to be recited to invoke the merciful Lord. One such masterpiece is the well-known Dua al Kumayl.

O my Allah, my master, my RABB!

Can Thou really see that I am thrown into the fire, notwithstanding my belief in Thy unity; inspite of Thy awareness thoughtfully perceived by me,

Thy praise eloquently pronounced by me, my soul abounding with Thy love; and despite my sincere confession and invocation, stooping low before Thy Lordship? Far be it from Thee!

Thou art too generous to abandon him whom Thou has nourished. (AL KUMAYL)

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The actual *malik* (master) is He who exercises absolute authority over everything in His possession. Everything owes its existence to Him He is the absolute. Therefore, the use of the term "master" for the possession and the right of possession (*malikiyyat*), or power and authority (*mulukiyyit*) is true and real in the case of Allah only. For others it would be only figurative and unreal. This is also strictly applicable to all His other attributes.

YAWMIDDIN

What man today, in this life, believes and disbelieves, will be laid bare on the day of faith. The believers and the disbelievers will witness the truth manifested before them. His reward to the righteous believers and His punishment to the wicked disbelievers will be announced. Both will thereafter live through the recompense required by the *maliki yawmiddin*. Therefore, the day of faith, in fact, is the day of judgement, or the day of reckoning.

There will be a day of judgement or requital, but it does not exclude Allah's authority to reward and punish while life, prior to the promised day, goes on. It is one of the aspects of the infinite mercy that the act of judging is continuous. This aspect serves as a warning to keep man on the right path, or to encourage him to return to it if he drifts or goes astray. The day of judgement is the day of final requital.

The life after death is the continuation of the life in this world, to be lived in paradise or hell, in view of the good or evil done here. As you sow so shall you reap. At every stage of existence the divine judgement stays operative.

The Holy Prophet advised his followers:

Keep on judging your conduct to make yourself ready for the (final) judgement and assess your deeds continuously ahead of the (final) assessment.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Yawm (day), mentioned in the Quran, is not, on every occasion, the day of the earth, from sunrise to sunset. It can be a moment or a period of time extending even to fifty thousand years as per verse 4 of al Ma-arij.

Therefore, according to the context in which it is used, the day may be of an indefinitely small or long period of time, not what we understand in terms of the orbit of the earth around the sun.

A thorough study of the Quran shows that whenever movement is mentioned, the downward course, or things descending from Allah to the terrestrial realm, are described as "night"; and the upward course, or things ascending towards Allah, are described as "day". The descending course is also described as *nuzul*.

The blowing of the trumpet (*nufkhus sur*; will breathe (spirits) into forms. All the creatures will take their final shape. The influence of time and space which separate one creature from the other will be removed. All will be brought together. It was He from whom everyone had come forth and unto Him every one shall return through the agency of the grace and guidance of (His) *rububiyat*. Each shall take up the position he or she is entitled on merit. *Din* is stipulated as such with reference to the *yawmid din*. Thus the masterdom of the *malik* assumes complete manifestation.

O man! Verily you are striving unto your Lord (with) a striving and are about to meet Him.

And what will make you know what *yawmiddin* shall be?

And what will make you know what *yawmiddin* is?

(It is) a day on which no soul shall own anything (helpful) for any (other) soul; the absolute (supreme) command on that day shall be Allah's. (INFITAR: 17 - 19)

The ultimate, absolute and real authority belongs to Allah who is the first as well as the final cause of all creation. All the other authorities are unreal and imaginary. Therefore, the normal course to be adopted by man is that which has been stated above - striving unto the Lord.

This is the day when people will stand before Allah, the Lord cherisher of the worlds (TATFIF: 6).

This day cannot be taken as a day of any duration. It shall be a day which will not be followed by any night.

The human beings would discard virtue and indulge in evil, employing immorality and tyranny to perpetrate all kinds of heinous crimes and destroy peace and harmony, essential for a normal and orderly life in this world, if they do not know and believe that there is an all-just authority to question, judge and punish the evil-doers. Therefore belief in the life after death and the *yawmiddin* is rooted in the basis of Islamic teachings.

What! Do those who commit evil suppose that We shall make them as those who believe and do good, that equal shall be their life and their death? Bad is their judgement. And Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth, and that every soul shall be recompensed (according to) what it has earned. And they will not be unjustly treated. (JATHIYAH: 21, 22)

5} {إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:5]

IYYAKA

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

All creatures, irrespective of social position or authority, in like manner, must submit to His will, and obey and worship Him. They have to seek His help in every activity. No one, not being equal to Him, is left out or exempted from His service. All are His servants. He is the original creator and the supreme law-giver. Every thing is created by Him, therefore, it has to abide by the laws He has made. No finite being can claim the rank of a god nor anyone can worship any finite being as a god, and also there is no room for *ta-addud*, the numeration of the infinite. The infinite is absolute and the finite is composite (a creature).

NA-BUDU

Worship is not mere carrying out some ritual. In thought and action "Thee alone we worship" is an

unconditional commitment to the service of Allah, and none else, in order to live and die as it would please the Lord-master. The devotee puts an obligation upon himself to serve only Allah and none else. It creates an essential spirit of faithfulness to the only real master, and sets him free from the fear and subjugation of all the false authorities. The faithful servant, consequently, invokes the master's pleasure to obtain the fulfilment of his needs and wants, because he expects nothing from anyone else except from the real master whom he serves exclusively. This declaration is also a source of total satisfaction, as the devotee vows to live and die as Allah wills, and not as he himself prefers.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Man owes loyalty to none but Allah, and true loyalty demonstrates itself by making him do nothing but carry out the will and command of the master, abide by His instructions, and represent His pleasure. To pay homage to or bow down before even a stone by His order, or to seek help through the means approved and established by Him is, in fact, His worship, because it is in conformity with the loyalty a servant owes to his master. To employ ways and means, in contravention to His orders, even to worship Him, is disloyalty.

So far Allah has been referred to as He, His, and Him, third person singular pronouns. Now one feels that one is standing in the presence of the absolute, so it is time to address Him in the second person singular by using the word *iybaka* which means "Thee alone" and none else, the negation of everything else other than Him and the assertion of the Only One. The created being, as an individual, disappears, and makes an appearance as a member of the community of the fellow creatures, a unique characteristic of the religion of Islam which unites individual and collective behaviour in perfect harmony to promote the cause of humanity.

No community or society of individuals can serve the Lord-master without an Imam (guide). It is also true that no one can be installed in this position except the person who represents His universal grace. Therefore the almighty Allah had sent the Holy Prophet as the "mercy unto the worlds". The reach and scope of the Holy Prophet's mission is as all-inclusive as Allah's *rububiyat*, which, of course, had established his finality (*khatamiyat*). According to some authentic traditions, the Holy Prophet, during the ascension (*mi-raj*), led the prayers attended by all the prophets and messengers of Allah, who had been sent, before him, as the representatives of the almighty Lord to guide mankind, together with the angels, which, again, had instituted his supreme leadership (*imamat kubra*). The institution of a supreme leader, to guide mankind in its collective obedience to and worship of the Lord of the worlds, is the basis of the essential Islamic form of government, approved by Allah. It means that absolute sovereignty is in the hands of Allah and it cannot be delegated to any one but to the person who represents His universal will and grace, who is in communion with Him, and who knows the relation of the infinite to the finite and the interrelationship between the finite beings.

Seek they other than the religion of Allah, when unto Him submits whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly, and unto Him they shall be returned. (ALI IMRAN: 83)

He is Allah, the creator, the master, the fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him, and He is the mighty, the wise. (HASHR: 24)

There is none in the heavens and the earth but must come unto the beneficent as a servant. (MARYAM: 93)

Keeping to the norm of the universal submission, man must also submit and surrender his will to Allah's will, and seek help from no one but Him. The Quran, in view of the execution and regulation of Allah's will, in the operation of creation, guides mankind to learn from the "book of creation".

This verse throws light on the doctrines of determinism and free-will, a controversial issue in philosophy, theology, ethics and jurisprudence. The act of obedience and seeking help prove that human being exercise freedom of choice, and, therefore, are responsible for their actions, because they are not passive targets of Allah's activity, but have been given free-will by Allah to make their own decisions and act upon them. Their free-will and its outcome are conditioned by Allah's will, order and providence. The will of Allah does not directly determine the deeds of creatures, making the creatures' will entirely ineffective, in which case they would not be responsible for their actions, as the determinists say. It is true that the creatures cannot exercise absolute free-will because their actions and judgements have to abide by the laws created and enforced by the will of Allah as explained earlier while making clear the meaning of the word *taqdir*. As Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir has said there is no predetermination as far as the activity of the created beings is concerned but every action is conditioned by the laws, made by Allah, operating the creation, so there can be no unbridled use of freedom. It is a conciliation between freedom of action and complying with the will of Allah.

In the Quran the predominance of Allah's will is mentioned to point out the overall supremacy of the laws made and enforced by Allah; and also the freedom of choice granted to man is confirmed to make it clear that although living beings have the freedom to do what they will, shouldering the responsibility of their actions, they cannot do away with the will of Allah. In common terminology it is a *via media*. Allah's activity can be described as "action", and the activity of the creature as "reaction". There cannot be a "reaction" without an "action". And if there is no "reaction" the action would be considered unproductive. In this sense Allah's action operates in the realm of creation to which the creatures, consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, react. The action is conditioned by the nature of the "actor". The divine action, the outcome of Allah's boundless grace, can be nothing but pure good, but the reaction of the finite creature may take a different course and produce evil for which the bad receptivity of the finite creature should be held responsible. The Quran says:

Whatever good befalls you (O man) it is from Allah, and whatever of evil befalls you, it is from yourself; (NISA: 79)

It is logical as well as profitable to seek help only from Allah whom the supplicant has accepted as his *rabb*, and has undertaken to serve Him only, because the infinite mercy of the merciful Lord will be available to the seeker of help in proportion to the sincerity of his commitment. Through this prayer, the pray-er, in all his prayers, invokes the divine mercy, and even if the desired relief is apparently delayed or withheld, he gets the satisfaction that petition has been put forward to the proper authority who alone knows what is best for the invoker, in his own interest. As only light, not

darkness comes forth from the light, so the withholding of mercy of the merciful Lord should never be misunderstood as indifference or pitilessness, because inadequate and faulty conjectures cannot comprehend the infinite wisdom of the all-wise Lord.

{ اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ } 6

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:6]

IHDINAS SIRATAL MUSTAQIM

A true believer in the truth, however learned and wise he may be, has to pray for this blessing from the all-knowing and all-wise Lord. Man needs guidance not only to have knowledge of the theory and practice of the doctrine he believes in, but also to perceive the extraordinary truths which open up new spiritual horizons.

The right path, mentioned here, is neither any particular path nor the doctrines of the religion. There are several angles of human life in this world. The physical, mental, moral and spiritual aspects of living, together with its many divisions, need guidance to find the right path. The guidance to the right path mentioned in the Quran encompasses all aspects of the various paths open to the human soul in this life. To fulfil the purpose of his creation, which is the ultimate purpose of man's existence in this world, he prays to the creator for spiritual assistance to keep him on the right path.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

llyyaka na-budu wa iyyaka nasta-in is the norm of human activity. Man must obey Allah's will, and seek His help, which also is obedience to Him. Human life is a striving to reach the absolute perfection, Allah. However perfect man's attainment be in this direction, it will still be finite. Only the infinite is absolute perfection. The distance between the infinite and the finite is infinite. Man's effort and strive in the way to perfection, by perpetual obedience and quest for help and guidance, should be continuous, then alone he can keep to the right path which leads to Allah.

{ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ } 7

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 1:7]

SIRATAL LADHINA AN-AMTA ALAYHIM

The right path has been clearly defined, unmistakable in meaning, positive in application. Any path, fancied and chosen by man, individually or collectively, according to this verse, is not the right path. The right guidance, identified beyond doubt, has been made available to mankind. To follow the path of the divinely guided guides, on whom Allah has bestowed His bounties, is the right guidance. Their path leads to the divine grace. It satisfies the essential fulfilment of those who desire to always remain rightly guided. Attached with the rightly guided guides, man must rely upon their model righteousness to give form and meaning to the life spent in this world. The rightly guided guides are only those whom Allah Himself has thoroughly purified:

Verily, Allah intends but to keep off from you uncleanness O you Ahl ul Bayt, and purify you with a

thorough purification. (AHZAB: 33)

The essential prerequisite for following the path of an ideal, worthy of imitation, is to love the cherished model with heart and soul. To serve this necessity the almighty Allah and His Holy Prophet have enjoined the love of the Ahl ul Bayt, the thoroughly purified and divinely chosen guides, who show the right path.

Say you (O Muhammad): "I ask of you no recompense therefor, save love of (my) relatives (Ahl ul Bayt)." And who earns good, We increase for him (more) good therein, verily Allah is oft-forgiving, thankful. (SHURA: 23)

Love and attachment with the chosen guides, the Ahl ul Bayt, is known, in the religious doctrines of the original Islam, Shi'ism, as *tawalla*.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Wherever you turn you shall find (only) His manifestation. (BAQARAH; 115)

Therefore, it may be said that all paths lead to Him, whether the path is straight or curved. Though it is true that every creation, in some way or the other, is His manifestation, yet that which is closer to His essence in comprehensiveness and gives a better vision of His unity, absoluteness and omnipotence, is more effective in making clear His supreme being. To follow the track of such manifestations is, in fact, itself the right path, which has been instituted by the almighty Allah as the true guidance.

A sure and clear view of the straight path is possible when there is a model or a guiding example. The Quran identifies it as the path of those on whom Allah has bestowed His bounties.

Who so obeys Allah and the messenger (Muhammad), they are with those upon whom Allah has bestowed favours, of the prophets, and the truthful, and the witnesses, and the righteous; and the best are they as companions!
(NISA: 69)

Whereby Allah guides him who follows His pleasure, into the ways of peace, and brings them out of darkness unto light by His grace (will), and guides them to the right path. (MA-IDA: 16)

Though His bounties are the outcome of His universal grace (*rahmaniyat*), encompassing all His creatures,

"My grace (mercy) embraces all things", (ARAF: 156),

yet out of His *rahimiyat* He has chosen the prophets, the truthful, the witnesses, the righteous, and those who follow their footsteps, in letter and spirit, as His friends. Even those who had been thoroughly purified by Allah and whose path has been described as an ideal for the whole mankind,

had always turned to Allah because the (two bows' length or nearer) distance, between theirs and the infinite beings' perfection, was visible to them only. So man must aspire to rise higher and higher, then only he becomes aware of the distance and submits unconditionally to the supreme being.

The gift of mental, moral and spiritual perfection, the real favour and true bounty, which enables man to avoid sin, is indicated in this verse. It also identifies the perfect beings whose purity had never been corrupted by any evil of any kind, from the beginning to the end of their life on this earth. Such men of ideal purity, who knew why and how the universe was created by Allah and the laws which govern its operation, therefore, did not commit any mistake, in thought and action, are called *ma-sumin* (infallible). They are only fourteen in Islam- the Holy Prophet and his divinely chosen twelve successors, and Fatimah, the daughter of the Holy Prophet. In addition, the prophets and the messengers of Allah, who had been sent before the Holy Prophet, are also *ma-sum* (infallible).

When Allah asks mankind to necessarily follow the path of those upon whom He has bestowed His bounties, it is a must that there always should be, till the end of the world, people on whom He bestows His bounties, who are destined to be the ideal, testified models of righteousness, on the earth. These men cannot be but those who should, of course, be like and comparable to the Holy Prophet in purity, wisdom and that which made the Holy Prophet the *khayrul bashr*, the best among mankind; otherwise without the availability of the model, the command to follow in its footsteps would be an injustice. This verse proves, beyond doubt, the existence of an Imam in every age, upto the day of judgement.

To know about whom the Quran says "he who is the best in knowledge and wisdom", the divinely guided guide, read the following verses:

VERSE 269 IN BAQARAH.

VERSE 55 IN MA-IDAHAH.

VERSE 35 IN YUNUS.

VERSE 16 IN RA'D.

VERSE 9 IN ZUMAR.

VERSE 26 IN MULK.

These verses guide the seeker of truth to find out the essential qualities a religious leader or a spiritual guide must possess, and then to select his leader, without fear or favour, because,

"there is no compulsion in religion" (BAQARAH: 256).

Freedom of choice has been given to man as a test and a trial, after revealing the truth which teaches to distinguish between good and evil. The Quran does not mention names but only describes qualities in order to give the seeker of truth an open opportunity to exercise his freedom of choice.

He to whom wisdom is given, he truly has received abundant good. (BAQARAH: 269)

Besides, "I and Ali are of the 'one and the same' light", and "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is

its gate", there are several traditions (see "Essentials for the readers of the Holy Quran" from page 1 to 7) which clearly make known the unique position of Ali in Islam. Through these traditions Muhammad and Ali have been proved to be the same in physical and spiritual purity. The meaning of this verse, in the light of other verses, is that to be guided aright, one should, in the absence of the Holy Prophet, follow Ali, and the divinely chosen genuine guides among his progeny, because while departing from this world the Holy Prophet gave his last and final guidance to all his followers, for all times:

I will soon be called back, so I will have to go away from you, but I leave behind, among you, the *thaqalayn* (two weighty indispensable influential authorities), the book of Allah and my Ahl ul Bayt. Should you be attached to these two, never, never shall you go astray, after me, for verily these two will never be separated from each other; and, joined together, they shall meet me at *kawthar*.

The Holy Prophet and the Holy Imams are the models. Their personal purity, according to verse 33 of al Ahzab, from the moment of their arrival in this physical world to their departure, had been the unquestionable manifestation of the glory of the divine purity. Through verse 177 of al Baqarah, man is directed to follow the path of those whose piety has been described therein. They are the Ahl ul Bayt.

"My Ahl ul Bayt are like the ark of Nuh. Who so gets into it is saved; and who so stays away is drowned and lost," said the Holy Prophet.

The privilege of receiving direction by means of *wahi*, or revelation, a special medium of communicating the divine will, through the agency of an angel-messenger (Jibra-il) to the prophets and messengers of Allah, who had to convey the divine message in verbatim, was brought to an end after the Holy Prophet, the last of Allah's messengers. No angel did ever come to any one after the last prophet, Muhammad, with any message whatsoever from Allah.

Wahi, through the messenger-angel, had been sent only to a messenger of Allah, endowed with a thorough purity, which alone could sustain, carry and convey it. No human being, who does not possess the essential cleanliness, is in a condition to bear the divine revelation conveyed through angelic agency, unless Allah Himself purifies him with a thorough purification. Only that substance which is inherently pure in its innate genesis and particularly moulded, with a purpose in view, can hold up the energy and reproduce it in the same tone. All the prophets were the true messengers of Allah but each had a different receiving capacity, therefore, the Holy Prophet was not only the last of the prophets of Allah but also stood high and distinguished amongst the divinely chosen messengers, because in purity, strength and wisdom he was the ultimate model designed by Allah.

These messengers, We have exalted some of them above some others; of them are some unto whom Allah has spoken, and some He raised many degrees, (BAQARAH: 253)

Now, a new school of thought, in an attempt to make up an excuse for the continuation of prophethood, puts forward several untenable arguments based upon conjectures. It is said that the divine favours of guiding a human soul, through *wahi*, can be bestowed on any one upto the day of

judgement. No one can deny that the divine guidance through revelation may continue as long as Allah wills. The word *wahi* literally means a mental awakening to an idea. Also any one may conceive any idea but this *wahi* cannot be said to have been revealed to him from Allah.

And verily satans do inspire (*yuwhuna*) their friends to dispute with you. (AN-AM: 122)

So Shaytan also, through his own methods, "inspires" his friends, but the confused simpletons are led to believe that the *wahi* is from Allah.

The *wahi* from Allah, known as *ilham*, through inspiration, guides those whom He chooses. The chosen being may be a man, or even a bee.

And your Lord inspired (*awha*) the bee: Choose habitations in the hills and in the trees and in that which they thatch; (NAHL: 69)

It cannot be a sensible argument to say that by receiving *wahi* from Allah, a bee becomes the messenger of Allah.

Only when a meaningful message is conveyed through the agency of the messenger-angel, Jibra-il, a person can claim to be the messenger of Allah. This method of divine communication had been terminated after the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, therefore, he is the last messenger of Allah.

This day I have perfected for you, your religion, and have completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the religion; (MA-IDAHA: 33)

When Allah, the Quran, as the source of the law and practice of the faith, the procedure of prayers, and the *qiblah* are the same, and Allah has perfected the religion, completed the favour and finally named the religion, why should any one feel the necessity of a new messenger, and for what purpose Allah would summon the messenger-angel to go to any person if there is no new message to be added to His already perfected, completed and final book? Although many impostors have come and gone with false claims to prophethood, but, in truth, as explained above, there is no necessity of a messenger after the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, nor any messenger will come, in future, till eternity.

GHAYRIL MAGHDUBI ALAYHIM WALADDALLIN

"Not (the path) of those inflicted with Your wrath, nor (the path) of those gone astray" is an explanatory clause of the 7th verse. The supplicant gives expression to his dislike and aversion for those who have rebelled against the divine authority and gone astray, and earned the wrath of Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

There is no need to take *ghayril maghdubi* as the qualifying adjectival clause for the personal pronoun *alayhim*, or the relative pronoun *alladhina*, as Zamaqshari says, because *an-amta alaykim* is a restriction. Therefore, these two clauses should be taken as appositional clauses in the negative form. *Ghayril maghdubi* and *waladdallin* are those who have deviated from the right path, to follow

which has been made obligatory by Allah, and by overstepping the prescribed limits have gone astray. By doing so they have earned the wrath of Allah. Those who neither fall short of and lag behind (*taqsir*), nor overstep the boundaries (*ghulu*), in fact, walk on the right path of the Holy Prophet. The Jews are said to be in the category of *maghdubi*, as an example of *taqsir*, and the Christians in the category of *dallin*, as an example of *ghulu*, but truly, those who fall short of and lag behind in the matter of carrying out Allah's commands are included in the *maghdubi* and those who overstep the boundaries and transgress the limits, laid down by Allah, are included in the *dallin*.

The Holy Prophet who, according to the Quran, "neither errs, nor is deceived, nor he speaks of (his own) desire", positively asked his followers to adhere to and abide by the guidance his Ahl ul Bayt (Ali and his descendants) would reveal and demonstrate, after him, as his divinely chosen successors. Who so, among his *ummah*, makes less their divinely set up position, renders himself liable to be grouped with the *maghdubi*; and who so elevates and exalts the men of ordinary character to higher status of spiritual guides, not confirmed by Allah and His prophet, renders himself liable to be joined with the *dallin*. Likewise those who glorify the prophets and their successors as gods are also con

Chapter 2

Tafsir Surah al-Baqarah (The Cow)

{الم} 1}

ALIF LAM MIM are letters of the Arabic alphabet. They are known as *huruf muqatta-at*, letters used as abbreviations for words which have a definite meaning of sublime and profound nature known only to Allah, His last prophet, and His Ahl ul Bayt, the true divinely chosen successors, the holy Imams. Particularly, these types of symbolic alphabets, used in some of the surahs of the Quran, as a part of those surahs, are beyond the comprehension of (even) the most learned intellectuals. It is strictly prohibited to use imagination and discretion in finding out its purport and meaning.

There are six surahs including al Baqarah, which begin with ALIF, LAM, MIM. The others are Ali Imran, Ankabut, Rum, Luqman and Sajdah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Many interpretations have been forwarded and manipulated by some commentators, but they are all based upon conjecture, devoid of any definite authority. According to the holy Imams these letters are a means of reaching the higher realms of true knowledge, available in the verses of the Quran, but the domain of sublime confidences are reserved only for the chosen representatives of Allah.

(2) Presence or glory (Baqarah: 115 - Rahman: 27).

{ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} 2}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:2]

DHALIKAL KITAB

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Dhalika (that), a demonstrative pronoun, refers to something distant, but, in Arabic, sometimes is also used to indicate a highly revered object, even if it is close at hand. This book, the word of Allah, in the sphere of revelation, is complete, comprehensive, sublime and worthy of reverence, in the highest possible degree. Therefore, here and in many other sentences *dhalika* is used to refer to this holy book; and *tilka*, the feminine gender of *dhalika*, is used to refer to its verses. Whether translated as this or that, it refers to that which is in our hands.

AL KITAB

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Al kitab, the book, has been named Quran, derived from the verb *qura-a*, which means to recite or to read. Therefore, the literal meaning of Quran is recitation, in the light of verses 16 to 19 of al Qiyamah, and in view of verse 185 of al Baqarah, it is a guidance with clear proofs, and a distinction.

It is *furqan* - that which teaches us to distinguish between good and evil, according to verse 1 of al Furqan, on account of its containing the principles of good and evil, and also the conditions of reward and punishment. It is also called *furqan* because of its gradual delivery, part by part, according to

verses 106 and 107 of Bani Israil. According to verse 9 of al Hijr, it is *dhikr*, the reminder.

Al kitab is *hakim* (a decisive book of divine wisdom), *aziz* (a unique book of natural beauty), *hamid* (praiseworthy), *majid* (glorious), *karim* (bounteous and honoured) and *mubin* (clear and expressive).

It is also *ummul kitab*, the mother book. The application of this title is with regard to the clear revelations, beyond all ambiguity (*ayat ul muhkamat*) - they are the substance of the book as per verse 7 of Ali Imran, in the light of which the rest of the book is explained.

There are many other substitute expressions of the above noted description of *al kitab*, mentioned in the verses of the Quran, some of which have been listed on page 1. Also many important aspects of the book have been discussed in the "essentials for the readers of the Quran", from page 1 to 7.

The Quran has been specified as the book, as well as, the word or sentence of Allah. The book and the word are the vehicles of thought and will. When the expression of thought or will, or both, are written, giving stability and simultaneity to the components, it is a book, whereas the word is only the spoken expression. Although the expression, whether written or spoken, is attributable to the knowledge and the ability of the author or speaker, it is absurd to refer to the work of the author or speaker as his attribute, because knowledge or ability, and not its outcome, is the attribute.

In normal sense, the word is produced by highly organised functions of the vocal organs of living beings; and a book is the result of the elaborate labour of man's hand, pen, paper and ink etc. This does not apply to the word and the book of Allah. According to Imam Ali ibna abi Talib, the word of Allah is not a spoken expression in the sense of sound but is a divine will. He said:

It is not a sound that strikes the ear, nor a voice to be heard. Verily His words are His work, originated by Him.

His work, originated by Him, had stability and simultaneity prior to its gradual delivery to the visible world; and after the appearance in the lowest sphere of manifestation, this stable and simultaneous work became His book. Therefore, it has continuity, in the order of descent, by the continuity of His will. In view of these two aspects, all that has been created (the whole and its parts) is His word, the effect of His creative will. On account of its stability and the simultaneity of its parts the whole creation is a book of Allah i.e. the written expression of His will and thought.

Generally, the endurance of the written expression does not depend upon the existence of its author, or the continuity of his attention. But the relation between the created and the creator, as pointed out by the Quran, is like the ray of light to its source; the reaction to the action; the reflection to the radiation; the speech to the continuity of attention and the will to speak; or the mental process to the attention. Also, as the speech is related to the speaker, so too the genesis, survival, continuity and simultaneity of the parts of every finite being is related to the continuity of the attention and will of the infinite, the creator. Viewing the creation from this angle, it is the word of Allah. Therefore, the effect or outcome of the divine will and knowledge is the book, as well as, the word of Allah.

Allah is the absolute and the ultimate authority in the domain of creation (what is), as well as, in the domain of legislation (what ought to be). In the "what is", there is no place for the will of the creature. In the "what ought to be", the will of the creature operates as a reaction. With reference to the "what is", the book of Allah is the *kitab ul takwini*. In connection with the "what ought to be", it is the *kitab ul tashri-i*. The source of both the books, the *takwini* and the *tashri-i* (under the process of *tanzil*, the gradual delivery), is with Allah, immeasurable, but the revealed form, He had sent down, is in a known measure (see verse 21 of al Hijr). *Nazul* or the revelation is a term applied in the Quran to the process of descent from the infinite to the finite, in creation as well as in legislation. The divine revelation, in legislation, passes through the same stages of intellectual, angelical and non-

material agencies, as it does in creation. In creation, the last stage of revelation is that when it is exposed to our senses, termed as *alam shahadat* (the visible world), and *alam malak* (the world of cause and effect). In legislation the last stage of revelation is the heart (power to visualise) of the Holy Prophet, prior to its utterance. Therefore, this revelation (legislation) is in complete conformity with the revelation regarding creation.

Imam Ali ibna abi Talib says:

Although you see yourself as a "nothing to speak of" origin, in you is summed up the vast universe; and, therefore, you are the meaningful book whose words make clear the unknown.

Thus man is the synthesis of *kitab ul takwini*, or a brief summary of the universe, a microcosm (*alam saghir*), and the universe is a universal man (*insan ul kabir*). Each can be viewed in the light of the other. This is only applicable to a man who has reached the superlative sphere of intellectual attainment and is capable of direct communion with the absolute, which is the highest stage of obedience (*ububiyat*). It is applicable to the last prophet of Allah. And it is applicable to those whom he had identified with himself in such attainment. It is unanimously agreed and universally acknowledged by all schools of Islam that the Holy Prophet did not identify anyone with himself nor himself with anyone save Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, Husayn and the other nine Imams of his house.

The Holy Prophet had said:

I and Ali are from "one and same" divine light.

The first of us is Muhammad,
the middle of us is Muhammad,
the last of us is Muhammad,
every one of us is Muhammad.

Next to the Holy Prophet and those mentioned above, are the other prophets and messengers of Allah, according to their various degrees of attainment. To each of them the word and the book of Allah, in the realm of legislation, had been revealed, keeping in view their respective degree of attainment as the microcosm and purposeful book of creation. The higher a prophet was in his attainment, the more comprehensively was the word and the book revealed to him. The last prophet, in his ascent, reached the maximum stage of *qaba aw adna* (two bows length, or even nearer - Najm:9), therefore, the word and the book revealed to him was the most comprehensive, the most expressive, and the final revelation, *tammam kalimatu rabbika sidqan wa adla* (and perfect is the word of your Lord in truth and justice) - See verses 115 and 116 of al An-am.

While explaining the word and the book, in their origin and in the various stages of their revelation down to the visible world, the process of descent from the infinite to the finite and from the absolute unity to manifold multiplicity has been dealt with. Now it must be mentioned, as pointed out earlier, that the process of creation is circular in nature, and all that which has been created should return to the original source, therefore, the ascent, from the finite to the infinite, and from multiplicity to unity, necessarily follows the same stages of the descent in reverse.

He regulates (all) affairs from heaven to the earth; then it shall ascend unto Him.

(SAJDAH: 5)

Also refer to verse 2 of al Saba, and verse 11 of al Rum.

Whatever comes into existence in the lowest realm, be it a substance, an accident, or an action, appears in the highest in a refined form, or correspondingly retains its refined impression. These impressions may be termed as the divine books of the hereafter (*kutub ma badut tabiyy*) i.e. books post-physical, in the same way as the impressions present in the process of revelation, prior to the

visible world, may be termed as book pre-physical. The origin and the absolute reality behind the phenomenon, the universe, in all its stages and phases, is identified with the infinite excellence. Therefore, it must be said that the stages, in both the arcs of descent and ascent, together with their contents, closer to the infinite, are more real than the stages further from the absolute. In fact the lower stages are the impressions, images and reflections of the real entities in the higher stages.

And there is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down but in a known measure.

(HIJR: 21)

In the initial stages of contemplation, the things perceptible to the senses look real, and all that which is out of sight (beyond perception) appears to be imaginary, but when the intellectual observation and vision grasps the above view point and reaches beyond, this state of mind will give the impression of unreality and the ideas beyond take the shape of reality. So, the things which appear in the sensual realm are merely of an illusory nature, unreal; because their reality lies in the realm beyond. This imperative condition is applicable to the book of creation (*kitab ul takwini*), the visible phenomenon of creation, as well as the revealed book of legislation (*kitab ul tashri-i*). To deny the existence of the Quran, or the other sacred scriptures, prior to their advent in their visible form, means the denial of the proceeding of the universe from the infinitely perfect absolute. It would be an unreasonable denial based upon a negative approach (from the imperfect to the perfect and from the unconscious to the conscious), because the basis of pure scientific investigation is that "a thing cannot come out of nothing." Or were they created by nothing? (Tur: 35) The truth that whatever appears in the visible world has had a pre-existence in some form in the book (the unseen world), as stated in verse 22 of al Hadid, has to be accepted.

The Quran, in verses 38 and 39 of al Rad says that "for every term (age) there is a book (a written record) prescribed; (of it) Allah effaces what He wills, and confirms (what He wills); and with Him is the mother of the book (basic source)." It means that for every fixed term or period there is a book which is subject to change. Also for every soul and for every community there is a book (see verse 10 of al Munafiqun) and each of these has two books, the book prior to its existence and the book after its existence (see verses 27 and 28 of al Jathiyah, and verses 13 and 14 of Bani Isra-il). All these partial books, dealing with conduct and character and various aspects, prior to or after the visible appearance, are included in the *ummul kitab*, which is with Allah (see verses 38 and 39 of al Rad), represented here by the Quran which is *ummul kitab*, as well as, *kitab ul mubin*. Therefore, all references to *al-kitab* indicate the Quran either in its revealed form or in its form prior to revelation.

The Quran is the sum total of the word and the book of Allah. It is the map of the universe. Its letters, words, clauses, sentences, chapters, parts, and symbols, jointly or severally, signify the facts of the creation in its circular process. To read and understand any map, a fixed scale is required, without which it would be a meaningless mass of unrelated and irrelevant dots and lines having no value or significance. Therefore, in the case of the Quran, those who do not make use of the "real scale", remain unattached, go astray and wander in the wilderness of ignorance and confusion. The Quran refers to this fact.

"Verily, We sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the book and the scale, that mankind may observe right measure (establish themselves in justice):

(HADID:25)

Reason, with its limitations, can be applied as a scale, but the Quran provides the clear guidance as to who are the true scale.

Verily (indeed) it is Quran honourable,

in a book, hidden,
which none touches save the purified.

(WAQI-AH: 77 to 79)

The touch, mentioned in the above verse, is not physical in nature, but is purely intellectual and spiritual, which implies total identification of the known, the knowing and the knower, inseparable from each other. Therefore, only the thoroughly purified souls, as shown in the above verse, can be in touch with the Quran in its pre-revealed form, as it is in the hidden book. The Quran clearly identifies such persons who have been thoroughly purified by Allah Himself to the perfect degree in verse 33 of al Ahzab. They are the Ahl ul Bayt, the people of the holy house. The well known and the most authentic declaration of the Holy Prophet (*Hadith Thaqaalayn*) is the confirming interpretation of these verses. The holy book and the holy Ahl ul Bayt are inseparably identified with each other from their origin, down in the arc of descent, and up again in their ascent (return) to the presence of the *maliki yawmid din*. It makes no difference whether the term *imamum mabin*, in verse 12 of Ya Sin, is interpreted either as the Ahl ul Bayt or as the Quran, for these two are neither separate from each other nor will ever be separable, because one reflects the other.

And everything we have confined into a clear expressive guide. (YA SIN:12)

The revealed book, in our hands, does not speak, and is therefore mute (*samit*); whereas the Ahl ul Bayt by being able to speak are eloquent (*natiq*). This conclusion is based upon the Quran and the wording of the Holy Prophet. Whoever does not accept it, does so, based on his own conjectural discretion. Whatever is said while explaining the verses of the Quran, throughout this commentary, is bas

3} {الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:3]

YUMINUNA BIL GHAYB

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The literal meanings of *iman*, *islam* and *din*, used frequently in the Quran, are very close to each other. The submission of thoughts and feelings to the object of belief is *iman*. To surrender willingly, inwardly as well as outwardly, to the will (of a supreme being) is *islam*. A deeply rooted dutiful, devoted, submissive and abiding approach, by nature and in appearance, towards "the approved discipline" is *din*. *Din* has been used variously to mean judgement, subjugation, religion, to do good, to obey, to advance a loan, to take into account, to reward and to punish, but the root is that which has been stated above, which also implies all the given meanings.

According to verses 14 and 15 of al Hujurat *islam* is the outward obedience and *iman* is the inward submission. *Islam* and *iman* become synonymous when *islam* is used with reference to inward submission and *iman* is used with reference to outward obedience. Let us examine the state of mind in connection with *iman* and *din*. All the mental tendencies and faculties together with their allied phenomenon is rooted in the human ego or the conscious-self, referred to as "I". The ego, endowed with self-consciousness, loves itself. This self-love is followed by the involvement and concern for self-protection, self-maintenance and self-advancement .

Self-love creates and promotes the emotions of devotion, hatred, lust, and anger, also feelings and imagination, thinking and contemplation. The love for self-preservation creates the lust (hunger) for food, which is responsible for the development of the sense of taste. It also enables to feel repulsion for that food which is harmful. This repulsion is termed as anger. The desire to preserve the self, in all times, through reproduction, is carried out by the sexual lust. It is because of self-love, that man loves that which belongs to him and to which he refers to as "mine" - parents, children, relatives,

community and surroundings with which, in some way or the other, he is associated. Things which he feels as not his own or opposed to his interest, create repulsion in him. Man's activities are the expression of either the love or repulsion that he feels, whether or not the object of love or repulsion is within the control of his will power. With regard to those objects which are within the control of his will power, a lust for domination is developed. But if the object, loveable or repulsive, useful or harmful, is beyond his control, a sense of awe and reverence associated with the desire for an approach through surrender, submission and appeasement is developed, believing that the object is sacred. This submissive state of mind is described as *din*, and its expression takes the form of sacrifice (*qurbani*). In this sense *din* and *iman* are one and the same, i.e. the inclination of the mind and heart towards the object believed to be effective in one's destiny. Mere belief, or just to be sure of anything is not *iman*, but belief in its reality and its effectiveness in one's destiny, beyond the domination of one's own will power, is true *iman*. No one, not even those who pose as atheists, can be devoid of this subjective aspect of *din* and *iman*. The objective aspect or methods of approach bring in the differences. People may differ as to who or what should be held as sacred and how to pray and offer sacrifice, but no one can do without holding something or other as sacred and bowing down before that sacred object, and adopting a method of approach and adoration. The sacred objects and the methods of prayers and sacrifice have gone through an evolutionary process with the development of man's intellect, knowledge, experience, power of reasoning, contemplation, and, above all, on account of the instructions and guidance given by the divinely commissioned teachers.

The necessary consequence of religious tendency, natural in every man, as the result of self-love, is prayer and sacrifice. Sacrifice is an effort to break one's bonds so as to come in contact with the sacred being, the ultimate object of faith, by parting with some of his possessions, which, on account of his faith, are regarded as gifts received from the sacred being. Prayer is a demand put forward to the object of adoration and veneration; and when the demand is met, the bounties received are given to others, in charity, to please the fulfiller. So to take and to give, in religious adoration, go together. Only in how and what is given people are distinguished from each other. *Din* and *iman*, in the highest form, is *yuminuna bil ghayb*, a total and perfect inclination and commitment of the mind and the heart, on the strength of pure reasoning, to the unseen and the inconceivable reality, realised by all as beyond the grasp of human means and intellect. The loftier the object the more intense will be the faith in it. Although there are beings beyond the empirical knowledge like angels and jinn etc., yet they are created beings, definable and within the conceptual capacity of man; despite the fact that they cannot be verified through observation and experiment. Only Allah, beyond all definitions and limitations, is *ghayb ul mutlaq*, the incomprehensible absolute, the loftiest object of *din* and *iman*, the ultimate of *iman bil ghayb*, and not anything else created by Him. This *iman bil ghayb* is a dynamic force which takes man towards the absolute in a progressive and unfaltering stride. If any other unseen, except the *ghayb ul mutlaq*, is held as an object of faith, it will cause stoppage, obstruction and stagnancy, which results in idolatry. In verses 52 to 56 of al Anbiya this stagnancy has been condemned.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq says:

That which your mind, in its finest awareness, may distinctly grasp, would be your creation like unto you, and that will bounce and come back to you.

YUQIMUNAS SALAT

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The literal meaning of *salat* is the middle of the backbone. When used as a verb, it means the bending and unbending of the backbone. It is particularly employed when an animal is curved at the time of delivery. Figuratively, it was used for a bending posture at the time of giving or taking something. From this, it was adopted for prayer, to signify a submissive attitude. The Quran has drawn on this word to describe man's praying attitude towards Allah, as well as Allah's turning towards His creatures.

The natural religious tendency of man, as the result of self-love, makes him bend before the absolute, in prayer, to express his wants and needs in order to obtain fulfilment. The bending of the absolute means His turning towards the supplicant to give that which he deserves.

According to verses 41 to 43 of al Ahzab, for the creature, prayer is the expression of his quest for the grace of the creator, and for the creator His *salat* is the bestowal of His grace upon the creature.

In Islam, the purpose of prayer is to please Allah, and nothing pleases Allah but that which is the most beneficial to His creatures. Therefore, no prayer is approved by Islam save that which has been prescribed by Allah, nothing less, nothing more, as man has no right to add, omit or alter the prescribed prayer.

MIMMA RAZAQNAHUM YUNFIQUN

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Please refer to the commentary of *yumununa bil ghayb* about spending in the way of the Lord which is the essential property of *iman*. Spending in the way of Allah, as prescribed by Him pleases Him because it is a source of great benefit to His creatures.

As mentioned earlier, the giving away to others from that which has been provided is not confined to the material possessions, but it includes every thing which comes under the term provision, like knowledge etc.

(see commentary for verse 1).

(see commentary for verse 2)

4} وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:4]

The pious are those who believe not only in the truthfulness of the Quran, revealed to the Holy Prophet, but also in the holy books sent down to the prophets of Allah before him. This makes Islam a universal religion for the whole mankind. According to verse 24 of Fatir, verse 78 of al Mumin, verse 150 of al Nisa, and verse 136 and 285 of al Baqarah, no other religion besides Islam, enjoins as an article of faith, the belief in the truthfulness of all the messengers of Allah and the holy scriptures.

BIL AKHIRATI

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Akhirat literally means the end, but in the Quran this word has mostly been used in the sense of the hereafter, the life after death. In some places it means the world beyond the visible world.

They know (only) the appearance (the apparent phase) of the life of the world (the lower life), and are heedless (negligent) of the hereafter (its other phase).

(RUM: 7)

The use of the word *zahir* (apparent), and *ghafil* (negligent) makes clear that *akhirat* referred to in the above-noted verse is an antonym of *zahir*, which is known to most people, yet they are negligent. The word negligence is justified when something is known but paid no attention. The life after death is not the antonym of the apparent, nor it is the neglected known. It is something to come. Therefore, in the above verse, the "other phase" means the world beyond the range of physical experience, which is the world of subjective insight and conscious self. In this connection, it must be noted that even the

material world is not known to us through the physical experience of senses because they are affected by the qualities and conditions of the matter, not by the matter itself; and the conscious self is closer to the other world than to the lower world, which is more akin to the senses. For this reason *ghafilun*, not *jahilun* has been used. To know the true meaning, it is essential to take into consideration the context in which this word has been applied in the Quran.

Here, in this verse *akhirat* has been utilised in the sense of hereafter, the life after death, or after the end, the end of the material world. There is nothing without some end, in the sense of purpose, and the purpose lies beyond the "apparent phase", the world of awareness through the physical experience of the senses.

HUM YUQINUN

Yaqin is the state of conviction and certainty acquired through an unshakeable evidence or proof. The description of *muttaqin* begins with *iman bil ghayb*, a complete submission of mind and heart to the *ghaybul mutlaq* and ends with *yaqin*, an unshakeable firm conviction and certainty that the ultimate purpose of life in this world lies in the life after death in the direction unto the absolute.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 3).

(5) Essence, self or the nature of the inner being (Ma-idah : 108 - Qasas: 88 - Rahman: 27).

Here it means total submission.

Mere verbal profession of faith does not bring salvation, as the Jews and the Christians thought, but guidance and its rewards are for him who submits himself entirely to Allah and acts in the way of Allah, in conformity with Allah's will, uncompromisingly, in full awareness of his goal, shedding all strings of attachments and desires. There is no fear for him, nor shall he grieve. At the time of migrating from Makka to Madina, the Holy Prophet had a companion with him. They took refuge in a cave to avoid the pursuing enemies. The companion was miserable with fear and grief. The Holy Prophet asked him not to fear because Allah was present with them. Also there were companions who deserted the Holy Prophet when the terror and fright of death made them flee from the battle of Uhad.

(see commentary for verse 2) Belief in the revealed scriptures, as the true word of Allah, is one of the articles of faith (Baqarah: 285).

His reliance upon Allah's ability to protect whom He wills, was unqualified;

1. and, above all, being from one and the same divine light, they were so closely integrated that one had

to be in the shoes of another all the time.

While the assassins were lying in wait for the planned strike, they, on several occasions, looked slyly at the bed, and were assured by the blanket of the Holy Prophet that he was sleeping inside it. They did not realise that it was Ali under the blanket, whilst the Holy Prophet opened the door and walked away unnoticed. As planned, the assassins, naked swords in their hands, broke in and removed the blanket from the sleeper's face. They were surprised to find Ali there instead of the Holy Prophet. They viewed his composure and steady expression of resolute courage, and having failed to obtain any information about the whereabouts of the Holy Prophet, disappointed, they stepped out one by one.

The Holy Prophet had asked his companions not to leave their homes on the night of the migration, but he found Abu Bakr following him on his way to Madina. However, he allowed him to accompany him and they took refuge in a cave, because after finding Ali in the bed, the conspirators at once started the quest for the Holy Prophet. By Allah's will, a spider wove a web across the mouth of the

cave, and in front of it a pigeon laid her eggs. Seeing this, the pursuers presumed that no one had entered the cave for a long time and did not search it. Inside the cave, the companion of the Holy Prophet was frightened and had started crying in anguish when he heard the voices of the enemy. The Holy Prophet recited the following verse to console him.

Do not fear. Allah is with us. (Tawbah: 40) On the next morning, Ali returned to the depositors all that which they kept with the Holy Prophet in trust and left Makka, with the ladies of the house, to join the Holy Prophet in Madina. It must be noted that even his opponents called the Holy Prophet *al-amin*, the trustworthy, and kept their valuables in his custody. And it was Ali, the executor of his will, who discharged all his commitments on his behalf. But the Muslim *ummah*, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, went along with the frightened companion and forgot him whose unshakeable faith in Allah, love for His messenger, and matchless courage entitled him to obtain *mardatillah*, the pleasure and discretion of Allah. Ali's risking his life for the Holy Prophet pleased Allah so much that He revealed this verse in his honour, referring to Ali's actions as selling his soul for earning Allah's pleasure and permission.

{أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًى مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ } 5

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:5]

The use of *ula-ika*, the demonstrative pronoun for remote things or persons, as the subject of the sentence implies "those only" (a restriction) who depend on and follow the guidance from their Lord, and are successful in their life-journey. The reason for this restriction is obvious, as, although His guidance is universal, but only people of such calibre (described as *smuttaqin*), and none else, can avail and use the guidance, in its minutest detail, in letter and spirit, to the full satisfaction and pleasure of the guide.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 3)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2) Those Jews and Christians who believe in some prophets and not in others (Nisa: 150) are, in fact, the real unbelievers (Nisa: 151).

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَوَاءٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْذَرْتَهُمْ أَمْ لَمْ تُنذِرْهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ } 6

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:6]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Kufr means to cover or to conceal. In the Quran covering the truth, or the fault, has been described as *kufir*. Covering or concealing the truth is turning the mind from it. Covering the fault is redeeming or redressing, or wiping it out, as per verse 31 of al Nisa. It is mostly used in a sense directly opposite to *iman*.

In the sense of concealment of truth, *kufir* is a wilful act, (may be) not out of ignorance, but due to ulterior motives or unreasonable bigotry. Therefore the disbelievers (*kafirs*), devoid of faith, do not follow guidance, whether they are warned or not. In view of verse 1 of al Furqan, it would be wrong to say that the Holy Prophet has been advised not to carry on his mission. It points out the obstinacy of the infidels and their expected reaction to the warnings, on account of their trend and tendency to suppress the truth.

When this biased and prejudiced bent of mind, to reject the real and adopt the unreal, becomes a rigid habit, "sealing" of hearts takes place, according to the next verse.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 3)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2) "Nor shall you attain unto righteousness until you spend of that which you love", says verse 92 of Ali Imran.

Islam does not demand indifference to worldly possessions but makes it obligatory to subordinate the love of possession to the spirit of giving it away in the name and cause of Allah, the real owner of the bounties, which are given to some of His servants as a favour. They should hold these bounties as a trust to be distributed according to His command. Emancipation of the captives or liberation of slaves is an essential condition of the genuine faith in Allah.

Of all the religions, only Islam condemns slavery. It treats liquidation of the institution of slavery as a prime virtue. In verse 13 of al Balad freeing a slave has been highly praised. In verse 89 of al Ma'idah and in verse 3 of al Mujadalah the liberation of slaves has been prescribed as *kaffarah* (expiation).

The Holy Prophet said:

"For the love of Allah give away your wealth for freeing those enemies whom you have captured in war."

Once the Holy Prophet gave a slave to Abu Dhar with instructions to treat him kindly and to do with him as he would with himself. As soon as Abu Dhar brought the slave home, he set him free. "Allah will bless you", said the Holy Prophet when he heard the news.

{ خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ غِشَاوَةٌ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ } 7

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:7]

Sealing of the disbelievers' hearts, who make a willing choice of the life of sin, is a happening in the usual course. Lack of proper use of the faculties of discernment and understanding blunts their judgement and reasonableness, a logical penalty, referred to in verse 179 of al Araf, and verse 5 of Ha Mim, wherein they themselves bear witness to the penalty they had been inflicted with. According to the commentator of Majma ul Bayan, seal means witness or testimony.

Allah bears witness to the loss of usefulness of the disbelievers' faculties to see, hear and understand,

in order to inform the Holy Prophet that all attempts, howsoever sincere and eager, will fail to bring them back to the right path, as they are unable to pay attention to any type of warning.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

As has been explained on page 24, in the commentary of verse 5 of al Fatihah, man's action is in fact a reaction to Allah's action which becomes active in response to the complex of essential qualities of the object which reacts.

QULUB

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Qalb (heart) in the Quran, refers to the functions of the conscious self. It is the centre of total human consciousness, known as "I", like the physical heart which is the centre of the blood circulation system. The mind receives information ; through the experiences of the senses, which are developed into ideas by a mental operation, which also perceives feelings. These feelings are translated into actions, and the actions return back to the mind, undergoing the same process. It resembles the circular movement of the blood into the physical heart. Another justification is the close relation of the feelings with the physical heart, the main organ of the body, which, moved by the feeling, acts. The *qalb* reacts to the suggestions and guidance received through the experiences of the senses as well as subjective insight, corresponding to the individual peculiarities. Some *qalbs* are more receptive to goodness, refined thoughts and feelings of a higher spiritual nature. Some *qalbs* are more inclined towards evil and worldly pleasures. A "one and the same" suggestion may cause different reactions in the two directly opposite *qalbs*. One *qalb* receives the divine command and carries it

out, while the other rejects it and revolts.

The immediate organ between the heart and the divine preaching is the ear, therefore, it has been connected with the heart, and as the result of the sealing of the heart, the ear has also been sealed. Consequently the disbelievers' vision has been obscured. Now they cannot see the truth. For them is a painful torture in the hereafter.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 3)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

8} وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُقُولُ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَمَا هُمْ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:8]

From verse 8 to verse 20 the conduct of the hypocrites has been described.

Aqa Mahdi Puya Says:

Those disbelievers, who put on a show of coming into the fold of Islam in order to avail safety and security, to serve their self-interest, and to protect their social position, have been described as the hypocrites (*munafiqin*).

Although a large number of commentators find it suitable to point to Abdullah bin Obay and his comrades, exclusively, as the hypocrites referred to here and in other places, but the use of the word *munafiqin* is not restricted to Madani surahs. In verse 11 of al Ankabut, revealed in Makka, when Abdullah bin Obay and his active partisans did not appear on the scene, this word was used to identify, in general, one and all, in any age, who may possess this evil.

Among those who accepted Islam and agreed to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet, some were reluctant converts; some were uncertain about the bonafides of the Holy Prophet as the messenger of Allah; some, under protest and with a heavy heart, followed the mainstream but at heart were pagans; some only put up a front. Such half-hearted, unwilling, or deceptive acceptance of faith is devoid of the higher spiritual conceptions, therefore, sincere and perfect practice of the faith was not possible. And men and women belonging to this category could never fulfil any of the demands of the faith, particularly that which did not serve their interest, because, in their minds, something else, not the faith in Allah and the Holy Prophet, was more likely and feasible. The incident about the cutting down of trees during the siege of Bani Nadhir, referred to in verse 5 of al Hashr; the abandonment in time of trouble by running away from the battle of Uhad, referred to in verses 153 to 155 of Ali Imran; the expression of doubt about the bonafides of the messenger of Allah, throws light on the conduct of those companions who were weak or indecisive in their belief.

In between the two directly opposite groups, the thoroughly purified *muttaqin* and the *munafiqin* whose hearts, ears and eyes have been sealed, there is the type of above-noted group of converts who agreed to give answer to the call of the Holy Prophet to worship one Allah and follow His commandments, but on account of their inability to detach themselves completely from the habits, customs and mental attitude of the "days of ignorance" and infidelity, failed, on many occasions, to meet the demands of pure faith,

because of the infiltration of doubts and suspicions about the genuineness of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet.

(i) According to Tabari (Vol. 3, page 21, published from Egypt), Shibli (Al Faruq), Ibna Kathir (Badayah Wan Nahayah: Volume 4, page 28, published in 1351 Hijra from Egypt), the second and the third caliphs were among the deserters in the battle of Uhad.

(ii) According to Tarikh Khamis, Vol. 2, page 24, published in 1302 Hijra from Egypt), Sahih Bukhari (Vol. 2; page 82 published in 1355 Hijra from Egypt), Tafsir Durr Manthur (Vol.2; page 77 published in 1314 Hijra from Egypt), and Tafsir Kathir (Vol. 3; page 351 published in 1402 from

Beirut), the second caliph Hazrat Umar bin Khattab, as per his own version, had never before suspected so strongly the bonafides of Muhammad the true messenger of Allah, as at the time of the treaty of Hudaibiya.

There are different classes of believers. No doubt the types described above are not hypocrites, but, as pure and perfect faith is a very refined state of mind and heart, they cannot be counted in the highest category of believers. It is very difficult for an individual to know the degree of his own faith (verse 9 refers to the self-delusion of such believers), until he comes across a test and trial. The true quality of the faith of the confused companions was laid bare whenever tested, yet such indecisive believers, after the Holy Prophet, were acclaimed as the heroes of Islam.

Many a commentator wrongly refers to Abdullah bin Obay and his associates whenever *munafiqin* are discussed in the Quran, as a scapegoat substitute for the really dangerous hypocrites whose subversive activities proved more harmful to Islam than Abdullah bin Obay and his comrades. It is an attempt to restrict the general view of the Quran. In fact Abdullah bin Obay's activities never amounted to a real threat. He had no influence even over his own family. He was a very wealthy man, and therefore, wanted to be the chief of Madina, but his chances of success disappeared after the arrival of the Holy Prophet. He was a man of no importance. Had his schemes been really harmful to Islam, the Holy Prophet would not have led his funeral prayers.

The verses in the Quran, about the hypocritical attitude of some of the disciples of the Holy Prophet, are more applicable to the people of Quraysh than any other group. The aim of the Quran is to describe the psychological condition of the companions surrounding the Holy Prophet, in order to classify the reaction of mankind, in general, till eternity, to the final message of Allah, conveyed through the last prophet. The reaction to the divine message divides people in different groups. Those whose commitment is total on account of their complete concord with the prophetic guidance, occupy the highest position nearest to Allah. Those who are not fully convinced, due to lack of wisdom, may not oppose and go astray, but only manage to keep themselves from denying the faith.

Apart from these two groups, there are some who openly oppose Allah and his prophet, with no hope of any improvement in their attitude.

There is another class of people who profess the faith in a hypocritical manner, with a rigid antagonistic attitude of mind and heart. They are those whose heart, hearing and sight have not yet been sealed. There is a hope of improvement if they come out of their wavering. They come under the definition of *munafiqin* until the improvement takes place. This wavering in most of the disciples of the Holy Prophet was due to their attachment with the old habits, customs and creeds. The force of the new mission tried to detach them from their "days of ignorance" psyche. This conflict between the tendency of the "days of ignorance" and the irresistible energy of truth created the mental conflict which was responsible for their activities both during and after the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. This wavering has been pointed out by the Quran in verses 144 and 149 of Ali Imran, and verses 25 and 26 of Muhammad. There are many authentic traditions that the Holy Prophet also expressed his concern about this "turning back" of his companions. It must be noted that though the Quran deals with the hypocrites in many surahs in various shades and descriptions, but the Muslim historians, however, do not mention the far reaching influence of the policies and activities carried out by the hypocrites, as rulers, after the departure of the Holy Prophet. On the contrary, a general view is presented that every one of the companions was a true faithful, a bright star, and a symbol of guidance, in total disregard to the indisputable role of the hypocrites during and after the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. They did not die before the Holy Prophet. They emerged with full force after him and exercised full control over the destiny of the ummah.

The Holy Prophet says:

A hypocrite is he who lies, breaks promises, and proves himself dishonest if trusted.

In fact there were very few among the companions who, detached from their old habits, customs and creeds, submitted wholeheartedly to the religion of Allah.

The Holy Quran says:

Very few of My servants are grateful.

(SABA:13)

In verses 8 to 20 reference is made to those hypocrites whose conscience, hearing and sight have been sealed and there is no possibility of their return to the truth.

Verse 9 confirms the position of the people, described and discussed in the previous verse, who are under the delusion that their state of mind is hidden from Allah. To obtain wealth and power they try to attract the attention of the people by putting on a superficial show of virtuousness. They may win the goodwill of the common people but their expectation of getting a reward from Allah ends in frustration, because He is fully aware of the intentions of His creatures.

He does not take them out of their delusion. Hypocrisy lurks in the hearts of those who are not thoroughly purified. Circumstances and lure of worldly gains, and not independent conviction, motivated many an early convert to come into the camp of the Holy Prophet. When, the doings and sayings of the messenger of Allah, under the strict commands of Allah, began to make clear that authority to guide and administer the society belonged to the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, the thoroughly purified, as the fulfilment of the divine will according to the verse 33 of al Ahzab, their envy and grudge against the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt came into the open. In the light of verse 80 of al Nisa whosoever opposes and subverts the authority of the Holy Prophet, in fact disobeys Allah.

The Quran says:

Verily, those who cause suffering to Allah and His messenger, Allah has cursed them in this world and the hereafter, and He has prepared for them a disgraceful punishment.

(AHZAB:57)

The Holy Prophet says:

Fatima is my flesh and blood. Whosoever causes suffering to her in fact causes suffering to me. He who has pained me in fact has pained Allah; and indeed, he is a disbeliever.

(Sahih Bukhari: Vol. 2; page 206 published in 1355 Hijra from Egypt, Sahih Muslim: Vol. 4; page 125 published in 1349 Hijra from Egypt).

Many books of history and traditions clearly mention the disgraceful attitude of the companions towards the dearest daughter of the Holy Prophet, after his death. For example in Vol. 1, page 64 of Tarikh Abul Fida, published from Egypt, it is written that the two caliphs were among those who went to the house of Fatima for setting it on fire. Also Abi Fat-ha Shahrastani in Al Milal Wan Nahal on page 25 and 26 mentions the events which took place at the house of Bibi Fatimah.

Anfusahum means themselves as well as their associates. "And they do not perceive" represent the men who imagine themselves to be good and those who follow such men. In fact they do not know what they are. They are actually self-deluded. This is the state of mind of all those who are misguided and misled by their own false judgement.

To follow the true guidance, communicated through the word of Allah, it is essential not only to know those upon whom, on account of their knowledge and total commitment to the divine guidance, bounties had been bestowed, but also to identify those who defied it and went astray, in order to

avoid following their wickedness.

The policy to verbally profess faith in Allah and His messenger, so as to deceive the faithful, in the hope of getting material gains, is termed in verse 10, and in many other verses as the "disease of the heart", the result of which may be disbelief (*kufr*), or hypocrisy (*nifaq*). Envy and jealousy took hold of those who did not sincerely believe in the supreme authority of the Holy Prophet. The disbelief, the envy and the jealousy of the hypocrites has been termed as a disease. Since it is Allah who bestowed the supreme authority on the Holy Prophet, therefore, the envy and jealousy in the hearts of the hypocrites, as a disease, which increased proportionately to the enhancement in the glory of the Holy Prophet, is the result of Allah's will.

The duplicity in the conduct of the hypocrites, pointed out in verse 11, was a mutual arrangement between them and the infidels to check and upset the growing honour and status of the Holy Prophet and the dominance of Islam, through intrigue and subversion; but, to pacify the questioning of the believers, they said it was to bring the infidels to friendly terms with the Muslims, whereas, truly, they were planning to usurp the political power in order to lay hands on the material gains which would be there to possess after the departure of the Holy Prophet. It became plain to them that during the lifetime of the messenger of Allah such schemes could not be implemented, therefore, the enemies of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, in the garb of peace-makers, played a waiting game. It must be noted that though, after the Holy Prophet, they took the control of the government, but earned the displeasure of almighty Allah who has promised painful punishment on the liars, a fact which they did not perceive.

For ordinary people it is very difficult to detach themselves from the clutches of old ideologies which serve their selfish interest, and follow or believe in a new faith, free from the lure of profit or the fear of loss, particularly when the new faith demands a complete rejection of the viciousness of the animal self which clings to raw passions and crude urges. They were proud of their social position and possessions under the old system. This misconceived individual and group pride made the infidels look down upon the true believers (with really awakened minds) as inferiors, because they (the infidels) could not use reason or put forward arguments to contradict the true faith, Islam. Verse 13 makes it clear that, in truth, it is they who are mean and stupid, not those who believe in Allah and His messenger by discarding false notions of pride and conceit

As you sow so shall you reap. It is the law of nature. In verse 14 and 15 "the making fun" of the believers by the infidels has been compared to devilry, but the paying back in the same coin by Allah is the scorn (or the last laugh) they shall experience on the day of judgement in the form of eternal punishment. In this world they have been given (enough) rope, pelf and power, to hang themselves in the end.

In verse 16 the wilful adoption of error has been likened to a bad bargain.

Believing in the truth, according to verse 17, is like the illumination of a fire which lights up the surrounding. The spark of faith which had just been kindled could have been turned into a bright floodlight but evils like envy, malice and love of material possessions put out the spark of faith, therefore, Allah, in view of the prevalent evil, took away the light of faith and abandoned them to the utter darkness of ignorance and disbelief.

In verse 18 the loss of the "inner light" is illustrated as becoming deaf, dumb and blind, due to which there is no possibility of finding the way leading to the truth.

Rain makes the earth grow life-giving and life-preserving provisions. In verse 19, Islam has been compared to an abundant rain. The lightning is the victories Islam won against the forces of infidelity.

The darkness is the occasion when the Muslims did not have an upper hand, which created doubts

in the minds of the hypocrites about the genuineness of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet. They feared total annihilation. In verse 20, it is said that the hypocrites, attracted momentarily by the glory of Islam, rejoiced at their joining the ranks of the Muslims; and in the hour of trials and tribulations they recoiled, scared and doubled-minded. They were under the total control of Allah's power. There is no escape from His hold. In the days of early Islam it was in the interest of the Muslims to let the hypocrites remain in delusion.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The new mission, Islam, is like a heavy shower coming down from heaven, a promising event every one welcomes, but the thunder, lightning and darkness, coming along with it, create fright and make people take precaution against the impending threat. In the days of early Islam some people anticipated re

9} {يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَمَا يَخْدَعُونَ إِلَّا أَنفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:9] (see commentary for verse 8)(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 3)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2) and fulfil a promise when made;

1. and bear with patience that which torments in distress, affliction and in times of conflict.

Those who own the righteousness, described above, are the ones who are true to themselves and safeguard themselves with thorough awareness of the divine laws.

Notes concerning some of the above factors are given below:-

Please refer to the commentary of verse 40 of this surah. Fulfilment of the promise made with Allah is also included.

Faithful adherence to treaties and fulfilment of commitments by Muslim governments have been prescribed by Islam.

10} {فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:10] (see commentary for verse 8)(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2) As verse 207 of al Baqarah and verse 111 of al Barat point out, a true believer's most praiseworthy and excellent characteristic is the ability to willingly endure adversity, inconvenience and discomfort, which is possible if he surrenders his soul to Allah. For him the life of this world is a burden of responsibilities. He is not afraid to lose it in the way of Allah, on the contrary he readily accepts death, and is fearless and devoted. In verse 119 of al Barat Allah asks those who believe to remain attached with the truthful ones whose qualities have been described in this verse-"these are the ones who are the truthful ones"; also refer to verse 15 of al Hujurat. Such superb qualities, in perfection and completeness, are found only in the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt, if the history of Islam is carefully studied without prejudice .

If verse 2 of this surah is read in the light of this verse it becomes clear that the Quran is a guidance to the pious who possess all the qualities mentioned in this verse - they are the Holy Prophet and the twelve holy Imams in whom each quality is manifest in its highest perfection and completeness. They are those who have been chosen by Allah to guide mankind towards the path of Allah through the Quran. Therefore, Shias, after the Holy Prophet, follow only Ali and the holy Imams as their guides because of their unique merits, acknowledged even by their enemies. The whole Muslim world, without exception, knows and accepts the fact that it was Ali alone who earned the unique title of *mazhar ul aja-ib* - the manifestation of (divine) wonders, because Ali and the Holy Prophet are the

manifestations of one and the same divine light.

Those who do not sell their souls to Allah tremble, fear and lose heart and confidence whenever they encounter distress or misfortune, because their profession of the faith in Allah is pretentious, sly and artful, not real.

To know the true significance of this verse, it is sufficient to quote the saying of the Holy Prophet that whoever acts upon this (one) verse attains perfection in faith.

11} وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:11] (see commentary for verse 8)(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

12} أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:12] (see commentary for verse 8)(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

13} وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا كَمَا آمَنَ النَّاسُ قَالُوا أَنُؤْمِنُ كَمَا آمَنَ السُّفَهَاءُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ السُّفَهَاءُ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:13] (see commentary for verse 8) Asadullahul Ghalib - The ever victorious strength of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

14} وَإِذَا لُقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلُّوا إِلَىٰ شِيَاطِينِهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا مَعَكُمْ إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُسْتَهْزِئُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:14] (see commentary for verse 8) Lisanullah - The tongue of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

15} اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:15] (see commentary for verse 8) Yadullah - The hand of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

16} وَأُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَنَزَلُوا الضَّلَالََةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ فَمَا رَبِحَتْ تِجَارَتُهُمْ وَمَا كَانُوا مُهْتَدِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:16] (see commentary for verse 8) Aynullah - The eye of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

17} مَثَلُهُمْ كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي اسْتَوْقَدَ نَارًا فَلَمَّا أَضَاءَتْ مَا حَوْلَهُ ذَهَبَ اللَّهُ بِنُورِهِمْ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي ظُلُمَاتٍ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:17] (see commentary for verse 8) Wajhullah - The face of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

18} صُمُّ بُكْمٌ عُمَىٰ فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:18] (see commentary for verse 8) Waliyyullah - The closest friend of Allah.

1. Akhu Rasulullah - The brother of the messenger of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

أَوْ كَصَيِّبٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فِيهِ ظُلُمَاتٌ وَرَعْدٌ وَبَرْقٌ يَجْعَلُونَ أَصَابِعَهُمْ فِي آذَانِهِمْ مِنَ الصَّوَاعِقِ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ

19} بِالْكَافِرِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:19] (see commentary for verse 8)(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ۖ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ

20} كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:20] (see commentary for verse 8) Siddiq Akbar - The most truthful.

(see commentary for verse 1)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

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

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:21]

In this verse, through *la-alla* (so that), the emphasis is laid on the freedom of choice given to every individual. In Islam there is no merit in any virtue imposed by force. Willing service to the Lord, in the spirit of thankfulness, is a must for the creature, in return for the countless gifts, favours and bounties He bestows on His creatures. Imam Ali ibna abi Talib defines obedience (service) as under:

(1) The service offered out of fear is the obedience of a slave.

(2) The service offered for gain is the obedience of a businessman or trader.

(3) The service offered by a free man, of his own choice, in thankfulness for the bounties he receives from the beneficent Lord, is the obedience of a sincere faithful who obeys on account of his independent conscience.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Obedience is to react to the order of authority in complete agreement and unity of feeling. In this sense the Quran directs man to surrender to no one save to the universal will of the absolute Lord of grace and love. Only complete resignation to His will saves man from the miseries of the worldly life. It does not mean mystic inactivity. It is an active reaction.

Faruq al Azam - The greatest distinguisher of truth and falsehood.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۗ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ } 22

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:22]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The structure of man's individual characteristics is the combination of physical and spiritual influences. The spiritual aspect is heavenly and the physical aspect is worldly - the up and down or the heaven and the earth. In relation to human vision, the spiritual aspects take man towards the absolute and the physical aspects divert him away from it. The ultimate aim of the Quran is to convince man that all his needs and expectations receive fulfilment if he directs his attention towards the heavenly direction, instead of diverting his attention to the material world. The spiritual journey terminates in the absolute up, the infinite, the equal of whom is inconceivable. So, devoted to Him, man must translate His will into practical life, particularly when the just idea of "an equal to Him is inconceivable" appeals to him.

Abul A-imma - The father of the Imams.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ } 23

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:23]

In this verse the almighty all-wise Allah throws an open challenge to mankind for making an effort to compose even one surah in the style and manner of the Quran, not only to assert the genuineness of the divine words revealed to a man who did not receive any type of education from any mortal, but also to put an end to doubts and speculations, for ever, that it could be the fabrication of any human mind.

This challenge refers to the Quran as a work of literature and wisdom, and not to its effects as some commentators wrongly try to prove. The inimitable literary excellence and the pure and perfect wisdom of the Quran has been and will always be beyond the reach of the literary and intellectual genius of mankind.

Say (O Muhammad); If men and jinn should unite to produce the like of this Quran they could not produce the like of it though they were helpers one of another.

Also refer to Yunus: 38, Hud: 13.

Even if any one makes an effort, there will be no witness available to testify to his claim. No attempt has been made so far, and no one shall succeed.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Since the beginning of Islam till today, the enemies of Islam have been trying to belittle Islam but they never dared to answer the challenge, in spite of repeated attempts made by the most celebrated scholars and men of letters, jointly and severally.

In what respect is the Quran an unchallengable miracle? How is it the proof of its own truthfulness? Several views have been put forward by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars.

- (1) Eloquence and rhetorical excellence.
- (2) Prophecies.
- (3) Precepts and laws.
- (4) Effect of its forceful and fascinating tone on the human mind and heart.

No attempt has been made to look into the book itself to know why and in what sense it is a miracle. The book is the book of guidance. The duty of the messenger of Allah was to convey and preach guidance to mankind. The speaker or author arranges his words and sentences to make his ideas meaningful to the audience or the readers. In search of the best way to communicate the ideas, the science of grammar and the art of rhetoric had been developed. The use of language and style has to be adopted in relation to the class of people who are addressed. A message or guidance of universal nature, dealing with all aspects of human life in its manifold dimensions (individual and social, economic and political, physical and spiritual) not for any particular person or class but for every human being, community and nation, educated and uneducated, till eternity, must be the work of a person who knows, inside out, human nature in general as well as the capacity to understand and the tendencies of different individuals and communities of different classes and races. In addition, the relation of each individual to the other, the relation of mankind as a whole to other beings and surrounding nature, the beginning and the end of human life, the first and the final cause of creation of which man is a part, have to be taken into consideration. The style and substance of such a message should not only appeal to the "welfare-oriented" interests of the people but also should be able to refine human feelings and emotions. Such a power of expression is beyond the limit of human ability. Therefore it is true to say that the Quran is a miracle in view of its style and substance.

Abu Turab - The father of the earth.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

{فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ} 24

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:24]

WA LAN TAFALU (and never shall you do it) is a prophecy as well as a warning.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The threat of making the disbelievers and hypocrites the fuel of the fire (hell) is real. The faith in Allah as the creator and the law-giver, and the belief in the hereafter wherein every individual will be rewarded in proportion to his obedience, or will be punished because of his disobedience to the divine law, are the two essential principles of Islam. It is downright dishonesty to interpret the fire as the miseries, torments, discomforts and calamities of the life in this world. This attribution of giving fanciful meanings, unsupported by the Quran or the sayings of the Holy Prophet, betrays the materialistic bias of such interpreters who do not agree that there is a real existence beyond this world.

The view expressed by the Ahmadi school in connection with verses 23 and 24, are in fact .the reproduction of the ideas put forward by Mirza Abul Fazl Gulpaygani, the leader of Baha-i movement. There are many doctrines of the Ahmadi school which have been borrowed from the Baha-i school.

Sayfullah - The sword of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ كُلَّمَا رُزِقُوا مِنْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرَةٍ رُزِقُوا قَالُوا هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَنُوتُوا بِهِ مُنْتَثَابِينَ وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَنْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ {25}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:25]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The expression that the heavenly fruits, which the believers will enjoy, are similar, in taste, to that which they were familiar with, shows the continuity of the human consciousness and memory of the experiences in the life of this world; otherwise there is no sense in the concept of reward or punishment. The emphasis on the continuance of consciousness by Islam is to make man guard against evil. The theory of Karma (transmigration), advanced by the Vedantic school, states that man loses the consciousness and memory of the experiences of his previous life as soon as he dies and takes another form of life. This theory is of no use to man as it does not stimulate him to do good or avoid evildoing.

In giving the description of the life of the hereafter, the Quran refers to the pain and pleasure experienced by the senses, because there is no other way to make man form an idea about the pains and pleasures, as a punishment or a reward, awaiting him in his other life, which he earns through bad or good conduct in this life. In the absence of the developed senses, to have an idea of the actual pains and the pleasures of the life of the hereafter, a figurative form has to be used to reach man in general, an example of which is verse 15 of Muhammad. The intellectual significance of the parables presented to man cannot be grasped by the common people save those endowed with wisdom. The Quran says that the life of the hereafter is the developed continuation of the life of the world. Not losing the essential elements, this life takes to a highly refined form in the next life, more real, effective and purposeful. Every object of our senses has a corresponding existence in the heaven. The social life of the hereafter, with positive and negative forces, is another fact which Quran makes known to us.

The rewards, mentioned in this verse, are obtainable through a creative power bestowed upon the faithful who win the pleasure of Allah by doing good and avoiding evil, in love of the creator. *Azwaj* means spouses, husbands or wives. Men will have women and women will have men as their mates.

This verse through *wa hum fiha khalidun* declares that the reward to the virtuous and the punishment to the wicked shall continue for ever.

Ba of Bismillah - The essence of the Quran.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَسْتَحْيِي أَنْ يَضْرِبَ مَثَلًا مَّا بَعُوضَةً فَمَا فَوْقَهَا فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَيَقُولُونَ {26} مَادَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَذَا مَثَلًا يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:26]

Dall means to lead astray or cause to err. When it is used with reference to divine action it means withdrawal of grace, as a punishment, for rejecting the guidance offered without ulterior motives.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Through metaphorical expressions, in the form of parables, the Quran stimulates the human mind

and heart. A healthy mind grasps the truth, whereas a perverted mind adds more threads to its web of doubts. The one and same expression produces two opposite effects. The right response is the acceptance of the guidance, the reaction of the *muttaqin*, and the wrong response is the "going astray", the reaction of the *fasiqin*.

Mawla - The Lord-Master.

It is not surprising that, throughout the centuries, the Muslims, in every age, in every place, never address any one as "Mawla" except Allah, Muhammad and Ali, though some restrict it to Allah alone, but whoso includes the Holy Prophet has to have Ali as the part of the sacred whole, in view of the Prophet's announcement "*man kuntu Mawla fa hadha Aliyyun Mawla*" at Ghadir Khum. So it is common among the Muslims to call out Muhammad and Ali as "*Mawla*"

The wisdom of Ali in the form of lectures and discourses is available to mankind in the "*Nahj al Balagha*". It is a book, considered in style and substance, next to the Quran, by all those Muslim and non-Muslim scholars who have studied these two books in depth.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

{الَّذِينَ يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ } 27

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:27]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The wrongdoers (*fasiqin*), mentioned in the previous verse, break the covenant of Allah (*yanquduna ahadallah*), and cut asunder that which Allah has commanded to join (*yaqtuna ma amarallah*), and make mischief to destroy peace and harmony in human society.

Which covenant?

Every soul, before coming into this world, makes a promise with the Lord that it will exist only to fulfil the will of the Lord, and never shall rebel against His authority, known as the original or the latent covenant. The second or the manifest covenant is that which an individual agrees to be bound by when he or she embraces Islam, which, in fact, is a surrender of the self to the will of Allah.

The covenant referred to here is that by which the believers bound themselves before Allah through the Holy Prophet at Ghadir Khum when the verse 67 of al Ma-idah was revealed. Every believer accepted the declaration of the messenger of Allah that of whomsoever the Holy Prophet was the lord-master, Ali son of Abu Talib was also his lord-master. After the unanimous undertaking of the believers, the following verse was revealed.

This day I have perfected for you, your religion, and have completed My favour on you, and chosen for you Islam (to be) the religion.

Therefore, fulfilment of the covenant made with Allah is demanded in verses 20, 21 and 25 of al Rad, so that after the departure of the Holy Prophet, the believers might not follow any other person save Ali ibna abi Talib, who alone was declared worthy and able to carry out the mission of Islam, as the lawful authority (lord-master), in the absence of the Holy Prophet.

The declaration was not a mere fancy of the Holy Prophet to honour Ali, but in compliance with Allah's command to save the followers of Islam from yielding to those who make mischief in the earth and spread corruption in the garb of religious leaders. According to verse 217 of al Baqarah, mischief is more grievous than carnage. Islam stands for peace and harmony. And when is peace disturbed? Only when anyone wants to have (usurp) something which rightfully is not his.

Islam has prescribed a well-knit structure of human relationship to maintain peace and harmony in the society. In addition to various aspects of human relations, Allah has, with a purpose in view, made it obligatory for the believers to know and adhere to the relationship prescribed between them and the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt. To avoid the overwhelming delusions of falsehood it is essential to

accept the authority of the Holy Prophet, Ali ibna abi Talib, and the divinely commissioned rightly guided guides, in his progeny.

This verse applies to everyone who opposes the divinely established authority of *imamat* (the guidance through the holy Imams) immediately succeeding the *risalat*(the prophethood of the Holy Prophet) which is the covenant every faithful adherent of Islam has to make good.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

28} {كَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَكُنْتُمْ أَهْلًا لَهَا فَآخِيَائِكُمْ تَمِّمْتُمْ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ثُمَّ إِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:28]

True knowledge about Allah is the basis of the faith. The whole system of religion is a natural consequence of that generative factor. The most practical method of acquiring this knowledge is to observe and contemplate on the creation before our eyes, as repeatedly advised by the Quran, known to the modern world as scientific, proceeding from the concrete to the abstract.

Through *kuntum amwatan* it is made clear that the soul, though existed in the spiritual realm but was unable to take any active part in the visible creation.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The human ego, which was not as it is now - a conscious self - is addressed here. The previous state is termed as "being dead". "Giving life" is the present conscious state. The departure of the conscious self from the body is death. The state after this departure is revivification. It is a continuous evolutionary transformation of a conscious self upto the communion with the infinite, not in the sense of annihilation, nor the absorption of the finite into the infinite, but in the sense of the realisation of the fact that nothing is real save Allah.

After departing from one life to live another life, the pain or pleasure in the succeeding life is the result of the mode of life adopted in the preceding life. Therefore the return is for the final retribution.

The Holy Prophet said:

You shall not be annihilated, because you have been created to last till eternity. You only go from this life of actions (good or bad) to the life of happiness or misery.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

29} {هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:29]

In Arabic language, according to Lisanul kitab, *sab-a* is used (in addition to denote number seven) to say seven or more, several or many. Therefore, the seven heavens mentioned in this verse may mean a large number of heavens.

What we see above is *sama*. Raghīb Isphānī says that every *sama is* a heaven in relation to what is beneath it.

In verse 12 of al Talaq it is mentioned that there are as many earths as the heavens.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to this verse and verses 9 to 12 of Ha Mim and verses 27 to 32 of Nazi-at the development of the earth and its resources had taken place before the arrangement and organisation of the heavens. Verses 30 to 33 of Anbiya say that the heavens and the earth were an integrated mass, but had been separated by splitting. The creation of the heavens and the earth was simultaneous, but the development of earth took place before the grouping of the heavens. Verse 30 describes another development after the arrival of Adam.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

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 ﴿30﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:30]

To understand this verse the following explanations should be carefully studied:

ANGELS

Angels, according to the Quran, are finite creatures, devoid of substance, in the sense of matter, therefore, imperceptible by our senses.

An Ahmadi commentator describes the angels as energy without any freedom of will and consciousness, which proves untrue in view of the reply the angels gave to Allah's declaration about His will to send a *khalifa* on the earth. It means that the angels have been endowed with freedom of will to give expression to their views whenever they choose to do so, and that they are liable to err, because Allah told them that they did not know what Allah knew when they made known their opinion.

In whatever manner created and wherever found, the angels, finite creatures of light, endowed with consciousness and intelligence, act to fulfil the divine plan. They take any physical form (except pigs, dogs and other base animals) to become visible to human vision, but belong to the celestial realm.

JINN

Jinn are also conscious beings. Angels are made of light, therefore, on account of their illuminating gracious nature only good comes out from them. Jinn are made of fire, therefore, more often than not, evil is associated with them. They can also take any physical form, including debased animals. The word *mala-ik* is derived from the Arabic *malk*, not from the Hebrew root *alaka*. The meaning of *malk*, *mulk*, *milk* and *malakut* is possession, which is also ownership or holding. The holding authority is *malik* or *maalik* or *malak*, who is also the owner or the sovereign, exclusively used by the Quran to refer to Allah. The whole universe is *milk* or *mulk* and the holder is the absolute owner, Allah. Between the absolute owner and the held *mulk* there are dominions over which the intermediary authorities exercise control, with Allah's consent, in relation to the dominion above them. Each of these dominions is termed as *malakut* and each holding authority is called *malak*. The pagans worship these *mala-ik*, under misconceived conclusion, as the independent authorities, either the sons or the daughters of the absolute authority, who can speak or advocate on their behalf to the king of kings. It is because they do not have the insight, or true guidance, to view the spiritual world, as pointed out by verses 26 to 31 of al Najm.

Allah alone holds the authority. No interceding authority shall be accepted by Him, save those to whom He Himself has delegated the authority, according to verse 87 of Maryam and such other verses in the Quran.

Therefore worship of no one is acceptable, in Islam, save the worship of Allah.

KHALIFA

The literal meaning of *khalaf* is to come after, follow, succeed etcetera. In this verse it has been used in the sense of succeeding, in fact, representing Allah on the earth, to exercise His authority in terms of "reacting" to His will, as His vicegerent. This is the basis of prophethood. Some schools of thought hold the view that reason and intellect, at the disposal of man, are enough to represent Allah, and there is no need of the delegation of authority. In this verse however the necessity of a vicegerent of Allah on the earth has been conclusively proved, appointment of whom cannot and shall not be made by any one save Allah. *Khalifatullah*, the representative of Allah, is he whom Allah Himself delegates His authority.

These are they whom We gave the book and the authority and the prophethood;
These are they whom Allah has guided, so, follow their guidance;

(AN-AM 89 and 90)

Neither the consensus of public opinion, nor a group, nor an individual has the right to represent the will of Allah. Even the prophets or the angels did not have the right to say anything in the matter of appointment of the *khalifa*. Allah does not allow any one to interfere with the execution of His will, nor can any one question Him. Here and in many other places, dealing with the delegation of authority, it has been asserted that His will and choice is not arbitrary but is always based on the recognition of merit. Adam was appointed as His vicegerent, in preference to the angels, on the merit of possessing the knowledge which they did not have. According to verse 124 of al Baqarah Allah appointed prophet Ibrahim as the Imam after He had tried Ibrahim with a number of things which he fulfilled, with the clear provision that although there would be Imams in his progeny, but those who were unjust would not receive this authority. In verse 947 of al Baqarah, Saul is appointed as an authority over the people because of his wisdom and strength, in preference to those who claimed to be more worthy than him on account of their worldly position. In verses 17 to 25 of al Sad, Allah appoints Dawud as His vicegerent on the merit of wisdom, power of judgement and obedience to Allah's will.

The most important qualifications, mentioned in the Quran, are given below:

- (i) Untiring and continuous remembrance of Allah, with no drift or diversion under any type of circumstance.
- (ii) Never giving in to the demands motivated by self-oriented interests.

1. Following only the divine revelations.
2. Being the first and the foremost in establishing and carrying out every virtue to the point of perfection.

(v) Awareness and wisdom of all laws (physical and moral) made by Allah, and their operation, so as not to make any mistakes; and for this awareness received no guidance or education from any one save Allah.

(vi) No type of adversity, crisis or temptation should affect the tranquillity of the mind and the heart, described as *sakinah* in the Quran.

(vii) The purity of birth, character and conduct because of which they are the most honoured with Allah (Hujurat:13), the foremost in faith and virtue, in receiving the rewards, and in their nearness to Allah (Waqi-ah:10,11).

(viii) Ruling over the people with justice as pointed out in verse 26 of al Sad.

Keeping in view the above-noted qualities, Allah, in verses 33 and 34 of Ali Imran, says that He had, on account of certain basic qualities, chosen Adam, Nuh, the descendants of Ibrahim and Imran and the Holy Prophet, the descendant of Ibrahim through Isma-il. The Quran does not advocate hereditary rights of succession but asserts that this lineage had a distinctive divine peculiarity for which they had been chosen as vicegerents of Allah. The reason for bestowing this privilege on the descendants of Ibrahim is known to Allah only, because as said by Allah in the event of appointing Adam as *khalifa*, He knows that which His creatures do not know. We must accept the limitations of our knowledge and glorify the grace and justice of Allah.

We have given to Ibrahim's children the book and the wisdom and We gave them a great kingdom.

(NISA: 54)

The above-noted verse refers to the Holy Prophet as the last prophet in the lineage of prophet Ibrahim.

The vicegerency of Allah did not come to an end after the Holy Prophet. It continued. In verse 77 of Bani Israil the almighty Allah says:

This was Our way with Our messengers whom We had sent before you, and you shall not find any change in our way.

So it is confirmed that there is no change or modification in the principle and the method of appointing His vicegerent. In verse 55 of al Nur it is further made clear that the vicegerency continues after the Holy Prophet in the same way and manner as was in vogue before him. According to verses 31 and 32 of Fatir the holy book, in completed form, was given in inheritance to those servants of Allah whom He had selected. They belong to the children of Ibrahim excluding those who were *zalimin*, unjust, meaning those who, at any time in their lives, had worshipped a *ghayr-allah* (other than Allah). A careful study of "the essentials for the readers of the Quran", page 1 to 7, and the commentary of verse 2 of this surah makes it clear that Ali ibna abi Talib was the true vicegerent of Allah, appointed by Allah and His Holy Prophet.

The Holy Prophet was the perfecter of Adam's mission of *khalifatullah* on the earth and the executor of the final will of the Lord of the worlds. Therefore his *khalifa* was also chosen and appointed by Allah to carry out the responsibilities of the divine office. The choice was not left to the fancy of the people, nor was any consultation needed. *Inni ja-ilun fil ardi khalifah* is an open declaration of His will and decision. Likewise the successor of the Holy Prophet could neither be chosen by the companions nor by the Holy Prophet himself. From the "feast of the near relations" to the event of "Ghadir Khum", narrated in detail on page 6 on the authority of well-known Muslim scholars, it was the will and command of Allah which the Holy Prophet had carried out.

History also testifies to the fact that on all occasions, it was Ali who came forward to meet the challenge, and proved his qualities for the entitlement to the divine office of vicegerency, although all the companions had equal opportunities to rise to the occasion.

After the conclusion and the termination of the office of prophethood, the infinite mercy of the merciful Lord did not leave mankind to go astray, misled by false leaders who usurped temporal authority, but commanded the Holy Prophet to declare the vicegerency of Ali and his progeny (the twelve Imams). The Holy Prophet, therefore, appointed Ali ibna abi Talib as his and Allah's *khalifa* on the earth.

Now the people have the freedom of choice either to follow the divinely chosen Imams or run after the self-appointed false leaders.

Verily, We have shown him (man) the (right) way, be he thankful (and follow it), or be ungrateful (reject it).

(DAHR: 3)

In addition to that which has been stated on pages 1 to 7 there are countless merits and qualifications of Ali ibna abi Talib, mentioned and discussed on the authority of well-known Muslim scholars, in several publications like "The Right Path", "Peshawar Nights" and other books which can be studied to know the truth. It is not possible to refer to all these here. In the commentary of other verses of the Quran, his merits have been mentioned and discussed. They also give conclusive answers to the point of view of those who say that after the Holy Prophet, the authority for the application of divine legislation has been delegated by Allah to the faithful followers of Islam in general, therefore, every Muslim is the vicegerent of Allah, to exercise His authority according to the book and the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet. The reference to the book of Allah and the *sunnah* (doings

and sayings) of the Holy Prophet, for the sake of justifying their conduct after the Holy Prophet, appears self-defeating and contradictory, when these two agencies (they purport to follow), as explained above and at many suitable occasions in this book, have irrefutably established the vicegerency of Ali and his progeny, which only the followers of "Muhammad and Ali Muhammad" faithfully accept and follow.

ADAM

While talking about the creation of Adam the appearance of visible form (matter) in the "arc of ascent" must be reviewed. Matter, in its primitive mode of being, carries the potentiality to develop into various forms - minerals, vegetables, animals and human beings. The capability of matter to give form to different species is determined by the "unlike in nature" potency of its elements or components. Earth, a product of matter, carried the capacity to bring some of its elements to a more advanced and highly organised body of a human being. Likewise its other components could develop other animate or inanimate objects. In form and substance each individual human being differs from the other. It is on account of the diversity in the potentiality of the components of the matter.

The development in the "arc of ascent" was gradual. The graduality (in time) is motion. Motion is the transfer of potentiality into actuality.

While, indeed, He created you through regular stages,
And Allah has caused you to grow as a growth from the earth,

(NUH: 14 and 17)

According to the following verses of the Quran man is made of the finest essence of the matter.
Verily, We created man of wet clay of black mud moulded into shape,

(HIJR: 26)

And indeed We created man from an extract of clay,

(MUMINUN: 1 2)

The distinctive aspects of each of the beings in the "arc of ascent" are reflections of the corresponding beings in the "arc of descent". Those angels who administer the development of the animal life belong to a higher order compared to those angels who control the development of the plant life. The human spirit (*ruh*) is the reflection emanated directly from the absolute (*min ruhi*), according to verse 29 of al Hjr. It does not mean separation because the absolute is indivisible. It refers to His direct attention or command. The other beings in the "arc of ascent" are also the reflections of His attention or command but through angelic medium.

Tinat (nature or disposition) is the extract of the total skill or worth in the matter under Allah's direct attention. The spirit, also referred to as "I", is the reflection of the divine command or attention referred to as *min ruhi*- My spirit, by Allah, but conditioned by its *tinat*. *Ruh* may be one but the reflections may be many and may differ in reflecting that which they have received. The total energy in the "arc of descent" conditions the *tinat* in its primitive stage, after which its developed state reflects the divine spirit. These two factors *ruh* and *tinat* constitute the creation of man. Through this evolutionary movement, from the

potential state to the actual form, as the Quran says, man in particular and all other species in general, have been developed from their respective origins which carry their respective potentialities.

Ruh, according to the Quran and the Holy Prophet's sayings refers to that which proceeds from the absolute through the "arc of descent". The *nafs* (soul, ego or self) is the corresponding reflection or the reaction in the "arc of ascent". As this reflection is conditioned by the *tinat*, it cannot have any existence prior to the development of the *tinat*. On the contrary, the *ruh* or the corresponding action in

the arc of descent has its existence prior to the reflection in the arc of ascent. If the reference is to the radiation or the acting source in the "arc of descent", it exists before the body, and is eternal with the eternity of the source. If the reference is made to the reflection (human ego, or self) it comes into being after the formation of the *tinat*. Therefore, the *nafs* of each individual is developed after the preparation of the body. It depends on the matter for its development but becomes independent in the process of growth. The *ruh* exists independently before the matter and remains so, for ever. It, the *ruh*, never joins the matter and never becomes dependent on it. It acts on the matter. The *nafs*, with no prior existence as it is only a reaction of the *ruh*, acts through the body, and when it develops into a state, free from the influence of matter, the *ruh* operates and makes it independent. Thereafter it neither deteriorates nor becomes dependent again. Through progress and development into a higher state of spirituality, passive mat

{وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ } 31

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:31]

NAMES

Angels are obedient beings. There is no "becoming" (change) in the angelic sphere. Each of them has a fixed status to carry out a particular function. Man, on the other hand, made of matter, endowed with vast potentialities and scope for progress and development, is more fit to reflect or to react to the various aspects of the higher will. The potentiality of matter reveals itself in many forms, but it is only through the organism of man that its highly refined potentiality develops into intellect, reason and contemplation, the essential requirements for wisdom and knowledge. According to verse 75 of Sad, Allah has created Adam with His two hands, matter and spirit, which gives man the distinctive power of expression, termed as *biyan* by the Quran. This expressive power is related to His vicegerency, because the vicegerent, as the representative of the principal, gives expression to His will and command. The higher the ability of receptivity and the reflective power, the greater will be the scope and canvas of representation. It is on this basis that all the messengers and prophets of Allah will be standing under the standard of the Holy Prophet, which will be in the hand of Ali, on the day of resurrection.

The names Adam learned from Allah were not in the knowledge of the angels, because these names did not refer to the phenomena known to them. The *hum* of *aradahum* does not refer to the "names" but to the "named", and as a plural term cannot be used for Allah, therefore, it cancels the possibility of interpreting these names as the names of Allah. When reference is made in Arabic to several objects of inanimate nature, a singular feminine pronoun is used, but when the objects are conscious beings, a plural masculine pronoun is used, as done here through *aradahum*, to point out the "named ones". If the object referred to is inanimate, the singular feminine pronoun, *tilka* or *hadhihi* should have been used. Here the personal demonstrative pronoun refers to the conscious beings of a superior-most status, knowledge of whose names entitled Adam to the vicegerency of Allah. Thus the existence of the beings of the highest status has been established. Due to the affinity between Adam and these highest beings (*alin*), he was capable to function as the medium of their manifestation. Verse 4 of al Tin says that the status of man, in the order of creation, is the highest in excellence. The *alin*, the highest beings, referred to in this verse, are the most perfect and the most blessed human beings, for whose manifestation in the arc of ascent, Adam was chosen. Till then the names of the highest beings along with the insight and vision of their realities, their latent qualities and inherent endowments were unknown to the angels.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

{قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ } 32

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:32] (see commentary for verse 31)(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئُهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ } 33

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:33]

Through Adam the angels became acquainted with the glory of the glorious beings. When Adam, at the command of Allah, stated the names, qualities and symbols of those highest beings whose collective and comprehensive status can be termed as wisdom personified, the angels witnessed the glory of the infinite power and wisdom of the Lord that could create such perfect beings of the highest calibre, in substance as well as in style, like of whom they did not know till then.

In Durr Manthur, Jalaluddin Sayuti says that the Holy Prophet had said: "The objects shown to the angels were five lights. Allah informed the angels pointing to each of the lights respectively:

(i) This is Muhammad, the most praised, derived from My name, the praised one.

(ii) This is Ali, the high, derived from My name, the highest.

(iii) This is Fatimah, the original, derived from my name, the originator of the heavens and the earth.

(iv) This is Hasan, the bountiful, derived from My name, the benefactor.

(v) This is Husayn, the good, derived from My name, the good in origin.

O angels! It is in love of these five that I have created the universe."

It becomes a logical conclusion that since Allah willed these five lights of glory to be manifested through Adam, he had been appointed as the *khalifa* of Allah, and through these lights Allah's light had been destined to be manifested.

As Allah is aware of all the "unseen" in the universe, He knew that the angels secretly thought themselves more deserving than Adam to be chosen as Allah's *khalifa*. After seeing the glory of the five lights, endowed in the seed of Adam, they accepted their ignorance and submitted to Allah's decision.

(see commentary for verse 4)(see commentary for verse 2)

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ } 34

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:34]

Satisfied with the proof of the absolute wisdom and mercy of Allah, the angels prostrated themselves before Adam, as ordered by Allah, and acknowledged the superiority of the *khalifa* of Allah. Iblis, jinn, as described by verse 50 of al Kahf, overcome with grief and despair, under the burden of arrogance (*kabar*), refused to come into the camp of knowledge and mercy surrounded by *iman*. According to this verse, prostration (*sajdah*) by one created being, in order to pay homage and accept superiority of another created being, is permissible. The *sajdah* of total submission and unconditional surrender is for the creator only.

(see commentary for verse 4)

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا وَلَا تَقْرَبَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ فَتَكُونَا مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ } 35

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:35]

With his opposite and complementary companion, Hawwa, the woman, Adam, the man was given the garden to dwell in, unrestrained. Only a tree was out of bounds.

According to many a tradition, it was not the perpetual heavenly garden. The garden referred to here was an area of expansion, comfort and ease, everything that was needed and desired was available without toil and effort. The out of bound tree is the symbol of temptation, covetousness, envy and greed. Imam Ali bin Musa al Rida says:

It stimulates desire for things which are not necessary for life.

Imam Ali bin Husayn says:

It stimulates desires for the worldly possessions as the ultimate object of life.

The command of Allah was not to go near the tree. Eating the fruit of the tree was not definitely forbidden.

(see commentary for verse 4)

36} فَأَزَلَّهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ عَنْهَا فَأَخْرَجَهُمَا مِمَّا كَانَا فِيهِ وَقُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا بَعْضُكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ عَدُوٌّ وَلَكُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُسْتَقَرٌّ وَمَتَاعٌ إِلَىٰ حِينٍ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:36]

Adam was endowed with infinite potentiality to reach the ultimate through rational thinking and be able to discriminate and choose. Shaytan, the furious and the fiery, obstinate and perverse, devoid of *iman*, became an enemy of Adam. The stimulating warning of the divine command "not to go near the tree" awakened Adam's latent ambition to march unto those "highest beings" whose status Allah had shown him. To begin this journey, Adam, in a way, apparently gave Shaytan the opportunity to use his guile and rebellious energy in order to take advantage of the situation and get even with his adversary who caused his downfall. Adam and Hawwa slipped out of the condition of peace and contentment into the realm of struggle where peace and conflict, love and hate, and such opposites are at full play. Thereafter the two opposite groups faced each other. It was a conflict between good and evil, right and wrong. *Ihbitu*, also used in verse 61 of al Baqarah, means a change from the easy life of joy and happiness to the life of toil, suffering and misery.

(see commentary for verse 4)

37} فَتَلَقَىٰ آدَمُ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَلِمَاتٍ فَتَابَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:37]

There was no chance of going back to the dwelling of joy and happiness. They were at the mercy of the Lord. They turned repentant unto Allah. The merciful and oft-forgiving Lord blessed Adam with the most extraordinary words of prayer through which Adam, and after him any one in his progeny (mankind), could invoke the mercy of the Lord. These were the holy names of those highest beings whom Allah had already introduced to Adam. So the oft-forgiving merciful Lord took Adam and his wife under His mercy when they invoked Him through these names.

(see commentary for verse 4)

38} قُلْنَا اهْبِطُوا مِنْهَا جَمِيعًا فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُمْ مِنِّي هُدًى فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:38]

Now to enter the real paradise, going back to the land of eternal bliss, man must use his intelligence, and make a choice of the right path shown by Allah through the guidance He has made available to man in this world of opposite forces. This guidance was already shown to Adam, which he disclosed to the angels who prostrated themselves immediately, but Shaytan refused to follow it. He is here, till the human beings dwell in this world, to lead man astray from the true guidance Allah has made available through His last prophet Muhammad and the divinely commissioned Imams. Those who follow these divinely chosen guides shall walk on the right path, will be safe from fear and grief, and earn the right to enter the heavenly garden.

(see commentary for verse 4)

39} وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:39]

The literal meaning of *ayat* is sign. Every verse of the Quran is a sign (*ayat*) because it draws the attention of the reader to its meaning. But Allah's signs, in the perfect sense, are those beings whose holy personalities draw the attention of the human beings to the glory of Allah. Every prophet of

Allah, during his time, was a sign of Allah, and the Holy Prophet, the Twelve Imams and Bibi Fatimah are the conclusive signs of Allah. Allah gives a fair warning to those who, under the influence of the eternal enemy of man, Shaytan, go astray from the right path, the path of "Muhammad and Ali Muhammad", that their abode will be the fire.

REVIEW OF VERSES 30 TO 39

The term "Adam", in the Quran, refers to the first man who came out of a state of ease and comfort to make effort and reach the ultimate excellence. In this journey, within the sphere of time and space, he, as the most well-equipped creature among all the created beings, has, at his disposal, divine guidance, to fight and overcome the obstacles and evil of satanic forces. Prior to the advent of Adam, life on earth for the living beings had no other meaning except to struggle for survival. Adam gave a new significance to life on earth. Man was given the knowledge to learn how to choose between good and evil, right and wrong. Through this knowledge his conscience directed him what to do and what not to do, to adopt harmony and to avoid discord. As Adam came out of the earthly paradise, blessed with the divine guidance, he, due to the potentiality he carried in himself, aspired for the ultimate good, by using all his faculties to curb the drift unto greed, lust, hatred, anger etcetera and walk on the right path.

The Holy Prophet says:

Every human child is born with the Adam's nature; it is the "parents" (the environment) which turns the child into a Jew, a Christian or a Magian.

Man is originally sinless. The evil takes roots in him through external factors. Therefore, the Christian theory of "original sin" has no place in the interpretation of the history of Adam by the Quran. The approaching to the out-of-bounds tree, when he was in the earthly paradise, was prior to his coming into this world, therefore, on account of his record, after shouldering the responsibility of the vicegerency of Allah on the earth, he is clean and sinless.

According to the traditions of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad there were several Adams, which indicate that there may be several worlds like ours. The symbolic value of the advent of Adam is applicable to human life because man is born in the paradise of ease and comfort, and as a child is pure and free from the responsibility of making efforts to fulfil his wants. As he grows to maturity, he has to make use of his faculties to get what he used to have without effort. The sense of duty and responsibility, and the consciousness of good and evil prepare him to fight against satanic forces working against him. It is not possible for him to get out of the trouble caused by the conflicting desires and satanic temptations unless he turns towards the ultimate reality as the sole object of his life. It gives him peace and tranquillity, saves him from fear and grief, does not let him fall from the state of humanity to the state of animal nature. To reach the ultimate reality it is essential to know the holy names because of whom Adam was blessed and forgiven. In these holy persons the divine vicegerency reached its destination. They are Muhammad (*Nabuwwat*), and his Ahl ul Bayt (*Imamat*).

In view of the creation of man, his responsibilities to the creator and to the institution of divine vicegerency and its continuity on earth till the day of resurrection, as a covenant between "man and God", and the submission to the universal will of the absolute, as the law governing all aspects of his life, it is necessary to point out a few guiding factors to have a clear understanding about the beginning and development of the prophetic mission.

Allah, who alone knows everything, has reserved the right of the appointment of the vicegerent with Himself.

The appointment is not an arbitrary act of choosing but the vicegerent is selected on merit after the test of inherent excellence.

The created beings, be they angels or prophets, have no right or say in the appointment of the vicegerent. The essential imperative is the knowledge of the holy names which alone help the candidate for the vicegerency to cross terrestrial barriers and reach the glorious heavenly heights in order to establish communion with the universal grace and will of the almighty Lord, as has been observed in the case of Adam.

Adam conveyed the appointment of Shith, his son, as the vicegerent of Allah to his other children, but a large number of his sons opposed this declaration. The tendency of the majority to revolt against the declared will of Allah is on record, as mentioned in the Quran, throughout the history of the appointments of the prophets of Allah - Nuh, Sam, Ibrahim, Is-haq, Isma-il, Yaqub, Yusuf, Musa, Talut, Dawud, and Isa.

The declarations of Musa, and other prophets after him, about the advent of Isa, Ilyas and the "promised prophet" in the progeny of Isma-il and the "twelve princes" succeeding him, were opposed tooth and nail by the Jews. The pagan Romans, instigated by the Jews, executed Yahya and put Isa on the cross, but Allah raised him to heaven. Isa announced the coming of the "Paraclete" (Muhammad or Ahmed) before he left this world.

And when the promised "Paraclete" would come, he will complete the mission by delivering the whole truth and shall never speak but whatsoever he shall hear from the Lord that he shall speak.

(The Book of John).

Isa had appointed Simon as his successor and as the rock of divinity on whom the edifice of the faith will be based, but Paul opposed him. To make people discard Simon, Paul claimed the appearance of Isa in his vision, and by accommodating the pagan cult of the Romans he corrupted the true faith and established the orthodox Christian Church.

The Holy Prophet, on several occasions, appointed Ali ibna abi Talib as his successor and vicegerent, in compliance with the commands of Allah. Some of the important traditions and the verses of the Quran which make clear and confirm the vicegerency of Ali ibna abi Talib have been mentioned in the "Essentials for the readers of the Quran" (page 1 to 7), and in the commentary of verses 2 and 30 to 39 of this surah. From his birth in the holy Kabah to the "tradition of qartas", there are several events and occasions, recorded by well-known Muslim scholars in many books of history, traditions and commentaries (mentioned in the commentary of relevant verses in this book) which can be referred to for arriving at the conclusion that in his own right and on the basis of his matchless merits, he alone was the divinely chosen vicegerent to succeed the Holy Prophet.

Some of the titles of Ali ibna abi Talib, which are exclusively his, are given below:

1. Mawlud Kabah - Born in the house of Allah.
2. Nafs al Rasul - The "self" of the messenger.
3. Kullu Iman - The total faith.
4. La Fata - The hero who has no equal.
5. Karrar Ghayra Farrar - The unconquerable attacker who never runs away from the battlefield.
6. Bab al Ilm - The gateway to wisdom.
7. Al Murtada - The chosen (by Allah).
8. Amir al Muminin - The commander of the faithful.
9. Imam al Muttaqin - The leader of the pious.
10. Mazhar al Aja-ib The manifestor of wonders.
11. Imam al Awliya - The original source of the friends of Allah who seek His closest nearness.
12. Sayyid al Awsiya - The chief (or the first) of the successors of the Holy Prophet.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِي أُوفِ بِعَهْدِكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ فَارْهَبُونِ } 40

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:40]

The Bani Israil are reminded to be faithful to their covenant with Allah.

This day the Lord, your God, commands you to keep these statutes and laws: be careful to observe them with all your heart and soul. You have recognised the Lord this day as your God; you are to conform to His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, and His laws, and to obey Him.

(Deut 26: 16 and 17)

And Allah would fulfil His covenant with the Bani Israil. Musa said:

For it was he whom the Lord God chose from all your tribes to attend on the Lord and to minister in the name of the Lord, both he and his sons for all time.

(Deut 18: 5)

I will raise up for them a prophet like you (Musa), and I will put my words into his mouth. He shall convey all my commands to them, and if any one does not listen to the words which he will speak, I will require satisfaction from him.

(Deut 18: 18, 19)

The Holy Prophet was the promised prophet.

To say that Isa was the promised Prophet is a false claim by the Christian Church because Isa himself said:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another to be your advocate, who will be with for ever - the spirit of truth. Your advocate will teach you everything, and will call to mind all that I have told you.

(John 14: 16 and 26)

It is for your good that I am leaving you. If I do not go, your advocate will not come. When he comes, he will confute the world, and show where wrong and right and judgement lie.

There is still much that I could say to you, but the burden would be too great for you now.

However, when he comes who is the spirit of truth, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but will tell only what he hears; and he will make known to you the things that are coming.

(John 16: 7 to 14)

"The Lord God will raise up a prophet for you from among yourselves as he raised me, you shall listen to everything he says to you, and anyone who refuses to listen to that prophet must be extirpated from Israel." And so said all the prophets, from Samuel onwards; with one voice they all predicted these days. You are the heirs of the prophets; you are within the covenant which God made with your fathers, when he said to Abraham, "And in your offspring all the families on earth shall find blessings"

(Acts 3: 22 to 25)

And when the promised "Paraclete" would come, he will complete the mission by delivering the whole truth and shall never speak but whatsoever he shall hear from the Lord that he shall speak.

(The Book of John)

Isa himself never claimed to have come in the fulfilment of the prophecy about the advent of the promised prophet, nor any other prophet, after him did so, except the Holy Prophet Muhammad al Mustafa. In view of these undeniable facts the Christian Church had no alternative but to give currency to the belief in the second advent of Isa. Musa and Muhammad were the law-givers, whereas Isa was the follower of the laws preached by Musa. Therefore, the phrase "like you" applies to

Muhammad, not to Isa.

Similarities between Muhammad and Musa are many. No two prophets, in historical background, resembled each other more than these two. It must also be noted that Allah helped and protected Musa through his brother Harun and Muhammad through his brother Ali.

Reference has been made here to the covenant taken from the Bani Israil to believe in the Holy Prophet and walk in the way of the Lord. The Holy Prophet rightly claimed to be the promised prophet.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَأَمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتُ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَٰ كَافِرٍ بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِنِّي فَاتِقُونَ } 41

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:41]

The Bani Israil are exhorted, in this verse, to believe in the Quran, which verifies Tawrat and Injil, particularly about the fulfilment of the prophecy about the advent of the promised prophet, Muhammad al Mustafa, as explained above.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَلَا تَلْبِسُوا الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْفُمُوا الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ } 42

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:42]

It refers to the scriptures, revealed prior to the Quran, which had been profusely tampered with, restyled and disguised by the Christians. Many rabbis knew the true text of the scriptures in the time of the Holy Prophet but concealed the truth, and when a few less careful, now and then, quoted them as mentioned in verse 76 of this surah they were rebuked for giving secret information to the Muslims.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ } 43

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:43]

Due to the system of optional asceticism among the Jews and the Christians, only a very few could adopt the life of piety and devotion (essential for a human being to be initiated into the realm of spiritual bliss), leaving the rest of the majority of the people to sink deep into hypocritical ritual practices. Islam, on the other hand, educates every human being, through *salat*, to keep their involvement with the material gains and enjoyment at a reasonable level and give sufficient time to the worship of Allah in order to reach the heights of spiritual glory, which in fact is the purpose of existence in this world. As explained in the commentary of verse 3 of this surah, *salat* has been made obligatory for all believers because, on account of its style and substance, man gets rid of pride and arrogance. *Zakat*, giving in the way of Allah, has also been dealt with in detail therein. These injunctions make every man join the stream of worshippers and seekers of nearness to the ultimate truth.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ۗ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ } 44

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:44]

It is essential to create in-built discipline through reason, and then, as a model, advise others to do good, otherwise empty advice is likely to be ineffective .

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ ۗ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى الْخَاشِعِينَ } 45

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:45]

Wasta-inu (seek help) applies to worldly as well as spiritual matters as stated in verse 5 of al Fatihah. *Sabr* (patience) and *salat* (prayer) curb vain desires, pride and self-indulgence and lead to humility, acceptance and obedience. The Arabic word *sabr* has many shades of implied suggestions -

willingness to endure, submission, self-control, serenity, poise, and ability to continue. *Salat* has been explained in verse 3 of this surah. To liberate the human ego from the clutches of the excessive attachment to bodily wants and material success, a refined discipline has to be built through subordinating the body to the control of the spiritual energy, otherwise mere formal rituals and recitation of chants and charms do not help man to rise above the level of animal life, as has been shown by Ali ibna abi Talib. The whole world bears witness to the fact that in wisdom, spiritual achievements, and bodily strength there is no one who can be compared with him. He stands high and above in the select company of the most devoted servants of Allah. The lives of the Holy Prophet, Bibi Fatimah, his daughter and the Holy Imams is a brilliant light which throws light on the path to be followed by the sincere faithful who seek assistance (*wasta-inu*) to build up the balanced character mentioned above, and referred to in this verse. It is reported that whenever the Holy Prophet or any of the holy Imams, or Bibi Fatimah faced any difficulty, they prayed *salat* and sought Allah's help.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا رَبِّهِمْ وَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ} 46

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:46]

The reward of spiritual discipline and worship of Allah is the certainty of the knowledge of the return to Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word *liqa* (meeting or encounter) has been used in the Quran many times. It is wrong to interpret it as seeing. The theory of the possibility of seeing Allah (*ruyat*) in this world or in the hereafter assumes the personification of God, which is a fanciful conjecture against the fundamental article of the faith (the absolute unity), therefore, has been rejected by the Holy Quran: "vision perceives Him not" (An-am: 103), and the Holy Prophet and the holy Imams.

Ali ibna abi Talib says:

I do not worship the God whom I cannot see, not through sight, (but) through insight.

Therefore, *liqa* means realisation through insight and not by physical vision.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ} 47

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:47]

The Bani Israil were Allah's chosen people. It was His favour that they were graced with many prophets. There were more prophets among them than the rest of the people of the world put together. Allah saved them from the merciless persecution of the Fir-awns and provided them with heavenly bounties, but instead of making use of the guidance and the blessings to reach a higher spiritual level they fell into the degradation of depravity and disbelief.

Aqa Mahdi Pooya says:

"You", the addressee, in this verse, are not only those who were present and were guilty of ingratitude but also their forefathers and ancestors. This is applicable to all humanity. It is a reminder to call to mind Allah's favours and bounties bestowed on mankind.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَأَنفُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا يُؤْخَذُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ} 48

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:48]

On the day of resurrection absolute justice will prevail. The chosen people also will be judged in view of their actions.

If "nor shall intercession be accepted" is not understood by knowing its particular use in this verse,

and by making reference to other verses of the Quran in this connection, every ordinary reader comes to a wrong conclusion.

Allah has prescribed for Himself mercy (An-am: 12 and 54), and says in verse 87 of Yusuf that verily, none despairs of Allah's mercy save disbelieving people. The just Allah is also the merciful Lord. His mercy conditions His justice.

The verses, which make certain that in the divine scheme of reward and punishment the "institution" of intercession has been firmly established, are quoted below:

Who can intercede with Him, except by His permission.

(BAQARAH: 255)

They shall have no power of intercession, save he who has taken a promise from the merciful.

(MARYAM: 87)

On that day no intercession avails, save (that of) him to whom the merciful has given permission and whose word He accepts.

(TAHA: 109)

There is no intercessor save after His permission;

(YUNUS: 3)

There are several such verses in the Quran which prove untrue the theory of non-availability of intercession propagated by a misguided school of thought among the Muslims.

The Holy Prophet and the thoroughly purified Imams (Ahzab: 33) are those upon whom Allah has bestowed (*an-amta alayhim* - Fatihah :7) the power of intercession.

The word *shafa* (to pair or to join a thing to its like) is the root of *shafa-at*, which means intercession. It can be favourable or unfavourable, as per verse 85 of al Nisa. It signifies the loving attachment of a person with his ideal or model whom he follows. On the day of judgement the wicked and the virtuous will be separated, therefore, it will be a day of pairing of the souls according to their affinity and attachment in this world - "remember the day when We will summon every people with their Imam (leader)", says verse 71 of Bani Israil.

The inadmissibility of intercession here is in the case of those who not only do not avoid evil but make a choice of wickedness as their mode of life; which is the direct result of their wilful rejection of the path of the thoroughly purified, adherence to whose guidance would have saved them from eternal damnation.

It is this despair of the non-availability of Allah's mercy which had compelled the founders of the Christian Church to invent the doctrine of atonement - God, in order to pardon man, in spite of His justice, incarnated Himself into the form a begotten son, called Jesus, and then got Himself killed so that the price of the sins of man be paid. This unreasonable idea of redemption gives man licence to sin as and when he likes.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word *yawm*, in this verse, refers to the life of the hereafter which includes the term of life beginning with the departure of the soul till the final resurrection. In some verses of the Quran it is said that every human being will undergo a trial on the day of final resurrection as an individual, whereas some other verses suggest groups of people, along with their leaders, will come before the Lord. According to some verses the wicked will be condemned without being permitted to put forward their lame excuses, whereas other state that some of the wicked will accuse their leaders for misleading them. There is no contradiction. In fact there are several varying stages in the intermediary period as well as in the final phase. The examination of every soul according to its individual deeds

may differ from the accountability of its social behaviour. A man may be condemned as an individual but on account of his attachment to the divinely chosen *wasilah* (support and influence), he may be redeemed. The Quran, in many places, asserts the effectiveness of intercession, therefore, the negation here either refers to a particular condition or to the fact that no intercession offered by a soul on its own behalf shall be accepted. Only those who have been authorised by Allah shall have the right to intercede.

The wavering between belief and disbelief by the Bani Israil is also visible among the followers of other prophets. All the messengers of Allah patiently put up with this kind of attitude in order to check desertion in the early stages of the propagation of the faith. Drift from the truth and reversion to falsehood was discouraged, and the doors of repentance were kept open, but only a few took advantage of the leniency.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَإِذْ نَجَّيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ يَسُومُونَكُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ يُدَبِّحُونَ أَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَيَسْتَحْيُونَ نِسَاءَكُمْ وَفِي ذَلِكُمْ بَلَاءٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ عَظِيمٌ} 49

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:49]

Specifically, this verse reminds the Bani Israil of the miseries the Fir-awns inflicted upon them and how they were saved. In general, it is a reminder to all who have been saved from past afflictions and given the knowledge of wisdom arising from such circumstances. The details of their sorry plight under the Fir-awns have been given in the old testament:

So they (Egyptians) treated their Israelite slaves with ruthless severity, and made life bitter for them with servitude setting them to work on clay and brick-making, and all sorts of work in the fields. In short they made ruthless use of them as slaves in every kind of hard labour. Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives: "When you are attending the Hebrew women in childbirth, watch as the child is delivered and if it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, let her live."

(Exodus 1: 13 to 16)

Allah kept them safe from the King's designs:

But they were god-fearing women. They did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do, but let the boys live. So he summoned those Hebrew midwives and asked them why they had done this and let the boys live. They told Firawn that Hebrew women were not like Egyptian women. When they were in labour they gave birth before the midwife could get to them. So God made the midwives prosper, and the people (Israelites) increased in number and in strength.

(Exodus-1: 17 to 20)

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَإِذْ فَرَقْنَا بِكُمْ الْبَحْرَ فَأَنْجَيْنَاكُمْ وَأَغْرَقْنَا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ} 50

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:50]

The cleaving of the (Red) sea was a real occurrence. In this way Allah saved the Bani Israil because at that time they were in submission to the truth.

A detailed account of the event is given in the old testament. Please refer to Exodus 14: 1 to 31.

To escape from the pursuing Fir-awn and his army Musa and his followers reached the Red Sea. Fir-awn was almost upon them when the Jews looked up and saw the Egyptians close behind. Then Allah commanded Musa to strike the water with his rod, as there were no boats to carry them across the sea. Musa did as was told. A dry path appeared. They easily reached the other side After their crossing

Fir-awn with his army followed the same path but in midway the water in the sea again began to flow and the pursuing enemy was drowned, while the Bani Israil were watching from the shore. Also refer to verse 90 of Yunus.

Since a self-appointed prophet, the founder of the Ahmadi school, could not rise above the level of ordinary human beings, he tried to deprive every genuine prophet of Allah of the special honours Allah had bestowed upon His chosen representatives. To him there is no extraordinary (miraculous) aspect in this occurrence. He and his followers do not believe in the divinely endowed spiritual strength of the true prophets of Allah. They say that *bahr* means a river, not sea (which is not true according to Arabic literature); and that at the time when Musa and his followers crossed, it was shallow, but the army of Firawn was swept away by a tide. In the line of wilful misinterpretation it is forgotten that the tide which saved Musa and his followers from the pursuit of the Firawn's army was a miracle, else how could the coming of tide in shallow waters be justified, unless it is attributed to the will of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 4)

51} وَإِذْ وَاَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰٓ اَرْبَعِيْنَ اَيَّامًا لَّا يَلِيْهُ تَمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمْ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَاَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُوْنَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:51]

Musa stayed on the mount for forty days after which the law of Tawrat was given to him. He observed fast on all the forty days. According to verse 142 of al Araf the stay was for thirty days, but subsequently the term was extended by ten more days. The delay created doubts in the minds of the Bani Israil about the genuineness of the prophethood of Musa, and unjustly they took up the worship of the calf.

Musa had appointed his brother, Harun, as his successor and deputy, during his absence. Likewise the Holy Prophet, at the time of migrating to Madina from Makka, had chosen Ali to sleep in his bed, during the night of *hijrat*, and to return the deposits, kept in trust with him, to the owners; commissioned Ali to take charge of the administration in Madina when he went to Tabuk to encounter the enemy; and he had also assigned to Ali the responsibility of delivering al Barat to the people of Makka, because as per the divine command only he or Ali could deliver the divine revelation. "Ali is to me as Harun was to Musa", declared the Holy Prophet. As the people of Musa violated their oath of loyalty to Harun and followed Samayri the magician, the *ummah* of Muhammad also turned their back upon Ali and pursued their own fancies. In this way the *iman* of the people was tested, and they were found doing injustice to themselves. As stated in verse 3 of this surah a true believer must believe in the unseen. In view of the limitations of human wisdom, reliance upon the divinely chosen guides is the surest way to the right path. If one does not follow the Holy Prophet and his divinely chosen holy Imams, it is the deviator who suffers the consequences by being unjust to himself because the guides remain independent of the mischief of the deserters.

(see commentary for verse 4)

52} تَمَّ عَفْوْنَا عَنْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذٰلِكَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُوْنَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:52]

Gratitude and glorification of Allah are the rewards of submission and recognition of the state of submission. Gratefulness is contentment.

(see commentary for verse 4)

53} وَاِذْ اَتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ الْكِتٰبَ وَالْفُرْقَانَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُوْنَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:53]

Furqan means that which teaches to distinguish between good and evil or between truth and falsehood. In verse 41 of al Anfal it is used to refer to the mental awakening experienced by the Muslims after the battle of Badr. The Quran is referred to as *furqan* in verse one of al Furqan.

(see commentary for verse 4)

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اِنَّكُمْ ظَلَمْتُمْ اَنْفُسَكُمْ بِاتِّخَاذِكُمُ الْعِجْلَ فَتُوبُوا اِلَىٰ بَارِيكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ عِنْدَ بَارِيكُمْ فَتَابَ

54} عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:54]

The outer meaning is that the righteous among the Bani Israil should get rid of the evil ones, the calf-worshippers, even if they were their own beloved kith and kin. It is stated in the Bible that three thousand persons were killed. The inner meaning could be the annihilation of selfishness, pride and other base passions. In any event, as stated here, carrying out Allah's command brings about purity and forgiveness.

As stated in verse 51 of this surah those who sin, in fact, do injustice to themselves, go astray and become poorer by missing the divine mercy.

(see commentary for verse 4)

55} وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نُؤْمِنَ لَكَ حَتَّىٰ نَرَىٰ اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْكُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:55]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Those who refuse to believe in the unseen (Baqarah: 3) inevitably go for idolatry. This tendency of demanding impractical divine manifestations was also evident in the opponents of the Holy Prophet (Nisa: 153)

(see commentary for verse 4)

56} ثُمَّ بَعَثْنَاكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوْتِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:56]

A group of seventy (stupid) elders demanded to see Allah and hear His voice, but when the manifestation of the divine glory came on them, they were destroyed (see Araf: 155). The lightning appeared on the demand of the people, therefore, it was not a punishment, and the word *mawt* refers to cessation of life, not stupor, as the Ahmadi commentator tries to misinterpret this verse. In verse 143 of al Araf *wa kharra Musa sa-iqa* means Musa fell down senseless, and *falamma afaqa* means when he recovered, whereas, here, in the case of the elders the word *mawt* (death or cessation of life) and *ba-atha* (raising after death) are used.

The tendency of Ahmadi commentators to deny miracles is the result of the lack of ability to understand the intellectual development of mankind. The historical events and the reactions of the people in the days of Musa and other prophets are recorded in the Bible. In those days miracles were frequently manifested to convince the people who were not aware of the laws governing the operation of creation, and therefore, could not be convinced through rational arguments.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The people asked Musa to show them the proof of his prophethood by requesting Allah to appear in person. In their foolishness they did not know that corporeality is for the creatures, not for the uncreated creator, therefore, their demand was met by another proof - the raising after death.

(see commentary for verse 4)

57} وَظَلَّلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْغَمَامَ وَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَنَّاءَ وَالسَّلْوَىٰ كُلُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَمَا ظَلَمُونَا وَلَكِنْ كَانُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:57]

"When the Bani Israil departed from Egypt towards the Philistine via the Red Sea, the Lord all the time went before them, by day a pillar of cloud to guide them on their journey, by night a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel night and day." (Exodus 13)

Manna and *salwa* are two heavenly foods not requiring toil to obtain.

Traditions confirm that there was always a similar pillar of cloud over the head of the Holy Prophet during his journeys to Syria, before he was commissioned to make public his mission of prophethood.

(see commentary for verse 4)

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا ادْخُلُوا هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةَ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمْ رَغَدًا وَادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُولُوا حِطَّةٌ نَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ خَطَايَاكُمْ وَسَتْرِيذُ
{الْمُحْسِنِينَ} 58

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:58]

The city mentioned here may be in the land of Canaan according to Numbers 33:52 of the Old Testament.

As commanded by Allah, Musa gave instructions to the Bani Israil to enter the city through its gate prostrating, and saying: "I seek forgiveness of the Lord and turn repentant unto Him", because therein they would live in peace and harmony with plenty of provisions.

The Holy Prophet informed his followers, Muslims, about another city with its gate. He said:
I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate.

If anyone wants to come into contact with the divinely endowed wisdom of the Holy Prophet, he should first get familiar with Ali not only by building up close attachment with him but also by paying homage to him with expression of reverence. In Tafsir Durr al Manthur, Jalaluddin Suyuti quotes Ali ibna abi Talib:

Our position in Islam to the Muslims is the same as the gate of *hitta* was to the Bani Israil.

Those who do good to others get more bounties from Allah.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَفْسُقُونَ} 59

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:59]

The Bani Israil changed the saying (*hitta* - pardon) which had been spoken to them for another saying (*hinta*-wheat), also mentioned in verses 161 and 162 of al Araf.

Those who unjustly change the word or covenant or command of Allah for something other than the original, are duly punished.

"Thus the plague which had attacked the Israelites was brought to a stop; but twenty-four thousand had already died."

(Number 25: 9)

Those who do not pay attention to the declaration of the Holy Prophet (I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate) suffer spiritual degradation and go astray.

(see commentary for verse 4)

وَإِذْ اسْتَسْقَىٰ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبْ بِعَصَاكَ الْحَجَرَ فَانْفَجَرَتْ مِنْهُ اثْنَتَا عَشْرَةَ عَيْنًا قَدْ عَلِمَ كُلُّ أُنَاسٍ مَشْرَبَهُمْ كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا
{مِنْ رِزْقِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تَعْنُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ مُفْسِدِينَ} 60

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:60]

Exodus 17: 1 to 6 narrate that when there was no water for the people to drink Allah asked Musa to take with him some of the elders of Israil and the staff with which he had struck the Red Sea. When Musa struck the rock, water poured out of it. Twelve springs for the twelve tribes of the Bani Israil gushed out from that rock, as each tribe wanted to have a separate spring for its use.

To deny the extraordinary (miraculous) events in the lives of the prophets, the Ahmadi commentator misinterprets this verse. He says that Musa was commanded to walk into the mountains where he found already flowing springs, and wrongly quotes Exodus 5:27 which, in fact, refers to some other occasion when salty water was turned sweet for the Bani Israil. This is plain mischief-making .

Islam prevents man from making mischief and lays stress on peace and harmony.

(see commentary for verse 4)

وَإِذْ قُلْتُمْ يَا مُوسَىٰ لَنْ نَصْبِرَ عَلَىٰ طَعَامٍ وَاحِدٍ فَادْعُ لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُخْرِجْ لَنَا مِمَّا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ بَقْلِهَا وَقِثَّائِهَا وَفُومِهَا وَعَدَسِيهَا وَبَصَلِهَا
قَالَ أَتَسْتَبْدِلُونَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَدْنَىٰ بِالَّذِي هُوَ خَيْرٌ اهْبِطُوا مِصْرًا فَإِنَّ لَكُمْ مَّا سَأَلْتُمْ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ وَالْمَسْكَنَةُ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ

{اللَّهُ ذَلِكُ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ذَلِكُ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ} 61

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:61]

One sin leads to another. Disobedience at a lower level gradually makes man bold and he begins to exceed the limits until he finally finds himself engulfed into the deep waters of sinfulness, disconnecting all his links with the grace and mercy of the Lord. This is how the Bani Israil became the murderers of the prophets of Allah because they all came with one message:

"There is no god save Allah."

And you say "If we had been alive in our father's time, we should never have taken part with them in the murder of the prophets."

(Matthew 23: 30)

"I send you therefore prophets, sages, and teachers; some of them you will kill and crucify, others you will flog in your synagogues and hound from city to city. And so, on you will fall the guilt of all the innocent blood spilt on the ground, from innocent Abel to Zechariah son of Berachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar."

(Matthew 23: 34 and 35)

Exactly in the same manner, the Muslims neglected the commands of the Holy Prophet about his Ahl ul Bayt. First they ignored the high status of the Ahl ul Bayt and then deprived them of their rights; ultimately they killed the holy Imams one by one. So, those who hear or write or read the accounts of the sufferings of the holy Imams caused by the people, with whom they feel closely associated in one way or the other, and quietly ignore their heinous crimes without expressing dislike, disgust and contempt, should be held responsible for those crimes as if they themselves have committed them. Particularly in the case of Imam Husayn, such persons will stand in the row of the actual murderers on the day of judgement.

Covetous for the material products of the earth, dissatisfied with the heavenly (spiritual) aspects of life, a better nourishment, the Bani Israil fell into abasement and humiliation, because they exchanged that which was better for that which was worse.

To know the behaviour of the Bani Israil, please refer to Numbers 11: 1 to 27 .

(see commentary for verse 4)

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} 62

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:62]

Sabeans belonged to Chaldean religion. Their religion was much modified at various times and places by Jewish, Gnostic and Zoroastrian influences, and so there are conflicting accounts of them in various Muslim authors. Star-worship was the distinctive feature of their religion, otherwise they were monotheists.

Before saying that whoever believes in Allah and the last day, and does good, not becoming a Muslim even after Islam has been chosen as the religion of Allah, is entitled to be blessed by Allah, the following verse should be taken into consideration:

And whoso seeks as religion other than Islam it will not be accepted from him, and he will be among the losers in the hereafter.

(Ali Imran: 85)

And to remove misunderstanding, it should be noted that this verse refers to those Sabeans, Jews and Christians who, as sincere faithful, followed the original teachings of their respective prophets, without ever corrupting the true message, and believing in the prophecy of the advent of Muhammad made known by Musa, Isa and other prophets (see Baqarah: 40), and also those of them who lived in

the days of the Holy Prophet but died before the news of his proclamation of the promised prophethood could reach them, because surely they would have come into the fold of Islam if they had known about it. Belief in the unity of Allah and the day of judgement and doing good is the spirit of Islam. This was the religion all the messengers of Allah preached to their people.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَأِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ } 63

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:63]

The Ahmadi commentator again denies the lifting of the mountain over the Bani Israil, because of his inability to read history in its true perspective, explained in the commentary of verse 56 of this surah. In verse 171 of al Araf the almighty Allah says: "We shook the mountain above them as if it were a covering and they thought that it was going to fall upon them;" therefore, the dishonesty or the lack of good sense in the thinking of the Ahmadi commentator is clearly evident.

"Hold fast" means to be sure of that good which has been bestowed so that certainty becomes second nature; and to remember is to be saved from darkness, loss and agony of non-remembrance. Be firm and aware of what is evil and harmful so that it is avoided.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ ظَعُنًا لَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَكُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ } 64

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:64] (see commentary for verse 4)

{وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمُ الَّذِينَ اعْتَدَوْا مِنْكُمْ فِي السَّبْتِ فَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ } 65

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:65]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Sabbath day was reserved exclusively for prayers. To do anything else was forbidden. The people invented crafty methods through which the fish got trapped. In this way they resorted to fishing which was also forbidden on the Sabbath days. In view of their persistent violations in spite of the repeated warnings given by the prophets., they were transformed into apes. After three days all of them died. A powerful wind swept their corpses into the sea. This incident took place in the town of Elah, on the coast of the Red Sea, during the time of prophet Dawud.

This transformation has again been stated in verse 166 of al Araf.

Misinterpreting the Quran, by inappropriately comparing the wording of one passage to the other passages without any grammatical reasoning or the identity of the meaning, is an attempt to confuse the purport of one with the other, which the Holy Prophet has strongly prohibited, and declared that it is as bad as infidelity.

The following wonderful events, which became operative as supernatural phenomena, are narrated in the Quran as the miracles given to Musa to furnish the proof of his prophethood.:

1. The rod of Musa transformed into a serpent.
2. The brilliance of the palm of Musa.
3. The splitting of the sea.
4. The gushing of water from the rock.
5. The coming of *manna* and *salwa* from the heavens.
6. The shadowing of the cloud over the Bani Israil.
7. The raising of the dead.
8. The suspension of the mountain over the people.
9. The transformation of the transgressors into apes.

Denial of the divine signs, which appeared due to the ability of the supernatural energy to make adjustments in nature leads to the rejection of the true religion of Allah preached by the last messenger of Allah, as is evident in the case of the Ahmadi movement - a hypocritical and dishonest camouflage and a gross disloyalty to the true faith. The Ahmadi commentator adds "as" before the word apes, in order to deny the divine sign.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{فَجَعَلْنَاهَا نَكَالًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهَا وَمَا خَلْفَهَا وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ} 66

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:66] (see commentary for verse 4)

{وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَذْبَحُوا بَقْرَةً ۚ قَالُوا أَتَتَّخِذُنَا هُزُوًا ۖ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ} 67

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:67]

If a man was murdered and the people were unable to trace out the murderer, according to the original law of Musa, 50 men of the suspected tribe had to swear their innocence and ignorance and pay the blood-money to the inheritors of the deceased. When a case like this actually took place the Bani Israil rebelled, argued, doubted and rejected the doctrine of truthful submission and guidance. They insisted that Musa should pray to Allah to reveal the name of the murderer, which Musa was rightly refusing because it was contrary to the divine laws in force. In fact it was a conspiracy to test the prophetic powers of Musa. In answer, Allah commanded them to sacrifice a cow. They were greatly disturbed by this command because under the influence of the heathen ideologies, cows and bulls were held in high veneration. They again started to pester Musa with endless questions. They thought that narrowing down the specification of the cow would result in non-availability of such an animal. Imam Ali bin Musa al Rida has rightly observed that any cow would have been sufficient, but the more the Bani Israil made a fuss, the more did Allah impose restrictions as a punishment to their persistent demands for unnecessary details. Musa, under the divine command, was able to make them purchase the prescribed cow by paying a large sum to a very holy and pious man who owned such a cow. It was a reluctant compliance.

The cow was slain and its tail was put on the sacrum of the dead man. The dead man came to life and pointed out the same man as the murderer, who had raised the cry for his blood-money. The murderer was his nephew. The body was concealed in a nearby village. The Bani Israil, as said above, wanted to test Musa. They were sure that Musa had no means of finding out the murderer to the full satisfaction of the people. The unfolding event proved their limitations. Allah brought forth that which they were going to hide.

The patience of the prophet of Allah with the doubters is a proof of his divinely inspired concern for the people. In a similar way, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, many of the Muslims quarrelled over his judgement and doubted his will and intention that Ali ibna abi Talib should lead and establish Islam-original.

Since all human beings have been created by Allah, killing a person and what he represents is like destroying the entire creation (see verse 32 of al Ma-idah).

The Ahmadi commentator says that the meaning of *qatl* in verse 72 is "almost dead" and refers to verses 157 and 158 of al Nisa wherein "the raising of Isa alive unto Allah" has been mentioned, and tries to make people believe that this verse also refers to Isa. In his zeal to fabricate falsehood he has overlooked the sentence: "And Allah brings forth what you hide". The Jews had no doubt about the crucifixion of Isa, nor concealed it, nor did they dispute about it. It makes clear that the Ahmadi school does not believe in the omnipotent power of Allah.

(see commentary for verse 4)

{قَالُوا ادْع لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا فَارِضٌ وَلَا بِكْرٌ عَوَانٌ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلُوا مَا تُؤْمَرُونَ} 68

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:68] (see commentary for verse 67)(see commentary for verse 4)

{قَالُوا ادْع لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَنَا مَا لَوْثُهَا ۚ قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ صَفْرَاءٌ فَاقِعٌ لَوْنُهَا تَسُرُّ النَّاظِرِينَ} 69

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:69] (see commentary for verse 67)(see commentary for verse 4)

{قَالُوا ادْع لَنَا رَبَّكَ يُبَيِّن لَنَا مَا هِيَ ۚ إِنَّ الْبَقَرَ تَشَابَهَ عَلَيْنَا وَإِنَّا إِن شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَمُهْتَدُونَ} 70

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:70] (see commentary for verse 67)(see commentary for verse 4)

{قَالَ إِنَّهُ يَقُولُ إِنَّهَا بَقَرَةٌ لَا ذَلُولٌ تُثِيرُ الْأَرْضَ وَلَا تَسْفِي الْحَرثَ مُسَلَّمَةٌ لَا شِيَةَ فِيهَا ۚ قَالُوا الْآنَ جِئْتُ بِالْحَقِّ ۚ فَدَبَّحُوا بِهَا وَمَا كَادُوا يَفْعَلُونَ} 71

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:71] (see commentary for verse 67)(see commentary for verse 4)

{وَإِذ قَتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا فَادَّارَأْتُمْ فِيهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُخْرِجٌ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ} 72

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:72] (see commentary for verse 67)(see commentary for verse 4)

{فَقُلْنَا اضْرِبُوهُ بِبَعْضِهَا ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُحْيِي اللَّهُ الْمَوْتَىٰ وَيُرِيكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ} 73

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:73] (see commentary for verse 67)

{ثُمَّ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَهِيَ كَالْحِجَارَةِ أَوْ أَشَدُّ قَسْوَةً ۚ وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْحِجَارَةِ لَمَا يَتَفَجَّرُ مِنْهُ الْأَنْهَارُ ۗ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَشَقَّقُ فَيَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ الْمَاءُ ۗ وَإِنَّ مِنْهَا لَمَا يَهْبِطُ مِنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ} 74

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:74]

Even after witnessing the soul-stirring event the Bani Israil lost no time in reverting to disbelief. They were like stones, worse. than stones, because even a stone follows its nature. It does not rebel. In

the thin layers of stones water is stored, which can be drawn out. Springs issues out of them. The nature of *qalb* (heart) is to turn - to change old habits and be intimate with truth; live, and die for the truth. If a man has the required degree of faith in Allah and develops the strength of conviction, he can make use of nature around him, because by native volition every object yields to the laws operative under the will of Allah. Therefore the messengers of Allah and the representatives of Allah had demonstrated extraordinary events (miracles) to prove that on account of the divine endowments in them, they could make the material phenomena yield to their will in complete submission to the will of Allah. The Quran repeatedly declares that everything, even inanimate objects, which seem to be fixed and immovable and unable to do anything of their own accord, volunteer and surrender to their creator. And there is none in the universe who does not sing or celebrate the glory of the Lord. See verse 44 of Bani Israil. So to deny "there are some of them which fall down for fear of Allah" under the cover of allusive symbolism is a guessing game of the Ahmadi and other of its kind theoreticians, who are apparently ignorant of the latest scientific findings. In the opinion of many scholars inanimate matter possesses a kind of rudimentary sensibility which can be stimulated to respond to a proper stimulus. The law of gravitation which maintains the form and movement of the whole universe confirms this theory.

{أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ} 75

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:75]

People who are not aware of the truth readily become believers when they see the light of truth, but those who know the truth and yet deny it remain disbelievers.

The Jews and the Christians of Arabia were expecting the advent of the Holy Prophet, in view of the prophecies made by Musa, Isa and other Prophets, (see Baqarah: 40), therefore, they used to warn the pagans:

"Wait! The promised one comes and punishes you all for your wickedness".

Their attitude towards Islam, before *hijrat*, was not hostile, if not friendly, but as the influence and

the power of the Muslims increased, they stopped talking about the prophecies mentioned in their scriptures and prevented others from referring to them. Though *yuharrifunahu* here means misinterpretation and not any material change in the wording, yet it is proved that the pre-Islamic scriptures had been misinterpreted (*tahrif ma-nawi*) as well as tampered with by omission, addition, and substitution of letters, words and sentences (*tahrif lafzi*), as mentioned in the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the periodicals published by the Watch Tower Society. What has been discovered today after extensive research by independent scholars has been disclosed by the Quran in this verse.

وَإِذَا لَقُوا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَا بِبَعْضِهِمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ قَالُوا أَتُحَدِّثُونَهُمْ بِمَا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لِيُحَاجُّوكُمْ بِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ {76}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:76]

Those Jews, who only pretended to have accepted Islam, had close relations with the rabbis. In their meetings, the clever rabbis, as stated in the commentary of Baqarah: 42, reprimanded the less-careful converts for their unscrupulous utterings about the prophecies written in their scriptures regarding the advent of the Holy Prophet. They were afraid of giving the believers, through such disclosures, an upper hand at the time of argumentation, which could make the true seekers of the truth among them go into the fold of Islam in sincerity.

{أَوْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا يُسِرُّونَ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ {77}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:77]

In continuation of verses 75 and 76 of this surah this verse says that the truth will prevail in spite of the false notion of the Jews that if they do not make known the prophecies about the advent of Muhammad, the last prophet of Allah, the people will never accept Islam.

{وَمِنْهُمْ أُمِّيُونَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا أَمَانِيٍّ وَإِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا يَظُنُّونَ {78}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:78]

The crafty scholars, among the Jews, kept the knowledge of the scriptures exclusively to themselves and told only lies in front of the illiterates in order to exert and maintain power over those of them who did not know the books. It is a warning to mankind in general that the illiterate, as opposed to the scheming scholar, is the innocent victim of priest-class falsehood and tyranny. Barring the common people from access to means of gaining knowledge, the clever set successfully maintains exclusive control and power, deliberately keeping others deprived, and in darkness.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word *ummi* generally means one who can neither write nor read. Here it is used for those Jews who could neither read nor write. In many places the Quran addresses the Arabs as *ummies*. With reference to the use of *ummi* for the Holy Prophet, commentators say that it is either because the Holy Prophet could neither write nor read, or because he was one of the Arabs, or because he was the inhabitant of the city of Makka known as the *Ummul-Qura*.

Ummi can also be derived from the word *umm*-the mother. *Ummi* means the person who remains the same in his native endowments as was born, without receiving any education or training from any (outside) source. The Holy Prophet did not receive knowledge or education from any mortal but by Allah Himself. He was born with divinely endowed wisdom and remained the same, without letting any worldly agency influence his self, tutored and perfected by Allah Himself.

Allah has revealed to you the book and the wisdom and taught you what you did not know. Great has been the grace of Allah on you.

Please refer to verse 12 of Ya Sin, verses 1 to 4 of al Rahman and verses 4 and 5 of al Najm.

It is He who raised among the *ummies* a messenger from amongst them, who recites His signs to them, reforms them and teaches them the book and the wisdom (JUMU-AH: 2), so it is absurd to believe that Allah had sent an illiterate to teach the book and the wisdom to the illiterates.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq has said that the conscience of every human being tells him not to follow blindly any one who pretends to be a guide without having the necessary merits, therefore, he cannot wholly blame others for being ignorant of the divine guidance because of the trickery of the false guides he chooses to follow.

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ بِهِ نَمْنًا قَلِيلًا فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا كَتَبَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا
79} يَكْسِبُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:79]

In order to confuse the people so that they could not see in the Holy Prophet the qualities mentioned in their books and rightly identify him as the promised prophet, they had made alterations in the holy scriptures. By corrupting the books they had corrupted themselves.

وَقَالُوا لَنْ تَمَسَّنَا النَّارُ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَةً قُلْ أَنْتَخَذْتُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عَهْدًا فَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ ؕ أَمْ تَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ 80}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:80]

According to George Sale, "the Jews believe that no person, be he ever so wicked, or of whatever sect, shall remain in hell above eleven months or at the most a year except Dathan or Abiram. the atheists who will be tormented there to all eternity ."

بَلَىٰ مَنْ كَسَبَ سَيِّئَةً وَأَحَاطَتْ بِهِ خَطِيئَتُهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ 81}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:81]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Earning (obtaining a return) is quite different from falling into evil. Those who earn the wages of sin are enclosed in sin. One sin leads to another sin. It is a vicious and unending cycle. Willing yielding to evil for self advancement, erects a fortress of wickedness brick by brick; and access to good becomes impossible. They are enclosed in error. Sinning becomes their nature, as the conscience is paralysed. Total abandonment to evil obtains eternal punishment. They are the people of hell. Man finds himself in such a hopeless situation only when he breaks the covenant made with the Lord and disconnects all links of attachment with the divinely commissioned guides (Baqarah: 38). Even a little liking for the goodness of the holy Imams may change the lifestyle of a habitual sinner.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَنَّةِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ 82}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:82]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا وَأَقِيمُوا
83} الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ثُمَّ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِّنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:83]

The covenant is a contract of guidance. Every clause is a command of Allah. *Tawhid*, worship and adoration of none other than Allah, is the first and the foremost command.

Call upon Him with sincere (and exclusive) obedience.

Turning to a *ghayrallah* is as bad as surrendering to Shaytan who is an open enemy of man.

For this reason recitation of al Fatihah has been made obligatory in every *salat*.

One is born into this world through parents, and therefore he who is on the path of guidance cannot but do good to parents (Luqman: 13). Parents should be loved, respected, obeyed and looked after in health and sickness. To walk ahead of them, to shout in their presence, to lose temper on account of any of their actions, or even to look at them with displeasure is unworthy of a true believer. In a wider sense, teachers and guardians are also parents - the spiritual source of guidance.

The Holy Prophet said:

"I and Ali are the fathers of the *ummah*."

In the Old Testament the covenant made with the Bani Israil has been referred to as under:

"He announced the terms of His covenant to you, binding you observe the ten words."

(Deut 4:13)

"You shall have no other god to set against Me."

(Exodus 20: 3)

"Worship the Lord your God."

(Exodus 23: 25)

"At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce for that year and leave it in your settlements so that the Levites, who have no holding or patrimony among you, and the aliens, orphans, and widows in your settlements may come and eat their fill. If you do this the Lord your God will bless you in everything to which you set your hand.

(Deut 14: 28 and 29)

In this verse the significance of the religion of Allah, Islam, has been pointed out. If the commandments of this verse are carried out how peaceful and pleasant would life on earth be!

84} وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ لَا تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَلَا تُخْرِجُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:84]

Ibna Hisham in "Siratun Nabi", and Amir Ali in the "Spirit of Islam" say that this reminder is directed to the Bani Israil, who entered into a treaty with the Holy Prophet at Madina.

A few clauses are quoted below:

"Whosoever is rebellious, or seeks to spread enmity and sedition, the hand of every man shall be against him, even if he be a son. Whosoever of the Jews follows us shall have aid and succour; they shall not be injured, nor shall any enemy be aided against them. The Jewish clans in alliance with the several tribes of Madina are one people with the believers. The Jews will profess their religion, the Muslims theirs. As with the Jews, so with their adherents. No one shall go forth to war excepting with the permission of Muhammad, but this shall not hinder any from seeking lawful revenge. The Jews shall be responsible for their expenditure, the Muslims for theirs, but if attacked each shall come to the assistance of the other. Madina shall be sacred and inviolable for all that join this treaty; controversies and disputes shall be referred to for the decision of God and His Prophet. None shall join the men of Makka or their allies, for verily the engaging parties are bound together against every one that shall threaten Madina. War and peace shall be made in common."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Although the Jews acknowledged and witnessed the divine command not to shed blood of their people, nor drive them away out of their habitations, yet they transgressed. This Jewish attitude was

conspicuously noticeable in the nature of the Muslim *ummah*, when they killed, tormented and abused the holy family of the Holy Prophet in Kerbala and after Kerbala.

Imam Ali bin Husayn al Zayn al Abidin had said:

In view of the clear instructions of the Holy Prophet and the decisive injunctions of the Quran it is obligatory to love, revere and follow the Ahl ul Bayt, but, even if the prophet had commanded the *ummah* to hate and abuse his children, they could not have been able to do worse than what they did to us.

They persecuted the Ahl ul Bayt in whichever town they took shelter, forced them to drift from place to place, and at last surrounded them from all sides in the desert of Kerbala, and then murdered in cold blood, all the male friends, relatives and companions of Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Holy Prophet. They spared no one, not even the six month infant son of the Holy Imam. The persecutors, in devilish frenzy, trampled the bodies of the devoted martyrs under the hooves of their horses, plundered, looted and set the tents of the Ahl ul Bayt on fire. It was a premeditated, ruthless and satanic dance of death. The ladies and children of the holy house in chains, along with the severed heads of the martyrs, walked through the streets of Kufa and Damascus (to the court of Yazid). The tragedy of Kerbala casts a gloom upon every refined, compassionate and God-fearing soul. It makes hearts bleed, and tears flow. Cries of lamentation reach the heavens.

In the court of Yazid, Bibi Zaynab binta Ali stood up and said in a clear, definite and strong voice:

O Yazid! What would the Holy Prophet say if he sees us in this condition today? Think you O Yazid, that by killing our men and capturing us and reducing us to this state, you have won and we have lost? Then verily you are mistaken. Our cause has been established by Allah and no power on earth can ever do it any harm. The temporal power which you assume is to be counted but only for a very few days and then you shall feel sorry for your tyranny but it shall be in vain. The divine kingdom is with us and shall remain with us for ever. All that you possess is nothing but a passing show and there is nothing divine in it. Verily, Satan holds power on the earth more than all the tyrants together but in the eyes of Allah he is the cursed and the derided one. It appears that sins have encompassed your heart and severed all the links of faith and made you bold to utter the proud words against the truth. "Have they not travelled on the earth and seen how the others before them had met their end? They were far more powerful than them, dug up the earth and built far more than what did they build; and their messengers came to them with clear proofs. It was not for Allah to wrong them, they wronged themselves. Then evil was the end of those who did evil, for they belied the signs of Allah and made fun of them."

ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَتُخْرِجُونَ فَرِيقًا مِنْكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ تَظَاهَرُونَ عَلَيْهِمْ بِالْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ وَإِنْ يَأْتُوكُمْ أُسَارَى تَفَادُوهُمْ وَهُوَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْكُمْ إِخْرَاجُهُمْ أَفَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِبَعْضِ الْكِتَابِ وَتَكْفُرُونَ بِبَعْضٍ فَمَا جَزَاءُ مَنْ يَفْعَلُ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا خِزْيٌ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيَوْمَ تُعْرَضُونَ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ تُرِيدُونَ إِلَىٰ أَشَدِّ الْعَذَابِ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ {85}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:85]

It is said by some commentators that this verse refers to the dual standards of the Jews of Madina.

"The Jewish tribes Bani Qurayza and Bani Nadhir living side by side at Madina made an alliance with Aus and Khazraj, the two rival tribes of Madina respectively, and when the latter fought against each other their allies took part in fighting and thus one Jewish tribe slaughtered and imprisoned the other and laid waste their habitations; but afterwards collected subscriptions for the release of Jewish prisoners, giving reason for this that their law commanded them to redeem the prisoners and they fought for the honour of their allies."

They carried out one command of Allah by ransoming their people but violated the other command

that they should have not slain their people and laid waste their habitations.

{أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ فَلَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ} 86

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:86]

They who bought the life of this world for personal gain and fulfilment of their treacherous designs by using unfair, wicked and brutal means to suppress and usurp the rights of the Ahl ul Bayt, are included among those who shall be punished in the hereafter.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ} 87

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:87]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Whenever the message of truth is not conducive to the selfish interests of the people the (animal) *nafs* rejects it, and the rejection manifests itself in rebellion against the divine covenant and against those who are divinely chosen to guide to the right path.

Although, according to verse 22 of al Mujadilah, Allah guides and inspires every virtuous individual through the spirit, but the repeated mention of *ruhul quds* (the holy spirit), in the verses of the Quran, has a special significance. It is, as far as we know, a very highly refined spiritual entity whose function is to guide, inspire and infuse the prophetic spirit. It also equips the divinely selected individual to exercise miraculous powers.

An impostor, who did not have such a spirit or an angel to guide him, yet claimed prophethood, interprets *ruh* as guidance, which every virtuous individual receives from Allah. According to him, even the help which prophet Isa received from Allah was merely in the form of guidance. In this way he purposely tries to discredit every true messenger of Allah from having any angelic service at his command.

The repeated mention of *ruhul quds* in connection with the prophet Isa clearly establishes the fact that he was particularly chosen for this distinction.

Please refer to the following verses wherein the word holy spirit or spirit has been used:

AL BAQARAH: 253

AL MA-IDA: 110

AL NAHL: 102

AL MUMIN: 15

AL SHURA: 52

AL MUJADILAH: 22

AL NABA: 38

AL QADR: 4

Through *fa-fariqan kadhdhabtum*, the obstinate refusal to believe in the true messengers of Allah, and to carry out those commands which do not serve selfish interests, is disclosed.

In fariqan taqtuluna, the change of tense from the past to the present refers to the attempts the Jews were making to kill the Holy Prophet.

{وَقَالُوا قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ بَلْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَقَلِيلًا مَّا يُؤْمِنُونَ} 88

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:88]

Ghulf can be interpreted either to say "our hearts are covered and encased, therefore, we cannot hear and understand that which the Holy Prophet says", or "our hearts are (already) the repositories

(of knowledge), therefore, we do not need any guidance". In either case, devoid of *iman*, they deserve to be cursed.

وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ كِتَابٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ وَكَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ يَسْتَفْتِحُونَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ مَا عَرَفُوا كَفَرُوا بِهِ فَلَعْنَةُ
{اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ} 89

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:89]

In Islam empty declaration of faith carries no weight. Those who believe must translate their intentions and love of truth into correct actions. People who do so shall dwell in the eternal land of bliss and fulfilment.

As has been explained in the commentary of verse 40 of this surah, and further elaborated in verses 75 to 79, the Jews should have known and accepted that the Holy Prophet was the promised prophet of Allah and he was preaching the truth, since his message was similar in form and language to that which they already had. But the Jews, had more of arrogance and pride in them than faith, and so belied him, thus earning Allah's curse.

بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ بَغْيًا أَنْ يَنْزِلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ طِفَاءً وَأَبْغَضَ عَلَى غَضَبٍ
{وَالْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ} 90

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:90]

These verses are in reply to the arrogance of the Jews. The Jews, out of envy, denied that Allah had sent down Injil on the prophet Isa and the Quran on the Holy Prophet. Although they said that they only believed in what was revealed to the Israelite prophets, despite the prophecy of the promised prophet in their book (see verse 40 of this surah), they still killed their own prophets.

There is no end to the wrath brought about on them which they themselves had earned.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ آمِنُوا بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا تُوْمِنُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا وَيَكْفُرُونَ بِمَا وَرَاءَهُ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَهُمْ قُلْ فَلِمَ تَقْتُلُونَ أَنْبِيَاءَ اللَّهِ
{مِنْ قَبْلٍ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} 91

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:91] (see commentary for verse 90)

{وَلَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مُوسَىٰ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَنْتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ} 92

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:92]

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاسْمَعُوا طَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْعِجْلَ بِكُفْرِهِمْ قُلْ
{بِئْسَمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِهِ إِيمَانُكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} 93

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:93]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Musa asked the Jews to hold fast with firmness to that which Allah had given them after making a covenant with them, but they said, "We listen, and disobey". Likewise, the Holy Prophet demanded allegiance from his followers to Allah's command at Ghadir Khum which they agreed to accept but broke the promise. The Holy Prophet had prophesied that his followers would follow into the footsteps of the followers of Musa.

{قُلْ إِنْ كَانَتْ لَكُمْ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَالِصَةً مِنْ دُونِ النَّاسِ فَتَمَنَّوْا الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} 94

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:94]

The Jews thought that they were Allah's favourites to the exclusion of all other people, and they alone would go to paradise. This preposterous idea made them deny the Holy Prophet in spite of the clear proofs available in their book (see commentary of verse 40 of this surah).

"Desire death, if you are truthful", is a challenge. *Tamannul Mawta* means desire or wish (not invoke or pray) death. If they were so specially favoured by Allah, they did not have to even take the trouble of praying for death; merely desiring it would have received His response. He who loves Allah loves death -to depart from this world and enter the eternal land of bliss and happiness. Also refer to verses 6 and 7 of al Jumu-ah. Everyone of the holy Ahl ul Bayt was always prepared for death and loved it. After receiving the fatal blow Imam Ali said: "By the Lord of the holy Kabah, I have attained success."

The conviction of the Jews was not genuine. They did not believe in what they said. Aware of their own misdeeds, and the way they had corrupted their books, they could not desire death for themselves. On the other hand they were plotting to kill the Holy Prophet, because they knew that the Holy Prophet was a true prophet of Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"Desire death, if you are truthful" is an open challenge. Whoso thinks that the blissful life of the hereafter is exclusively his must always be ready to die. He who is sure of a better life in the hereafter, as the favour of Allah, would not like to prolong his earthly life but would expedite his departure from here. According to Imam Ali, a genuine devotee, the lover or the favourite of Allah, would not let his soul stay in his body for fraction of a moment if his term of life has not been ordained by Allah, because he knows what awaits him in the life of the hereafter. Therefore he is never afraid of death.

Imam Ali said:

"Verily, by Allah I declare that the son of Abu Talib is more familiar with death than a baby is with the breast of his mother."

Therefore, neither the greed for power nor the fear of death, as the opponents of Ali used to think, was the reason for his outspoken analysis of the behaviour of his contemporaries, or his silence in the midst of ruthless deviators and hypocrites.

{وَلَنْ يَتَمَنَّوْهُ أَبَدًا بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ 95}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:95] (see commentary for verse 94)

{وَلَتَجِدَنَّهُمْ أَحْرَصَ النَّاسِ عَلَى حَيَاةٍ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا ۗ يَوَدُّ أَحَدُهُمْ لَوْ يُعَمَّرُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ وَمَا هُوَ بِمُرْضِيهِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ أَنْ يُعَمَّرَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ 96} {بَصِيرٌ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:96] (see commentary for verse 94)

{قُلْ مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِجِبْرِيْلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ 97}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:97]

According to the book of Daniel (12: 1) , Mika-il is the great captain who stands guard over the Jews. So Mika-il was their guardian angel. They disliked Jibra-il, who they thought, always brought punishment. It was Jibra-il through whom the prophets came to know the perverse behaviour of the Jews, and, therefore, they cursed the Jews. It was Jibra-il who announced the birth of John the Baptist, and conveyed the glad tidings to virgin Maryam about the birth of Isa whom the Jews obstinately hated. It was Jibra-il who saved Nebuchadnezzar from their clutches when he was a boy, and he, afterwards, destroyed their temple. Jibra-il was their enemy. This prejudice led them to believe that he was asked to convey the office of prophethood to one of the Jews but he inadvertently went to the Holy Prophet. Abdulla bin Suriya, a Jew, came to the Holy Prophet and asked some questions to test his genuineness. He was convinced that Muhammad was a true messenger of Allah, but when he came to know that it was Jibra-il who conveyed the divine message, he said that he

would not believe in his prophethood because Jibra-il was the enemy of the Jews. In fact, the Jews were the enemies of Jibra-il, who brought Allah's commands and revelations to His prophets, which contained guidance and good news for the believers. Whosoever is the enemy of Allah, His messengers and His angels is an unbeliever. Allah is the enemy of the unbelievers who are described as infidels. Therefore, those who troubled, tortured and killed the Ahl ul Bayt, the beloved darlings of the Holy Prophet and Allah, are the enemies of the Holy Prophet and Allah. When the Holy Prophet was leaving this world to meet his creator, the so-called followers of the true religion of Allah deserted him and held a conference in Saqifa to choose a ruler in complete disregard to their oath of allegiance, which they had promised to uphold, at Ghadir Khum, just a few months before. They had accepted Ali as their *Mawla*, but soon after the departure of the Holy Prophet, they deprived Ali of his right to succeed the Holy Prophet, and, to show their power in this world, arrested him and dragged him to the court of the ruler. The daughter of the Holy Prophet, Bibi Fatima Zahra, was not only publicly insulted during the trial of Fadak, but that which the Holy Prophet had given her by the command of Allah was taken away from her, and her house was also set on fire. An aggressor kicked the door of her house which fell on her and killed the child she was carrying in her womb, and which finally proved to be the cause of her death. Ali was killed in the mosque. Hasan, the grandson of the Holy Prophet was killed by poison. Husayn, the other grandson of the Holy Prophet, and his friends and relatives, were slain in Kerbala, and the ladies of the holy family were chained, tortured and held captive for a long time. One after the other, the Holy Imams were killed. Sayyids, the sons and daughters of the family of Ahl ul Bayt, were hunted, captured and were either murdered or tortured. Those who were responsible, directly or indirectly, for such heinous crimes are certainly the enemies of the Holy Prophet, because no reasonable person can say that these were the acts of friends. Such people are unbelievers, and Allah is the enemy of the unbelievers. In verse 57 of al Ahzab, Allah has cursed those who annoy or displease Allah and His messenger in this world and has prepared a painful punishment for them in the hereafter. The Holy Prophet said:

"O Ali! Your flesh is my flesh, your blood is my blood. He who fights you, in fact has declared war against me, and to fight against me is to fight Allah."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Angels and angelic functions have been explained in the commentary of the earlier verses of this surah. Now the functions of the four arch-angels are given below:

(1) JIBRA-IL

He communicated the will of Allah to His messengers. He also destroyed the enemies of Allah and His messengers.

(2) MIKA-IL

He supplies nourishment and provisions.

(3) ISRAFIL

He gives forms and shapes. He also assimilates nature.

(4) IZRA-IL

He disengages living beings from one state of existence to initiate into another state of existence .

These are, in fact the functions of the *rububiyat*, the cherishing aspect of Allah's grace. There are many angels working under the arch-angels. The various angelic functions are closely linked together. One cannot function without the other. The single exclusive authority of Allah controls these functions according to His supreme will. So, there is no room for the angels to act in contravention to the command of Allah. Only ignorant fools indulge in the theory of possible disobedience by the angels. In verse 6 of al Tahrim, the almighty Allah says that the angels do not disobey Him in that which He

commands them; they do that which they are commanded to do.

When various agencies represent one and the same authority, hostility directed towards any will include all and finally lead to the original source, as has been correctly pointed out in verses 152 to 154 of al Nisa.

{مَنْ كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ} 98

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:98] (see commentary for verse 97)

{وَلَقَدْ أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ آيَاتٍ بَيِّنَاتٍ وَمَا يَكْفُرُ بِهَا إِلَّا الْفَاسِقُونَ} 99

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:99]

The verses of the Quran are clear signs. "Signs" also refer to the miracles which the messengers of Allah put into operation (under Allah's command) when the unbelievers denied their divinely commissioned role. Allah's authority is absolute. What His will brings about none can ever undo. Covered with ignorance, the perverse unbelievers disbelieve in the "signs" of Allah.

{أَوْ كَلَّمَا عَاهَدُوا عَهْدًا نَبَذَهُ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ بَلْ أَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ} 100

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:100]

Those who break the covenant made with Allah through any of His messengers are indeed the accursed unbelievers. Such a covenant was made with Allah by the Muslims through the Holy Prophet at Ghadir Khum. After him, they threw the sacred covenant to the winds and usurped the right to guide the people in lure of worldly gains which they obtained by corrupting and converting the religion of Allah into a heathen system of government, like of which there were many in this world before Islam.

{وَلَمَّا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَهُمْ نَبَذَ فَرِيقٌ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ كَانْتَهُمْ لَا

{يَعْلَمُونَ} 101

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:101]

This verse refers to the obstinate Jewish denial of the prophecy about the Holy Prophet in their books. Please refer to verse 40 of this surah.

{وَاتَّبَعُوا مَا تَتْلُو الشَّيَاطِينُ عَلَىٰ مُلْكِ سُلَيْمَانَ ۗ وَمَا كَفَرَ سُلَيْمَانُ وَلَٰكِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ كَفَرُوا يُعَلِّمُونَ النَّاسَ السِّحْرَ ۖ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ الْمَلَائِكَةِ بِبَابِلَ ۖ هَارُوتَ وَمَارُوتَ ۗ وَمَا يُعَلِّمَانِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ حَتَّىٰ يَقُولَا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ فِتْنَةٌ ۖ فَلَا تَكْفُرْ ۗ فَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مِنْهُمَا مَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بِهِ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَزَوْجِهِ ۗ وَمَا هُمْ بِضَارِّينَ بِهِ مِنْ أَحَدٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَيَتَعَلَّمُونَ مَا يَضُرُّهُمْ وَلَا يَنْفَعُهُمْ ۗ وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَنِ اشْتَرَاهُ مَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ ۗ وَلَيْئَسَ مَا شَرَوْا بِهِ أَنفُسَهُمْ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ} 102

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:102]

Prophet Sulayman was endowed with extraordinary powers to control the forces of nature. To discredit him in the eyes of the people the devils had forged a book in the name of Sulayman on the art of sorcery in order to give currency to the idea that it was witchcraft, not divine endowment, through which Sulayman directed the operation of created phenomena and exercised various super natural acts. As sorcery demands belief in ungodly agencies and false deities, he who makes use of witchcraft is an infidel. To cast aspersion on the prophet of Allah was a blasphemy. Sulayman worshipped the true God (Yahweh). He was not an unbeliever. It was the devilish beings who disbelieved.

Though it cannot be directly observed, the good and evil spirits are capable of corporeal manifestation. To invoke the agency of evil spirits in order to effect magic is infidelity, and is therefore condemned by Islam. In Babylon and other centres of old civilisation sorcery was in vogue. It was used to confuse the people because they could not distinguish between witchcraft and genuine

miracles. To counter this devilish scheme two angels, Harut and Marut, were sent down by Allah to help the prophet of that time. By providing him with the means of undoing the effects of sorcery, the people were properly equipped to discriminate between right and wrong, truth and falsehood. During the time of the Holy Prophet a large number of Jews practised sorcery and adopted it as their creed by setting aside the Tawrat.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to the first book of Kings 11: 1 to 11, in the Old Testament, Sulayman defected from true worship and the Lord was angry with him because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel. This verse refutes the Jewish allegation. The following inferences can be drawn from this verse:

(1) Sorcery is not altogether ineffective.

(2) Sorcery can do no harm if Allah so wills.

(3) To learn witchcraft or sorcery is not profitable, but harmful.

(4) Those who go after the art of sorcery and witchcraft will have no share of good in the hereafter, because it is as bad as mischief-making. To dispel the effects of witchcraft and sorcery people are allowed to learn the art of defending themselves.

{وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَمَثُوبَةٌ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَّوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ } 103

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:103]

Instead of guarding themselves against evil and relying upon that which Allah gives as a reward, a large number of people had fallen prey to the belief in sorcery.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا لِلَّذِينَ عَدَابَ اللَّهُ } 104

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:104]

The doubters, and all those with the outlook of Bani Israil, take to twisting any word necessary to suit their purpose. *Ra-ina* means "listen to us", but it was turned by a little twist in accent into a word of reproach (meaning "stupid") by the Jews (also refer to verse 46 of al Nisa). Therefore the word *unzurna* (look upon us) was suggested which gave no room to the enemy for casting aspersion on the Holy Prophet. This verse shows how much the Jews disliked the Holy Prophet. It also prohibits use of any word bearing sinister meaning with reference to him.

The Jews and the idol-worshippers did not like that *khayr* (good), the Quran, should be revealed to the Holy Prophet. As "the mercy unto the worlds" the Holy Prophet himself was *khayr* because *khayr* (good) is *rahmah* (mercy). He, the last law-giver messenger of Allah, was a descendant of prophet Ismail, the younger son of prophet Ibrahim, therefore, the Jews, who were the descendants of prophet Ishaq, the elder son of prophet Ibrahim, did not like the advent of the promised prophet in the progeny of prophet Ismail. They knew that the ministry of the Holy Prophet was genuine and Islam was the true religion of Allah, but their prejudice and envy led them astray. The same prejudice and envy created the venomous group of the hypocrites (*munafiqin*) who opposed the Holy Prophet in his lifetime, and, after him, persecuted, murdered and tried to destroy completely his Ahl ul Bayt. The hatred of the Israelites against the non-Israelites was reflected in the hatred of the non-Hashimites against the Hashimites. Allah chooses whom He pleases for His mercy and grace (also refer to verses 90 and 91 of this surah).

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

An interesting conversation between the second caliph and Ibna Abbas, recorded by Tabari and other historians, is quoted below, which throws light on the influence of the Jewish mentality on the

behaviour and mental attitude of the non-Hashimite Muslims.

The second caliph said:

"O son of Abbas! Do you know why your family has been deprived of *Khilafat*? The Quraysh did not like that prophethood (nubuwwat) and vicegerency (*khilafat*) be combined in the family of Hashim, lest their vanity increases. So they chose some one else, really their choice was good."

Ibna Abbas said:

"There is nothing unusual so far as the hatred of the Quraysh for the family of Hashim is concerned, because right from the beginning they did not like the message, nor the messenger. 'That is because they were averse to what Allah has sent down, so He shall render their deeds null and void (Muhammad: 9)'. And the apprehension about the vanity of the people who have been (thoroughly) purified, by Allah himself, from every type of uncleanness is an (unfounded) accusation. It would have been most appropriate if the Quraysh had chosen he whom Allah had chosen, and .."

At this stage the caliph interrupted and said:

"Behold! O son of Abbas! I have already been informed about your utterances. Beware! You may fall in my estimation."

Ibna Abbas said:

"Yes. If my opinions are true, they should not cause my downfall, and if they be untrue, you should remind me to put them in order."

The caliph got angry and left the place.

This incident, sharply defines the most vital issue which divided the Muslims into various schools of thought .

مَا يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ وَلَا الْمُشْرِكِينَ أَنْ يُنَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ } 105

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:105]

{ مَا نُنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِئَهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } 106

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:106]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Naskh, as a Quranic term, means substitution of one current law by another. It is called *bada* if the substitution is in the law of creation, and *naskh* if it is in the law of legislation.

Substitution has been effected in "creation" as well as in "legislation". The sudden changes in the course of creation, caused by the supreme will of Allah, a factor apparently incomprehensible for the human intellect, are known as miracles - like the birth of Adam and Isa, and the extraordinary performances carried out by the prophets and divinely chosen representatives of Allah. These miracles cannot be taken as effects without any cause, but are caused by a factor inconceivable by the human intellect. The effect of the creature's prayer in the course of providence is also based on the phenomenon of *bada*. These types of activities on the part of the creatures are a reaction to the divine action. They are governed by the possibility of *bada*, provided there is no contradiction. For example the "creation of a self-existing being" is a self-contradictory idea. Allah alone is the self-existing creator, and what He creates cannot be self-existing. The term "creation" itself suggests that it is not self-existing but was created whereas the term "self-existing" means that it was not created by anyone. Another example is of an "even number". It is impossible to stop it from being divided into two equal whole numbers. In view of the infinite power, possibilities and potentialities at the command of Allah it has been believed and accepted that every known operation in the creation can be changed, substituted or abrogated by His supreme will or action. The human knowledge may not

comprehend the use of that which has happened and that which will happen, in the sphere of *bada*. It must be kept in mind that there can be no limitation to the power and ability of Allah. Imam Ali ibna Abi Talib says: "Allah has effected changes (*bada*) and will also effect many changes in the operation (system) of the universe."

Change (*Naskh*) in the "legislation" became necessary due to the gradual development of the human society. Though the spirit might have been the same but the laws and teachings for mankind in a developed society had to be other than what they were in the primitive age. The conditions and circumstances of a particular age do not appear again. There are teachings, applicable in every age, but they, keeping the essential spirit intact, take to new forms till they reach the final stage. From Adam to Muhammad, the divinely appointed teachers took into consideration the receptive capacity of the people. For example prophet Isa, knowing the limitations of his people, put off the delivery of the final message and asked them to wait for the promised prophet.

There is still much that I could say to you, but the burden would be too great for you now. However, when he comes who is the spirit of truth, he will guide you into all the truth: for he will not speak on his own authority, but will tell only what he hears; and he will make known to you the things that are coming.

(John 16: 19 and 13)

The divine order "to do" or "not to do" a thing is based upon reason - alms should be given for helping the poor; or liquor is prohibited in order to avoid its ill-effects. The justifying reason is in the thing ordered to be done or not to be done.

Sometimes the justifying reason is in the order itself. This is true of the orders issued merely as a test of the obedience of the believers. For example, the change in the direction of *Qiblah* was made (Baqarah: 149) to test the obedience of the believers; or when prophet Ibrahim was asked to sacrifice his son

In the first category *naskh* takes place only when the substitution is necessary in view of the new development. In the second category change is made, without making less its scope and intensity, so that it may fully serve the purpose of the trial. Through *naskh* as well as *bada* the withdrawal of the previous procedure or legislation is made known. If the time-limit has already been prescribed for any law or procedure then the term *naskh* or *bada* cannot be used. Every aspect of the creation or the legislation, together with their possible manifestations, are known to the creator. *Naskh* or *bada* (substitution) cannot be attributed to Allah's ignorance or change of mind. These terms are used in relation to the creatures' knowledge of the divine will. Some orders or processes carry the restriction of the period of validity at the time of their revelation in which case the term *bada* or *naskh* cannot be applied. Sometimes it manifests afterwards. In both cases of *naskh* and *bada*, the change or substitution means notification of the discontinuation of the procedure or legislation which was in force. In connection with the events of creation or the procedures of legislation the prophets of Allah, now and then, received definite revelations about the taking place of an event, with its details, without any possibility of any change; and at times the nature of the predictions of the consequences of an act was indefinite, which, subject to conditions, could be changed. When the development reaches the ultimate stage, as verse 115 of al An-am says, there is no changing in His words. In the gradual revelation of the laws to the Holy Prophet, no abrogation of any portion of the Quran has been effected. It is generally believed that some Quranic laws, had been abrogated by its own verses, or by the sayings of the Holy Prophet; a list of which has been prepared by the jurists and the commentators, but the context of the traditions, in view of the external evidence, has been, with ulterior motives, twisted and misapplied. A careful study of the Quran with a thorough

knowledge of the conclusively proved laws of the faith, passed on to us by the Holy Ahl ul Bayt, the divinely chosen purified custodians of the word of Allah, makes clear the view and proves that there are very few, not exceeding five, abrogations; and even those cannot be described as real or actual *naskh*. For example the order to pay alms in verse 12 of al Mujadalah was given to test the sincerity of the persons who wanted to meet and talk to the Holy Prophet privately, because most of the companions, without any reason at all, sought his audience for the sake of personal vanity. After this order none paid the prescribed alms save Ali. The purpose of the test was to make public the insincerity of the companions, therefore, it was removed when their deception was proved. This order was totally withdrawn, after condemning the niggardly attitude of the companions, in verse 13 of al Mujadalah. This order resembles the order given to prophet Ibrahim to sacrifice his son. When it was proved beyond doubt that Ibrahim was certainly carrying out the divine command, the order was withheld (Saffat: 103 to 107). In the same manner when only Ali carried out the order of verse 12 of al Mujadalah, it was proved that he alone, and no one else among the companions, was in the category of prophet Ibrahim, therefore, the order was withdrawn.

As the Holy Prophet said, theoretically his sayings could change or substitute (*naskh*) the Quranic laws. Such change or abrogation can be accepted if reported on the authority of the thoroughly purified Ahl ul Bayt, because traditions reported through other sources are conflicting and spurious.

In every age, among all human societies, in different parts of the earth, the representatives of Allah were sent to put in order the affairs of the people through laws applicable to the time and environment in which they lived. Ability of man to apply reason and understand things and events progressed and advanced with the passage of time, therefore, certain laws and commandments (pertaining to theoretical, practical, intellectual, religious and legal matters concerning day to day life) which bring harmony and peace in every aspect of existence upon the earth, as well as make man ready to explore the higher regions of spiritual satisfaction, in certain cases and circumstances had to be changed or substituted to pave way for further progress. At last the last messenger of Allah, the greatest and the most manifest sign of Allah (the term Ayat or sign taken in a broader and higher sense means the best human soul created), endowed with the divine wisdom, power and authority, was sent to give effect to the concluding part of the plan of educating and training for the final unification of mankind through the true knowledge of the immediate as well as the ultimate. In the chain of the prophets of Allah, among whom some had been made to excel others (Baqarah: 253), the last prophet, Muhammad al Mustafa, the superior-most, the seal of prophethood, came with the final discipline and guidance. Once the development had reached its maximum height, there remained no need for any further change of any kind. Therefore, no prophet was sent after his departure (see commentary of verse 7 of al Fatihah), but a man like him, after him, is necessary as an Imam, in every age, for the authentic, true, and proper explanation of the word of Allah, the Quran, and also to serve as an ideal to guide and keep mankind on the right path. The following saying of the Holy Prophet is a true interpretation of this verse:

The first of us is Muhammad,
the middle of us is Muhammad,
the last of us is Muhammad,
everyone of us is Muhammad.

Only men of understanding know that the same quality of divine energy which activated the prophethood was also manifested in *imamat* with equal force.

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:107]

The whole universe is Allah's kingdom, He is the owner, the sovereign. Therefore, it is a waste of time and energy, serving no purpose, if persons, i.e. polytheists and idol-worshippers, worship imaginary gods or deities.

{أَمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَسْأَلُوا رَسُولَكُمْ كَمَا سُئِلَ مُوسَىٰ مِنْ قَبْلُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ } 108

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:108]

Squabbling or hankering after proofs and miracles, as the Bani Israil did for disbelieving in that which a messenger of Allah had said, in order to disobey his orders and as well as to create doubts in the minds of the believers, is the lower nature of man, which is clearly condemned in this verse as losing the right direction of the true path.

There is a warning particularly to Muslims who must always remember that the Holy Prophet did not (ever) speak of his own desire, and that whatever he said was nothing but a revelation that was revealed to him (Najm: 3 and 4). According to verse 65 of al Nisa, even in personal matters, the messenger of Allah's orders should be accepted and carried out.

{وَدَّ كَثِيرٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يَرُدُّونَكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِكُمْ كُفَّارًا حَسَدًا مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۖ فَاعْتَدُوا وَاصْفَحُوا حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } 109

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:109]

The Jews always looked for opportunities to create doubts in the minds of the people who had accepted Islam so as to bring them back to their idolatrous creeds. After the battle of Uhad they said to Ammar and Hudhayfa:

If your prophet had been on the right path he would not have lost this battle. It would be better for you to join us.

Ammar replied:

Victory or defeat in a battle can never be a proof of truth or falsehood. It can be a test of the believers. We shall not give up the true faith.

When the Holy Prophet heard of this incident and played for Allah's blessings upon Ammar, this verse was revealed.

The Jewish prejudice against Islam is also stated in verse 51 of al Nisa. "Until Allah brings about His command" means the victories the Holy Prophet won one after the other thereafter, and the complete triumph of Islam.

{وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ } 110

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:110]

Our good as well as bad deeds run before us into the court of Allah for His judgement. The influence of our deeds begins to operate as soon as they are committed. It is an effective warning to remain alert and careful at every step of our life in this world.

{وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ ۗ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ ۗ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ } 111

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:111]

The Holy Prophet was fully aware of the original text of every scripture revealed to the messengers of Allah before him, and he also knew the additions, omissions and alterations made in them by their followers in the course of time. It was, therefore, made clear by him that the idea of "no one shall enter paradise except a Jew or a Christian" was a false concoction, not mentioned in any original

scripture. Also refer to the commentary of verse 80 of this surah.

{بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} 112

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:112]

Wajh means face, but it also implies the following meaning:

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ ۗ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ
{مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ ۗ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ} 113

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:113]

Ala shay-in means confirming anything worthy of consideration. *Alladhina la ya-lamun* (those who have no knowledge) means the heathens whose beliefs. are not based upon any heavenly scripture but upon their own personal conjectures. The Quran makes known the ignorance of the Jews and the Christians who accused each other for lack of goodness in their respective creeds in spite of the fact that both of them followed the Old Testament. Among the followers of the messengers of Allah there should have been no discord if the true text of the revealed books was kept intact and applied sincerely. On the day of judgement they will know that it was bias, pride and prejudice which prevented them from accepting the true faith, Islam.

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ مَنَعَ مَسَاجِدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُذَكَرَ فِيهَا اسْمُهُ وَسَعَىٰ فِي خَرَابِهَا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا كَانَ لَهُمْ أَنْ يَدْخُلُوهَا إِلَّا خَائِفِينَ ۗ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ
{وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ} 114

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:114]

The people of Quraysh did not even allow the Holy Prophet and his companions to visit Makka in 7 Hijra for the pilgrimage. This verse is a general prophecy of the ultimate triumph of Islam and the downfall of its opponents. It also refers to the complete annihilation of the enemies of Islam, the Quraysh, after the fall of Makka. It must be noted that there is no evidence of a plan to destroy the *masjids* of Allah by the Quraysh of Makka. Evidently this verse refers to the plan of the hypocrites who had hatched a conspiracy to kill the Holy Prophet, when he was returning from Tabuk, and then to demolish all the *masjids* in Madina and other places. In true meaning, a *masjid* is the place where Allah is remembered and adored, therefore, all the sacred shrines of the holy Ahl ul Bayt, where only Allah, and none else, is remembered, adored and invoked, are also the *masjids* of Allah in a wider sense. So whoever stops people from going into these shrines and destroys them shall be disgraced in this world and shall be severely punished in the hereafter.

{وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۗ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 115

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:115]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Wajh means face - the manifesting aspect (side) of a thing. Imam Ali ibna Abi Talib says:

Beyond this moon are many moons, beyond the sun are many suns".

(Bihar ul Anwar).

The east and the west mentioned here should not be confined to the directions we know in relation to the rising and setting of the sun. It also refers to the whole cosmos where there are several moons and suns, therefore, the hold of the omnipotence of Allah, the absolute, controls and directs (manifest) in all the easts and the wests of the universe. He is the all-pervading omniscient who is in everything and everything is in Him. His manifestation (*wajh*) serves the purpose of man. In whichever direction the mind turns there is His manifestation. (Araf: 137, Shu-ara: 28, Saffat: 5, Zukhruf: 38, Rahman:

17). The interpretation of *wajh*, as Allah's purpose, by the Ahmadi commentator, is a linguistic misappropriation to effect a motivated confusion.

The verb *sharaqa* means to beam or radiate with light. It may be physical or spiritual (Zumar: 69). The place or the direction from which the light beams is *mashriq*(the east), and the place or direction in which the light disappears is *maghrib* (the west). The terms *mashriq* and *maghrib* should be taken in a wider and more comprehensive sense to include all the lights, physical and spiritual, coming from the absolute to enlighten the various spheres of existence in the universe. In this sense Allah is the *wasi-un alim*.

The first creation in which the unity of the absolute is manifested is known as *mashriqul wujud*, and the matter in which the unity disappears and gives its place to multiplicity is known as *maghribul wujud*. On the other hand, as regards to the multiplicity of manifestation the matter can be taken as the *mashriq* of the multiplicity and the absolute as its *maghrib* wherein the multiplicity disappears. These are some examples of the various usages of the terms *mashriq* and *maghrib* in their singular, plural and dual forms. The particular incident of the revelation of this verse relating to the direction of *qiblah* (noted below) does not affect the universality which this verse signifies.

"This verse was revealed when the companions, who were sent to fight a battle, camped outside Madina. It was a dark night. The sky was full of clouds. The direction of *qiblah* could not be correctly ascertained, so they prayed the *isha salat* after making approximation, which was proved to be wrong in the morning. In Madina, they informed the Holy Prophet of that which had happened and, mindful of their mistake, prayed the said *salat* again. This verse was then revealed to console those faithful devotees."

(Tafsir Kabir).

Tawalla (to turn) means, in this verse, that in whichever direction the Muslims turn they will win victory, or whichever direction the infidels choose to flee, they will encounter the might of Allah.

{ وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَانَهُ ۗ لَبَّ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ كُلُّ لَّهُ قَائِمُونَ } 116

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:116]

The Jews and the Christians metaphorically referred to the virtuous prophets of Allah, from Adam to Isa, as the sons of God, but this metaphorical usage gave opportunity to some theologians to corrupt the true religions and made the common people believe that Ezra or Jesus were sons of God. The pagans believed that the angels were the daughters of God. Therefore the use of the term "son" or "daughter" of Allah, as a doctrine or as a metaphor, has been condemned as the greatest sin (Luqman: 13).

When everything in the heavens and the earth and in between them is the creation of Allah, it becomes meaningless to believe that anything, in any sense, can be equal to Him. The basic and the main doctrine of Islam is "the absolute unity" of Allah.

{ بَدِيعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ } 117

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:117]

Badi means the originator who designs, makes, begins and brings into existence for the first time, without any pre-existing similar example. Ali ibna abi Talib says:

"He (Allah) created the creation in the perfect sense of creating and began it in the perfect sense of beginning, under precisely regulating laws, and made their unlike, complex and diverse dispositions agree and fit well together, implanted and infused harmony, balance and co-ordination in their nature. (For all this) He did not have to check up on or try out their course, nor had to make use of trial and

verification, nor was He enthusiastic or anxiously thoughtful that could make Him excited."

(Nahj al Balagha)

Kun fa-yakun (Be, and it is.) is a term to bring home to the human mind the omnipotent will which can never be translated into any verbal expression.

Imam Ali ibna Abi Talib says:

"Not by sound uttered, nor by voice heard, His word, blessed be He, is "action", beginning and proceeding from Him."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

To refute the Christian theory of "the son of God", here and in many other verses of the Quran, the word *badi* has been used.

The four principles of the causative factors responsible for the existence of the finite beings are material cause, formal cause, initial cause and final cause. Anything made, owes its existence to the material out of which it is made, and the particular shape or form it has been given. These are the structural causes. The agency through which a thing is made is called the agential cause:

(1) The person who brings the material into shape is called the agential cause.

(2) The motive or the purpose which moves the agent is the final cause.

Creation (*badi*) means bringing a thing into being out of nothing through the agency of the will of the agential cause without the slightest change in the essence or the attributes of the agent.

According to the Quran this is the relation of the absolute creator to all finite created beings, therefore, only the creator is eternal and none else is co-existing with Him, and there is no one as a part of Him.]

وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ لَوْلَا يُكَلِّمُنَا اللَّهُ أَوْ تَأْتِينَا آيَةٌ كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَابَهَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ
{يُوقِنُونَ} 118

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:118]

It is wrong to use this verse to prove that the Holy Prophet did not have the power to perform miracles. The Quran bears witness that he had rent asunder the moon, yet the infidels said:

"This is the same magic continuing".

(Qamar: 1 and 2).

Besides those mentioned in the Quran, a large number of miracles, performed by him, have been recorded in the books of history reported on the authentic and unbreakable evidence of the traditions. Not only the Holy Prophet, but also the divinely chosen holy Imams had performed miracles whenever they deemed it necessary and thought that it could serve a definite purpose but refused to put them to use as an answer to the challenge of any antagonistic individual or group, who even after witnessing a miracle would not accept the truth. It is also true that the belief, generated by a miracle, deprives the individual of the possibility of enjoying the real value of the faith acquired through reason and conviction. The demand for miracles (as stated in verses 90 to 93 of Bani Israil) was made to satisfy the lust for witnessing wonders. It was not the true mission of the last prophet of Allah to satisfy the vain desires of the people who merely wanted to watch and enjoy miracles, The signs of Allah are enough for those who are sure. Likewise when prophet Isa was brought before Herod to perform a miracle, he, who had already performed a large number of miracles and whose very birth was the greatest miracle ever witnessed, refused to comply with the request. At another place he said to the Pharisees:

"It is a wicked, godless generation that asks for a sign;"

(Matthew 12: 39)

Every messenger of Allah was put under pressure by the people either to persuade Allah to speak to them directly or make clear through some heavenly signs that whatever revealed was from Him.

{إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ بِالْحَقِّ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا ۖ وَلَا تُسْأَلُ عَنْ أَصْحَابِ الْجَحِيمِ } 119

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:119]

The messenger of Allah was sent to preach the truth and create discipline by setting practical examples. He was not responsible for the reaction of the people. He was a warner. He will not be called upon to answer for the behaviour of the transgressors .

وَلَنْ تَرْضَىٰ عَنْكَ الْيَهُودُ وَلَا النَّصَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَتَّبِعَ مِلَّتَهُمْ ۗ قُلْ إِنْ هَدَىٰ اللَّهُ فَمَا لِي بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الْعِزِّ وَمَا لِي أَلْفَاظُ مَا قُلْتُ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ هَارُونَ أَن نَحْمِلَ كُفْرَهُمْ كُنَّا أَقْرَبَ لَهُمْ كَيْدًا وَأَكْثَرَ بَعْدًا ۚ وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بَعْدَ الَّذِي جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۗ مَا لَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ } 120

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:120]

In view of verse 33 of al Ahzab wherein the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt had been thoroughly purified, leaving no room for infiltration of any kind of ignorance or carelessness, and the divine command in verse 7 of al Hashr that "whatever the messenger gives you accept it and whatever he forbids, abstain from it", and his supreme position as the last law-giver and the chief of the prophets, it is the people who go astray that are warned in this verse, and not the Holy Prophet. He has been addressed in order to make the people seriously take precautions against the schemes of the Jews and the Christians. The Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt were thoroughly purified and infallible, therefore, their following the desires of the Jews and the Christians was an impossibility.

Had it been possible for him to err, it would mean a fault in the judgement of the all-wise Lord in selecting him as a final warner. But any fallible believer is liable, at some time or other, to be careless and to make mistakes, so extreme care and vigilance have to be applied in following the path shown by the Holy Prophet.

{الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَتْلُونَهُ حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِهِ ۗ وَمَن يَكْفُرْ بِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ } 121

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:121]

The Quran was given to the Holy Prophet and those who were his flesh and blood. Their spirit was one. They were created from one light.

They are his Ahl ul Bayt. See "the essentials for the readers of the Quran" on pages 1 to 7.

The Holy Prophet had said:

"Ali's flesh is my flesh. Ali's blood is my blood".

"I and Ali are of one and the same light".

According to the verse of Mubahilah (Ali Imran: 61) Ali was the *nafs* (self) of the Holy Prophet. It was Ali who stood by the Holy Prophet and protected him in the battle of Uhad when all his companions ran away. In all the battles which guided the course of Islamic history, it was Ali who won victories for the Muslims. It is evident from these and other incidents in history that only the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt (the Imams in his progeny) are those who studied and followed the book as it ought to be done, and it is only they who are referred to in this verse.

{يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتِيَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَنِّي فَضَّلْتُكُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ } 122

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:122]

Please refer to the commentary of verses 47 and 48 of this surah.

{وَاقْتُوا يَوْمًا لَا تَجْزِي نَفْسٌ عَنْ نَفْسٍ شَيْئًا وَلَا يُقْبَلُ مِنْهَا عَدْلٌ وَلَا تَنْفَعُهَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَلَا هُمْ يُنصَرُونَ } 123

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:123] (see commentary for verse 122)

124} وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ فَقَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۗ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:124]

This verse guides mankind to identify the genuine leaders of the true faith as well as the impostors. It also helps to understand *risalat* and *imamat*.

The covenant was made with Ibrahim, the father of Isma-il as well as Is-haq, long before either of the sons was born.

The Lord said to Abraham, "I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you and make your name so great that it shall be used in blessings:

Those that bless you I will bless,
those that curse you, I will execrate.

All the families on earth will pray to be blessed as you are blessed."

There the Lord appeared to Abraham and said", I give this land to your descendants." So Abraham built an altar there to the Lord who had appeared to him. (Genesis 12: 2,3, and 7)

Allah chose Hajirah to bear the first child of Ibrahim and named him Isma-il.

The angel of the Lord said to her (Hagar), "Go back to your mistress and submit to her ill-treatment".

The angel also said:

"I will make your descendants too many to be counted."

And the angel of the Lord said to her:

"You are with child and will bear a son. You shall name him Ishmael, because the Lord has heard of your ill-treatment."

(Genesis 16: 9 to 11)

Immediately after the birth of Isma-il, Allah made a covenant with Ibrahim. Is-haq was not born at that time.

"Live always in my presence and be perfect, so that I may set my covenant between myself and you and multiply your descendants".

Abraham threw himself down on his face, and God spoke with him and said, "I make this covenant, and I make it with you: You shall be the father of a host of nations". "I will fulfil my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you, generation after generation, an everlasting covenant, to be your God, yours and your descendants' after you."

(Genesis 17: 2, 3, 4 and 7)

Allah further blessed Isma-il with twelve princes in his progeny.

"I have heard your prayer for Isma-il. I have blessed him and will make him fruitful. I will multiply his descendants; he shall be father of twelve princes, and I will raise a great nation from him." (Genesis 17: 20)

The covenant was made with Ibrahim and not with Is-haq, a fact which the Jews overlook when they claim that the promised prophet (Deut 18: 18) should be a Jew.

According to Genesis 17: 7 the covenant was between Allah and Ibrahim and his descendants, generation after generation, when Isma-il was born, so it is logical to say that it pertains to the children of Isma-il, not the children of Is-haq who was born much after this covenant. Again, after the prophecy of the birth of Is-haq when Ibrahim showed concern about Isma-il, this covenant was renewed (Genesis 17: 20), with added blessings - the Twelve Princes in the progeny of Isma-il. It differs with the covenant made with Ibrahim which includes both of his sons, Isma-il and Is-haq, and their descendants:

This is how you shall keep my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you: circumcise yourselves, every male among you. (Genesis 17: 10)

I will give you and your descendants after you the land in which you now are aliens, all the land of Canaan, and I will be God to your descendants. (Genesis 17: 8)

Circumcision is obligatory for the Jews as well as the Muslims. The descendants of Ibrahim had the right to possess the land of Canaan but as the children of Is-haq, the Jews and the Christians, had corrupted the true faith of Ibrahim, the children of Isma-il thus became the rightful owners. In fact after the advent of the Holy Prophet, the true representative of the house of Isma-il, according to Deut: 18 : 18, all the Jews and the Christians should have embraced Islam, the religion of Allah, which Ibrahim had followed. Ibrahim was a prophet. In spite of his holding the office of the prophethood he was tested and tried by Allah before He made him an Imam. It means that a prophet is not necessarily an Imam and *imamat* is an office of a decidedly higher order which is granted only when one proves himself suitable and worthy after undergoing a test. "Verily, I make you an Imam for mankind" clearly indicates that *likerialat*, *imamat* is also bestowed upon the chosen representatives of Allah by Allah Himself. It is a position no one, however virtuous or godly he may be, not even Ibrahim, the prophet of Allah, could claim for himself, nor can it be conferred on any one by any individual, group or community. It is an exclusively divine action.

What was the nature of the test which Ibrahim passed to qualify himself for the *imamat*? To test a prophet of Allah of the calibre of *Khalilullah* in the elementary matters of personal cleanliness and ethics, as some commentators say, sounds meaningless. It was not an ordinary test, definitely not connected with daily habits, behavioural patterns and acts of personal cleanliness. The word *kalimat* has been used here in the same sense invested in verse 37 of this surah-Allah turned to Adam mercifully when he received the *kalimat* from his Lord. See commentary of verse 37 of this surah.

Ibrahim's trial was a test of the steadfastness of his faith in Allah. In his dream prophet Ibrahim received the command of Allah to slay his son, Isma-il. Awake, he at once carried out the command (Saffat: 105 to 108). His faith in Allah was on trial. He was certain that what he saw in his dream was the command of Allah. Allah made him an Imam of mankind, yet he had no right to hand over the office of *imamat* to his descendants, therefore, he requested Allah to let his descendants inherit it. He could only pray for it, which he did. And it is Allah who alone has the right to appoint an Imam. "My covenant does not include the *zalim* (unjust)" indicates that *imamat* is given only to those who have not sinned. Only an infallible can be an Imam. Like Ibrahim, Imam Husayn, his descendant, readily sacrificed his sons in the way of Allah.

Zalim (unjust) in the view of the Quran, is he who worships, or has worshipped a *ghayrallah*. *Shirk* (idolatry) in the words of the Quran is the greatest *zulm* or injustice. Therefore he who, at any time in his life, has been a *mushrik* (idolater) can never be an Imam. Besides the Holy Prophet there was no one, among his companions, who had not been an idol-worshipper, save his cousin, Ali ibna abi Talib, who alone could be rightfully chosen by providence "to receive the covenant of *imamat*". The Holy Prophet, therefore, under the command of Allah transferred the *imamat* to Ali, and after Ali to the eleven Imams in the progeny of Muhammad and Ali. In this way the covenant of Allah with Ibrahim was fulfilled, and in the progeny of Isma-il the twelve princes, the twelve holy Imams, were born.

Ismat (infallibility) required for *imamat* applies to purity from all kinds of sins, great or small, hidden or open, because the conduct of an individual is the outcome of his inherent character and in-built discipline. Therefore, it is downright hypocrisy to accept any man of questionable character as

an Imam, arguing that hidden sinfulness should be left alone, and only outward justice should be taken into consideration. Those who have sinned but turned repentant to Allah and gave up sinning can not claim infallibility. Firstly, no one knows for sure that his sins have been forgiven by the Lord. Secondly, repentance may bring forgiveness but the term sinner can never be removed from the name of the person who has sinned. He will be called a forgiven or pardoned sinner. He cannot be equal to a man who has never sinned at all at any time in his life, like Ibrahim. The covenant made with an infallible prophet (Ibrahim) can only be fulfilled by giving *imamat* to those who are, inwardly and outwardly, as pure and infallible as the great prophet Ibrahim was.

The work of legislation was ended with the ministry of the Holy Prophet. Through the last messenger of Allah, the perfected and completed religion of Allah was conveyed to mankind for their material welfare and spiritual progress for all times till the end of the world; yet the mercy of the Lord must continue because an everlasting covenant was made with Ibrahim:

I will fulfil my covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you, generation after generation, an everlasting covenant. (Genesis 17: 7)

Therefore there must be an infallible Imam, a divinely commissioned guide, with power and authority delegated to him by Allah, in every age, to keep the people on the right path and direct them unto the destination determined by the merciful Lord of the worlds.

The Holy Prophet said:

Whoever dies, not knowing the Imam of his age, dies in ignorance.

Allah made Ibrahim an Imam of mankind. He was neither a ruler nor a political force, yet it was made obligatory on mankind to obey him in all temporal as well as spiritual matters, and after him, to obey those of his descendants who have been chosen as Imams. Therefore it is the duty of all Muslims to obey and follow the Imam of the age in all matters, because, as in the case of Ibrahim, political or temporal power is not necessary for an Imam in order to demand obedience from the people.

The office of *imamat* is not hereditary. It is Allah's covenant, which is only bestowed upon an infallible devotee of Allah who comes out successful from the tests and trials specifically prescribed for him by Allah. A sinner or a forgiven sinner cannot be an Imam. The names of the twelve Imams, the descendants of Ibrahim in the progeny of Isma-il, divinely commissioned in fulfilment of the covenant made with Ibrahim, are given below:

(According to verse 33 of Ali Imran, Allah chose and preferred Adam and Nuh and the descendants of Ibrahim and the descendants of Imran above all His creatures. The requisite merits were known to Allah only but whosoever was chosen had to undergo an evident test or trial. After Ibrahim the lineage was divided into two branches. The lineage Is-haq terminated in Isa who was raised to heavens. The descendants of Isma-il carried the light to Abdul Muttalib. Again it was bifurcated through his two sons - Abdullah, the father of Muhammad al Mustafa, and Abu Talib, the father of Ali al Murtada. Muhammad and Ali were identical with each other in spirit, character and wisdom. One reflected the other. This identity and unity was integrated in one entity through the marriage of Ali and Fatimah, the holy daughter the Holy Prophet.)

1 Ali al Murtada.

2 Hasan al Mujtaba-the elder son of Ali and Fatima.

3 Husayn al Shahid ul Shuhada-the younger son of Ali and Fatimah.

4 Ali bin Husayn al Zayn al Abidin.

5 Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir.

6 Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq.

7 Musa bin Jafar al Kazim.

8 Ali bin Musa al Riza.

9 Muhammad bin Ali al Taqi.

10 Ali bin Muhammad al Naqi.

11 Hasan bin Ali al Askari.

12 Muhammad bin Hasan al Mahdi.

(Imam Muhammad al Mahdi is alive like Khizr and Isa. He is the living Imam, for all times till the end of the world. He is the awaited saviour. At the appointed time he will appear in order to exercise the divine authority. Along with him Isa will also come back on the earth and follow the leadership of Imam al Mahdi, as Ali had followed the Holy Prophet. In this way the bifurcated descendants of Ibrahim will be reunited.)

All the above mentioned Imams were infallible from birth to their martyrdom and never received any formal education or training at the hands of any mortal, yet were the fountainheads of knowledge, wisdom and guidance.

The merit for selection to the divine office of *nubuwwat*, *risalat*, *imamat*, or *khilafat* is the degree of submission to the divine will and the ability to reflect (or to convey) the same to others, the measure of perfection which determines the state of nearness to the absolute. The test (*ibtilla*) is the theoretical and functional knowledge of the *kalimat* (the most comprehensive names) on account of which Adam was given the *khilafatullah* (vicegerency of Allah). These *kalimat* are accommodated in the essence of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad. They are the manifestation of the light of the *kalimat* appeared before Adam for the first time.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنَا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّٰى وَعَوَّضْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَنَّ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ
{وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ} 125

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:125]

Mathabatan and *amnan*, with reference to *bayt*, means a place of refuge, rest and peace where one earns ample recompense from Allah.

Ahdina (We took a promise or We enjoined) refers to Allah's covenant that the eternally blessed descendants of Ibrahim should keep the holy Kabah pure, and should remove the false gods whenever installed in it. In 7 Hijra the Holy Prophet, the promised prophet, for whose advent Ibrahim prays in verses 128 and 129 of this surah, after the fall of Makka, visited the holy Kabah. There, Ali stood on the shoulders of the Holy Prophet and pulled down all the idols, firmly fixed in the walls, in order to purify the sacred house of Allah

Tahhira (to purify) implies that a house for the worship of Allah already existed there before Ibrahim, which like the Kabah in the times of the Holy Prophet, was despoiled with idols. It was in ruins. Ibrahim rebuilt it. As verse 127 of this surah suggests, after purification, the place was reserved for worship of Allah only. According to verse 96 of Ali Imran, the first house made for the worship of Allah was the Kabah in Makka, and in verse 29 of al Hajj it has been referred to as *bayt ul atiq* (the ancient house).

Muir, Burton, Rodwel and Fretyag have tried to mislead the Christians by stating that Ibrahim had never gone to Arabia to build the holy Kabah.

These are the names of the sons of Ishmael named in order of their birth; Nebaioth, Ishmael's eldest son, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam." (Genesis 25: 13)

It is a fact that Kedar has been connected with Arabia in the Old Testament.

"Hard is my lot, exiled in Meshech, dwelling by the tents of Kedar." (PSALMS 120: 5)

Also refer to Isaiah 42: 11 and 60: 7. In Genesis 21: 14 to 21 Hajirah's wandering in the

wilderness of Beersheba with her son Ismail, the appearance of the well (*Zamzam*) and Allah's promise to make of Ismail a great nation have been clearly mentioned.

The events concerning Ibrahim, Hajirah and Ismail, which actually took place, are given below: Ibrahim's wife Sarah had borne him no children. She had a handmaid whose name was Hajirah. She gave her to Ibrahim as a wife. Hajirah bore Ibrahim a son. Ibrahim named the child Ismail. After his birth, the peace and harmony of the family was disturbed. Sarah ill-treated Hajirah. Ibrahim was vexed on Ismail's account. He sought Allah's help. Allah, in view of Sarah's past goodness, directed Ibrahim to send away Hajirah and Ismail to a place now called Makka. Ibrahim, with the help of Jibrail, took Hajirah and Ismail out of the native land and reached Arabia. They stopped at the place where *hajar aswad* or the black stone is stationed. Jibrail informed Ibrahim that it was a land full of Allah's blessings and bounties, and there used to be a house (known as *baytul mamur*) in that place, which was held sacred and venerated by mankind in ancient times, and that it was Allah's will that Ibrahim and Ismail should rebuild the ruined house again. A shelter was made for Hajirah and Ismail so that they could live there in Ibrahim's absence because Allah had commanded Ibrahim to go back to his native land. At the time of his departure Hajirah said:

"O Ibrahim, the devotee of Allah, in whose care are you leaving us here?"

Ibrahim said:

"I leave you in the care of Allah who saved me from the fire in which Namrud threw me, and gave me all that which I needed and desired."

Hajirah said:

"I rely upon Allah. He is sufficient for me and my child."

When Ibrahim reached the mount Zi-Tavi, he stopped and turned towards the place where he left Hajirah and Ismail and prayed:

"Our Lord! Verily I have settled a part of my progeny in a barren valley near to Thy holy house, our Lord. so that they may establish prayer; so incline some hearts of men that they yearn towards them, and provide them with fruits in order that they may be grateful." (IBRAHIM: 37)

When the water in the waterskin, Ibrahim left for them, was finished, there was no water any where near them to quench their thirst. There was no milk in her breasts. The heat in the desert had dried it. The scorching sun brought the situation from bad to worse. The child was restless. He cried, cried and cried. The mother ran hither and thither, between Safa and Marwa.

From Safa to Marwa and Marwa to Safa she ran seven times because when she was on the mount of Safa she heard a voice from the mount of Marwa, and when she reached Marwa she heard a voice from Safa. There was no one in sight. Unable to see her son dying, she left him where he was lying and stood alone on the mount of Marwa. Dejected, helpless, yet worried for her son she came back. There she saw a spring of fresh and sweet water gushing forth from the earth under the feet of Ismail. In her absence Jibrail, under the command of Allah, came and produced a well full of water (known as *Zamzam*) - also recorded in Genesis 21: 14 to 21. She heard a voice (saying):

"Fear not. The Lord has produced this well for you and your son, but it will also serve the pilgrims who will visit His holy house which your husband and son shall build."

The flow of water increased day by day and the surrounding land became fertile. People began to come and settle there. Soon it became a flourishing town. Trade and commerce developed. When Ibrahim returned he found the wasteland in the desert a busy trade centre.

The running of Hajirah between Safa and Marwa has been prescribed as one of the essential rites of *hajj*.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ {126}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:126] (see commentary for verse 125)

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ {127}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:127]

When Ibrahim and Ismail raised the foundations of the holy Kabah, they prayed to Allah to accept their service, make them both Muslims (submissive to Allah), and also make their descendants Muslims, and raise up in them a messenger who would recite to them Allah's revelation, teach them the book and the wisdom and purify them.

This prayer shows that there had always been some men and women in the progeny of Ibrahim who were true Muslims, through whom the divine light of Muhammad and Ali passed till it reached Abdul Muttalib. Then his two sons Abdullah and Abu Talib carried it separately. Abdullah transferred it to Muhammad. and Abu Talib transferred it to Ali, the vicegerent and the successor of the Holy Prophet the first of the twelve Imams the divinely commissioned rightly guided guides for mankind. "I and Ali are from one and the same light", said the Holy Prophet

The word *ummat* does not always means a community or a nation. In verse 120 of al Nahl it refers to a single individual.

This prayer also shows how difficult it is to be a true Muslim. Even a distinguished prophet of Allah like Ibrahim makes a request to Allah to let him remain a Muslim.

رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةٌ مُسْلِمَةٌ لَكَ وَأَرِنَا مَنَاسِكَنَا وَتُبْ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ {128}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:128] (see commentary for verse 127)

رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ {129}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:129] (see commentary for verse 127)

وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ {130}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:130]

Only those men of understanding who know and apply reason become Muslims. Those who reject Islam are fools. They are damned and disgraced for ever. *Safiha nafsahu* means he who makes a fool of himself, therefore, is liable to be condemned.

وَإِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْتُ قَالَ أَسْلِمْتَ قَالَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ {131}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:131]

Aslim means to submit. The root of the word is *islam* (complete submission to Allah). Ibrahim submitted and surrendered to the will of Allah and became a true Muslim in the perfect sense of the word.

وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمْ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ {132}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:132]

Having been blessed by accepting the religion of Allah, Islam, Ibrahim charged his offspring to acknowledge the purity of the path that has been chosen and asked them not to die except as Muslims. Prophet Yaqub also did the same. In Genesis I 8 : 19 this advice has been mentioned.

أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَوَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ {133}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:133]

It should be noted that Ismail, who was a paternal uncle of Yaqub, has been cited as the father of the descendants of Yaqub, and also in the following verses:

Ali Imran :84

Nisa: 163

An-am: 85 to 88

Sad : 45 to 48

It is evident that people used to address a paternal uncle as father. In the same way Ibrahim had addressed Azar, his uncle, as father.

The message of Allah, Islam, is continuous, for all times.

{تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ} 134

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:134]

The doctrine of personal responsibility is the most important principle of Islam. Please refer to the commentary of verse 48 of this surah.

{وَقَالُوا كُونُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى تَهْتَدُوا قُلْ بَلْ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ} 135

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:135]

The religion of Ibrahim the *hanif* (*hanafa* means to turn, to bend, to incline - to righteousness) is the true path, not the path of the Jews or the Christians. Therefore the path of the faithful representatives and advocates of the Ibrahimic faith is the right path.

{قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ} 136

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:136]

The religion of Islam is universal, for all people, in every age. Therefore, it is necessary for every follower of Islam to believe in all the prophets and messengers of Allah and in what was revealed to them. No other religion besides Islam demands from its followers to believe equally in the sinless purity of the conduct and character of other prophets of Allah, and in the truthfulness of other sacred scriptures as the revealed words of Allah.

{فَإِنْ آمَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا آمَنْتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ} 137

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:137]

The Jews and the Christians would have become the followers of the true faith if they had accepted the teachings of the earlier prophets and acknowledged the prophethood of the Holy Prophet, but they opposed the Holy Prophet right from the beginning and on many occasions tried to kill him

{صِبْغَةَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ صِبْغَةً وَنَحْنُ لَهُ عَابِدُونَ} 138

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:138]

Sibgh means dye-colouring or immersion in water. The Christian church has adopted it as a religious ceremony of baptism. By immersion in or sprinkling water on every convert, he or she is admitted to their faith. The Christian baptism, this verse reminds, does not really introduce a man to the true faith. The true faith is universal. The Christian baptism rejects and denies all prophets and messengers of Allah. The divine baptism inspires love for goodness (*tawalla*) and dislike for evil (*tabarra*) which is the true nature of man. It colours or conditions the mind and behaviour of the believers so that he or she should adhere to godliness and reject godlessness.

The dye-colouring of Allah means to take on the colour of the attributes of Allah and involve the soul deeply in the divinity of the Lord. It inspires the believer with the conviction that the Lord of the universe is one. He loves every created being.

Those who love Allah must love every thing Allah loves.

{قُلْ أَنَحَاؤُنَّا فِي اللَّهِ وَهُوَ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ وَلَنَا أَعْمَالُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُخْلِصُونَ } 139

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:139]

Allah is the Lord of all created beings. He is the Lord of the worlds - the universe. He is not biased against anyone, nor shows favouritism towards any. Those who sincerely devote themselves to Him receive, in return of their goodness, His special grace.

This is a warning to the Jews and the Christians and all those who believe that they alone are the "beloved children of God."

"Whosoever goes on the right path, verily he does so for himself; and he who goes astray does so to his own loss; and no one who carries a burden shall bear another's burden; and We never punish until We have sent a messenger (among them)." (Bani Israil: 15)

Verse 18 of al Fatir and verse 7 of al Zumar also refer to this truth.

{أَمْ تَقُولُونَ إِنَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطَ كَانُوا هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَى قُلْ أَأَنْتُمْ أَعْلَمُ أَمْ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ كَتَمَ شَهَادَةً عِنْدَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ } 140

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:140]

Please refer to the commentary of verses 20 and 135 of this surah. The question put in this verse is, in fact, a disapproval of the belief of the Jews and the Christians, as it has been used in verse 195 of al Araf to condemn the idolworshippers.

{تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ } 141

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:141]

Please refer to the commentary of verses 23, and 134 to 139 of this surah.

{سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَا وَلَا هُمْ عَنْ قِبَلَتِهِمُ الَّتِي كَانُوا عَلَيْهَا قُلْ لِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ } 142

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:142]

For "the east and the west belong to Allah" see commentary of verses 107 and 115 of this surah.

Qiblah is the direction towards which the face is turned. In Makka, the Holy Prophet used to face Jerusalem at the time of praying *salat*, but the holy Kabah was always between him and the first *qiblah*. Even in Madina, he continued to pray towards Jerusalem for seventeen months, after which Allah accepted the Holy Prophet's request to change the *qiblah*, because the Jews of Madina had been mocking the Muslims for not having their own *qiblah*.

In fulfilment of the divine promise to bless Ibrahim and Ismail, it was necessary to make the house built by them, the final *qiblah* for the worship of Allah, by the followers of the perfected and completed religion of Allah, for all times.

Reference to surah al Fil makes it clear that to keep safe the highly venerated house of Allah, Allah Himself destroyed the army of Abraha who came to demolish the holy Kabah. This change was also a prophecy that Makka would, one day, come into the hands of the Muslims, and that it would be cleared of the false gods, because a centre of idolatry could never have been the *qiblah* of a thoroughly monotheistic faith.

وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ۗ وَمَا جَعَلْنَا الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعِ الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ ۗ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ لَكَبِيرَةً إِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضَيِّعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوفٌ
 {رَحِيمٌ} 143

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:143]

To understand this verse it is necessary to know the meanings of some important words and phrases used in it.

(1) *Ummat* does not always mean a community or a nation. In verse 120 of al Nahl it refers to a single individual-Verily Ibrahim was a people (*ummat*) obedient to Allah.

فَدَرَى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ ۗ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً تَرْضَاهَا ۗ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ ۗ
 {وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَيَعْلَمُونَ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِعَاقِلٍ عَمَّا يَعْمَلُونَ} 144

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:144]

Madina is located between Makka and Jerusalem. Facing Jerusalem, standing in Madina, meant turning the hinder parts of the body towards Makka. Since the Holy Prophet knew that the holy Kabah in Makka was going to be the ultimate *qiblah*, he did not like to turn his back towards it.

The Jews knew that the Holy Prophet was the final messenger of Allah (see verse 40 of this surah)

They also knew that the holy Kabah, with the "black stone" set in one of its corners, was destined to be the *qiblah* of the true believers.

"The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner-stone."

(Psalms: 118 : 22 and Matthew 21 : 42).

Prophet Isa said: "He will bring those bad men to a bad end, and hand the vineyard over to other tenants, who will let him have his share of the crop when the season comes." It was a parable narrated to the Jews. It happened exactly as the Jews were warned. When the Jews failed to fulfil the covenant, the covenant of Allah was transferred to the descendants of Ismail.

Then Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected has become the main corner-stone. This is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful in our eyes? Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and given to a nation that yields the proper fruit." When the chief priests and Pharisees heard his parables, they saw that he was referring to them. (Matthew 21 :42 to 45).

The kingdom of God, the spiritual leadership of mankind, transferred to the descendants of Ismail, remains with the family of the Holy Prophet, the divinely chosen holy Imams.

For it was he whom the Lord your God chose from all your tribes to attend on the Lord and to minister in the name of the Lord, both he and his sons for all time. (Deut: 18: 5)

Isa said:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another to be your advocate, who will be with you for ever. (John 14: 16).

Isa referred to the Holy Prophet as the advocate or the comforter who would succeed him and be with the people for ever. Isa's prophecy is proved true in the Holy Prophet and his descendants, the last of whom is our living Imam.

وَلَئِنْ أَتَيْتَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ مَا تَبِعُوا قِبْلَتَكَ ۗ وَمَا أَنْتَ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَتَهُمْ ۗ وَمَا بَعْضُهُمْ بِتَابِعٍ قِبْلَةَ بَعْضٍ ۗ وَلَئِنْ اتَّبَعْتَ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ مِنْ
 {بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ ۗ إِنَّكَ إِذًا لَمِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ} 145

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:145]

Allah informed the Holy Prophet that nothing, not even Allah's signs, would make the Jews and the

Christians follow his *qiblah*, the true religion of Allah - Islam, because, out of their stupidity and arrogance, they did not like a descendant of Ismail to be the promised prophet. Also the Jews and the Christians did not follow each other's *qiblah* or religion.

Allah warns the Muslims (through the Holy Prophet) that if they try to make a compromise with the Jews and the Christians, after the knowledge (Islam) has come to them, then they will certainly be among the disbelievers.

{الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ} 146

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:146]

As explained in many verses of this surah (40,41,42,75,77,78,79,89,90,91,101,105, 109, 124) the Jews and the Christians knew that the Holy Prophet was the promised prophet as clearly mentioned in their books, but they deliberately concealed the truth.

{الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَالَّا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ} 147

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:147]

The Jews and the Christians concealed the truth because it threatened the continuity of their attachments, old habits and position, otherwise they knew the truth of the "prophetic message" clearly but withheld it and denied its exposure to others. It is a reiteration of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet to reassure those believers who were weak in faith, and a positive statement to exhort the disbelievers who refused to believe in him as a genuine messenger of Allah. It is a warning to the followers of the Holy Prophet (through him) not to be of doubters.

{وَلِكُلِّ وِجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّيئُهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمْ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ} 148

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:148]

The unity of *qiblah* symbolises the unity of the purpose of the religion, and binds all the believers (who try to reach the ultimate goal by performing selfless good works as pure actions, remaining on the path of *tawhid*) into one brotherhood or a discipline. According to Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq "Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together" gives glad tidings to the true believers that wherever they may be, at the time of the *zahur* (reappearance) of the living Imam, they will be brought together under his banner. Many Muslim commentators say that this refers to the day of judgement. It is a meaningless interpretation because in this verse only the believers are addressed and not the whole of mankind, comprising believers and disbelievers, who will be summoned on the day of judgement for final examination and retribution.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

As has already been pointed out in the commentary of verse 115 of this surah, specific direction does not mean that manifestation of Allah is restricted to that direction only. He is manifest in all directions. The order to turn to a particular direction, while praying, was a test of obedience for the followers of the faith as mentioned in verse 143 of this surah, and also to create unity of purpose in the minds of the praying believers.

Every one has a direction in life, the ultimate object of which is Allah. As mentioned in verse 177 of this surah performing good deeds in the overall interest of the society (to possess the theoretical and functional virtues, the root of which is faith in Allah - *Tawhid*) minimises the importance of the turning towards the east or the west as a virtue.

Huwa (He) is generally translated to mean "everyone" (*kul*), but the Shia grammarians assert that it refers to Allah.

Muwalliha is also recited as *muwallaha*. *Muwallaha*, past participle, means He is the ultimate object of the direction of every one 's mind. *Muwalliha*, present participle, means He is directing everyone towards a particular direction, as has been said in verse 48 of al Ma-idah. The purpose of various precepts and methods of worship is to test competitive striving for owning virtues. Notwithstanding the different directions of striving, every man will reach the same destination. The absolute is all pervasive. The Holy Prophet said: "Do not abuse nature which some people take as the first cause of the whole phenomenon. Nature itself is God". But a person who perceives or identifies Him in the manifestations of nature can not be equal to the man who reaches the highest stage of monotheistic belief. Therefore, it is not proper to say that all religions are true because their aim is one and the same. The difference in realisation of the truth distinguishes which one is the best direction. The Quran refers to the different directions and makes clear the best direction.

{وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِنَّهُ لَلْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِعَافٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ } 149

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:149]

The importance and the sanctity of the holy Kabah has been established by binding all Muslims to turn their faces towards it, wherever and in whatever circumstances they may be.

Yazid destroyed the holy Kabah. Walid held a feast of debauchery on the roof of the house of Allah. Abdul Malik and Mansur constructed their own Kabahs in Damascus and Baghdad respectively for pilgrimage. Yet these rulers are respected by {non-Shia} Muslims as *khalifatul muslimin* and spiritual leaders (Tamaddun Islam-Tabari).

Alaykum hujjatun - so that people (the Jews and the Quraysh) will have no accusation against you. The Jews used to boast that Muhammad bowed towards their temple in Jerusalem. The Quraysh observed that instead of turning to the religious centre of the Jews, Muhammad should have preferred the house built by Ibrahim and Ismail.

Wa-li-utimma nia-mati alaykum refers to the perfection of religion and completion of Allah's favour (Ma-idah: 3). In 11 Hijra, on the 18th Dhil Hajj, at Ghadir Khum, the Holy Prophet chose Ali as his successor (refer to page 6 for details). After this event verse 3 of al Ma-idah was revealed. In other words the religion of Allah, Islam, was perfected when *imamat* was established to succeed *risalat*, which is the completion of Allah's favour. It also refers to the fulfilment of the promise Allah made with Ibrahim in connection with the descendants of Ismail (see commentary of verse 124 of this surah and Genesis 17:20).

La-allakum tahtadun also refers to the divinely established institution of *imamat* for the guidance of the faithful for all times, in fulfilment of the promise made by Allah in connection with the descendants of Ismail.

By making Kabah the *qiblah* Allah had fulfilled his covenant made with Ibrahim and Ismail. None but the unjust refuse to believe in the *risalat* of the Holy Prophet and *imamat* of his holy Ahl ul Bayt.

{وَمِنْ حَيْثُ خَرَجْتَ فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۗ وَحَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَيْكُمْ حُجَّةٌ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْهُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِي ۗ وَلِأْتِمَّ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ } 150

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:150] (see commentary for verse 149)

{كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا فِيكُمْ رَسُولًا مِنْكُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتِنَا وَيُزَكِّيكُمْ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُعَلِّمُكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ } 151

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:151]

To fulfil the prayer of Ibrahim (Baqarah: 129), Allah sent the Holy Prophet as a messenger, to make known His commands and signs, to educate and refine the people, to teach them the book and the wisdom and that which they did not know, and establish the sacred house built by Ibrahim and Ismail

(Baqarah: 125) as a sanctuary (duly purified by the Holy Prophet and Ali ibna abi Talib), and show the true *qiblah* towards which all the devotees must turn their faces.

The journey in this life is from darkness into light, from ignorance to knowledge. An open heart will receive that knowledge if it is directed to the message and the messenger.

{فَاذْكُرُونِي أَذْكُرْكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِي وَلَا تَكْفُرُونَ} 152

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:152]

If you remember Allah, avoiding other than He, you are in the midst of reality. Allah, reality, will reflect the remembrance - if the sincere seeker remembers Allah, Allah remembers him.

Forgetfulness can never be attributed to the all-perfect. His remembrance refers to His special favours and bounties bestowed on those who remember Him.

To be grateful *{shukr}* is the key to the fulfilment and application of remembrance which neutralises desires and generates joy of inner contentment - deep and peaceful.

The opposite of this condition is *Kufr*-the falling over hurdles on the road of disobedience.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اسْتَعِينُوا بِالصَّبْرِ وَالصَّلَاةِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ} 153

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:153]

Refer to the commentary of verse 45 of this surah.

{وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ يُقْتَلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتٌ بَلْ أحيَاءٌ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ} 154

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:154]

Those, who die and give themselves fully for the sake and in the way of Allah, are not dead. They are alive, attached and closely connected with the ever-living Allah.

It is reported that verse 154 was revealed for the Muslims who were slain in the battle of Badr. In those days the new converts to Islam, like the disbelievers, thought that death means loss of life for ever.

Fisabilillah means "in the way of Allah" or "for the cause of truth". "The way of the devils" means "for the cause of falsehood" (Nisa: 76). Sale's interpretation of *fisabilillah* (wars fought against non-Muslims to propagate Islam) is a deliberate distortion. There is no compulsion in religion (Baqarah: 256), therefore, the Holy Prophet went to war only when it was forced upon him.

All the created beings are given the opportunity to prove their potential, therefore, everyone is tried with something of fear, hunger, and loss of possessions and children. Those who have attained the highest spiritual maturity through personal virtues, ability to exercise patience, with faith and reliance upon Allah, face the trials successfully and reach the highest stations nearest to Allah. Each individual occupies a different status according to the degree of faith and patience he employs to encounter the test and trial. Some souls are not considered fit to be tried. It is their misfortune. The exemption may be to let their infidelity or hypocrisy grow to its full scope for which there is a painful punishment. (Ali Imran: 178).

The Holy Prophet and the twelve holy Imams occupy the highest status near Allah with reference to the faith in and reliance upon Allah, personal virtues and ability to exercise patience. For the cause of truth, in the way of Allah, they gladly suffered every kind of misery, hardship and calamity of the utmost severity throughout their lives. Only once in the history of the world all kinds of trials, mentioned in this verse (155), to the maximum conceivable degree, have been happily and triumphantly endured and coped with by Imam Husayn and his family and friends in the desert of Karbala. No less was the situation of the other holy Imams under the tyrannical rule of the Ummawi

and Abbasi rulers.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The soul of every conscious being will taste death (Ali Imran: 185), therefore, this verse does not refer to the departure of the soul from the body. It refers to a particular state of blissful life which the souls of the non-Muslims are deprived of.

The term "life" and "death" has also been used in the Quran to signify "knowledge" and "ignorance" (Ya Sin: 70), or "belief" and "disbelief" (An-am: 123) respectively.

The life the soul lives after its departure from the body can be termed as death if it is more painful and miserable than the life of this world when it was in the body, because it has been deprived of the bliss it enjoyed here. And if the life of the hereafter is more blissful than here, the life of this world should be described as death.

The Holy Prophet has rightly observed:

This world is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the disbeliever.

A poor Jew once asked Imam Hasan to tell him how could his poverty be a paradise and Imam's plenty be a prison?

The Imam replied:

"If you would know the miseries awaiting the disbelievers, and the blessings in store for the believers in the life of hereafter, you will then agree that even your present plight is a paradise compared to those miseries, and my affluence here is a prison for me as compared to the blessings that will be bestowed on me there."

Life and death should be understood in the sense of gain and loss in the various stages man passes through, as described by the Quran in verse 154 of this surah. In verse 169 of Ali Imran it is advised not to think that those who are slain in the way of Allah are dead, because they are alive, getting sustenance from their Lord. It means that they are in direct communion with their cherisher and sustainer. The term *shahid*, in the Quran, refers to this state of existence.

{وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ } 155

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:155] (see commentary for verse 154)

{الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ } 156

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:156]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This is the attitude of a faithful when a misfortune befalls him or he suffers a loss. It is the summary of all that which Islam teaches. We are His. We unconditionally submit to His will. We shall return to Him. He is our destination. Whoso makes his life a true expression of this description becomes His prime favourite for His grace, blessings and guidance. The Holy Prophet who stands first and foremost in submission to Allah is the ideal model of this expression which has further been elaborated in verse 163 of Ali-Imran.

It is reported that when Ali ibna abi Talib heard the news of the martyrdom of Hamza, his and the Holy Prophet's dearest uncle, in the battle of Uhad, he said:

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAYHI RAJI-UN

And afterwards Allah revealed these words to the Holy Prophet in this verse.

{أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۗ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُؤْتَدُونَ } 157

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:157]

Those who face misfortunes with a smile, knowing that it is the Lord's way of teaching patience and understanding, are the followers of the right path. The Lord prays for and blesses them - *salawat* is the word for Allah's blessings. In view of the extraordinary merits, achievements and excellence, mentioned on pages I to 7, and in the commentary of verse 7 of al Fatihah, and verses 2 to 5 and 30 to 39 and 124 of al Baqarah, and other verses of the Quran, only the holy Ahl ul Bayt of Muhammad al Mustafa can be joined with him for receiving Allah's *salawat* (see verse 56 of al Ahzab). Therefore, every true faithful says: "ALLAHUMMA SALLI ALA MUHAMMADIN WA ALI MUHAMMAD".

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ {158}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:158]

Safa and Marwa are two clusters of rocks between which the pilgrims run back and forth during *hajj*. They are the scene of Hajirah's running to and fro in search of water, after being left alone with Ismail in the blistering heat and wilderness of Makka. Please see the commentary of verses 125 and 126 of this surah. Before the Holy Prophet had purified and perfected the rituals of *hajj*, Usaf, an idol, was kept on Safa, and Nu-Allah, another idol, was kept on Marwah, therefore, people did not like to go to these rocks. Through this verse, the said stigma has been removed and running between the two rocks has been made an obligatory function of the *hajj*.

Sha-a-irillah means signs of Allah, which remind a person of Allah or a representative of Allah - a prophet or an *imam*, whose remembrance itself would be an act of virtue or devotion to Allah. It is in this sense that the followers of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad give respect to *alams*, *tazias*, *zarihs*, associated with the holy Imams.

Allah is grateful (*shakir*) means appreciation of good deeds and liberal rewarding in return.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالْهُدَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بَيَّنَّاهُ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْكِتَابِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ يَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَلْعَنُهُمُ اللَّاعِنُونَ {159}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:159]

Those who withhold what has been revealed to them of the book, be they Jews (who knew the truth about the Holy Prophet - refer to verse 40, 75 to 79, 89 to 91, 101, 105, 109 and 124 of this surah; and the holy Kabah - Psalms 118: 22 and Matthew 21: 42) or be they the Muslim hypocrites (who know the true interpretation and application of verses - Ahzab: 33; Shura: 23; Nisa: 54 and 59; Ali Imran: 61 and 103;

Tawbah: I 19; Rad: 43, Hud: 17; and Ma-idah: 3, 55, 67 in connection with the event of Ghadir Khum) are cursed by Allah and by the angels and by those who follow His right path. In verses 86 and 87 of al Nisa also the angels and the believers join Allah to curse the wicked. In verse 56 of al Ahzab, Allah and His angels bless the Holy Prophet; and Allah commands the believers to send blessings on him. Unless we join Allah and His angels to curse the enemies of the Holy Prophet, our asking Allah for sending blessings on him will be incomplete. Therefore, the followers of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad bless the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt and curse their enemies. Justice demands that we identify the devil as a devil, and curse him even if he is disguised in the garb of a Muslim like Yazid and others. Cursing and expression of dislike and disgust for any evil or evildoer is essential to remain on guard against wickedness, as has been made clear in the above-noted verse and verse 7 of al Fatihah, therefore, *tabarra* has been prescribed as one of the fundamentals of the religion.

The Jews were most vehemently cursed by Musa for not observing all his commandments (Deut 28: 15-68).

{إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَبَيَّنُّوا فَأُولَٰئِكَ أَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنَا التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ} {160}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:160]

Those who recognise falsehood and condemn it, undoubtedly revert to the path of reality through repentance and true submission. Allah is ever-available for those who turn away from their *nafs*. As a consequence of this real repentance, they will be mending their way of life, that is, unifying their intentions and actions along the path that will bring them the promised bliss and mercy.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ} {161}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:161]

Kufr is the rejection of truth, wilfully by perversity or indolence, or it is disbelief in that which is preached by the Holy Prophet. All disbelievers or non-Muslims are not included in this category. A clear exception is mentioned in verse 98 of al Nisa. Those mentioned in verse 106 of al Barat have to wait for the command of Allah to be punished or to be pardoned. Hell is only for those who wilfully and perversely reject the truth, or those who have the means to know the truth but do not care to do so.

(162)

Those who will be punished will abide in hell according to the state they have reached in this life, without respite. The chastisement is eternal.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq says:

Since the pious would have lived a virtuous life as long as they stayed in this world, they deserve eternal bliss. Similarly the wicked would have spent their days in depravity and immorality as long as they lived in this world, they deserve to be condemned for ever.

{خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا} لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ} {162}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:162]

{وَاللَّهُمَّ إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا} لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ} {163}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:163]

There is no god but Allah. There is only One God, and all attributes belong to Him. His main attribute is an all-encompassing beneficence and mercy. The "unity of God" is the main and single fundamental upon which the whole structure of the religion of Islam rests, through which all guidance and enlightenment emerge.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word *wahid* (one) is not used in any numerical sense, nor in the sense of order (the first of any second), nor in the sense of the oneness of a genus or a specie, nor in any other general term, but it is used in the sense that He is indivisible, unanalysable organically, chemically, geometrically, logically, mentally or physically, or in any sense whatsoever. This unity, in essence, does not correspond to any limitation. Since He is unlimited, a second, an equal, or an opposite to Him is not conceivable.

Ibna Babwah writes in the book of Tawhid:

In the battle of Jamal a Bedouin asked Ali:

"Do you say that God is One?"

Some companions did not like the idea of asking such a question at a time when Ali was fighting a

war, and they rebuked him.

But Ali ibna abi Talib said:

"Do not disapprove his question, because what he asks is the very object of this battle. We are demanding the true answer to this question (same faith in the unity of Allah) from our enemy." Then Ali gave the above-noted description of *Tawhid*.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيَّاحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ {164}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:164]

Having said that there is only one God, the e creation and its duality is described. Nature's diversity is caused by one source and it will revert to the same source. There are heavens and earth, day and night, land and sea, dryness and wetness, life and death; and man, who is the highest form of creation, is given the consciousness to experience all of these, to explore the meaning behind them. Whoever contemplates on the nature of creation, will reach the conclusion that it is one divine power that activates and enlivens all the diverse manifestations.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The harmony in the working of the universe is referred to in the Quran as a sign of the unity of the maker. Man is asked to reflect over this creation and realise the divine unity in the midst of diversity and amongst the various forces of nature that work in perfect harmony. (See quotation from Nahj al Balagha on page 20).

As has been pointed out by Imam Musa bin Jafar al Kazim to his disciple, Hisham bin Hakam: Verily Allah perfected His arguments with reasoning, assisted His messengers with miracles, and proved His *rububiyat* with His signs.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq has explained the part reasoning plays in determining the relationship between man and God and its limitations. Reasoning (the internal) and the prophet (the external) are the two proofs Allah puts forward to let the people, who understand, have unshakeable faith in Allah. There is no use of the external proof (the prophet) if the heart and mind are not convinced through the internal proof (the reasoning). There may be religious doctrines beyond the grasp of limited human intellect but there should be no religious assertion contradictory to rational thinking. This shows that the only medium for understanding the absolute and securing nearness to Allah is sound logical reasoning. After reaching the final stage of the realisation of His existence and unity, the medium between him and the absolute becomes the divine revelation.

(165)

To love, adore and worship a *ghayrallah* (other-than-Allah) is bound to bring about punishment .

The Arabic phrase *ka-hubbillah* means the love of idol-worshippers for their idols and their leaders which should have been for Allah. This also refers to the followers of the false and self-appointed leaders among the Muslims who usurped authority to keep them away from the true divinely commissioned rightly guided religious leaders. Those believers who are stronger in love for Allah not only love everything that Allah loves but also love the true leaders of the religion of Allah because they love to love that which Allah loves in order to please Allah. Therefore the followers of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad love or hate anything or anyone for the sake and in the cause of Allah

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَّخِذُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَنْدَادًا يُحِبُّونَهُمْ كَحُبِّ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ يَرَى الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِذْ يَرَوْنَ الْعَذَابَ أَنَّ

{ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعَذَابِ } 165

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:165]

{ إِذْ تَبَرَّأَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا وَرَأُوا الْعَذَابَ وَتَقَطَّعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَسْبَابُ } 166

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:166]

In the next life the followers of misguidance will recognise their false leaders, the usurpers, and will wish to be given another chance to experience this life with true light, "the genuine leaders," but there will be no escape from the fire. Allah will show them their actions, done pursuant to their judgements, to prove that as promised justice has been done to them.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse makes clear that every individual, in the next life, will be conscious of his deeds in this life. The continuity of the human memory and consciousness, after death, indicated in this verse, dismisses the idea of transmigration of soul.

The Ahmadi interpretation of fire as intense feelings of regret and deprivation, instead of physical suffering, is to belittle the gravity of the divine punishment from which the transgressors shall never come out.

{ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَنَا كَرَّةً فَنَتَبَرَّأَ مِنْهُمْ كَمَا تَبَرَّءُوا مِنَّا كَذَلِكَ يُرِيهِمُ اللَّهُ أَعْمَالَهُمْ حَسَرَاتٍ عَلَيْهِمْ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنَ النَّارِ } 167

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:167] (see commentary for verse 166)

{ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ } 168

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:168]

To determine what food is lawful or unlawful is a very intricate procedure. The injunction is to eat all that is suitable and good, and avoid causes of harm based on the satanic pattern. Unlawful are not only those things which Allah prohibits but even unforbidden things acquired unlawfully - by usurpation, by theft and cheating etcetera. Those who lay stress only on the apparent aspects of religion make a show of dislike to unlawful things but devour things unlawfully acquired (Ma-idah: 63).

"Follow not the footsteps of Shaytan" means follow the way of Allah which has been shown by the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt.

{ إِنَّمَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالسُّوءِ وَالْفَحْشَاءِ وَأَنْ تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } 169

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:169]

To be far off the mainstream of divine order and mercy and to fall away from the ordered direction into disorder, cast off and cut away from the light of knowledge, is the fate of those who seek guidance from Shaytan, who misleads, misguides, transgresses, and makes people speak against Allah what they do not know.

{ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمُ اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ قَالُوا بَلْ نَتَّبِعُ مَا أَلْفَيْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا أَوَلَوْ كَانَ آبَاؤُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ } 170

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:170]

To blindly follow in the footsteps of one's forefathers or leaders, is to discard the sacred responsibility of seeking the truth. The fathers or those who came first before the true message was delivered through the Holy Prophet, were in senseless ignorance, and whoever follows their direction will be away from the guided path. The greatest barrier which the Holy Prophet broke was that of narrow-minded tribal despotism and nationalism. This verse strongly condemns blind following of those traditions of the ancestors which do not tally with sound reasoning and divine guidance.

{ وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ } 171

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:171]

Those who cover themselves with the dark veil of ignorance (*Kufr*-infidelity) are deaf, dumb and blind, therefore, the impact of the call of the message of Allah is lost. There is no response. The *kafir* is devoid of understanding.

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ } 172

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:172]

The Holy Prophet and the holy Imams have enjoined to say *bismillah* before eating, and to say *Alhamdulillah* after eating. In this way eating, an act of unification at the physical level, becomes a function of devotion. The state of gratitude to Allah is bound to increase love for Allah, and thus increases the quality of worship and devotion.

{ إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَن اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ } 173

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:173]

There is a clear description of some of the forbidden edibles. These foods were also forbidden by the law of Musa, and by Isa. The Jews had forbidden some foods to themselves without any authority (Ali Imran: 93). In verse 147 of al An-am prohibitions, exclusively imposed upon the Jews due to their rebellion, have been mentioned. Also refer to al Ma-idah: 3, and al Nahl: 115.

Innama excludes everything besides that which has been mentioned.

"The animals over which any other name than Allah has been invoked" brings to light the fact that everything in the universe belongs to Allah whose name is invoked when we eat or drink anything lawful.

Ghayra baghin means "not for enjoyment" but to satisfy an unavoidable necessity.

La adin means "without any intention" to break the prescribed laws of Allah, or not exceeding the minimum to satisfy the actual want.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The divine mercy is such that when it is absolutely necessary for survival, or in circumstances beyond one's control, there is no blame if one transgresses temporarily. Allah's mercy will overcome the evil of the transgression. The spirit of the divine law must be observed in normal as well as extraordinary conditions. Under no circumstances any revolt against any divine law is allowed.

{ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْتُمُونَ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ مَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ إِلَّا النَّارَ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ } 174

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:174]

The Muslims are warned not to act like the Jews who conceal that which Allah has revealed and buy error for right direction and punishment for forgiveness.

Concealing of truth is compared to eating nothing but fire into their bellies or reducing the soul to ashes. On the day of reckoning, such persons will be isolated from communion with Allah. His mercy which purifies polluted souls will not include them. It indicates that on the day of judgement Allah will speak to some sinners, purify them of their sins, and grant them amnesty.

{ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الضَّلَالََةَ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَالْعَذَابُ بِالْمَغْفِرَةِ ۗ فَمَا أَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى النَّارِ } 175

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:175] (see commentary for verse 174)

{ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ نَزَّلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِي الْكِتَابِ لَفِي شِقَاقٍ بَعِيدٍ} 176

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:176]

Allah's book is true. It contains and encompasses the knowledge of the diversity of creation. Dispute and difference can only relate to the diversity of creation, not to the laws that govern it. Those who go against the book doubt the genuineness of the Quran as the revealed word of Allah. The opponents of the book among the Jews concealed or misinterpreted the prophecy about the advent of the Holy Prophet, clearly mentioned in their scripture. See al Baqarah: 40.

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ} 177

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:177]

According to the Holy Prophet whoever puts this verse into practice attains perfection in faith. The theory and practice of piety have clearly been mentioned in this verse. Faith in Allah and welfare of the mankind have been founded as the essence of the religion of Allah, Islam.

Please refer to the "note" written by Aqa Mahdi Puya in verse 148 of this surah.

Righteousness is this that one should believe:

1. in the unity of Allah with all His attributes;
2. in the last day of judgement;
3. in the angels;
4. in the book of Allah;
5. in all the prophets and messengers of Allah;
6. and give away wealth out of love for Allah to the near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and the beggars, and for the liberation of slaves;
7. and keep up the (obligatory) prayers,

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِصَاصُ فِي الْقَتْلِ الْحُرُّ بِالْحُرِّ وَالْعَبْدُ بِالْعَبْدِ وَالْأَنْثَى بِالْأُنثَى فَمَنْ عُفِيَ لَهُ مِنْ أَخِيهِ شَيْءٌ فَاتِّبَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَأَدَاءٌ إِلَيْهِ بِإِحْسَانٍ ذَلِكَ تَخْفِيفٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى بِكُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} 178

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:178]

In this verse the law of *qisas* (requit, settlement) is set forth in detail. It is enforceable strictly according to the demands of justice tempered with the spirit of mercy. Allah is the forgiving, and therefore man must be able to forgive. The heirs of the slain have the choice to pardon the murderer if someone on behalf of him pays them the blood-price, after which brotherhood is again restored among the parties concerned. Before the advent of Islam, more often than not, the scenario after a murder was a chain of brutal and bloodthirsty reactions. The families and the tribes of both the slayer and the slain used to engage themselves into a war of attrition, generation after generation, involving innocent men, women and children. Islam, through the Holy Prophet, put a stop to this barbaric collective human behaviour and gave a just and kind system of justice to the human race, which for the first time, without ignorance and superstition, applied compassion and understanding in order to live in peace and harmony. "Payment should be made according to recognised usage in a good manner" is called *diyat* (blood-money). In the end this verse says that moderation in punishment is an alleviation from the Lord. Verse 92 of al Nisa prescribes moderation when the murder is not

premeditated and intentional. Verse 93 of al Nisa clearly declares that a great punishment awaits the murderer who kills a believer intentionally. In addition to the legal penalty, in the hereafter, he will abide in hell for ever.

Verse 9 of al Hujurat says that if two groups of believers fight one another, promote peace between them. Then if one of them turns aggressive against the other, fight against the aggressive party till it returns to Allah's authority. If it does so, make peace among them equitably and be impartial.

Compare these practical ways of ensuring peace and harmony among the conflicting forces, a regular and day-to-day phenomenon in the human society, with the imaginary, decorative and unreasonable slogans introduced by the Christian Church:

"When a man hits you on the cheek, offer him the other cheek too; when a man takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well. Give to every one who asks you; when a man takes what is yours; do not demand it back." (Luke 6: 29 and 30)

At no time in history the Christian or any other authority could put this principle into practice.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Ma-ruf means anything known, recognised, approved, and according to customary usage. Its opposite is *munkar* - rejected, disapproved and contrary to common sense and religious laws.

In matters pertaining to the relatives, charity and maintenance of widows or divorced wives, *ma-ruf* means moderation in the light of common sense. In the case of *famr bil ma-ruf* it means obligatory duties prescribed by Islam. In *Nahya anil munkar*, *munkar* means forbidden prohibitions.

{وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} 179

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:179]

Qassa, the root of *qisas*, means to cut, divide and differentiate. Life is balanced by discrimination between good and bad, light and darkness, life and death. The proper justice of retaliation is discrimination without which we become transgressors by not enforcing Allah's law of balance. Therefore, the guilty should be paid back in the same coin. The people against whom the crime is committed should know what punishment has been given and how it is carried out. This way the boundaries of transgression are clearly marked and made known.

La-allakam tattaqun points out that the purpose of ordaining penalty for the crime is to make people abstain from evildoing.

{كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ إِنْ تَرَكَ خَيْرًا الْوَصِيَّةَ لِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ} 180

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:180]

What one leaves behind should be clearly defined, according to the law of inheritance as well as one's own wishes. No vagueness is allowed in Islam, because the path is that of awareness, discrimination, and knowledge.

In verse 8 of al Adiyat also *khayr* refers to wealth, as in this verse. *Khayr* according to most commentators means abundant wealth or large property.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Although the Sunni school thinks that this verse has been abrogated by verse 11 of al Nisa, but its proper study makes it clear that the distribution of wealth among the heirs is to be effected after taking the will (bequest) of the deceased into consideration. The Holy Prophet and Imam Ali had clearly, in many instances, advised those, who sought their guidance, to bequeath or not to bequeath according to the merits and circumstances of the seekers of guidance. Here the word *kutiba* means "laid down". It can be compulsory or optional according to the merits and circumstances of the case.

To alter or to misinterpret the word of Allah is a major sin. Beware. He is hearing, knowing. The wishes of a departed being should not be altered. In case of disagreement, proper settlement, within *shari-ah*, should be made so as not to deprive the rightful heirs, nor let those, in whose favour the bequest has been made, suffer any undue loss.

{فَمَنْ بَدَّلَهُ بَعْدَمَا سَمِعَهُ فَإِنَّمَا إِثْمُهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يُبَدِّلُونَهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 181

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:181] (see commentary for verse 180)

{فَمَنْ خَافَ مِنْ مَوْصِلٍ جَنَفًا أَوْ إِثْمًا فَأَصْلَحَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} 182

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:182] (see commentary for verse 180)

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الصِّيَامُ كَمَا كُتِبَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ} 183

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:183]

Fasting is a means of restraining and controlling the *nafs*, so that contentment (*rida*), and all the other blessings of this great discipline may be experienced. The fasting of the ordinary man is to withhold only from food and drink. The fasting of the pious man is to curb sensory desires, to refrain from looking at the unlawful, hearing the harmful, and thinking about the distasteful, or about what stimulates the lower nature. The fasting of a true believer is to seal the heart from paying any attention to other-than-Allah (*ghayrallah*), and safeguard himself with thorough awareness of the divine laws. Fasting (*sawm*) is one of the obligatory functions of the faith, next only to the prescribed 5 times a day prayers (*salat*), in importance. It trains the Muslims to guard themselves against evil as well as conditions them to suffer physical affliction and exercise self control in the defence of faith and the faithful.

Fasting, although not as perfectly regulated and decisive as in Islam, was prescribed for the followers of the previous prophets also, and was also in vogue, in varying forms, in different parts of the world. Among the Jews it was done in times of sorrow and affliction. Among the Hindus in India, fasting is undertaken as a penance or to achieve spiritual power. The Sabians were also prescribed fasting for one full month and the object of fasting among them was almost identical to Islamic fasting.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse is wrongly stated to be abrogated by the next verse, which, in fact, deals with some of the details of the conditions to be observed during the fasting.

{أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَى سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامِ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ ۚ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۖ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} 184

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:184]

Fasting is prescribed "for a certain number of days" - and as per the next verse they are the days of the month of Ramadan. The deeper benefits of fasting are gained when one is in good health. However, both in sickness and travel, these benefits are unlikely to be realised, therefore, exemption from fasting is provided, but a number of other days should be selected to fast in lieu of the obligatory fasts that have not been observed due to sickness or travel, and also a redemption (*fidyah*) should be effected by feeding a poor man for every missed fast. Aged people, nursing mothers and other cases in which the health is sure to be harmed by fasting can forego fasting altogether, but feed the poor instead, giving away the equivalent of one man's food daily for each fast missed.

It is better to fast as well as feed the poor to obtain a greater return from Allah. The *fidyah* is a concession allowed to the sick and the old but if they know the deeper benefits of fasting they must fast instead of availing the concession. The Holy Prophet and the holy Imams used to give away

whatever they had in the way of Allah but in the month of Ramadan, they were more liberal and open-handed, because the month of Ramadan is the month of Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Yutiquna means the ability to do something with great difficulty. The old and the sick come in this category. It is unreasonable to say that "so whoever witness this month (Ramadan) shall fast in it" (see next verse) cancels this passage. According to the holy Ahl ul Bayt this passage has not been abrogated. *Tawaqa* means ability with hardship, and *tawa-a* means ability with ease. This subtle difference was pointed out by Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq. This passage applies to those who are able to fast but due to some weakness it is very difficult for them to do so.

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ {185}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:185]

The month of Ramadan is that in which the complete Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet in the night of Qadr (Dukhan: 3; Qadr: I). Thereafter he was intimated to deliver it gradually to the people as and when Allah deemed it suitable.

All schools of Islam agree that the whole Quran was sent to *baytul ma-mur* and thereafter it was revealed to the Holy Prophet on suitable occasions during a period of 23 years. *Bayt ul ma-mur* is said to be the celestial counterpart of the holy Kabah. It is an allegorical term used for the heart of the Holy Prophet. The book of Allah and its connection with the Holy Prophet has been explained in detail in the commentary of verse 2 of this surah. The readers are requested to please study it carefully to know that the divinely chosen Holy Prophet was commissioned to guide the whole mankind till eternity after he had received the whole guidance and wisdom (the Quran), and that he delivered it to the people gradually whenever he received the divine command.

The Quran is a guidance to mankind, and the Holy Prophet according to Nisa : 79; A-raf: 158, Anbiya: 107, had been sent as a messenger to all mankind; therefore, Islam is a universal religion.

According to Matthew 15: 24 prophet Isa had said:

"I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to them alone."

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۗ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ {186}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:186]

Allah is very near, nearer than the jugular vein. Awareness of this fact serves two purposes-it stops man from drifting towards evil, and secondly it gives him heart and confidence to rely upon Allah alone, independent of all created beings, making him understand the ever-living reality of Allah who alone controls the whole universe and that which takes place in it.

He answers the prayer of every sincere supplicant when he calls on Him. Allah hears every cry of help and gives to His devotee that which is best in his interest, known to His infinite wisdom alone. Acceptance of prayer does not mean immediate fulfilment of whatever is sought.

"So they should answer My call" means man should carry out Allah's will expressed through His commandments to regulate and discipline the life of this world.

"And believe in Me" means awareness of the ever-living presence of the almighty and all-knowing Lord creator, equal to or like unto whom is no one.

To get that which is desired man has to make efforts and employ all the means at his disposal, arranged and provided by Allah, and then invoke Him to let the labour bear fruit. To use the available

means properly, to apply the native faculties, and to pay close attention he needs guidance for which he invokes the highest authorities from whom nothing is hidden and for whom nothing is impossible. Through prayers guidance is received as to how the efforts should be made to fulfil the desires. The merciful Lord who is also all-wise knows what is profitable (An-am: 41). Sometimes Allah puts His devoted servants to test and trial (Baqarah: 155). In this sense man's efforts and his prayers are inseparable.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The act of invocation has been recommended by Allah Himself, because it helps to make the efforts of man fruitful. This passage dismisses the fatalist view that man's destiny is predetermined, regardless of his actions; this verse not only recommends prayer but also promises a response, showing that prayer which is a human action, has its effect on determining the destiny. The prayer to which response is promised should be a sincere cry from the depth of the heart. If there is predestination as the fatalists say, then this verse and verse 5 of Al Fatihah become meaningless. Please refer to the commentary of al Fatihah: 5.

Imam Ali ibna abi Talib says:

Put faith in Allah. Seek His protection.

Direct your prayers, requests, solicitations and supplications to Him and Him alone.

To give as well as to withhold lies in His (only in His) power.

Ask as much of His favours as you can.

Know that Allah owns the treasures of the heavens and the earth. Not only He has given permission to ask for His mercy and favours, but also has promised to listen to your prayers. He has not appointed guards to prevent your prayers reaching Him. Invoke His help in difficulties and distress. Implore Him to grant you long life and sound health. Pray to Him for prosperity.

Think over it that by simply granting you the privilege of praying for His favours and mercy, He has handed over the keys of His treasures to you. Whenever you are in need, pray, and He gives His favours and blessings.

Sometimes you find requests are not immediately granted. Do not be disappointed. Fulfilment of desires rests with the true purpose or intention of the pray-er. More often fulfilment is delayed because the merciful Lord wants to bestow upon you suitable rewards. In the meantime bear patiently hardships, believing sincerely in His help. You will get better favours, because, unknowingly, you may ask for things which are really harmful to you. Many of your requests, if granted, may bring eternal damnation.

So, at times, withholding fulfilment is a blessing in disguise.

أَجَلٌ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصِّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ أَتُمُوا الصِّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ {187}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:187]

During the fast eating and drinking, after the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night, is prohibited until night. (For other conditions see books of fiqh). In the beginning cohabitation between man and wife was not allowed for those who observed fast, whether night or day, but the future second caliph and some other companions confessed to the Holy Prophet that they had transgressed this prohibition (Tafsir Baydawi). Through this verse cohabitation between man and wife during the night was made lawful.

Man's actions must follow certain patterns, starting with the gross, and gradually ascending to the subtlest of the subtle. There were very few truly obedient devotees of Allah (the Ahl ul Bayt) who observed every command of Allah, but the merciful Lord also takes into consideration the wishes of the "not so careful Muslims."

{وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتُدْلُوا بِهَا إِلَى الْحُكَّامِ لِتَأْكُلُوا فَرِيقًا مِنْ أَمْوَالِ النَّاسِ بِالْإِثْمِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ } 188

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:188]

It is incumbent upon each one of the faithful to seek the roots of justice and right balance deeply. The purpose of *sawm* is to curb mean and lower tendencies such as wrongfully consuming even things lawfully possessed and letting greed dominate every aspect of life.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْأَهْلِ قُلْ هِيَ مَوَاقِيتُ لِلنَّاسِ وَالْحَجِّ وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا وَأَتُّوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ } 189

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:189]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Swallowing up other people's rights and usurping unjustly the possessions of others have been declared unlawful (also see Nisa: 29).

In Islam religious duties and other prescribed actions like fasts, festivals and pilgrimage, are carried out according to the lunar calculation. The reasons are given below:

- (1) Even an illiterate person can determine the day of the month and the month of the year according to the different shapes and forms of the moon, which cannot be calculated from the sun.
- (2) Man can experience the joy and satisfaction of fulfilment in every type of season, which is not possible if solar calendar is followed.
- (3) Acts of worship do not become seasonal rituals.
- (4) The lunar year is shorter than the solar year. So the devotee gets more opportunities, in his lifetime, to turn to Allah, and obtain more benefits.

The inclination of some to adopt the solar calendar, with reference to acts of worship, under the influence of Christian propaganda, should be discouraged, because it was Paul, who, in order to please the pagan Romans, introduced the solar calendar.

On account of superstitious customs before Islam, the Arabs, after putting the 'Thram' did not enter their houses through the regular doors, but made new back entrances to get into their abodes. This verse put an end to this false belief.

The true interpretation of this verse is that every occasion has its own door of approach. Every arena, physical, intellectual, or spiritual, has its natural point of entry. The intelligent man recognises the right door, unsuperstitiously, and in order to enter depends on knowledge. Entering from behind is a figurative expression for rejecting the right course, and entering through the (regular) door means following the right path. The house is the "house of guidance". Righteousness is this that one should approach the "house of guidance" through its door, the right path. "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate", said the Holy Prophet. To know the true guidance one has to turn to Ali as the Shia school (Islam original) rightly does. The Mutazali sect of Sunni school and the *sufis* also follow the teachings of Imam Ali ibna abi Talib.

{وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ } 190

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:190]

The message of Islam is universal. From early times the Muslims were only permitted to fight in

self defence. When there is no option, and in the face of persecution, however, the Muslims must fight. The strength of Islam lies in its certainty of ultimate victory over aggression, transgression, and ascribing falsehood to Allah and His last prophet. *Fitna* can mean oppression, persecution, seduction - all implying the "discord" that attachment with *ghayrallah* (other-than-Allah) brings about. It is used as in verse 217 of this surah - war is detestable but *fitna* is worse than slaughter. Islam promotes peace, order and harmony in the human society and keeps man on the right path. When the enemies of Islam found that the light of this message was sweeping darkness from every corner, the disbelievers vowed to annihilate it. It was only then that, no recourse being left for the believers, they had to resolutely take up the sword in defence. Verses 39 and 40 of al Hajj also give permission to fight when any people is wronged, oppressed and persecuted.

If Numbers 25: 1 to 3 and 31: 7 to 18 in the Old Testament are read carefully one comes to the conclusion that when the Israelites, in Shitim, began to worship the gods of Moab the Lord God asked Moses to "take all the leaders of the people and hurl them down to their death before the Lord."

And they made war on Midians as the Lord has commanded Moses, and slew all the men. The Israelites took captive the Madianite women and children, and carried off all their cattle, their flocks and their property. They burnt all their cities. Moses asked them to kill every male child and every woman who has had intercourse with a man.

So in the way of Allah, the prophets were commanded to put an end to the activities of the disbelievers who wanted to destroy the true devotees of Allah in order to stop the advancement and progress of the religion of Allah. The Quran commands the Muslims not to exceed the limits but to fight evil until its power base is dislodged, and if the *kafirs* desist then to show mercy. Compared to what the other prophets did, as commanded by Allah, to destroy the unbelievers, the role assigned to the Holy Prophet as the "mercy unto the worlds" was the most benign of all the campaigns undertaken by His messengers to liberate mankind from the clutches of the enemies of Allah. He fought and killed the enemy whenever war was imposed on him.

Nobody who has any idea of the miserable conditions of the early Muslims, would for a moment imagine that this handful of people could have wantonly set themselves to provoke the active hostility of the whole world about them. They would quietly have borne any provocation rather than take the risk of fighting numberless hordes. If they did engage themselves in this way, one would presume that circumstances had forced them to it; unless their very existence was in peril, they could not possibly have thought to plunge themselves into a mortal struggle. This is so clear *a priori* that even if the initiative did appear to be taken by Muslims, no sane minded person would for a moment suppose that they were really offensive wars - they must have been offensive with a defensive import. The circumstances had forced them to take action, and if the Holy Prophet had not been quick to it and had waited for a formal assault from the other side, he would only have given the enemy time to collect their forces; and who can doubt that in that case, the world would soon have heard the last of this little band of Muslims.

Yet such is the perversity of prejudice that no such considerations, obvious as they are, are allowed to have any weight with writers like Muir, Sale, Neoldeke and others. All they can see is that in the battle of Badr and its prelude, the raid of Abdullah bin Jahsh, it was the Muslims that began the quarrel with the infidels. What the infidels had been doing all the time before is, as a matter of principle, ignored and forgotten.

How deep-rooted was the acrimony which drove the infidels on against the new converts, may be easily judged from their pursuing them down even to Abyssinia, to where the Muslims had fled to avoid the horrible tortures they were suffering at their hands. The infidels would not let them live in

peace even in other lands. Could it be imagined that they could all complacently see them flourish and develop their mission from a centre only 70 miles away from themselves? What are the facts? Soon after the emigration of the Holy Prophet, they wrote to the chief of Madina, Abdullah ibna Obay, as follows:

You have given protection to our man. We have sworn by God that you either kill him or expel him, otherwise we will come upon you with all of us. and kill your fighting men and take hold of your women as lawful for us"

Obay bin Kab says, "When the Holy Prophet and his people came to Madina and the Ansars took them under their protection, all the Arabs were united to make an assault upon them. They never lay down to sleep except with their weapons with them."

This is not the place to give an account of the various wars and battles that were fought. They will be described under the various verses relating to them.

This is merely an introduction that may help us to understand the true state of things at the time. All this is quietly passed over by European critics of Islam.

Finally it should be noted that as without *jihad* correspondence of the Holy Prophet to the career of prophet Musa would fail to be perfect, Islam would also fail to be a complete and perfect religion for the world. Fighting has well been said to be the direct necessity of human nature, a religion that did not provide for it, did not regulate its principles and define its rightful limits, would not be a perfect religion, much less a final religion for the world.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In spite of all that has been said that Islam prefers peaceful methods of preaching the truth, and that it never took any initiative in waging wars against its opponents, the fact is that Islam recognises the right of taking the initiative in using force against those who persist in ungodly activities causing human degradation or social and moral deterioration. But this measure can only be adopted by the prophet of Allah or his vicegerents, authorised by Him, and none else. As Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir says: "A war may be termed as holy or godly (*jihad*) if the object is to make people give up submission to the *ghayrallah* and to submit only to Allah's authority and the divine will. But if the purpose is to make them give up submission to one creature in order to submit to any other, it is the usual war waged for selfish and worldly gain. Hence it is unholy and thus condemned by Islam." Taking this definition in view, it is obvious that no war is holy unless it is sanctioned and allowed by the person who is perfectly pure from every kind of ungodliness and is constantly in communion with the universal will of the absolute.

However, Islam enjoins on Muslims to be always ready, well prepared and well equipped to meet all exigencies, or an eventuality which may unexpectedly develop against them, then they should gather as much strength as they can, so that their opponents, the opponents of the divine cause, may refrain from any unprovoked aggression. (Anfal: 60).

وَاقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَأَخْرِجُوهُمْ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَخْرَجْتُمْ وَأَلْفَنْتُمْ أَشَدَّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ ۚ وَلَا تَقَاتِلُوهُمْ عِنْدَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ حَتَّىٰ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِيهِ ۚ
{فَإِنْ قَاتَلُوكُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ ۚ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:191]

The order is to kill the enemy (against whom fighting has been enjoined) wherever they are found, whilst the war goes on. It does not refer to unbelievers in general.

"And drive them out from where they drove you out" refers to Makka, wherein the holy Kabah, the centre of Islam, is located, because it belonged to the Muslims but was usurped by the infidels unlawfully.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Fitna means subversive activities to destroy peace and rule of law. With reference to other verses like this verse (Nisa: 135; Ma-idah: 2 and 8) it must be said that Islam advocates universal peace and harmony in the human society and teaches us to tolerate and accommodate other creeds so far as their followers do not hatch plots and generate ill-will to destroy the Muslims and ascribe falsehood to Allah and His religion. In verses 1, 8 and 9 of al Mumtahanah, the believers are advised to show kindness and do justice to the unbelievers who are not hostile to them, but at all events, friendship with the enemies of Allah has been discouraged. Islam avoids killing and destruction, but when public peace and safety is at stake, prompt and severe action is taken to bring order and eliminate lawlessness. Islam has no room for wilful aggressors and cunning mischief-makers. The sanctity of the holy Kabah and the sacred months is very important, but when attacked all considerations should be kept in abeyance till the aggressors are destroyed completely. Keeping this principle in view, the Holy Prophet fought against the infidels of Makka and their (Jewish) associates, in self defence, because they wanted to exterminate the religion of Allah and its followers. When the Syrian vassals of the Roman empire advised Hercules to help and support the Makkan pagans and liquidate the Muslims, the Holy Prophet had to go to war against the Christians. No peaceful person, tribe or community was ever attacked by him. He did not allow his followers, either in his lifetime or after, to needlessly attack any people. There are many traditions and verses of the Quran which enjoin peaceful preaching of the truth through argument and reason, with wisdom and kind exhortation in the best way possible. (Nahl: 125). The sword which was used to defend the cause of Islam right from the beginning was the *dhulfiqar*, and the man who devoted his life to the cause of Islam was Ali. A divine voice informed the Holy Prophet in the midst of the battle of Uhad.

LA FATA ILLA ALI, LA SAYF ILLA DHULFIQAR

(There is no hero save Ali, there is no sword save dhulfiqar)

Ali, the champion of Islam, and his God-sent sword fought against the pagans of Makka and their allies and the Jews and the Christians in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. After him, he never took part in the hostile campaigns directed against the non-Muslims of the world by the companions of the Holy Prophet. It is because of the policies carried out by those companions, that men like Gibbon declared that Islam was preached by the sword, as he (wrongly) concluded that what the followers did, must have been the policy of the preacher. He failed to identify the true followers of the prophet of Islam, Ali and his sons, who, after the Holy Prophet, took the sword in their hands, not to enslave the non-Muslims and appropriate their wealth, but to save Islam from the evil of hypocrisy which had emerged in full force to mutilate the beautiful face of Islam. "I shall not cease to fight against the hypocrites until the last of them is driven out from the fold of the true believers," said Imam Ali ibna abi Talib. In Kerbala Imam Husayn bin Ali used the *dhulfiqar* for the last time to distinguish between right and wrong or truth and falsehood. When this purpose was served the God-sent sword was sheathed for ever till the return of the last living Imam. The event of Kerbala clearly separated and identified the two camps the camp of Allah and the camp of Shaytan. The Imams in the progeny of Imam Husayn, through piety, reason and wisdom, preached the true religion of Allah. The hypocrisy of the usurpers, through ruthless intimidation and shameless treason, opposed them to crush and destroy the Islam original kept alive by the Ahl ul Bayt. Yet the Islam original flourished. The severest despots could not obliterate it.

{فَإِنْ أَنْهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} 192

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:192]

Showing mercy when one has the upper hand is enjoined in this verse. On all occasions, the lover of Allah attempts to draw near Him by taking on the appropriate attribute of Allah. Mercy and forgiveness for the enemies if they desist from fighting has been recommended. No other creed or religion has this provision.

{ وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى لَا تَكُونَ فِئْتَةً وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ لِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةً فَلَا عُدْوَانَ إِلَّا عَلَى الظَّالِمِينَ } 193

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:193]

Fighting evil should continue until its power base is dislodged, after which it should be stopped. *Fitna* has been explained in verse 191 of this surah.

"*Din* should be only for Allah" makes it clear that the purpose of fighting in the way of Allah is to remove persecution, corruption and mischief which suppress liberty and do not allow people to choose between truth and falsehood so that they may willingly believe in Allah and follow His commandments. The root of evil is in polytheism. It should be uprooted. When our living Imam returns, he will put an end to polytheism and make available true freedom for mankind. In verse 40 of al Hajj it is said that Allah repels some men by means of others to keep safe synagogues, churches and cloisters so that every man may have the freedom to remember God according to his own belief, because there is no compulsion in religion (Baqarah: 256). Only Islam, and no other religion, gives freedom to one and all to worship one true God - Allah.

"And if they desist" means when the polytheists renounce false gods and idol-worshipping and come into the fold of the true faith, Islam, and believe in the one and only true God.

الشَّهْرُ الْحَرَامُ بِالشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ وَالْحُرُمَاتُ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنْ اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ فَاعْتَدُوا عَلَيْهِ بِمِثْلِ مَا اعْتَدَى عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ وَانْفُوا اللَّهَ وَعَلِّمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِينَ } 194

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:194]

Rajab, Dhilqad, Dhilhajj and Muharram are the sacred months. The men of Allah are allowed to inflict injury on those who violate the sanctity of the sacred months and attack the believers, because under the law of retaliation justice demands that the aggressors be punished, but when the enemy desist from continued confrontation, peace, bound by agreement, should prevail and be adhered to. The *muttaqin* have been described in verse 2 of this surah.

{ وَأَنْفُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْفُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ ۚ وَأَحْسِنُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ } 195

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:195]

Muhsin (derived from *ihsan*) is he who acts well, does good deeds and spends in the way of the most perfect, good and bountiful Allah. Allah, therefore, loves the *Muhsin*. When a man gets what he deserves, proportionate to his deeds, it is called justice (*adl*); but if one is given more in view of one's needs, more than what one deserves, it is called *ihsan* (to give for a present).

Islam views closefisted miserliness as ungodliness, which keeps the miser away from paradise and throws him into hell.

By not spending in the way of Allah, individuals cast themselves and their nation into perdition and both are destroyed.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Man's life and his possessions are not his own. They belong to Allah. Man only holds them as a trust. He should not use them to please himself. He must spend of his possessions and readily give his life in the way of Allah to promote His cause, as Imam Husayn did in Kerbala. But he must protect his life and property when there is no danger to the religion or to the mission of Allah, as the Holy

Prophet did at the time of the treaty of Hudaibiya, as Ali did in Siffin, and as Hasan did with Mu-awiya.

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ وَلَا تَخْلِفُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامٌ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۚ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۚ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلَهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ {196}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:196]

The date and the month for performing *hajj* is fixed, whereas *umra*, an abridged ritual, can be performed at any time.

To inculcate restraint, perseverance, sincerity and purity of intention, submission, and dedication to the service of Allah, a thorough discipline has been prescribed for performing *hajj* and *umrah*. [Please study "Hajj and Umrah guide" and "Supplications for Hajj and Umrah", published by the Peermahomed Ebrahim Trust, or any such publication published by the Shia publishing houses.

Hajj is a week of total loyalty. The body is denied all kinds of comforts. The mind and the heart are tuned to bask in the light of devotion. It enables man to rise to the glorious heights of spiritual bliss. The proud, rich and the egotistic celebrities are made to know and realise their true insignificance, otherwise, in any other situation, they would prefer to spend any amount to avoid association with the ordinary people and being brought to the level of the meek. No distinction of wealth, fame, birth, colour or nationality are of any use when the *hajj* begins. All are in the service of the Lord. It is a training ground to put the idea of the brotherhood of man into practice. Whoso fails to do in day-to-day life what he has experienced during the *hajj*, is not a true believer. There is no other religion which has such an institution to inspire effective voluntary control to curb brutality and pride, so easily acquired by the men of the world. Islam would have been labelled as an imperfect code of life if *hajj* has not been prescribed as an obligatory duty.

The criticism of the slaughter of animals by the opponents of Islam is unreasonable. Animals have been created by the creator to provide food for the human beings. There is "life" in everything man or animal eats or drinks. Therefore saving or sparing "life" is not possible. This is the law of nature. The very existence of life depends upon the proper consuming of life. Life in the lower stages of creation has been purposely created to be sacrificed to serve the survival of the species in the higher realm. Similarly, man has been created to sacrifice his self which is dearest to him, to reach the higher realms of divinity or spiritual bliss. It is true that purposeless slaughter of animals is a waste of Allah's bounty when it is carried out in contravention to the laws of the author of nature. Even for those who hold animals sacred, the surest way to show their concern is to slaughter them at the proper time, because one day they will be eliminated by death. So, if an animal is to die anyway, it is better to use it for sustenance of human life, rather than letting it go waste. The merciful creator, therefore, has allowed slaughter of animals for the sustenance of human life.

In the days of ignorance, man sacrificed man to please his man-made gods. Islam stopped this practice. Instead, to keep alive the spirit of the intended sacrifice of Ismail by Ibrahim, to show his obedience to his Lord, sacrifice of animals has been prescribed. On the other hand, Islam prohibits purposeless killing of animals. As long as a *haji* is in *ihram* he cannot kill even a mosquito. Hunting is not only forbidden during the *hajj* but also as a sport in ordinary life. Imam Ali, on his death bed, asked his children to take care of the birds he had domesticated, or else to set them free. Once a disciple of Imam Jafar al Sadiq killed some pigeons in exasperation. The Imam asked him to give one

dinar in charity for every pigeon he had killed as an expiation.

The companions of Imam Hasan tried to make a dog run when the unclean animal came near them while they were having meals with the Imam. The Imam prevented them and began to eat one morsel himself and gave another to the dog. He said: "I should feel ashamed if a creature of Allah looks at my food and I turn it away."

At the call of duty a true believer must be ready to act as commanded, therefore, the impracticable and imaginary tenderness, which actually is not so, should not be allowed to take root. One must kill even a human being if proved guilty of murder and lawfully condemned to death. The misconceived feeling of tenderness is a moral weakness which can be removed by proper training.

If the holy Kabah is held in reverence, it is not idolatry. The spirit of holding in veneration things dedicated to Allah (or godliness) without any intention of worshipping them, even if it is the psyche of the idol-worshippers, is not idolatry. The holy edifice was built by Ibrahim and Ismail, the two distinguished friends of Allah, for the exclusive remembrance of the true Lord. The pagans appropriated it and used it as their temple. The two other friends of Allah, the Holy Prophet and Imam Ali, cleared the sacred house of the idols and restored it to its original purpose. They destroyed the false gods but retained the really venerable black stone used by Ibrahim in construction of the holy house, because this stone was sent down by Allah. Likewise the respect paid to Safa and Marwa, on account of its association with Ibrahim and Ismail, has been preserved.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"Whoever profits by combining *umrah* with *hajj* means that after performing *umrah*, the pilgrim casts off *ihram* and puts it on again at the time of *hajj*, but by combining *umrah* with *hajj* he does not have to journey again for *hajj* after *umrah*, and also does not have to be in *ihram* all the time during the intervening period. The second caliph, nominated by the first caliph, who opposed this in the life time of the holy Prophet, issued orders to discontinue it and *muta ul nisa*, and *hayya ala khayril amal* from the *azan*. However, the later jurists did not follow his order for discontinuation of the *muta ul hajj* but the *muta ul nisa* and *hayya ala khayril amal* had been discontinued by the ignorant people in contravention of the divine commandments (Nisa: 24).

الْحَجُّ أَشْهُرٌ مَّعْلُومَاتٌ ۖ فَمَنْ فَرَضَ فِيهِنَّ الْحَجَّ فَلَا رَفَثَ وَلَا فُسُوقَ وَلَا جِدَالَ فِي الْحَجِّ ۗ وَمَا تَفَعَّلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَعْلَمُهُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَتَزَوَّدُوا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ {197}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:197]

Shawwal, Dhilqad and Dhilhajj are the well known months. One can start the pilgrimage in these months but the principal performance of *hajj* has been prescribed in the month of Dhilhajj. During these days the pilgrim enters the state of purity in which he is entirely absorbed with Allah. *Taqwa* is the best provision, because by resigning oneself to Allah and abstaining from all that which connects with worldly matters, devotion to Allah becomes total. Everything which pertains to *rafas* (sexual intercourse), *fasaq* (fornication), *jidal* (quarrelling with one another) are forbidden.

"Take provision" means to plan and carry sufficient provisions for the journey so as not to be a burden on others. Some people used to go for pilgrimage to Makka without sufficient provisions, on the pretence that they trust in Allah's help, thus becoming a burden on their fellow travellers. Making provision may also mean making provision for the journey of life with piety and righteousness. Surely the best provision is *taqwa* - guarding against evil or safeguarding with full awareness of divine laws. If the men of understanding desire increase in provision, here and in the hereafter, then they should know the boundaries and fortify them.

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا أَفْضْتُمْ مِنْ عَرَفَاتٍ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ ۖ وَادْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَاكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِنَ الضَّالِّينَ {198}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:198]

Fazl means bounty, the sustenance one obtains by trade and commerce.

Mash-aril haram, the holy sign or monument, is the place known as *muzdalifa*, where the pilgrims halt for a night while returning from Arafat on the evening of the 9th Dhilhajj.

{ثُمَّ أَفِيضُوا مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفَاضَ النَّاسُ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ {199}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:199]

Despite the dissimilarity of colour, age and gender, the pilgrims stand equal in the eyes of Allah, on the plain of Arafat. The Quraysh and the Kanana tribes imagined themselves superior to other people, therefore, they used to stay behind and did not join the multitude.

{إِذَا فَضَيْتُمْ مَنَاسِكَكُمْ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا ۗ فَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ خَلَقٍ {200}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:200]

Hajj is a meeting with the Lord . The ignorant Arabs used to boast about the achievements of their fathers. The father is merely a physical source, whereas the real source is Allah. The pilgrims are asked to remember and glorify only Allah.

{وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ {201}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:201]

Most men seek only physical fulfilment, therefore, they shall have no share in the hereafter. Those who pray only for the present life indicate that they feel themselves secure in the other life (for which they do not pray) and do not need the help of Allah. The true seekers, with inner certainty, glorify Allah and invoke Him to grant them good in this world, and good in the hereafter. Islam guides man to achieve success in both the worlds. This prayer, for both the lives taught to the Muslims by the Quran, indicates that Islam wants man to adopt the middle course between materialism and asceticism.

{أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ {202}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:202]

The doers of good deeds must call upon Allah to accept their accomplishments.

As soon as the good or the bad deeds are done by an individual, the result at once comes before him. Allah is swift in reckoning.

{وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ اتَّقَى ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ {203}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:203]

The specific reference here is to the three days after sacrifice-called the days of *tashriq*. The normal state of a true seeker is to be in perpetual remembrance of Allah, safeguarding himself with full awareness of His laws, knowing for certain that all shall be gathered before Him.

{وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ {204}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:204]

No particular person is referred to in these verses; the reference is to the miscreants in general. The enemy of truth and Islam is his own enemy. He is a shattered being, the breakdown between what is said and what is really meant, and, therefore, causes mischief and destruction of the natural order, and tries to break up the divine system. Such men assured the Holy Prophet to rely on their co-operation, but hatched plans, in secret, to make mischief both in his lifetime and after. They refused to adopt piety because pride and self-elevation led them astray. Hell is their resting-place.

{ وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ } 205

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:205] (see commentary for verse 204)

{ وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُ اتَّقِ اللَّهَ أَخَذَتْهُ الْعِزَّةُ بِالْإِثْمِ ۖ فَحَسْبُهُ جَهَنَّمُ ۚ وَلَيْسَ الْمِهَادُ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:206] (see commentary for verse 204)

{ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ } 207

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:207]

Thalabi, Ghazali, the author of Ahya-ul Ulum, and all the Shia commentators say that this verse was revealed to praise Ali ibna abi Talib, when he slept in the bed of the Holy Prophet, during the night of *hijrat*.

Immediately after the death of Abu Talib, Abu Sufyan, the chief of the branch of Umayyah, succeeded to the principality of Makka. A zealous votary of the idols, a mortal foe of the line of Hashim, he convened an assembly of the Quraysh and their allies. All tribal heads held a conference on the instigation of Abu Sufyan and Abu Jahl. It was resolved that one man from every tribe should go to the Holy Prophet's house in the darkness of the night and kill him jointly, in order to divide the guilt, and baffle the vengeance of the Bani Hashim. In the stupidity of their ignorance, they forgot that Allah is seeing, hearing, and His *hand* (Ali) was alive, who, from his earliest days, had committed himself to save the Holy Prophet at all costs. In the dark night, the conspirators surrounded the house of the Holy Prophet. Meanwhile, Allah commanded the Holy Prophet to leave Makka at once and go to Madina. The Holy Prophet intimated Ali of the divine plan and asked him to lie down on his bed, in order to lead the enemies into thinking that it was the Holy Prophet himself who was sleeping, thus giving him enough time to go away from Makka (unnoticed). Ali asked the Holy Prophet if his lying down in his bed would save the Holy Prophet's life, to which he answered in the affirmative. So Ali lay down on the Holy Prophet's bed, covering himself with his blanket. Ali made a willing choice of certain death, as the blood-thirsty enemies were lurking around the house to kill the Holy Prophet in his bed at any time during the night.

Ali willingly agreed to die because:

(1) in his opinion the life of the Holy Prophet was more valuable than his own;

1. he was absolutely certain that it was the duty of a true believer to obtain the pleasure of Allah and His messenger, even if one's life has to be bartered;

1. he had the peace of mind which gave him courage to sleep, while the naked swords were flashing to

strike him - a singular example of willing surrender to Allah's will;

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ادْخُلُوا فِي السِّلْمِ كَافَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ } 208

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:208]

Silm means *iman*, the inner core or depth of the faith. The use of this word in this verse points out that "you who believe" are those who know and believe in the religion but are unaware of the scope and extent of the depth of *iman*, so they are invited to surrender and submit with perfect belief and thorough conviction; then alone they will not follow the footsteps of Shaytan, who is an open enemy.

As reported by Ayashi, Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir had also explained this verse as above and added that it also means that all Muslims are enjoined to believe in *imamat* and follow its divine guidance after the *risalat*, which ended with the Holy Prophet.

By not following the *imamat* of Ali, after the Holy Prophet, the Muslim *ummah* was easily deceived by the whims and fancies of incompetent and selfish leaders, and by not paying attention to the command of Allah to submit, as given in this verse, the ignorant Muslims were caught in the web of sects, sub-sects, and many schismatic schools of thought. The safest way to enter into submission is to follow the Holy Prophet and the holy Imams of his Ahl ul Bayt.

{فَإِنْ زَلَلْتُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْكُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَأَعْمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ} 209

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:209]

Those who made a show of becoming Muslims to save their private interests will certainly backslide, but their defection shall not affect the cause of Allah in any way, nor cause any inconvenience to those who believe in Allah. Those who go astray shall be the losers.

{هَلْ يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِي ظُلَلٍ مِنَ الْعَمَامِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَقُضِيَ الْأَمْرُ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ} 210

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:210]

"The coming of Allah" means the execution of Allah's will to punish the disbelievers through His laws which are absolute. Allah's decree encompasses all existence, seen or unseen. It operates in every situation and phenomenon. The total ecological balance, and the overall outcome of any system, are contained within the laws of reality, therefore, the result is already settled - all matters emanate from Allah and return to Allah. The disbelievers and those who backslide shall be punished in consequence of the inevitable execution of Allah's will. Verses 33 and 34 of al Nahl also state the same reality, using the same phrase. Similarly verse 2 of al Hashr refers to the arrogance of the Jews whose evil (persistent mischief-making to upset the peaceful life of the people of Madina) destroyed them, because the divine laws take their course without fail.

(211)

Ni-mat means bounty or grace. In this verse it means the word of Allah, the Quran. Those who change its wording (or its meaning) after it has been revealed to the Holy Prophet (and duly explained by him) shall be severely punished.

{سَلَّ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ كَمَا آتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ بَيِّنَةٍ وَمَنْ يُبَدِّلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ} 211

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:211]

{رُيِّنَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْحَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَاللَّهُ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ} 212

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:212]

The rich Jews who, through usury, had multiplied their wealth, used to jest at those believers who had migrated into Madina with the intention of settling in it. Since they had to leave behind everything they possessed in Makka, they were reduced to a state of extreme poverty. According to this verse, the true worth of a man is determined by his piety, independent of his wealth. Material possessions shall be of no use on the day of resurrection. Piety *{taqwa}* will reign supreme.

كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ {213}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:213]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Mankind was ignorant, closely associated with each other in waywardness and lack of knowledge, before the revelation of divine wisdom. Therefore, prophets were sent to enable people to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong. It agrees with verse 19 of Yunus. So the purpose of the divine mission was not to bring unity among the people who differed in their religious ideologies, but to develop their aptitude for choosing the right path by pinpointing evil and evildoers.

"And only those to whom the scriptures were given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come to them, through hatred of one another", refers to the Jews and the Christians who profusely corrupted their scriptures.

It also refers to the Muslims who misinterpret the verses of the Quran.

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَأْتِكُمْ مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ خَلَوْا مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مَسَّتْهُمُ الْبَأْسَاءُ وَالضَّرَاءُ وَزُلْزَلُوا حَتَّى يَقُولَ الرَّسُولُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ مَتَى نَصُرُ اللَّهُ ۗ أَلَا إِنَّ نَصْرَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ {214}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:214]

This verse is reported to have been revealed at the time of the battle of Khandaq, when the restless Muslims kept on asking:

"When comes Allah's help?"

Before them the famous Arab warrior, Amr bin Abdwud, astride on his horse, was proudly repeating his challenge for a man-to-man combat. The Muslims were on the brink of losing faith in Allah and His prophet as they had done in the battle of Uhad. Every one, among them, was hiding his head, lest the messenger of Allah might command him to accept the challenge. Some, among them, began to narrate the daring acts of the dare-devil in order to discourage their friends. Though they are held as great heroes of Islam by their ignorant followers, they refused to go to fight the challenger when asked by the Holy Prophet, because they relied more upon the advice of their comrades than on Allah's help. After that the Holy Prophet wanted to know who would go to meet the enemy? He repeatedly asked this question. Every time only Ali came forward. At last Ali, "the total faith," as aptly described by the Holy Prophet, went to fight against Amar bin Abdwud, "the total disbelief". Ali, in no time, killed the formidable champion of the invaders. When the total faith of Ali in Allah and His messenger, through his matchless bravery, was established, there came a violent storm which ruined the enemy camp and routed their fighting forces. They dispersed in chaos and disorder and ran all the way to Makka in utter disappointment and defeat.

"Now surely Allah's help is near" was revealed in praise of the faith, strength and bravery of Ali.

Then the Holy Prophet declared:

"The one strike of Ali on the day of Khandaq is superior to the prayers of both the worlds."

Also refer to verses 9, 10 and 25 of al Ahzab.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse confirms the saying of the Holy Prophet that his companions would follow in the footsteps of the Jews and the Christians in deviating from the right path and wavering in faith. Verse 213 and 214 of this surah also confirm that the prophets came to develop the aptitude of man for distinguishing between right and wrong and test his ability to choose the right path. Reaction to the

prophetic mission varies according to the receptibility of an individual. Therefore, the followers of the last prophet are not an exception to this general rule. They cannot be said to be equal in faith. Some were certain. Some were doubtful. Some were sincere. Some were hypocrites.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلْوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ {215}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:215]

Islam is the only religion which makes spending (in the way of Allah) obligatory. Every Muslim must follow the divine commandments as to how the bounties of Allah, given to him, should be shared with his less fortunate relatives and fellow-creatures. This verse tells us the order in which charity should be given. First, in the list, are the parents, then the near kindred, the orphans, the needy and the wayfarer. There is no reward if parents and the nearer kindred are overlooked in order to meet the demands of others. The needs of the parents should be cared for as a duty without the embarrassment of their having to ask for the same. The Holy Prophet advised his followers to take care of the parents, brothers and sisters, and the nearest relatives first, and then the others. It must also be noted that wars (in self-defence) require funds. To finance such wars is as important as spending for the helpless relatives, because it is in the interest of the whole community that the invaders should not be allowed to destroy the polity of the faithful.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

What should be spent in the way of Allah? Whatever good that may benefit others is the answer. As *Zakat* (the poor-tax) is compulsory, it cannot be made a part of "whatever good you do", which has no connection with *Zakat*. Also, *Zakat* cannot be spent on the members of the family. The word *afwa* in verse 219 of this surah makes it clear that only surplus should be given. The Holy Prophet has defined the surplus, and how much and to whom it should be given. In all events moderation is the guideline.

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ {216}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:216]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

There cannot be peace without battle against evil. Islam dislikes war, and yet without war against corruption and injustice, the by-products of aggressive infidelity, peaceful existence and freedom of worship of One God cannot be preserved. Love of peace, harmony and freedom is rooted in the hatred of injustice, hypocrisy and chaos, which should be isolated and kept at bay by those who believe in Allah and submit to Him (Hajj: 40). Please refer to the commentary of 190 to 194 of this surah, and verse 39 of al Hajj. Permission to fight has been given to put an end to persecution and mischief-making, in order to establish freedom of worship. The mission of the Holy Prophet was based upon rational doctrines to establish the (divine) rule of law for the welfare of the whole human race. To stop this universal movement, the pagans, the Jews and the Christians left no stone unturned, because they wanted to maintain the status quo of the exploitation of man by man, to serve the interests of the wicked, devilish and brutal ruling classes. But the Holy Prophet could not give up his divinely commissioned mission, so he did not. He had to take steps to liquidate *kufir* in order to serve the cause of truth. Before him the other messengers of Allah did the same. Even the followers of Christ and Buddha could not do without pre-emptive strike to forestall hostile actions. Of course, this may give licence to the mischief-makers to guise their personal interests in the garb of "the larger

interest of the humanity"; therefore, to cancel the misuse of this principle, the Quran has prescribed certain qualifications in a person, or group of persons, who alone are entitled to resort to the right of a pre-emptive strike.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الشَّهْرِ الْحَرَامِ قِتَالٍ فِيهِ قُلْ فِيهِ كَبِيرٌ وَصَدٌّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَكُفْرٌ بِهِ وَالْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَإِخْرَاجُ أَهْلِهِ مِنْهُ أَكْبَرُ عِندَ اللَّهِ وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ وَلَا يَزَالُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَكَ حَتَّى يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَن دِينِكُمْ إِنِ اسْتِطَاعُوا وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَن دِينِهِ فَمَا لَهُ مِن شَيْءٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا قَدِيرًا {فَأُولَئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} 217

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:217]

This verse should be read in continuation of the commentary of the above verse. Also refer to the commentary of verse 194 of this surah. For *fitna* see commentary of verse 190 and 191 of this surah.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أُولَئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} 218

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:218]

Jihad (from *jahada*) means to strive, take great pains, and to give away life, property and everything in the way of Allah (see commentary of verse 216 of this surah).

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا ۗ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْغَفْوَةُ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ {219}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:219]

Actions such as taking intoxicants, or seeking quick and easy wealth through gambling, draw us away from reality and dull our sense of comprehending and distinguishing things. Man's reason for existence is to grasp reality. All intoxicating substances have been defined by the Holy Prophet and the holy Imams of his Ahl ul Bayt.

Abu Hanifah, the founder of the Hanafi school, says that any liquor, not prepared by grapes, is not prohibited.

Mawlvi Muhammad Ali, a Sunni scholar, in his translation of the Quran says:

"Those who think that the verse under discussion does not contain a prohibition have failed to understand the language of the Quran. When the harm of a thing is stated to be greater than its advantage, it is sufficient indication of its prohibition, for no sensible person would take a course which is sure to bring him a much greater loss than an advantage."

Even after the revelation of this verse some of the companions of the Holy Prophet used to drink non-grape wines and come to pray *salat* in the *masjid*, on account of which verse 43 of al Nisa and verses 90 and 91 of al Ma-idah were revealed to prohibit intoxicants and gambling.

The Holy Prophet said:

"Curse of Allah be on liquor, its maker and he who assists him, bearer, loader, distributor, seller, purchaser, consumer and whoever uses its sale proceeds and profit."

Imam Ali ibna abi Talib said:

If a drop of liquor falls into a well and a minaret is built on its nearby land I will not recite *azan* from it; and if it falls into a river and in its dry bed grows grass, I will not let my horse graze on it.

Liquor is *ummul khaba-ith*, the mother of all vices. An intoxicated person ceases to be a human being, becomes a brute and loses the ability to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong.

The effect of these verses worked wonders with the Arab Muslims. In the opinion of the social reformers who labour day and night to put an end to the drinking habits of non-Muslim communities it is a miracle. Drinking was second nature to the heathen Arabs. The Jews and the Christians were also

sunk deep into this wicked addiction.

Yasara, the root of *maysir*, means to divide a thing into parts or portions. *Maysir* means a game of chance to seek quick and easy wealth, an unearned profit. Gain or loss is a matter of chance. This verse prohibits all games of chance and gambling.

For *al afwa* see commentary of verse 215 of this surah.

فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْيَتَامَىٰ قُلْ إِصْلَاحٌ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ ۖ وَإِنْ تُخَالِطُوهُمْ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ الْمُفْسِدَ مِنَ الْمُصْلِحِ ۚ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَأَعْنَتَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ {220}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:220]

Acting rightly and generously towards the orphans and those without guardians will not only directly benefit the giver as well as the receiver, but also be reflected in an improved human society. Therefore there are several verses, such as Baqarah: 177 and al Balad: 11 to 16, revealed to the Holy Prophet to provide the basis for doing good to fellowmen

Islam allows partnership with an orphan, and guardianship and trusteeship of an orphan, with strict injunctions to maintain correct separate accounts in order to safeguard the orphans's interest at all events.

وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكَاتِ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنَ ۚ وَلَا مَآءَهُ مُؤْمِنَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكَةٍ ۚ وَلَا تُنكِحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّىٰ يُؤْمِنُوا ۚ وَلَعَنَدُ الْمُؤْمِنِ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ ۚ وَلَا تُعْجَبْكُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى النَّارِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يَدْعُو إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَالْمَغْفِرَةِ بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ وَبَيِّنَ الْآيَاتِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ {221}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:221]

Inter-marriage between the believers in God and the idolaters has also been prohibited by Tawrat and Injil.

You must not intermarry with them, neither giving your daughters to their sons nor taking their daughters for your sons; if you do, they will draw your sons away from the Lord and make them worship other gods. (Deut 7: 3 and 4)

Do not unite yourselves with unbelievers; they are no fit mates for you. What has righteousness to do with wickedness? Can light consort with darkness? (2 Corinthians 6: 14)

According to verse 21 of al Rum, Allah created for us from ourselves spouses that we may find repose in them, and caused between us love and compassion, therefore, spiritual affinity is essential between two life-partners, which is not possible if one believes in Allah and the other is an infidel who, spiritually and intellectually, is on the animal level, caught in the cobweb of falsehood, wickedness and mental retardness. It would be an unholy alliance. The infidel partner may draw the faithful away from the Lord and make him or her worship the imaginary deities and false gods. More often than not the children are affected by the conflicting beliefs of the parents. The risk is quite unnecessary, because any adverse response will lead directly to hell.

The school of Ahl ul Bayt, in view of verse 5 of al Ma-idah, allows temporary marriage with the women of those who received the scriptures. (See books of *Fiqh* for details about marriage between the various schools of thought.)

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْمَحِيضِ قُلْ هُوَ أَذَىٰ فَاعْتَزِلُوا النِّسَاءَ فِي الْمَحِيضِ ۖ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوهُنَّ حَتَّىٰ يَطْهُرْنَ ۚ فَإِذَا تَطَهَّرْنَ فَأْتُوهُنَّ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَمَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ {222}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:222]

The natural cyclical discharge of woman is a purifying process - it removes discarded cells and purifies her body. So men have been commanded not to approach women, during the menstrual

discharge, until they become clean.

"You shall not approach a woman to have intercourse with her during her period of menstruation. (Leviticus 17: 19)

The divine laws had been given to mankind through the Holy Prophet whose life is a perfect model for the followers of the religion of Allah. In Sahih Bukhari, under the chapter of menstruation, a false, baseless and disgraceful report has been narrated by one of the wives of the Holy Prophet to malign him, which, in fact, is a deliberate character assassination. Such kind of reporting makes clear that the followers of these schools of thought have failed to understand the true status of the Holy Prophet.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Yat-hurna means cessation of menstruation or the state after *ghusl* (bath) - for details refer to *fiqh*.

Min haythu amarakum means "as ordained"-see next verse.

Yuhibbul mutatahhirin refers to the purification of the body as well as the mind. Islamic instructions and restrictions bring forth mental and physical refinement, both equally important.

{نَسَاؤُكُمْ حَرَّتْ لَكُمْ فَأَثُوا حَرَّتْكُمْ أَلَىٰ شَيْئْتُمْ ۖ وَقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ مُلَاقُوهُ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ} 223

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:223]

Sexual relations among the human beings is a very delicate matter. The Quran deals with it in a manner which not only takes into consideration the physical sensuality but also makes certain that man should rise above the animal level and temper his sensual urges with moral and spiritual discipline. Even the language used to provide the essential guidance in this connection has been very carefully worded so as not to let the issue be described in a lewd style - the literary way and technique of the then Arabic poets.

Woman is compared to tillage. The real object of conjugal union should be for the reproduction of human life for the service of the Lord.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"Do with your tillage as you like" explains "Do with them as ordained" of the previous verse, but keep in mind that women are a tillage, therefore, dealing with it in a wasteful or unnatural way is foolish and detestable.

Qaddimu li-anfusikum means do good before-hand for your life after death, because ultimately you will meet Allah.

{وَلَا تَجْعَلُوا اللَّهَ عُرْضَةً لِأَيْمَانِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَتُصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 224

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:224]

Allah commands man to do good. Therefore, "not to do good" cannot be justified under any pretext, not even because of swearing by Allah. Allah cannot be made an *urdah* (obstacle) in the way of doing good, safeguarding against evil, and making peace between men. It is an injunction to abstain from making "swearing by Allah" a pretext for withholding oneself from doing good. Good must be done at all events. For example the "swearing by Allah" of a husband in anger, that he will not go to his wife, has been forbidden. (See also al Qalam: 10; al Ma-idah: 89).

Vain oath means unintentional swearing, which is a common habit with most people in their ordinary conversation. Allah will not hold any one accountable for vain oaths, but He will call His creatures to account for their real intentions and what they do. Verbal swearing has no value. However, swearing with full consciousness of the seriousness of the undertaking, binds the swearer to do as resolved provided the deed to be done is legal and good. Before Islam, it was a custom among the Arabs that when a husband avowed to discontinue conjugal relations with his wife, the

wife was left in a lurch - neither a married woman nor a divorcee. The Quran ignores the swearing concerning disassociation with wives and gives four months for reconsideration and reconciliation; after which, if the husband still desires separation he should divorce his wife, otherwise the wife can refer the matter to the *hakim shara* (competent authority on Islamic laws) and obtain freedom from the bond of marriage to wed someone else.

Fa-in- fa-u means if they return to their wives within the prescribed four months Allah will forgive them.

{ لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا كَسَبْتُمْ فَلَوْ بُكِمُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ } 225

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:225] (see commentary for verse 224)

{ لِلَّذِينَ يُؤَلُّونَ مِنْ نِسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ طَفَّانٍ فَاءُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ } 226

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:226] (see commentary for verse 224)

{ وَإِنْ عَزَمُوا الطَّلَاقَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ } 227

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:227]

Talaq means letting a woman free from the bond of marriage or dissolution of the contract of marriage. *Talaq* should be put to use only when reconciliation is not possible in spite of best efforts. To warn the husbands who, unjustly and without reason, divorce their wives, the phrase "Allah is surely hearing, knowing" has been added. Only Islam safeguards the interests of women. According to the Holy Prophet, of all the permissible acts, divorce is the one most disliked by Allah, so as to keep in check any indiscriminate use of this pragmatic sanction. Therefore, in Islam, divorce is the most loathsome of the permitted acts. Marriage is an alliance of two individuals who love each other. Without love and understanding, it becomes a soulless body. In this situation, the sooner it is undone the better. If due to events and reasons, beyond control, day to day life of a married couple becomes a burden and a misery, separation is necessary and is an act of charity. Islam has the essential and elastic laws to deal with every type of case and circumstance and to control the harmony of the society as well as to safeguard the interest of every individual.

Divorce, though legalised by Islam, has been so controlled and restricted through the observations of the Holy Prophet that its indiscriminate use is not possible by those who sincerely believe in Allah and follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt. For them it is almost impossible to resort to divorce.

{ وَالْمُطَلَّاتُ يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ ثَلَاثَةَ قُرُوءٍ ۚ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَهُنَّ أَنْ يَكْتُمْنَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ فِي أَرْحَامِهِنَّ إِنْ كُنَّ يُؤْمِنَنَّ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ وَبَعُولَتْهُنَّ أَحَقُّ بِرَدِّهِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ إِنْ أَرَادُوا إِصْلَاحًا ۚ وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ } 228

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:228]

Quru means menstrual period. The divorced woman is required to keep herself in waiting for three menstrual periods, during which the husband has to support and care for her. In the course of these three months, if it is found out that she is pregnant, then the parental propriety of the offspring is established. Above all, the door of reconciliation remains open. If there is real love between them, the husband can take the wife back before the expiry of *iddat* (prescribed period of waiting). Such a practical arrangement is not available in any religion except Islam.

The legal rights given to women by Islam brought a revolutionary change in human society for the first time. So far woman was a wicked creature, the agent of the devil, and therefore was treated like a chattel, occupying the lowest position in the family and community. Islam gave women an honourable status, similar to men. It was a dynamic change, unknown to history, because it was never

even considered, in pre-Islamic period, that women could have rights over men.

"But the men are a degree above women" refers to the natural differences which separate men from women. Allah is all-wise, therefore, particularly in the case of divorce, man can initiate the course of divorce, but a woman cannot. She, no doubt, can go to a *qadi* to obtain separation on the ground of unbearable maltreatment and demand dissolution of marriage by surrendering her right to *mahar* (dowry). This provision is reasonable because it prevents women from obtaining separation on flimsy grounds.

Islam gives women the right of choosing her life-partner. No one can compel her to accept any man as her husband. The matter lies entirely on her independent judgement. So she does not have the right to take the initiative for annulment of wedlock. Yet she has a recourse. She can go to a *mujtahid* or *hakim sharah* and obtain separation and then marry again whomsoever she likes.

الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَانٍ ۖ فَمَا مَسَاكُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحٌ بِإِحْسَانٍ ۗ وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمُ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِمَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ شَيْنًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ ۗ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا ۗ وَمَنْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ
الظَّالِمُونَ {229}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:229]

"Divorce may be pronounced twice". These two pronouncements can be revoked. It is an effective check to prevent divorce on account of emotional outbursts and high-handedness of a husband who may recover his balance of mind and reconsider his unreasonable pronouncement. Before Islam, a man could divorce his wife as many times as he liked and take her back. To stop this absurd farce, only two revocable pronouncements of *Talaq* have been prescribed by Islam. After the third announcement, the *Talaq* is complete and becomes irrevocable. Even after *Talaq* the husband has to treat the divorced wife with kindness. It is not lawful for the husband to take back or withhold any part of what he has given to his wife or promised to give her as *mahar* (dowry).

"What she gives up to become free" refers to *khula* or *mubarat*, the recourse a wife can avail to obtain separation, explained above, by the arbitration of the *hakim sharah* or *mujtahid*, by returning the dowry if she has taken it in advance, or by foregoing it.

"If you fear" refers to the lawfully constituted religious authority - *hakim sharah* or *mujtahid*. If the husband revokes his decision he must keep his wife in good relationship and honour, and respect her.

The pronouncement of *Talaq* more than once at a time is meaningless in view of the "divorce may be pronounced twice" (the opening words of this verse) because it stipulates chances of reconciliation after the first, and if not, after the second pronouncement.

As mentioned in verse 97 of al Barat, "these are the limits of Allah", are the divine commandments.

فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا تَحِلُّ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدُ حَتَّىٰ تَنْكِحَ زَوْجًا غَيْرَهُ ۗ فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يَتَرَاجَعَا إِنْ ظَنَّا أَنْ يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَتِلْكَ
حُدُودُ اللَّهِ يُبَيِّنُهَا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ {230}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:230]

After the third, final and irrevocable pronouncement of divorce the husband cannot take his divorced wife back until she marries another man and the next husband agrees to divorce her. This is a sufficient reason to conclude that all the three pronouncements of *Talaq* cannot be said at one time. The consequences of the third pronouncement check indiscriminate pronouncement of *Talaq*.

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ سَرِّحُوهُنَّ بِمَعْرُوفٍ ۗ وَلَا تُمْسِكُوهُنَّ ضِرَارًا لَتَعْتَدُوا ۗ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَقَدْ
ظَلَمَ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا ۗ وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ لِيُعْظِمَكُمْ بِهِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا
{231} أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:231]

A husband has the right to divorce his wife but he cannot abuse her or refuse to pay her dues. Whoever does this, exceeds the limits (disobeys Allah's commandments). He must set her free with kindness and give her all her entitlements. The laws of Allah should not be taken in mockery. It shows how serious is the matter of divorce. There are prescribed laws in Islam, yet people (men and women) have the freedom to act according to their conscience; and if they are mindful of the fact that Allah is the knower of all things, they shall not go astray and do injustice to their own souls.

The non-Shia schools do not observe the restrictions given in these verses in the matter of divorce.

"It may not even be properly expressed in words at all. This is admitted to be irregular but is not the less effective. One form of making a divorce irrevocable, the pronouncing of it thrice, one in each "tubr"(period of woman's purity) is allowed to be regular by Hanafis though condemned in the matter of intention. If a man pronounces a divorce whilst in a state of inebriety from drinking fermented liquor, such as wine, the divorce takes place. Repudiation by any husband who is sane and adult is effective, whether he be free or slave, willing or acting under compulsion; and even though it were uttered in sport or jest, or by mere slip of the tongue instead of some other word." (Fatwas Alamgiri - cited by Hughes)

No doubt the Islamic law of divorce has been criticised as contemptible and ridiculous.

The Shia school condemns all irregular forms of divorce. For Shias it is necessary that the man who pronounces a divorce be an adult, sane and free in his choice, will, design and intention. It does not take effect if given implicatively or ambiguously, even if there is intention. According to the teachings of the holy Imams, it is also absolutely necessary that the pronouncement must be made by the husband in the presence of two just witnesses; non-fulfilment of this condition renders the divorce null and void. If the husband pronounces the divorce, in an irregular manner, even a hundred times, the woman remains his wife. (For details see books of *fiqh*).

وَإِذَا طَلَّقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَبَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا تَعْضُلُوهُنَّ أَنْ يَنْكِحْنَ أَزْوَاجَهُنَّ إِذَا تَرَاضُوا بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ ذَلِكَ يُوعِظُ بِهِ مَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ يُؤْمِنُ
{بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۗ ذَلِكَمْ أَزْكَىٰ لَكُمْ وَأَطْهَرُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } 232

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:232]

After the first or second *Talaq*, if both the husband and wife agree to be reunited, in a lawful manner, they are allowed to do so. The woman has a right to take her own decision. Her relatives or guardians are warned not to prevent her in any way from exercising her rights. Even though the period of waiting may elapse, the husband can marry the divorced wife, if the third irrevocable *Talaq* has not been pronounced.

وَالْوَالِدَاتُ يُرْضِعْنَ أَوْلَادَهُنَّ حَوْلَيْنِ كَامِلَيْنِ ۖ لِمَنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُتِمَّ الرَّضَاعَةَ ۗ وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ لَا تُكَلِّفُ
نَفْسٌ إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا ۚ لَا تُضَارَّ وَالِدَةٌ بِوَلَدِهَا وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ لَهُ بِوَالِدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى الْوَارِثِ مِثْلُ ذَلِكَ ۗ فَإِنْ أَرَادَا فِصَالًا عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْهُمَا وَتَشَاوُرٍ فَلَا
جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا ۗ وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ أَنْ تُسَنِّرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذَا سَلَّمْتُمْ مَا آتَيْتُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا
{تَعْمَلُونَ} بَصِيرٌ } 233

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:233]

Though this verse was revealed for the divorced mothers, it applies to all mothers. See al Ahqaf: 15.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Darra (transitive) means to harm. *Tadarrur* (intransitive) means to suffer harm. In verse 12 of al Nisa *mudarr* has been used which means "either to harm or suffer harm.". In this verse it is said that on account of the child or the disagreement between the parents, none of the three (father, mother or

the child) should be harmed by any of them. Please refer to *fiqh* for proper understanding of the issues pertaining to the rights and duties of the mother and the husband during the period of suckling of their babies, and the duties of the heir of the husband, and employment of a wet-nurse.

وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنْفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا فَإِذَا بَلَغْنَ أَجَلَهُنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ {234}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:234]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The wife of a deceased man should keep herself in waiting for four months and ten days, even if she had no intercourse with her dead husband. If she is pregnant she should wait upto the prescribed period or the delivery, whichever is later.

وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِيمَا عَرَّضْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ خِطْبَةِ النِّسَاءِ أَوْ أَكْنَنْتُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ ۖ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ سَتَذْكُرُونَهُنَّ وَلَكِنْ لَا تُوَاعِدُوهُنَّ سِرًّا إِلَّا أَنْ تَقُولُوا قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۚ وَلَا تَعْزِمُوا عُقْدَةَ النِّكَاحِ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْكِتَابَ أَجَلَهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ فَاحْذَرُوهُ ۚ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ {235}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:235]

There is no harm if some one desires to marry a widow who is keeping herself in waiting for the prescribed period (*iddat*), and indirectly speaks his mind, but there should be no confirmation of the marriage tie until the period of waiting is completed.

لَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ طَلَقْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ أَوْ تَفْرِضُوا لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَمَتَّعُوهُنَّ عَلَى الْمَوْسِعِ قَدْرَهُ وَعَلَى الْمُقْتِرِ قَدْرَهُ مَتَاعًا ۚ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ {236}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:236]

Faridah is the dowry known as *mahar*. Even if the marriage is not consummated the husband must make provision for the divorced woman, according to his means, whether he is rich or poor.

وَإِنْ طَلَقْتُمُوهُنَّ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَمْسُوهُنَّ وَقَدْ فَرَضْتُمْ لَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً فَنِصْفُ مَا فَرَضْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ يَعْفُونَ أَوْ يَعْفُوَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ عُقْدَةُ النِّكَاحِ ۚ وَأَنْ تَعْفُوا أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَلَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ {237}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:237]

"He in whose hand is the marriage tie", according to the holy Ahl ul Bayt, is the *wali* - father or grandfather of the wife, and if none of them is available, the legal authority - *hakim sharah*.

The wife is entitled to receive the amount of dowry directly; but if she is a minor her guardian (*wali*), on her behalf, shall receive the payment. It is unreasonable to say that the husband himself is the *wali*, because he is the person who must pay the dowry; and it is the wife or her guardian who is paid, or approached for half refund (if dowry has been paid in advance) or for foregoing the full amount. The husband cannot plead for the concessions due to himself. As far as *shariah* is concerned, the rules of breaking a marriage contract are clear. The seeker of spirituality is advised to go beyond the call of *shariah*, with generosity and good-naturedness, to help the divorced wife. Man, who has the upper hand over woman, must reflect the *fadl* of the bountiful beneficent. "Allah sees what you do", refers to the mutual kindness and charitable disposition with which the members of the brotherhood of the believers in Allah should deal with each other; and it is a warning to the husbands if they foolishly believe that they can hide any evil intention while dealing with their wives.

{حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ} 238

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:238]

Wasta means middle. Many commentators say that the middle prayer is the afternoon (*asr*) prayer, coinciding with the peak of daily activity, most likely to be overlooked, although it is a duty of a devout believer to remember Allah in the midst of worldly pursuits. According to al Baqarah: 143 *ummatan wasatan* implies a group of people who are balanced, anchored, well-behaved, persevering, and away from the danger of extremes. If that which is the best is properly attended to, then generally speaking, the entire pattern of worship will be sound.

Qumu lillahi qanitin (stand up with devotion, truly obedient to Allah) prescribes *qunut*, recitation of any Quranic *dua*, while standing and raising both the hands, palms joined together, in front of the face. Concentration and presence of mind are essential for praying the *salat*, a regulated system of worship which gives man the opportunity to establish communion with his creator, five times a day. *Salat* prescribed by Islam, is not the ritualistic movements of the body. Its demand of employing all mental powers enables man to reflect divine attributes in his character, otherwise mere ritual has been condemned in the following verses.

Woe, therefore, to such performers of prayer, who are unmindful of their prayer, who would (pray) to be seen. (Ma-un: 4 to 6)

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Salat prayed in danger, is called *salat ul khawf*. According to this verse *salat* cannot be missed under any circumstances.

{فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ فَرِجَالًا أَوْ رُكْبَانًا فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَأَدْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَمَا عَلَّمَكُم مَّا لَمْ تَكُونُوا تَعْلَمُونَ } 239

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:239]

{وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ وَيَذَرُونَ أَزْوَاجًا وَصِيَّةً لِأَزْوَاجِهِمْ مَتَاعًا إِلَى الْحَوْلِ غَيْرَ إِخْرَاجٍ فَإِنْ خَرَجْنَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا فَعَلْنَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِنَّ مِنْ مَّعْرُوفٍ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ } 240

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:240]

In verses 11 and 12 of al Nisa the law of inheritance has been clearly mentioned. The rights of women as wives have been dealt with in verses 227 to 237 of al Baqarah. In this verse it has been emphasised that a woman should be protected at all times. Man's authority over woman brings about the direct responsibility of her welfare upon him. She should not have to be worried about her protection, provision, and livelihood.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to Manhaj us Sadiqin and Majma-ul Bayan verse 235 of al Baqarah and verses 11 and 12 of al Nisa abrogate this verse. A close study of these verses does not bring out any contradiction. Verse 235 of al Baqarah only fixes the obligatory period of waiting for a widow, therefore, if the widow stays in her husband's house, she is entitled to receive the advantages of the bequest her husband makes for her according to this verse; and verses 11 and 12 of al Nisa grant the widow her share, in addition to the benefits mentioned in this verse. These two verses safeguard the rights and freedom of the widow, but do not reduce the utility of the bequest, therefore, there is no abrogation.

{وَالْمُطَلَّاتِ مَتَاعٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ } 241

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:241]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"Provision according to custom" is an extra grant to the widow in addition to the dowry which must be paid to her. This verse and verse 236 of this surah enjoin on men to employ piety, grace, love and clemency in dealing with women even when they are separated, in addition to the rights given to her.

{ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ } 242

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:242]

In this verse the word signs {*ayat*) has been used for the divine laws which are the guiding signs for a disciplined life to achieve success in this world and salvation in the hereafter. These are clear and unambiguous. The Quran repeatedly invites man to think and apply reason for progress and advancement.

{ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَهُمْ أُلُوفٌ حَذَرَ الْمَوْتِ فَقَالَ لَهُمُ اللَّهُ مُوتُوا ثُمَّ أَحْيَاهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُونَ } 243

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:243]

The historical reference here is to the children of Israil, who ran away from their homes in thousands out of fear of the plague, thinking that their timely flight would save them from death. On account of their lack of faith in Allah, death caught up with them under His command. Their bodies turned into dust. Only their bones were lying scattered on the ground. Inspired by Allah, their prophet Ezikiel prayed for them by reciting a particular name, after which, Allah brought them to life again, showing that Allah does what He wills. There is no escape from the will of the Lord.

In the opinion of Ahmadi commentators, no miracle (bringing the dead out of the living and the living out of the dead) took place; it is only a metaphorical description. The materialistic tendency to deny any event beyond the natural course known to man can be justified only if man can claim knowledge of all the factors functioning in the working of the universe. It is a wise saying that the more a man knows, he realises how less he knows. There is no reason at all for any sensible and intelligent person to deny things which are decidedly beyond the acknowledged limitedness of human experience, observation and conceivability, yet the modern commentators deny the omnipotence of Allah and the supernatural forces functioning in the universe, on which all religions are based. Allah is the master of His will. He does what He wills. Every faithful believer must rely on Allah and should not fear death. Fear of bodily death in this life leads to moral and spiritual death. His life belongs to Allah. He should live it as desired by Him and surrender it to His command.

{ وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ } 244

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:244]

See commentary of verses 190 to 193 of this surah.

{ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يقرضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ } 245

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:245]

Qardan hasanan, a goodly loan, is given without any consideration for its repayment, or time of repayment. In fact, it is completely forgotten as soon as it is given. The rewards of a goodly loan, offered to Allah to seek His pleasure only, are manifold. It brings about echoes of the goodness of the creator. The return from the merciful Lord corresponds to the purity and sincerity of the intention of the lender. This goodly loan, in this verse, refers to the spending in the way of Allah and striving in the cause of Allah.

To restrict or increase the means of subsistence is exclusively in the hands of Allah.

{ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الْمَلَإِ مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مُوسَى إِذْ قَالُوا لِنَبِيِّ لَهُمْ ابْعَثْ لَنَا مَلَكًا نُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَالَ هَلْ عَسَيْتُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَيكُمْ الْقِتَالِ أَلَّا تُقَاتِلُوا قَالُوا وَمَا لَنَا أَلَّا نُقَاتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَقَدْ أُخْرِجْنَا مِنْ دِيَارِنَا وَأَبْنَاءِنَا قُلْنَا كَيْتَبُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ تَوَلَّوْا إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالظَّالِمِينَ } 246

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:246]

After Musa several prophets were sent to maintain his law (Tawrat), but as time passed, people started neglecting the law and took to idolatry. Ultimately a time came when the Jews had no prophet to guide them. In those days their enemies from the tribe of Jalut had captured all the land on the Mediterranean including Egypt and Palestine. They killed 440 princes and noblemen of Bani Israil and enslaved them. The Bani Israil prayed to Allah for a prophet. Allah appointed Samuel as their prophet. They asked Samuel to choose a king for them. Samuel warned them about what the kings would do, but they refused to listen to him. They said: "No, we will have a king over us; then we shall be like other nations, with a king to govern us, to lead us out to war and fight our battles." (1 Samuel 8: 19 and 20).

Samuel again warned them that they might not fight even if fighting was ordained for them. And when fighting was ordained for them, they turned back, except for a few of them. In this verse fighting for the emancipation of the people from the tyranny of the oppressors has been described as fighting in the way of Allah.

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ بَعَثَ لَكُمْ طَالُوتَ مَلَكًا قَالُوا أَنَّى يَكُونُ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ عَلَيْنَا وَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ بِالْمُلْكِ مِنْهُ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ سَعَةً مِنَ الْمَالِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَزَادَهُ بَسْطَةً فِي الْعِلْمِ وَالْجِسْمِ وَاللَّهُ يُؤْتِي مَلَكُهُ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ {247}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:247]

(In continuation of verse 246).

Samuel said to the Jews that Allah had raised Talut (Saul) to be a king over them. According to 1 Samuel 10: 23 he was a head taller than anyone else. There was no one like him in the nation of Jews. He was called Talut on account of his height and strength. The people despised Talut's kingship because he did not have wealth, which they had in abundance.

The essential qualities required in a leader are clearly discernible if careful attention is paid to the reply given by Samuel:

1. *Inallahas-tafahu alaykum*-Allah has chosen him in preference to you. According to the divine law a

leader of the people (temporal or spiritual) is chosen by Allah, not by the people.

1. *Wa zadamu bastatan fil ilmi wal jism*-And He has increased him abundantly in knowledge and physique. The chosen leader is given knowledge and physical strength by Allah Himself. The true leader possesses divinely endowed knowledge and strength to guide and protect the people whom Allah loves and cherishes.

1. *Wallahu yuti mulkuhu man yasha* - Allah grants His kingdom to whomever He pleases. The sovereignty and the kingdom of the universe belong to Allah, therefore, on His behalf, the authority to lead and guide the created beings, is with him whom Allah chooses. He chooses whomever He likes, whether the people like it or not.

1. *Wallahu wasi-un alim*-Verily Allah is vast (giver of ample bounties), all-knowing. The bounties the

people receive and use for the satisfaction of their needs and wants are given to them by Allah. No human being can claim credit for providing them to the people. What is good and what is bad for the people is known only to Allah. This knowledge is given to those leaders whom He Himself elects

to lead and guide the people.

Man's hypocrisy, doubt, denial, bickering and disagreement about leadership, in spite of clear and specific prophetic directions, arise in all religions. The same thing occurred among the Muslims after the departure of the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet, in compliance with Allah's command, had appointed Ali as his vicegerent and successor in the open assembly of *ashira* and in the large gathering at Ghadir Khum. Ali's superiority over others in knowledge and physical strength is unquestionable. It is acknowledged by all. Please refer to pages I to 7, and the commentary of verses 2 to 5, 30 to 39 and 124 of this surah, to know the divine decrees and clear prophetic directions, according to which Ali alone was the true divinely chosen successor of the Holy Prophet. But, while the Holy Prophet was on his deathbed, the Muslims began to lobby for and squabble over power, following their limited and imperfect logic, intending to build a Muslim empire based upon heathen theories and practices, instead of following the guidance given by Allah and His last messenger. As long as man continues to passively remain under the influence of his baser tendencies, this state of chaos and confusion in the affairs of his life will continue, as it did after the departure of the Holy Prophet, when the Muslim *ummah* refused to obey the command of Allah (Ma'idah: 67), conveyed to them by the Holy Prophet at Ghadir Khum, in spite of the fact that total submission to the decisions of the Holy Prophet has been prescribed as the first fundamental condition of the faith, by the Quran, in verse 65 of al Nisa.

To avoid chaos, discord and confusion which would lead to the destruction of the foundation of the Islamic society, the Holy Prophet took special precautions, which no other prophet before him had ever taken, to guide the people through clear actions, statements and signs that, after him, they should remain attached to his Ahl ul Bayt and follow their leadership. Unfortunately, the people chose to follow policies which led them astray into the hands of the devil.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The instructions inferred from this verse are as under:

Legislation, process of governing and administration of justice are the functions of a sovereign. And sovereignty belongs to Allah, He delegates all the functions to a single person as His vicegerent, or chooses different persons to carry out one or more of them separately. Samuel had been entrusted with the authority to convey legislation and administer justice. When the people requested for a king as an executor, Allah appointed Talut as their king. It means in the presence of a divine legislator and judge, an executor can also be appointed. It makes clear that Samuel (the prophet) had no right to appoint an executor. It also gives permission to allow the people to have a say in the formation of the executive authority. The voice of the people may also be heard in addition to the book and the sunnah of the Holy Prophet, if not contradictory to these two agencies, in legislative and judicial functions. But to claim sovereignty, which belongs only to Allah, is to return to the days of ignorance. It is not Islam.

Jihad (war in the way of Allah) was prescribed and carried out by the prophets also.

The reaction of the people to the divine appointment of the executor can be favourable or unfavourable. The Jews did not like the appointment of Talut as a king. Likewise, the Muslims also did not approve the appointment of Ali as the successor of the Holy Prophet. The unfavourable reaction of the people, based upon ignorance and short-sightedness, can be compared to the reaction

of the angels when Allah appointed Adam as His vicegerent. The answer to this reaction is almost the same as given in verses 30 to 39 of this surah.

Whenever the question of succession to the Holy Prophet in the matters of legislation, execution and justice is dealt with, the implications of this verse should be taken into consideration. Verse 55 of al Nur gives strength to the point of view of the followers of Muhammad and Ali Muhammad.

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ } 248

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:248]

The *tabut* (3 yards X 2 yards) was a holy ark or chest which contained divine signs, understood by the prophets of Allah only. It was so divinely blessed that whenever carried by the Jews into the battlefield, the enemy invariably ran away. It was passed on from one prophet to another, and had miraculous properties. It is reported to contain the garments of Musa, the turban of Harun and some sacred relics. It was brought back from Shiloh to help the Jews in the war against the Philistines. The ark mentioned in verse 39 of al Taha (Exodus 2: 3) is not this ark.

According to the Ahmadi commentators *tabut* means heart, into which Allah sends down peace of reassurance (tranquillity). He quotes verse 4 of al Fat-h.

"Put him into the ark, and cast it into the river", (Taha: 39).

Can any sensible person put the word "heart" in the place of "ark"? It would mean that Allah commanded the mother of Musa to put him into her heart and cast her heart into the river. It is an absurd interpretation. The word *baqiyyah* is interpreted by them as "the best of a thing", whereas it means "that which is left behind". This kind of interpretations are put forward by the Ahmadi (also known as Qadiani) commentators because their prime motive is to deny miracles attributed to the prophets of Allah, as Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, the false prophet of Qadian could never ever produce a miracle. The list of their twisting of the verses of the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet is very long which cannot be discussed here. They are always in search of some imaginary meaning of the word, other than the actual one, be it the most obscure and far-fetched, to serve their purpose. Such misinterpretations are presented with the full force of as many conjectures as possible. The Qadiani (Ahmadi) school is diametrically antagonistic to the faith of the Ahl ul Bayt who are the only divinely authorised custodians and teachers of the Quran according to the *hadith al thaqalayn*.

The Holy Prophet said:

My Ahl ul Bayt are like the ark of Nuh. Whoso gets into it is saved and whoso stays away is drowned and lost.

Verse 35 of Yunus and verse 22 of al Mulk make it clear that a true guide is he who is guided and appointed by Allah Himself. He does not receive any type of education and training from any one other than Allah.

So any one, who is not guided and appointed by Allah as a guide, is an impostor.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The executor appointed by Allah (see verse 247 of al Baqarah) should have the divine signs, the sacred heritage of the divinely chosen lineage which is endowed with the tranquillity (*sakinah*), on account of which no worldly or temporal force or consideration would frighten him from the way and cause of Allah. Such an appointed executor who slept in the bed of the Holy Prophet on the night of the migration is praised in verse 207 of al Baqarah (see commentary); and the sorry plight of the man who by himself claimed the executorship with the help of his comrades is exposed in verse 40 of al Tawbah. On every occasion it was Ali, the beloved of Allah and His messenger, who fearlessly

strived in the cause of Allah and destroyed the enemies of Allah and His messenger, while the rest of the companions either watched the fighting from a safe distance or ran away from the battlefield; this was so because there was tranquillity in Ali's heart from the Lord, as has been confirmed by verse 26 of al Tawbah and verse 26 of al Fat-h. Besides this in-built tranquillity, the appointed executor must possess the divine heritage of the holy house, therefore, in view of the saying of the Holy Prophet that "Ali is to me as Harun was to Musa", the divine authority to guide and administer human society cannot be claimed by any one who does not belong to the holy Ahl ul Bayt (Nisa: 54).

فَلَمَّا فَصَلَ طَالُوتُ بِالْجُنُودِ قَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مُبْتَلِيكُمْ بِنَهَرٍ فَمَنْ شَرِبَ مِنْهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَمَنْ لَمْ يَطْعَمْهُ فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي إِلَّا مَنِ اغْتَرَفَ غُرْفَةً بِيَدِهِ فَشَرَبُوا مِنْهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَهُ هُوَ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ قَالُوا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا الْيَوْمَ بِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالَ الَّذِينَ يَظُنُّونَ أَنَّهُمْ مُلَاقُوا اللَّهِ كَمْ مِنْ فِئَةٍ قَلِيلَةٍ غَلَبَتْ فِئَةً كَثِيرَةً بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ مَعَ الصَّابِرِينَ {249}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:249]

This verse depicts the differentiation between those who are the real followers of the path of submission and truth, and those who are not. He who leads the people must have the knowledge of what is good and what is evil for his followers, and also should be able to find out ways and means to correctly ascertain the sincerity of their faith. Talut tests his men by means of the river (saying: whoever then drinks from it, he is not of me, and whoever does not taste of it, he is certainly of me, except he who takes as much of it as fills his hand), but only a few of them are found faithful.

It must be noted that although the men with Talut were aware of their weakness against Jalut, they did not desert him, but history is a witness to the fact that some of the companions of the Holy Prophet not only ran away from the battlefield (Uhad) but also advised their comrades to return to their former state of idolatry, because they loudly announced that the Holy Prophet had been killed. They did not realise that Ali (the hand of Allah) was there to defend the Holy Prophet and disperse the hordes of enemy soldiers single-handedly and turn the impending defeat into a glorious victory. Ali did the same in every battle that the Holy Prophet fought against the infidels (see the books of history written by well-known Muslim authors), but after the departure of the Holy Prophet, the deserters became the heroes of Islam and Ali was forced to withdraw himself from the public life, although he continued to guide the sincere followers who came to him to seek guidance and wisdom.

{وَلَمَّا بَرَزُوا لِجَالُوتَ وَجُنُودِهِ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَثَبِّتْ أقدامَنَا وَاَنْصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ {250}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:250]

The supplicants first ask the Lord to pour patience, and then make their footsteps firm, after which victory is besought.

فَهَزَمُوهُم بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَقَتَلَ دَاوُودُ جَالُوتَ وَآتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَهُ مِمَّا يَشَاءُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَفَسَدَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ {251}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:251]

An account of the formidable strength of the mighty forces of Jalut is given in 1 Samuel 17: 4 to 11. Dawud killed Jalut in single combat. The Philistines, when they saw that their hero was dead, turned and ran.

A similar event took place in the early days of Islam. The infidels of Makka with a mighty host of twelve thousand warriors encircled Madina to destroy a few hundred Muslims, including women and children. On the suggestion of Salman, a ditch was dug around the city in six days. This battle is known as the battle of *khandaq* (ditch) or *ahzab*. Amr bin Abdwad, a warrior who used to defeat one thousand soldiers single-handedly, jumped over the ditch and threw an open challenge to the Muslims.

The Holy Prophet turned towards his companions, and invited each of them to go and fight Amr on behalf of Islam, but there was fear and panic in their hearts, as some of them had been close to him in the days of their infidelity and had witnessed his acts of bravery and strength. No one came out at the call of the Holy Prophet. Then Amr shouted aloud the names of the famous companions, one by one, but each looked aside. The Holy Prophet repeated his call three times. There was no response. Each time only Ali came forward and said:

"I am ready to fight him O the messenger of Allah."

After the third call the Holy Prophet put his turban on Ali's head and said:

"Verily, here goes total belief to fight against total disbelief."

"*Allahu akbar*" said Ali and hit Amr with his sword. It cut his sword, shield, iron head-gear in half, and Amr's head was lying on the ground.

"Here is the head of the enemy of Allah and Islam O messenger of Allah", Ali said and put Amr's severed head before the Holy Prophet.

The Holy Prophet said:

"One strike of Ali, on the day of *khandaq*, is superior to all worship of both the worlds put together."

Please also refer to the commentary of verse 214 of this surah.

In the battle fought between the Jews and the Philistines the enemy ran away when Dawud killed Jalut; in like manner the whole army of infidels of Makka left the battlefield in chaos and confusion when Ali killed Amr, completely routed and annihilated. These two events are meaningfully connected because perhaps there is no other battle where an army of a large number of fighting men left the battlefield when only one warrior was killed. And Allah gave him (the conquering warrior) kingdom and wisdom. Since kingdom belongs to Allah, He grants it to whom he likes, on merit after test and trial, to exercise divine authority on His behalf. It was given to Dawud. It was given to Ali (as *imamat*). The right to administer the human society was also given to Ali. It is another issue that the people did not allow him to do so, but the office of *imamat* given to him could not be usurped by any one, because the ability to guide and wisdom, particularly bestowed by Allah, cannot be stolen.

The last part of this verse says that the purpose of war is not to gain territorial expansion but to dispel mischief and establish peace on the earth.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Before Adam "survival of the fittest" was the driving force among all types of creatures. In the struggle for existence, every living being used all available means, good or bad, to obtain maximum resources, without giving any thing to other fellow beings. It was almost an animal society. It was evil. Islam stopped it. With the development of intellectual faculties and inspiration, natural tendencies gave place to moral values, and instead of fighting for food and material necessities, men began to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad. Verse 40 of al Hajj gives permission to fight against those who deprive people from the essential freedom to worship Allah and to make use of His bounties justly and equitably. Those who strive in the cause of Allah, to put an end to the survival of the fittest theory, receive help from Allah. Therefore the true servants of Allah vie with one another to fight against the evil in their own selves and in the society in order to be nearer to Allah. "And everyone has a direction to which he turns, so hasten to do good (Baqarah: 184)." "So vie one with another in good deeds (Ma-idah: 48)." To stop this striving in the cause of Allah means reversion to the animal way of life. And were it not for Allah's repelling some men by means of others the earth would certainly be in a state of disorder.

{تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ تَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَإِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُزْسَلِينَ} 252

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:252]

The symbolic events that took place in ancient times have been reported, in the Quran, to condition the minds of the Muslims for coping with similar exigencies and occurrences, most likely to happen again and again.

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَأَتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ
وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَلَكِنْ اخْتَلَفُوا فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ آمَنَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَفَرَ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مَا اقْتَتَلُوا
وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَفْعَلُ مَا يُرِيدُ} 253

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:253]

Although all the prophets of Allah are equally truthful and holy, but in the same way that some signs are clearer and contain deeper messages than others, so Allah's messengers are of different ranks. The particular mention of Musa and Isa is to point out their distinguished positions as the reformers. Musa was directly addressed by Allah, and Isa was assisted by the *ruhul qudus* (the holy spirit). Both these prophets of Allah glorified the Holy Prophet and gave to the people the glad tidings of his arrival. Refer to the text of the Bible (Deut 18: 5, 18, 19; Acts 3: 22 to 25; John 14: 16, 17; John 16: 7 to 14) mentioned in the commentary of al Baqarah: 40.

It would be a false and contradictory statement if it was said that the above-noted verses of the Old and the New Testaments refer to Jesus, because Isa himself, like Musa, gave the news of the advent of the Holy Prophet in John 14: 16, 17 and John 16: 7 to 14.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In addition to the guiding statements of the two distinguished prophets of Allah - Musa to whom Allah spoke, and Isa to whom He gave clear miracles and strengthened with the holy spirit. there are several verses in the Quran, according to which the Holy Prophet occupies the highest place in the company of all the prophets of Allah. He is the superior-most messenger of Allah. The glory of the divinity of the Lord manifests, reflects and radiates in him to maximum perfection. Endowed with perfection, he was sent as a "mercy unto the worlds" (Ambia: 107). The other prophets were sent to guide a particular people in a particular place (Matthew 10: 5 and 6), therefore, in view of their limited mission, they are not on the level of the Holy Prophet who was sent to guide and discipline the whole mankind for all times (Saba: 28). As the Holy Prophet is the best of all the prophets of Allah, a distinguished group among his followers has been raised up by Allah *askhayra ummatin*, the best of all the people (see commentary of verse 110 of Ali Imran).

To understand *kalamallaku* (Allah spoke) it is necessary to refer to verse 51 of al Shura:

"It is not to any mortal (man) that Allah should speak to him except by inspiration or through (from behind) a veil,"

Allah does not speak in the sense attributed to the created beings who use the mouth and the tongue to produce sound. The veil can be anything which can be caused to produce sound.

This verse implies that a large number of messengers were sent by Allah. He made some of these messengers to excel others, and some of them He exalted in rank. In the end He sent the best of them all, the Holy Prophet, to guide mankind on the right path and prevent the people of the world, in all times, from going astray in the direction of Shaytan, their avowed enemy. There is no compulsion in religion. It is not the plan of the almighty that guidance should be imposed upon any individual or community. There is complete freedom to any person who wants to go astray. Allah does not keep any one on the right path under duress if he himself, through reason and intelligence, does not make willing efforts to walk on the right path. The followers of the prophets, including the followers of the

Holy Prophet, fought one another, went astray and followed the path of the devil as soon as the divinely commissioned guides, with clear signs and arguments, had left them. If Allah had willed, this straying could be stopped. He brings about what He wills. He could guide the people without the agency of the prophets, but He has given freedom to man to use reason and intelligence to distinguish between good and evil and make efforts to do good and earn reward, or make mischief and collect punishment. The door of guidance is kept open for those who sincerely seek the true direction.

As for those who strive in Us, We certainly show them our paths. (Ankabut: 69).

To fulfil this promise, the merciful Lord has established the divine institution of *imamat* as soon as the *risalat* came to an end-Ali ibna abi Talib is the first and Muhammad al Mahdi, the living Imam, is the last of the twelve divinely commissioned and infallible holy guide-leaders.

To keep himself on the right path, man has been asked to seek Allah's help by reciting al Fatihah in every *salat*. See the commentary of verses 5 to 7 of al Fatihah.

The guidance has been made known. Now whosoever goes right, it is only for the good of his own soul that he goes right, and whosoever errs, errs only to hurt himself. Each soul earns only on its own account. According to the following verses, man has been given an independent free will to act:

BAQARAH : 48

AN-AM : 165

HIJR : 42

BANI ISRAIL : 7 and 15

ANKABUT : 6

FATIR : 17

ZUMAR : 7

HA MIM : 46

DAHR : 2

The individual differences in the prophets of Allah are on account of the level of intelligence and the needs of the people amongst whom they were sent, to show them what was right and what was wrong. The manner of receiving the inspiration from Allah and the nature and limitation of every prophet's mission were determined in accordance with the ability of the people to understand and grasp the message. The last message of Allah was perfect, complete, final and conclusive. Therefore, the prophet who was chosen to deliver the final message was the most superior of all the prophets. He was not only the last prophet but also the foremost in total submission to the will of Allah.

Musa was honoured with the divine speech, Isa with the holy spirit, Ibrahim with *shuhud* (vision), but the Holy Prophet had the distinction of receiving the divine inspiration and revelation through all the mediums-see verse 43 of al Anfal and verse 60 of Bani Israil for vision in dreams, verse I of Bani Israil for vision in wakefulness; verses 192 to 195 of al Shu-ara, verse 52 of al Shura for the holy spirit; verses 1 to 16 of al Najm and verses 1 to 4 of al Rahman for direct instructions .

This verse clearly states that the discord and strife among the followers of the prophets is due to belief (*iman*) and disbelief (*kufr*), therefore, the apologetic attempt of some of the theologians to justify the dissension and conflict between the various religions or the sects of each religion as the outcome of *ijtihad* or discretion is based upon conjecture, and therefore, untenable.

According to Quran, such differences between the people of the scriptures is due to their rebellious attitude against the clearly manifested will and command of Allah. See verse 19 of Ali Imran and verses 13 of 14 of al Shura. The responsibility for wrongdoing rests with the man; and whatever good he does is from Allah.

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمْ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةَ وَلَا شَفَاعَةً ۗ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمْ الظَّالِمُونَ } 254

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:254]

Please refer to the commentary of verses 3, 195 and 215 of this surah for spending out of what Allah gives, and verses 48 and 123 of this surah for intercession. To provide or give help in cash and kind to the needy has been identified with the "spending in the way of Allah". It is an exhortation, not a compulsion. According to your conscience you have the liberty to spend in the way of Allah "out of what He has given to you", whether you have large means or a moderate income.

"Before the day comes" implies that one has to do good in this world. What you sow (in this life) you shall reap (in the life of the hereafter). "There will be no bargaining, nor any friendship nor intercession" means that wrongdoers will not be able to claim salvation in exchange of good deeds done by their ancestors or their posterity; or on account of the acts of their religious leaders as the Christians think that Jesus, by his blood, has redeemed the sins of his followers. This verse categorically denies this type of assertion and warns the people not to indulge in such a false belief. The wicked will be punished.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

To make the social life in this world egalitarian every individual should contribute to the welfare of the human society out of what Allah gives him. The overall effect of this system covers every person in the community.

"The unbelievers are the unjust" implies that injustice is the root of all other wrongs. According to verse 13 of Luqman ascribing partners unto Allah is the greatest injustice.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۗ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۗ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۗ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۗ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ } 255

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:255]

This verse is known as the *ayat ul kursi*-the verse of the seat or throne of the almighty, omnipotent and wise authority of Allah. This verse is an *ayah* of protection. In it is mentioned all that we the mortals can ever know about Allah.

"Allah is He beside whom there is no god" - please refer to the commentary of verse 1 of al-Fatihah for the word "Allah".

Not only the denial of false gods, but also the belief in the absolute unity of Allah without any complexity of any kind, in any sense, in His ever-living and self-subsisting supreme being, is the first and the foremost doctrine of Islam. Complexity suggests an interdependence among the components which means the "whole" depends upon the performance of the components. All the prophets of Allah, before the Holy Prophet, also preached the unity of Allah, but the perfect unity made known through the Holy Prophet could not be presented to the people of earlier times because their intellect and perception had not developed enough to understand the ever-living and self-subsisting being of Allah. The following words, spoken by Isa, are quoted as an example:

There is still much that I could say to you, but the burden would be too great for you now. However, when he comes who is the spirit of truth, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but will tell only what he hears; and he will make known to you the things that are coming. (John 16: 12 and 13).

Every prophet of Allah preached the unity of Allah. The idea of trinity was not given by Isa. It is an after-thought of the Christian church. Please read the following quotations from the Old and the New Testaments.

Old Testament:

God spoke, and these were His words:

"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

You shall have no other god to set against me.

You shall not make a carved image for yourself nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth". (Exodus 20: 1 to 4).

Hear O Israel, the Lord is our Lord, One Lord. (Deut 6: 4)

"I am the Lord, the Lord is my name; I will not give my glory to another god, nor my praise to any idol." (Isaiah 42: 8)

Thus says the Lord, Israel's king, the Lord of hosts, his ransom:

"I am the first and I am the last, and there is no god but me." (Isaiah 44: 6)

"I am the Lord, there is no other; there is no god beside me."

"I am the Lord, there is no other."

"There is no god but Me; there is no god other than I."

"I am God, there is no other." (Isaiah 45: 5, 18, 21, 22).

"I am God, there is no other." (Isaiah 46: 9)

"I am He; I am the first, I am the last also. (Isaiah 48: 12)

New Testament:

A false god has no existence in the real world.

There is no god but one.

Yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all beings comes. (1 Corinthians 8: 4 and 6)

One Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. (Ephesians 4: 5 and 6).

Prophet after prophet came and awakened man step by step and degree by degree. Finally the Holy Prophet, the brightest light, was sent to expose and explain the ultimate truth, as promised by Allah, to enlighten the human mind and heart with the knowledge through which man can become aware of the Lord God, but comprehends only what his power of contemplation can bear.

It is reported that there are three kinds of existence;

(1) WAJIB UL WUJUD

The self-existing existence. The primal cause. There can never be any effect without a cause. The universe, therefore, was created by the self-existing creator, the primal cause.

(2) MUMKIN UL WUJUD

The creatures or created beings whose creation is possible only if the creator so wills.

(3) MUMTANI UL WUJUD

The impossible existence. The existence of another being like Allah is not possible because there cannot be two equals in the sense of oneness. If there are two equals in this sense, then there is no meaning in their being two, separated from each other. They must be one. If there are two such beings then there must be a dividing factor which makes the two as two and maintains their two separate entities, in which case the dividing factor will be the *wajib ul wujud*, therefore, such an existence is neither possible nor real.

Wajib ul wujud, therefore, means the self-existing existence of the ever-living and self-subsisting creator. To maintain His self-existing existence He must be an omnipotent authority who not only owns absolute knowledge of the existence but also the will that does what it wills. His control is absolute. His attributes are His self, inseparable from Him from any point of view or in any imaginable meaning or sense, as the meaning is inseparable from a word or as equiangularity is

inseparable from an equilateral triangle. As the limited knowledge of the finite being cannot conceive of anything without referring to its attributes, we give names to the attributes of Allah, with the help of our visualisation, to have a suggestive idea of His absolute existence. Therefore, the Shia school holds it as a cardinal doctrine of faith not to think of any of His attributes as a separate entity from His existence. All the attributes of Allah are one absolute unity, because, if they are not, then it would mean complexity, which negates the absolute independence of the omnipotent authority. His existence means His authority, His authority means His knowledge, and likewise all His attributes are so linked together that they are one indivisible unity. Allah is a transcendental reality. He is unknowable. He is an infinite being, beyond the conceivability of our finite consciousness. He is inconceivable. He is *hayyul qayyum*, the ever-living, the self-subsisting (Ali Imran: 2; Ta Ha: 111, Mumin: 65).

Imam Ali says:

O He!

O He whom none knows what He is,

nor how He is,

nor where He is,

nor in what respect He is;

except He. (*Dua al-Mashlul*)

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Qayyum is a magnified form of the adjective *qayam* - standing, lasting, enduring. It implies He who stands by Himself, and all others stand because of His (eternal) endurance. His relation to His creatures is like the source of light to the rays of the light, or like the mind to the concepts, not like the relation of an architect or a builder to a construction he builds. It is exactly as Ali ibna abi Talib has said-"Every thing stands by means of Him". He is the self-subsisting everlasting, therefore, He is the first and the last, and the apparent and the hidden (Hadid: 2 and 3); and He is the knower of all things, and He is with everything but is not computed with anything (Mujadilah : 7; Ma-idah: 73).

While trying to visualise His attributes, it is necessary not to be misled by the finite inferences. His activity does not at all mean movement to perform an act by employing energy as we do. Awareness of His attributes, based upon reason and contemplation, may appear pure and perfect to us, but, in fact, it remains a shadow of the reality which transcends all faculties of comprehension.

"Slumber does not overtake Him", means that He is not influenced by any change whatsoever. He is beyond time and states, for He encompasses time and all states. He is the ever vigilant, or the true and perfect vigilance itself.

"Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His" means that He is the creator of matter. If the "matter" is not created by Allah, and is said to be eternally existing as He is, then He is only a fashioner of things out of matter, in which case nothing belongs to Him. There is no propriety in this conjecture. It is unreasonable to say that there are two independent eternal equals. If matter is accepted as an independent and uncreated eternal, then Allah, to prove His existence, will need the matter to carry out His creative plan, otherwise the matter will remain idle. There is no meaning in the idea of two eternal equals, separated from each other. They must be one. If there are two such beings, then there must be a dividing factor which makes the two as two and maintains their two separate entities, in which case the dividing factor, superior in will and authority will be the ever-existing supreme being.

"Who can intercede with Him, except by His permission?" implies that though Allah is the almighty and the absolute sovereign but as He is also the merciful, the compassionate, He has given permission to "Muhammad and Ali Muhammad", the thoroughly purified, to intercede on behalf of the sinners.

The issue of intercession has been dealt with in detail in the commentary of verse 48 of this surah. Please refer to it.

"He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases", means Allah's omniscience. The finite beings cannot hide anything from Allah. They cannot comprehend anything except what He pleases, no matter whatever knowledge and intelligence they possess. The facts which are unknown or unknowable to the finite beings are known to the infinite. Allah's knowledge is infinite and absolute. He is the knowing who knows ahead and in advance (in term of time and space) the origin and causality of knowledge. Although the ordinary human beings do not perceive that which is known to Allah only, but those who have been endowed with the divine knowledge are aware of the secrets of the universe.

In "His *kursi* (seat of authority and knowledge) extends over the heavens and the earth", although *kursi* literally means "chair", like *arsh* (used in other verses of the Quran) means "throne", but both these words have been used metaphorically. They refer to the divine knowledge and authority of the supreme, almighty and sovereign Allah, in relation to all that which has been created by Him. His "relation" with His creation, in time and space, remains unconditionally unaffected. His control over everything, created by Him, is perfect, complete and absolute. There is no limitation to the infinity of His existence, because the ever-existing existence is only His and it is He who gives existence to whom He wills. When we say "He is here, there and everywhere", we only make use of our limited and inadequate ability to understand and express His absolute infinity. He is the creator of time and space, therefore, His infinite existence cannot be conceived by the help of the knowledge derived from the system based upon experience and induction.

According to the Ahl ul Bayt *kursi* or *arsh*, not connected with any kind of matter, is the manifestation of His knowledge and authority in relation to all that which has been created. It includes all the heavens and the earth. *Arsh* refers to Allah's hold and sway over all creation. In other words, the creation as a whole is the *kursi* or the throne of Allah from which all His divine attributes of knowledge, wisdom, might and glory manifest.

"And the preservation of them does not tire Him" means the creation, as a whole, is sustained by Him, and its continued existence is maintained by Him. The laws (created by Him), governing the operation of creation, produce fatigue, therefore, He is independent of such laws. His absolute existence is eternal and everlasting.

"He is the most high, the great", according to the Holy Prophet, is one of the most important verses of the Quran, which deals with the unity of Allah, His attributes, His relation to His creatures, the position of man in the order of creation, his instinctive desire to turn unto Him, his means of salvation and the ultimate reward and punishment.

In order to prevent the total seizure of mind and heart by the greatness of the *kursi*, mentioned in this verse, it is made clear in the end that Allah alone is the most high, the greatest.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ طَقَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ { 256 }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:256]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse states a psychological fact that the submissive attitude of the mind and heart towards any sacred object cannot be obtained by force or compulsion, therefore, only a clear view of the sacred generates the spontaneous conviction to adopt the right and reject the wrong. It is not an imperative but an indicative statement. There is no room for considering this verse as having been abrogated by

any other verse dealing with *jihad*. This verse also asserts that after the right way has become clearly distinct from error, man must reject the false gods and believe in Allah.

This verse confirms that which has been said, in detail, in the commentary of verses 190 to 193 of this surah, about the false accusation by the European historians that the Holy Prophet used the sword to preach Islam.

Sir Edward Dennison Ross says:

"For many centuries the acquaintance which the majority of Europeans possessed of Muhammadanism was based almost entirely on distorted reports of fanatical Christians which led to the dissemination of a multitude of gross calumnies. What was good in Muhammadanism was entirely ignored, and what was not good, in the eyes of Europe, was exaggerated or misinterpreted. It must not, however, be forgotten that the central doctrine preached by Muhammad to his contemporaries in Arabia, who worshipped the stars; to the Persians who acknowledged Ormuz and Ahriman; the Indians, who worshipped idols; and the Turks, who had no particular worship, was the unity of God, and that the simplicity of his creed was probably a more potent factor in the spread of Islam than the sword of the ghazis".

Even William Muir, the worst enemy of Islam, in the following passage, admits that:

It is strongly corroborative of Muhammad's sincerity that the earliest converts to Islam were not only of upright character, but his own bosom friends and people of his household; intimately acquainted with his private life, who could not fail otherwise to have detected those discrepancies which ever more or less exist between the professions of the hypocritical deceiver abroad and his actions at home."

Through this verse peace, love and mutual understanding have been prescribed for the Muslims. Also refer to verse 125 of Bani Israil. There is no need for compulsion in religion because verse 2 of al Dahr says: "Verily, we have shown him (man) the (right) way; (whether) he be grateful or disbelieving (ungrateful)!"

Taghut (the devil) means the inordinate, the rebel, the wrongdoer, the strayer, like Shaytan. The word *taghut*, in this verse, implies all the devilish tendencies and activities which mislead the people. The first step towards genuine belief in Allah is the rejection of the devil.

In other words hatred of the wicked (*tabarra*) takes precedence over the love of Allah and His chosen friends (*tawalla*). It is essential to clean the heart and the mind from the disturbing influence of falsehood and then expose them to the reflection of truth, otherwise conflicting impressions will create confusion and distort the beauty of the beloved. See verse 6 of al Ma-idah.

Urwatil wuthqa means a strong rope - the firmest handhold. According to Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir, a true faithful, in order to remain attached with Allah and enjoy genuine godliness, must seek attachment with the thoroughly purified Ahlul Bayt (Allah's chosen friends) and love them (as ordained in verse 23 of al Shura). Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq has said that the firmest handhold means having complete faith (trust) in Allah. The Holy Prophet has declared that every faithful must hold fast the rope of Allah, Ali, because he, who remains attached with Ali, will never go astray. Ali is the ideal of the true faith in Allah. The true mode and manner of the faith is perfectly integrated in the divinely commissioned successors to the Holy Prophet - Ali and the holy Imams of the Ahlul Bayt, therefore, *tawalla* (love of Allah and Muhammad and Ali Muhammad) has been prescribed as one of the articles of the *furu ud din*.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

It is clearly indicated that faith consists of two fundamental factors:

(1) The negation of what is against the legislative will of Allah - *tabarra*.

(2) Belief in Allah and whatever He wills and commands - *tawalla*.

Be averse to the wicked and be good to the virtuous. Be with the flowers as a flower and be far away from the thorns.

اللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أُولِيَاؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوتُ يُخْرِجُونَهُم مِّنَ النُّورِ إِلَى الظُّلُمَاتِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ
{أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} 257

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:257]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Wali literally means "be close to or stand immediately by" - a nearness or contact between two objects without any intermediary. It is used to refer to such closeness as exists between brothers, friends, neighbours and helpers. A master is also called *wali* because of his hold over his slaves - the hold brings the slave close to the master. Any one who exercises authority becomes a *wali* of those over whom the authority is exercised; therefore, a guardian, an administrator or a ruler is also called *wali*. Here, it means that Allah is the nearest authority over the faithful; and the false gods the authorities over those who disbelieve, and who push them into hell for ever.

Nur means the light of the faith or the true awareness about Allah and firm conviction in His authority.

Zulumat means the darkness of the disbelief in Allah or the ignorance and uncertainty about Allah.

See verses 35 and 36 of Ibrahim.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ حَاجَّ إِبْرَاهِيمَ فِي رَبِّهِ أَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ الْمُلْكَ إِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّيَ الَّذِي يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ قَالَ أَنَا أُحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ ۗ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ يَأْتِي بِالشَّمْسِ مِنَ الْمَشْرِقِ فَأْتِ بِهَا مِنَ الْمَغْرِبِ فَبُهِتَ الَّذِي كَفَرَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ} 258

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:258]

Idol-worshippers, in ancient times, revered their kings as the representatives of God. Nimrud, in the days of prophet Ibrahim, claimed divinity. Boastful of his temporal power, he disputed with Ibrahim about the authority of the prophethood bestowed upon him by Allah, since Ibrahim's authority clashed with his absolute sway over the people, whose lives, he argued, depended on his decision; he could kill them at any time or let them live. Ibrahim rendered his argument null and void by pointing out his helplessness against the divine forces working in nature. Although there was no reply, yet Nimrud, an obstinate disbeliever, could not draw advantage from this clear guidance. The Ahmadi commentator says that *ata* does not mean "gave"; it means "promised". It is about the grant of kingdom to Ibrahim, in this verse, as well as in verse 54 of al Nisa. Even if it is taken as "promised", then Allah is the best fulfiller of promise. All His promises are fulfilled. To say that Allah's promise made with Ibrahim was a bogus and false undertaking is certainly *kufir* (disbelief in Allah).

"I am the Lord who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land to occupy", says Genesis 15: 7; and the Quran repeats it in this verse.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The personal pronoun of the third person singular in the objective case *hu* may refer to Ibrahim, and the *mulk* means kingdom, the spiritual as well as rightful (see verse 54 of al Nisa); and if it refers to Nimrud then the *mulk* would mean temporal and actual though not rightful. However, the meaning and application of this verse remains the same as explained above.

أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ يُحْيِي هَٰذِهِ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا ۗ فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ ۗ قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ ۗ قَالَ
لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۗ قَالَ بَلْ لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ ۗ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ ۗ

259} وَأَنْظِرْ إِلَى الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:259]

Wherever "giving life after death" is used in Quran, the Ahmadi commentator and his like say that it is a metaphorical reference to the revival of the stagnant nations, because the Ahmadis are averse to the fact that Allah and His chosen friends are able to cause miracles. To them the death and revivification of prophet Uzayr, referred to in this verse, was only a vision, not an actual happening. Since their self-made prophet was unable to work any miracle, the Ahmadis have decided not to accept the agency of miracles at all. To show their point of view as the only truth, the Ahmadi commentator says: "it appears that" and then quotes the events connected with Ezekiel from chapter 37 of Ezekiel and misinterprets them to serve his perverted ideas, although there is nothing in common in the event referred to in this verse and the events mentioned in the above noted chapter of the Old Testament. It is not Ezekiel but Ezra (Uzayr) who is referred to in this verse. It refers to the death and revivification of Uzayr and his donkey, whilst the events in chapter 37 of Ezekiel refer to the revival of a town. It was prophet Uzayr who, like Ibrahim in the next verse, prayed and asked Allah to show him how the dead are brought back to life again.

The true account of the events that took place is given below:

Nebuchadnezzar conquered and destroyed Jerusalem. The corpses of the inhabitants were left to be eaten by the wild beasts and birds of prey. When prophet Uzayr passed by the ruins of the city, he wondered if the people whose desiccated bones were lying on the ground could ever be brought to life again so as to rebuild the devastated town? So Allah caused him and his donkey to die. After seventy years, Cyrus gave permission to rebuild Jerusalem. Within thirty years Jerusalem was an active city again. When Uzayr died, it was morning. After hundred years he was brought to life again. The sun had not yet set. "How long have you tarried?" the angel, who was sent to meet Uzayr, asked him.

I have tarried a day, or part of a day," he replied.

No! You have tarried a hundred years," the angel informed him. He also asked him to look at his food and drink in his bag. It was as fresh as it was a hundred years ago. He looked at his donkey. There were only its bones lying beside him. As he was looking at his donkey, its scattered bones were joined together and it stood before him, alive and breathing. The purpose of this miracle was to make prophet Uzayr an instructive example to those who either do not know how the dead will be brought to life again on the day of resurrection, or who disbelieve in Allah's warning. So when it became clear to Uzayr, he said: "I know that Allah has power over all things."

At home he found his son, born after his departure, one hundred years old; his young maid one hundred and twenty years old, and all his grandchildren older than him. They looked at the fifty year old Uzayr and wondered. Uzayr became a living sign of Allah's omnipotence.

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوْ لَمْ تُؤْمِنْ ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ۖ ثُمَّ اجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا ۖ وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ ۖ {260}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:260]

The words of this verse are very clear. Ibrahim asked Allah to show him how Allah gives life to the dead, so that his heart may be at ease. It is narrated that as directed by Allah, Ibrahim took a pigeon, a peacock, a cock and a crow, cut them into very small pieces, mixed them together and put portions of the mixture on the top of four separate mountains, and then called out to them; they came flying to him as individual birds. It became clear to Ibrahim that Allah does what He wills because He is mighty, wise.

The Ahmadi commentator wrongly refers to "Abraham said: O Lord God, how can I be sure that I shall occupy it?" (Genesis 15 : 8). He does it to lower the status of Ibrahim, a true prophet of Allah, by saying that Ibrahim had asked Allah about a factor which any ordinary man of common sense knows without receiving information from anyone. Genesis 15: 8 refers to Ibrahim's prayer about the kingdom Allah promised to give him, whereas this verse refers to Ibrahim's request to show him how the dead will be brought to life again. When his arguments lead him to a dead end, the Ahmadi commentator presumes that this verse has been tampered with, because he cannot prove that this verse refers to the promise that the land of Canaan will be given to Ibrahim, although he gives irrelevant references from the Bible.

Some spiritualists say that the slaying of the four kinds of birds is meaningful for those who aspire for a spiritual life.

(1) The pigeon stands for social life - the love for family, friends and associates, which must be sacrificed.

(2) The cock stands for animal passion which must be killed.

(3) The crow stands for greed which must be destroyed.

(4) The peacock stands for worldly adornment which must be smothered.

When all the above four desires are crushed, the soul merits the bliss of the eternal life.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says;

"Allah gives life and causes to die, and then He gives life to the dead", mentioned in verses 258, 259 and 260, makes clear the power and authority of almighty Allah, but to deny the miracles associated with the prophets of Allah, the Ahmadi commentator and others like him rely on conjecture to find out metaphorical parallels, as if they are aware of all that is possible or impossible, and the laws governing the operation of creation.

Of such a claim, verse 51 of al Kahf says:

"I made them not to witness the creation of the heavens and the earth, nor at the creation of themselves, nor am I He who chooses those who lead (the people) astray, (as My) helpers."

In the following two Persian lyrics, life on earth in relation to heavenly existence has been meaningfully described.

(1) What does the mosquito know from where came the garden and how it grew. It is born in the spring and dies in the autumn.

(2) The heavenly existence addresses life on earth:

"For us, a century of years is only a breath,
an ocean of yours a moisture,
we only see and move on."

The terms life and death can be applied, in the physical sense, to a man or any other creature, a group of men or a nation. It can also be applied to a man's or a nation's spiritual rise and fall, with reference to knowledge or faith or any accomplishment. In both the meanings it may take place in its usual or natural course, known to us, or it may take place on account of an unusual course. not known to or unknowable to us. Whatever takes place is an effect of Allah's will.

Though many a commentator says that these verses refer to Ibrahim and the Israelite prophets. yet the Jews and the Christians of today may not accept their conclusions, based upon the references to the Old and the New Testaments, as likely and reliable. The Shia commentators rely on the reports and opinions of the Ahl ul Bayt whose source of information is the Holy Prophet whom Allah Himself gave the wisdom and knowledge of all creation directly. The ideas, theories and events presented by the scholars of the highest calibre, by referring to the Old or the New Testament or any other book,

cannot be accepted if these do not agree with the Quran or the explanation or interpretation given by the holy Imams.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ { 261 }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:261]

"Giving out" is the means to collect more. In the habits of Arabic speech, the number seven often implies its multiples, or great numbers. Please refer to the commentary of verses 3, 195 215 and 254 of this surah. Whatever is spent in the way of Allah, out of that which Allah gives, will be returned repeatedly, added and amplified, in this world and in the hereafter, provided the conditions mentioned in the next two verses are fulfilled .

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَدَىٰ ۗ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ { 262 }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:262]

True spending or giving should have no strings attached - it should be done in the way of Allah. Spending in the way of Allah grows the means of the spender manifold, provided he does not make it known, or cause harm by following it up with reproach - *mannan* meaning to give expression to the good done or reminding one of the favours done to him as a reproach, and *azan* meaning harm or inflicting a slightest injury. Even a mention of any favour may put the concerned person to shame or humiliation in the eyes of others.

Imam Husayn bin Ali used to give alms from behind the door, so that the needy might not feel ashamed and humiliated. His son, Imam Ali bin Husayn, used to kiss the hand of the needy before giving anything in charity, because, according to verse 104 of al Tawbah, it is Allah who takes the alms.

{ قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَدَىٰ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ { 263 }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:263]

Qawlun ma-ruf - kind speech and forgiveness, refers to forbearance if the seeker of help makes unreasonable demands. Spending in the way of Allah is a means of purification. If it causes injury, it will add impurity. If you are a lover of the forbearing, you will imitate His attribute. On no account must you show any sign of anger or irritation at the poor man's importunity.

It is mentioned in the Minhajus Sadiqin that when Imam Ali ibna abi Talib asked Prophet Khizr to say something good, Khizr said:

"To give in the way of Allah to please Allah is the best charity."

"Do you know that which is better than this?" Ali asked him.

"No", Khizr replied.

Ali said: "The self-respect of the poor, who depends on Allah, is better than the charity the wealthy give to the needy."

Khizr observed that Ali's opinion should be written in gold. Spending in the way of Allah is a social commitment, which generates love among the people and promotes brotherhood.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَدَىٰ كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا ۖ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ { 264 }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:264]

Imam Ali ibna abi Talib says that he who has wealth but does not show off, or he who has the power to avenge but forgives, or he who gives good counsel even to his enemy, or he who spends in the way of Allah with no strings attached, without making it known, is the true hero.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

To attach strings to charity, or to make it known, or to reproach the overly solicitous seeker of help, is an exercise in futility and renders the charity useless.

While giving *Zakat* and *sadqa*, one positively lays claim to the act of goodness done in obedience to Allah, but *salat* is an act of devotion which implies self-denial; the devotee is engrossed in the greatness of the absolute. Sublime was the devotee, Ali ibna abi Talib, who performed these two different acts at the same time - prayed as well as spent in the way of Allah, and, therefore, was declared to be the *wali* of the faithful along with Allah and His messenger, in verse 55 of al Ma-idah.

We are barren like rocks. To be fertile and of benefit to ourselves and to others, we must cover ourselves with the moist earth of *ihsan* (giving more than what one deserves). If we cause harm or injury, it is as if the fertile soil was washed off, leaving us once again barren.

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيْتًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَطُلٌّ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ {265}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:265]

Spending and giving of what one wants to keep, benefits man twice over; it speeds up the process of inner purification as well as promotes the welfare of the human society. Islam lays special stress on the spending in the way of Allah because it is a universal religion, perfected and completed by Allah who has prescribed mercy for Himself in verses 12 and 54 of al An-am. Islam, when translated into action, takes the form of *salat*, *Zakat* and *sadqa*. And faith, unless proved by actions, is a bogus claim. Neither Allah accepts it nor His servants give it any importance.

If the spirit or the intention behind the spending is to seek pleasure of Allah, then, if the means are large the corresponding spending will also be substantial and big-hearted and if the means are moderate, even then the spending will be sufficient. When heavy rain falls the tall trees of a garden bring forth their fruit twofold, but even light rain is sufficient, because rooted very deep, they draw adequate nutrition from the soil.

In the days of the Holy Prophet, the early Muslims lived in a hostile environment. It was a period of test and trial. The overwhelming forces of falsehood made their lives a bed of thorns, their relentless persecution hunted them, therefore, in the face of the preponderant danger to their lives and property, they had to sacrifice whatever they owned, lives as well as possessions, whenever either or both of them were needed. Under such circumstances the minimum sacrifice deserves maximum reward.

This verse assures the sincere believers in particular and other members of the human society in general that every act of virtue has its own energy to make both the lives (here and hereafter) meaningful and rewarding, even if there were no external agents to nourish them.

أَيُّوْدُ أَحَدِكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ {266}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:266]

Islam prescribes spending in the way of Allah, but does not treat it as a tax to be collected by the government. It is a moral responsibility to carry out the religious duty. It develops conscientiousness to observe the obligations prescribed by religion voluntarily to our utmost feasibility.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

It is a warning to those who do good, but render it null and void by doing bad deeds by and by. Man is always in need of quick recompense from Allah in the shape of His bounties, therefore, it is downright stupidity to let the good deeds go waste. If one does not guard one's good actions, they will be wiped out.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا الْخَبِيثَ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ ۗ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ ﴿267﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:267]

This verse is a summation of the preceding verses from 261 to 266. The priority in life is to spend in the way of Allah of the good things that we earn and possess, and of what Allah has given us out of the earth; and not to give that which we reject as bad, because we ourselves would not take it unless its price is lowered, therefore, in verse 92 of Ali Imran we are reminded:

You will not attain unto piety until you spend of that which you love.

The rich are warned not to give their rejected and unwanted things as charity to the poor.

الشَّيْطَانُ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْفَحْشَاءِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿268﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:268]

Fahsha literally means indecency. In this verse it means selfishness or close-fistedness which is, in fact, a worst type of indecency. Shaytan frightens us with loss. He rises in us at the time of giving. So those men of large or moderate means who spend freely to enjoy life but fear that they would be short of those things which they give to the needy, and so withhold them, play in the hands of Shaytan.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Miserliness due to the fear of poverty is an indecent tendency prompted by Shaytan who enjoins selfishness upon those who have devilish characteristics, whereas those who are godly in nature always expect grace and abundance from Allah, therefore, give what they receive from Him.

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۗ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿269﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:269]

Hikmah, not only means intellectual power and ability to apply reason but also implies spiritual perception and command over divine guidance, particularly bestowed by the grace of Allah, to make right use of knowledge on all occasions. Allah gives permission to fathom the depth of the ocean of wisdom to those who actively seek it from Him with devoted determination.

The highest form of *hikmah* is revelation revealed to the divinely chosen and the thoroughly purified by the almighty all-wise. Please read verse 33 of al Ahzab with verses 77 to 79 of al Waqiah. The creator Lord created a group of His chosen representatives, thoroughly purified them, gave them His wisdom, and then commissioned them to guide mankind, in every age and every clime, till eternity. One after another the prophets of Allah came with divine guidance at every stage of development in the human society; and in the end the last messenger of Allah, the Holy Prophet, came with the final message, after which the office of prophethood was terminated. To protect and preserve the revealed truth in its original form, uncorrupted, the merciful Lord, after *risalat*, established the institution of *imatat*, and appointed Imams (guide-leaders). Through the Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt, the thoroughly purified, the divine guidance will continue to guide the people to the end of this world. Allah has shown him (man) the right way (Dahr: 3), and given him the free choice to identify these rightly guided guides and obtain true guidance, or reject them and go astray.

{ وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ ۗ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ } 270

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:270]

For giving alms refer to the commentary of verses 261 to 268 of this surah.

A *nadhr*, vow, is a self-directed warning, a reminder of promised action, so that one may be sure of going in the right direction. It is a voluntary undertaking of an act of virtue, binding oneself in gratitude for some special favour prayed for. If one does not constantly give alms and make vows, then one will find his way to loss. The unjust, in this verse, are those who interfere and try to frustrate the undertaking to walk on the right path and block the course of spending in the way of Allah.

"Allah knows it" means He accepts both the good deeds and gives reward.

{ إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۗ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ } 271

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:271]

It is well if one gives alms openly to set an example for others to follow suit. Extra and hidden giving in compliance with the Holy Prophet's advice "one hand knows not what the other gives", is more noble because it protects from the danger of vanity. This verse sanctions both the modes of spending in the way of Allah - open and secret, because Allah is aware of the intentions and the motives of the givers. He gives in return an appropriate recompense in both the cases. It is, therefore, presumptuous to say that "if one does some act of charity before men, no reward awaits him in his Father's house in heaven." (Matthew 6: 1).

"And this will do away with some of your evil deeds" indicates that there are some good deeds, like spending in the way of Allah, which earn forgiveness from the Lord for the sins so far committed.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq says:

Hidden charity appeases the wrath of Allah, does away with the sins as the water puts out the fire, and keeps away several misfortunes.

The Holy Prophet has said:

Seven persons shall be allowed to take refuge with Allah when there will be no other refuge.

(1) He who rules justly and judges impartially.

(2) He who grows up in a virtuous family as an embodiment of virtue.

(3) He who remains attached with the place of worship of Allah, and loves and helps the worshippers.

(4) He who loves people, and hates the evildoers in order to promote the cause of Allah.

(5) He who says: "I fear the Lord" whenever a beautiful woman incites him to do that which is forbidden.

(6) He who gives charity in secret by one hand, not letting the other know it.

(7) He who prays in secret and sheds tears in fearful awareness of the Lord.

{ أَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُوَفَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ } 272

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:272]

The general policy of Islamic ideology is to give freedom of choice to the individual, therefore, Allah, through His messenger, makes it clear that no one should compel any one to walk on the right path. Whatever we spend, to seek the pleasure of Allah, works out our own good - the common welfare of the society. So, a portion of *Zakat* and *khums* has to be spent, under the directions of a *mujtahid*, for the general benefit of the community. It is recommended that to bring the infidels from

the darkness of ignorance into the light of faith, charity may also be given to them.

We spend in the way of Allah to benefit ourselves, because whatever we spend is paid back to us in full.

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَعْنِيَاءَ مِنَ النَّعْتِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ
النَّاسَ الْخَافَةَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ {273}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:273]

Alms should be given to those who are devotedly absorbed in the service of Allah. We can recognise them by the light of contentment and positive acceptance of their mission on their faces. They do not solicit charity, but live from hand to mouth. By stating that only those poor who abstain from begging deserve charity, this verse, indirectly, condemns professional beggary.

"Go about in the land" means seeking sustenance for the family.

{الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ سِرًّا وَعَلَانِيَةً فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} 274

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:274]

Jalaluddin Suyuti writes in Durr ul Manthur (and all the Sunni scholars agree) that this verse was revealed in-praise of Ali to glorify his giving of four *dirhams* in the way of Allah - one by night, one by day, one secretly and one openly. Ibrahim bin Salih, Muhammad bin Salih, Yusuf bin Bilal, Muhammad bin Harun and Ibna Abbas report the Holy Prophet's saying that this verse was revealed to him in praise of Ali. Ali informed the Holy Prophet that he had only four *dirhams* with him and he gave all of them in the way of Allah to seek His pleasure, and he was fully satisfied to know that Allah had accepted his spending.

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ
وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا
خَالِدُونَ {275}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:275]

Riba literally means a growth or an addition. The additional amount, collected over and above the capital given as a loan, is interest or usury. It is an abuse or a misuse of the power one holds over the weak or the needy, and therefore, strictly forbidden. Spending in the way of Allah for the welfare of the human society has been prescribed in the preceding verses. With enough means at one's disposal, it is a sin not to part with some of it in order to help the needy. When giving in the way of Allah, as a free gift, under such circumstances, has been prescribed, then those whom Allah has given enough, must at least lend that which is needed by the needy, without charging any additional payment, because practising usury is akin to being confounded by Shaytan, and is tantamount to digging one's own grave. Inherent in a transaction of usury is the element of enslavement and abuse, because a person who is in need of material help cannot pay back more than what he had originally taken; therefore Islam has prohibited usury. In the transaction of usury, both the givers and the takers suffer. The lender, in love of more and more material gains, becomes heartless and selfish. Those who take loans become extravagant and ruin their families. This scenario is diametrically opposed to the very purpose of the religion of Islam - establishment of a fair, kind and welfare-oriented social order. If there is no temptation of usury, material help will be given to only those who are really in need of it.

Trade, on the other hand, is a mutual transaction in which both parties feel satisfied, in which both either hope to gain or run the risk of a loss. If financial help is required for business or trading, a different relationship can be structured between the two parties, such as a partnership or some form

of sharing profit and loss.

Those who say usury is only like trading will rise on the day of resurrection in a state of insanity, as those rise whom Shaytan has prostrated by his touch.

The prohibition took effect from the day this verse was revealed. The usury collected by the lenders prior to the promulgation of this prohibition was allowed to be retained by them.

In banking transactions, the directions of the religious jurist {*mujtahid-faqih*) should be followed to determine bank charges, commission and profit as fixed or as agreed or as actual dividends.

{يَمْحَقُ اللَّهُ الرِّبَا وَيُرِي الصَّدَقَاتِ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُجِبُّ كُلَّ كَفَّارٍ أَثِيمٍ} 276

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:276]

Mahaq means to blot out, to render unfortunate, to withdraw one's blessings from Allah does not bless usury, and He causes charitable deeds to prosper. The act of usury itself lights the fuse of the ultimate destruction of the system that builds, supports and perpetrates it. According to the Holy Prophet, he who upholds usury as permissible is a *kafir*.

It is generally known among the Muslims that to use the gains obtained from usury is as wicked and as satanic as marrying one's own mother.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} 277

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:277]

Those who believe in Allah, do good deeds, keep up the *salat*, and pay *Zakat* will have no fear nor will grieve on the day of judgement. Those who have strayed off this divine path will encounter fear and grief.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَذَرُوا مَا بَقِيَ مِنَ الرِّبَا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} 278

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:278]

Historically, this verse instructs the faithful to stop taking usury on what they have already put into that system, once they have clearly seen its wickedness and satanic touch.

{فَإِن لَّمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا بِحَرْبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَإِن تُبْنُمْ فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ} 279

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:279]

There is no neutral standing space between good and bad actions. If the faithful do not desist from usury, they will bear the consequences of making war against Allah and His messenger. *Fadhanu* means "be warned of" a war from Allah and His messenger.

Imam Ali ibna abi Talib says:

The Holy Prophet not only cursed the giver, the receiver, and the consumer of the usury but also condemned those who write and witness the transaction of usury.

{وَإِن كَانَ ذُو عُسْرَةٍ فَنَظِرَةٌ إِلَىٰ مَيْسَرَةٍ وَأَن تَصَدَّقُوا خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ} 280

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:280]

If the debtor is in crisis, the demand for repayment should be postponed till he is in a better situation. The helpless poor must not be prosecuted and harassed. It is better, in such cases, if one can, to postpone demanding payment forever, because one is only here for a short while.

The Holy Prophet said:

He who grants a respite to his debtor, or gives up a part or the whole of the principal (given to him in cash or kind), will be allowed to take refuge with Allah on the day when there will be no shelter.

During the period of postponement, the repayable debt will be treated as charity given by the lender to the debtor, till it is repaid.

Zarara came to Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq and informed him that one of Zarara's debtors was selling his house to repay his debt. The Imam said: "O Zarara! In the name of merciful Lord I direct you not to render him shelterless."

Islam instructs the creditors to give respite and remission to the debtors and warns the debtors not to avoid repayment if they own sufficient means. It is reported that once a corpse was brought into the *masjid* for the final rites. The Holy Prophet refused to conduct the funeral prayer because the deceased had sufficient means at his disposal but did not repay his debt. Then and there Abu Qatadah paid the full amount on behalf of the deceased, after which the Holy Prophet prayed his funeral prayer. The Holy Prophet made it known that Allah dislikes those who neither repay their debts before death overcome them nor leave behind anything to meet their commitment of repayment on their behalf.

{وَأَنْتُمْ يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ ثُمَّ تُوَفَّى كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ } 281

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:281]

This verse sums up the previous verses about spending in the way of Allah. "Every soul will be paid back in full what it has earned" implies that our life in this world is the sum total of our actions and intentions, therefore, our lives should echo the absolute charity and love of the compassionate merciful. Those who safeguard themselves with full awareness of divine laws and do good, will get back what they have invested here in full on the day of reckoning. Those who oppress, abuse and wrong others shall be punished proportionately to the hurt they have inflicted.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا تَدَايَيْنُم بِدِينٍ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ ۚ وَلْيَكْتُب بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ وَلَا يَأْب كَاتِبٌ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ كَمَا عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ ۚ فَلْيَكْتُبْ وَلْيُمْلِلِ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَبْخَسْ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ۚ فَإِنْ كَانَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ الْحَقُّ سَفِيهًا أَوْ ضَعِيفًا أَوْ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يُمِلَّ هُوَ فَلْيُمْلِلْ وَلِيُّهُ بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ وَاسْتَشْهِدُوا شَهِيدَيْنِ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ ۚ فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُونَا رَجُلَيْنِ فَرَجُلٌ وَامْرَأَتَانِ مِمَّنْ تَرْضَوْنَ مِنَ الشُّهَدَاءِ أَنْ تَضِلَّ إِحْدَاهُمَا فَتُذَكَّرَ إِحْدَاهُمَا الْأُخْرَىٰ ۚ وَلَا يَأْب الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا ۚ وَلَا تَسْأَمُوا أَنْ تَكْتُبُوهُ صَغِيرًا أَوْ كَبِيرًا إِلَىٰ أَجَلِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَأَقْوَمٌ لِلشُّهَادَةِ وَأَدْنَىٰ أَلَّا تَرْتَابُوا ۗ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً حَاضِرَةً تُدِيرُونَهَا بَيْنَكُمْ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَلَّا تَكْتُبُوهَا ۗ وَأَشْهِدُوا إِذَا تَبَايَعْتُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُضَارَّ كَاتِبٌ وَلَا شَهِيدٌ ۚ وَإِنْ تَفَعَّلُوا فَإِنَّهُ فُسُوقٌ بِكُمْ ۗ وَأَنْتُمْ اللَّهُ وَيُعَلِّمُكُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ } 282

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:282]

Everything in the religion of Islam points to clarity and certainty. Therefore, all contracts of debt should be recorded. It is incumbent upon a Muslim to act as mediator, witness, or scribe when called upon to do so. All the parties to a contract of debt should safeguard themselves with full awareness of Allah's laws, a reminder which has been repeated twice in this verse, because Allah knows all things and what He teaches us is for our own good in the larger interest of human society. If we do not follow His guidance then surely we transgress. The laws prescribed in this verse develop and maintain a progressive, welfare-oriented, civilised social order.

Every contract of debt should be written down by a scribe with fairness. He who owes the debt should dictate without diminishing anything. If he is unsound or weak in understanding then his guardian should dictate with fairness. Two witnesses should be chosen to witness the written contract. If there are not two men, then one man and two women must be called in to witness, so that if one woman errs, the second may remind the other.

If the transaction is for ready merchandise which is given and taken from hand to hand, then there is no blame on any party in not writing it down.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Refer to *fiqh* for the details pertaining to the contracts of debt. In this verse Allah teaches us to write down and record the fact so that there may be no dispute in future. The one very important consequence of learning the art of writing is literacy. According to the Quran knowledge or education is the most valuable virtue. According to Tabari, the Holy Prophet, in order to remove illiteracy, asked the literate pagan captives, after the battle of Badr, to teach reading and writing to the Muslims. In return, he set free one pagan if he had taught writing to ten Muslim boys. When the Quran has asked the faithful to record in writing the transactions between individuals to avoid disputes, then it become all the more imperative that the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet, one of the two main sources of Islamic ideology and jurisprudence, should have been faithfully recorded. However on account of political exigency, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, it was not done, lest the fighting spirit of the Arab soldiers be adversely affected if their attention was diverted to intellectual progress. Not only was the writing down of the Holy Prophet's sayings stopped but large libraries in the conquered lands of Egypt and Persia were burned and destroyed in the days of the second caliph on the plea that if those books were in agreement with the Quran, they did not need it, and if they were not, then they deserved destruction (Tabari, Yaquti and others).

As a result of not writing down the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet, a great many disputes surfaced among the Muslims, dividing them in several sects and schools of thought.

At a time when the Muslim *ummah* was conquering far away lands and bringing in camel-laden booties in the streets of Madina, according to the well-known Muslim historian, Amir Ali, in his book "the Spirit of Islam", Ali was giving lectures in the *masjid* to spread knowledge, wisdom and intellectual progress, which emerged in full force among the later Saracen race.

It must be noted that it was Ali who advised the second caliph not to destroy the famous library in Alexandria, which was founded by the Greek scholars. Ali and the men attached with the holy house of the Ahl ul Bayt continued to record the traditions of the Holy Prophet in writing. Bukhari refers to a *sahifa* maintained by Ali which contained the true dictations of the Holy Prophet. According to many historians, Abdullah bin Abu Rafi-i, the freed slave of Imam Ali, had produced a recorded document containing the sayings of the Holy Prophet, narrated by Ali ibna abi Talib.

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ وَلَمْ تَجِدُوا كَاتِبًا فَرِهَانٌ مَّقْبُوضَةٌ فَإِنْ أَمِنَ بَعْضُكُم بَعْضًا فَلْيُؤَدِّ الَّذِي أُؤْتِمِنَ أَمَانَتَهُ وَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ رَبَّهُ ۗ وَلَا تَكْتُمُوا
الشَّهَادَةَ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْتُمْهَا فَإِنَّهُ آثِمٌ قَلْبُهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ عَلِيمٌ ﴿283﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:283]

This verse enjoins to take collateral if a proper document of agreement cannot be written down, and the parties do not trust each other.

لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِنْ تُبَدُّوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبُكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ۗ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ
عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿284﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:284]

The heavens and the earth, and all that they contain, seen and unseen, material and spiritual, always belong to Allah. He, to whom everything belongs, will take you to account for your transaction with His belongings. Evil thoughts and intentions, even if not translated into actions, are liable to be examined for penalisation.

Say (O Muhammad): Whether you hide that which is in your hearts or manifest it, Allah knows it. He knows whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and Allah has power over all things. (Ali Imran: 29)

Imam Ali says:

Allah requites His servants by that which is in their hearts.

He forgives whomever He wills and punishes whomever He wills. He alone knows who deserves forgiveness, as mentioned in verse 271 of this surah: "and this will do away with some of your evil deeds;" and what type of sins earn definite punishment. It is Allah's will that prevails but never without justice.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says;

"And whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it (intentions and motives), Allah will call you to account according to it"; makes it clear that there is no room for treating this verse as abrogated.

All actions of Allah, including reward and punishment, are the immediate effects of His will. It does not mean that His actions are arbitrary. His justice, wisdom, grace, love and mercy are reflected in His will. There is no contradiction in His attributes which play a very important role in shaping His will. His will follows His wisdom.

أَمَّنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلُّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ {285}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:285]

Please study this verse with reference to the commentary of verse 253 of this surah and verse 55 of Bani Israil.

All the heavenly scriptures are from the creator Lord. There are differences between the prophets but no differentiation. The message is the same: worship Allah, and trust in His all encompassing mercy, as transmitted through His messengers. The true faithful believe in Allah, His messengers, His angels and His books. Please refer to verse 177 of this surah. Islam is a universal religion. (286)

- Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Wusat means extent or ability with ease. It implies that Allah expects from you as much as you are able to give with ease, for which you have to go to the extent of your potential. It refutes the doctrine of determinism (*jabr*). Allah does not ask man to do that which is beyond his capacity, nor He does impose a duty to do that which is difficult for him. "He has not laid upon you in religion any hardship (Al Hajj: 78)" The Holy Prophet has also said:

"I have brought you a very easy religion with a great many facilities."

Kasb and its derivatives have been used in the Quran mostly in the meaning of consequences of action, and sometimes for taking into consideration the inclination to do an act. The determinist school wrongly differentiates between the act and what it earns, by saying that "the act" is done by Allah but man earns its recompense. This school of thought is unable to explain how the act can be separated from its consequences exactly as the Christians cannot make clear the theory of trinity. "Do not lay on us a burden (*isr*) such as You laid on those before us!" implies that the duties and injunctions for the believers, before the Holy Prophet, were very hard and difficult; and the word *isr* (burden) also used in verse 157 of al A-raf, carries the undertaking that it will be removed.

Through the prayer mentioned in this verse the supplicant prays for the triumph of truth over falsehood and victory of belief over disbelief, and the suppression of satanic tendencies by godliness. It is a prayer to Allah not to inflict on us situations that may result in us committing misdeeds, and to acknowledge our limitations as we expect it from our Lord, provided we work at our maximum capacity, as expected from us; and to rejuvenate us by wiping clean all traces of errors and mistakes;

and have mercy on us through pardon (*afwu*).

Those who believe in the oneness (*Tawhid*) of Allah expect from their Lord protection, mercy, guardianship and the ultimate prevalence of true *iman* throughout the world. This supplication reflects Allah's own laws and promises.

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَعَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا إِنْ نَسِينَا أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْنَا إصْرًا كَمَا حَمَلْتَهُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِنَا رَبَّنَا وَلَا تُحَمِّلْنَا مَا لَا طَاقَةَ لَنَا بِهِ وَاعْفُ عَنَّا وَارْحَمْنَا أَنْتَ مَوْلَانَا فَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ {286}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 2:286]

Chapter 3

Tafsir Surah Aal-'Imraan (The Family of 'Imraan)

الم } 1

See the commentary of verse 1 of al Baqarah.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ } 2

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:2]

Refer to the commentary of verse 255 of al Baqarah for "Allah! There is no god save He, the ever-living, the self-subsisting." *Hayy*, the ever-living, and *qayyum*, the self-subsisting, are the two attributes of Allah which break up and blot out the absurd doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ. He, who did not have an existence before his creation, like any other mortal, was brought into being by Allah, therefore, cannot be *hayy*, the everliving; and also he cannot be *qayyum*, the self-subsisting, because, according to the Christians, he was crucified.

Ibna Ishaq says that verses 3 to 80 of this surah were revealed about the Christians of Najran whom the Holy Prophet with his Ahl ul Bayt confronted in a spiritual contest known as the event of *mubahilah* (see commentary of verse 61 of this surah).

A great deal of metaphysical nonsense, based on conjecture and speculation, is put forward by the Christians in support of their claim, yet they themselves do not understand the doctrine of divinity of Jesus, which they take as true without examination or proof. Moreover, there is no consensus among their theologians. The most popular belief is triune, three in one, or a trinity in unity-God is a spiritual organism, having living components which can be called organs only so long as they remain united and interrelated to each other in the whole, therefore, God is one but has components which perform separate functions. Jesus has a mysterious double nature which makes him a member of the trinity. The idea of trinity or the doctrine of divinity of Jesus was not given by prophet Isa. Please refer to the quotations of the Old and the New Testaments given in the commentary of verse 255 of al Baqarah.

All organisms are finite. To function in a harmonious whole the components must be interdependent. There must be an omnipotent will or a primal cause to keep the diverse components together, without being disunited, in order to let them work in harmony. The primal cause is God. None of the components or their whole can be God because they obey and follow the will of the primal cause.

Hayy, the everliving, is He who knows and acts freely without any limitations. Any organism whose components are finite and dependent cannot be an everliving infinite.

Qayyum, the self-subsisting, (a magnified form of the adjective *qayam*-standing and enduring) is He who stands (subsists) by Himself and all other stand (are subsisted) by His eternal endurance.

Anything, composed of components with separate functions, is governed by the law of cause and effect; and that which needs reason or cause to be effective or sufficient cannot be self-subsisting,

"Allah is the self-subsisting" means that to be effective or sufficient He does not need a reason or cause because He Himself is the prime cause. Now it becomes clear that the hypothesis of the scholars and the theologians of the Christian church not only fail to convince the seekers of truth but also create chaos and confusion.

{نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ} 3

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:3]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Tawrat, Injil and the books, mentioned here and in other verses of the Quran, refer to that which was revealed to Musa, Isa and other prophets. Tawrat (the revealed will of Allah) was revealed to Musa. In Hebrew it means light. But the Old Testament is a collection of several other books in addition to the Pentateuch. The four gospels of the New Testament are not the Injil revealed to prophet Isa. These gospels contain only some extracts of the sayings of Isa, and narrate his activities in Galilee, Jerusalem and other habitations of the Jews. The Christian Bible is a book of traditions like the books of traditions written by Muslim, Bukhari and other writers of traditions. These four gospels were written by the followers of Jesus, whom the Christian church proclaims as the apostles. In fact the teaching of Jesus is the gospel, which means glad tidings or good news, because the advent of the last prophet of Allah,

the Holy Prophet, was foretold by him, as mentioned in John 14: 16, 17; and 15: 26; and 16: 7 to 13 (see commentary of verse 40 of al Baqarah). The Old and the New Testaments, known as the Bible, is an edited edition of the corrupted and distorted Jewish scripts, prepared to give currency to the doctrine of trinity.

It is mentioned in Mark 1: 15 that Jesus asked his disciples to believe in the gospel and preach it to the children of Israel. The gospel referred to by Isa was the Injil, original text of which is not available. On account of theological considerations adhered to by the first council of Venice, the four gospels, written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; are said to be authentic, otherwise there is no historical evidence to support this claim. There were other gospels written by some other disciples but they are treated as apocryphal (spurious) and non-canonic.

The Quran is the only uncorrupted book of Allah, containing the true word of Allah in its original purity, revealed to the Holy Prophet, who pronounced it as it was revealed to him, recorded then and there, preserved, never tampered with, and transferred to generation after generation.

Falsehood cannot come near it from before it nor from behind it. (It is) a revelation from the all-wise, the most praised. (Ha Mim: 42)

For *kitab* see commentary of verse 2 of al Baqarah.

Bil haqq means (with) truth, certainty, reason, justice and proof, in contrast to the false notions and fabricated dogmas of the other corrupted religions and creeds.

Musaddiqan means the Quran verifies and confirms the preachings of the earlier prophets about the unity of Allah and His demand from man to do good and adopt righteousness.

Furqan means that which teaches us to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood. It also means salvation. It is another name of the Quran.

{ مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَأَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انتِقَامٍ } 4

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:4]

Those who disbelieve in Allah's signs shall be severely punished. The verses of the Quran are His signs. Signs also refer to the miracles the messengers of Allah and His chosen representatives (the Ahlul Bayt) put into operation under His command and guidance, for which readers are requested to refer to the commentary of verses 50, 56, 60, 65 and 243 of al Baqarah.

{ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ شَيْءٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فِي السَّمَاءِ } 5

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:5]

Allah knows the hidden, the manifest, the seen and the unseen. He is aware of everything and every event in the universe, because He is the creator of all things. Prophet Isa has made it clear in his following statement that he was only a mortal, created by Allah, and not god as the Christian church wrongly claims:

But about the day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, not even the son; only the Father. (Mark 13: 32).

In surah al Nazi-at Allah informs the Holy Prophet that he does not have to explain to the people when the hour will be, because He (Allah) alone knows its term or termination.

{ هُوَ الَّذِي يُصَوِّرُكُمْ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ } 6

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:6]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"As He likes" implies the omnipotence of the divine will. He does what He wills.

A thorough study of the formation and development of the embryo in any specie, brought into being by the particular protoplasm of its member, proves that it is a carefully designed operation. The way in which the parts of an individual, the members of a specie, and all the species are connected with each other, as the components of the universe, provides sufficient proof that the creator, designer and architect of the whole as well as the components is He, the almighty, the all wise, the one self-subsisting (*qayyum*), besides whom there is no god.

Someone asked Tolstoy:

"Do you see the hand of God (a miracle) in the birth of Christ?"

He replied:

"I see the hand of God in the birth of every child."

The hand of God is visible in the working of the whole universe. He is the first, the everlasting, the apparent, the hidden.

Although ordinarily the laws enforced by the will of Allah keep the creation in operation, yet He is not unable to manifest the extraordinary, which the ignorant or the pseudo intellectuals deny, because He has power over all things and He does what He wills. Reproduction by means of an unfertilised ovum is common in insects and bees. If the author of the nature so wills, He can make use of this process in a human being also. So He created Isa without a father. This verse is an introduction to the birth of Isa, narrated in the subsequent verses.

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخْرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ طَفَّأَمَا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:7]

As explained in the commentary of verse 2 of al Baqarah the Quran was revealed to the Holy Prophet. He knew the true meaning of every verse, or after him, it was Ali who claimed that he knew when, why and for whom every verse of the Quran was revealed.

Most of the verses of the Quran are clear and decisive. There is no ambiguity in them. They are known as the *muhkamat*. They relate to the fundamentals of the faith, such as the oneness of Allah, the directions pertaining to the practice of the faith and the laws governing the day to day life of the faithful. They can neither be changed nor modified. Any man of average intelligence can understand and follow them.

The *mutashabihat* are the verses which have been composed in subtle and profound diction and style. They carry implications other than the literal meanings, and therefore, are capable of giving different significations, like "The hand of Allah is on their hands" in verse 10 of al Fat-h. Verse 1 of al Hud says that the Quran is a book of clear and decisive verses. Verse 23 of al Zumar says that Allah has sent down the very best discourse as a book conformable in its repetition and consimilarity. Only the men of understanding who possess a higher level of intelligence contemplate and find out the meaningful implications of such verses. Average and ordinary minds cannot figure out or have knowledge of the real purport of such verses, and if they try this on their own, they are bewildered and go astray. As mentioned in the commentary of verse 1 of al Baqarah, the *huruf muqatta-at* are also meaningful but their subtle and profound meanings are known to Allah and His chosen representatives (Muhammad and ali Muhammad) only. Therefore, those who know the true purport of these symbolic letters occupy the highest position in the domain of knowledge and wisdom. In the well-known tradition of *thaqalayn* the Holy Prophet has clearly made known the fact that whoso remains attached with the Quran and his Ahl ul Bayt, after his departure from this world, will never go astray, because these two weighty authorities will never be separated from each other, and joined together, they shall meet the Holy Prophet at the spring of Kawthar; and "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate", said the Holy Prophet in order to guide the faithfuls so that, to have knowledge of the Quran, they must refer to Ali and his Ahl ul Bayt, who alone know the true meanings of the *mutashabihat*.

Zaygh means disease, perversity, evil, and wicked intention, the inclination to go against the truth and to blunder, revolt and go astray. *Fitna* means to create mischief, or to create difference of opinion and to mislead.

"None knows its interpretation except Allah and those (who are) firmly rooted in knowledge", renders null and void all attempts made by scholars to discover the true meanings of the *mutashabihat*. The firmly rooted in knowledge are those whom Allah Himself gives the knowledge, as verse 49 of al Ankabut says: But it is clear revelations in the hearts of those who have been given knowledge. Therefore, the observation of the Ahmadi commentator that reading various passages in the light of each discover the true significance of ambiguous passages, is based upon his inclination to go out of the right course. The Christians also try in vain to assign divinity to Isa by calculating the numerical value of the *haruf muqatta-at*, and misinterpret the complex verses to suit their dubious theories.

How the complex verses can be interpreted is not mentioned in this verse, nor anywhere in the Quran, but it is clearly disclosed that besides Allah only those, endowed with divine knowledge, know the true meanings of the *mutashabihat*. The firmly rooted in knowledge are the Holy Prophet

and his Ahl ul Bayt, the thoroughly purified ones (Ahzab: 33), who possess the desired purity of heart and soul, essential for receiving and holding the truth in order to use it (Waqi-ah: 77 to 79) to do good to themselves and to others. It is obvious that there is no conceivable necessity of revealing complex verses or letter symbols if even the Holy Prophet, to whom the Quran was revealed, did not know their meanings. It is only a hypothetical inquiry, otherwise there is the clear mention of *rasikhuna fil ilm* (the firmly rooted in knowledge) in this verse, the first among whom is the Holy Prophet, and after him, as said earlier, his Ahlul Bayt are the custodians of his knowledge and wisdom, who alone are entitled to interpret every word of the Quran.

In reply to Anas bin Malik's query about *rasikhuna fil ilm* the Holy Prophet said:

"They are those whose hands do not do aught but that which is just, righteous and good; whose tongues do not utter aught but that which is true; whose hearts and minds are enlightened and rational; whose stomachs are free from that which is forbidden."

The *ayah al tat-hir* (Ahzab: 33) confirms that only the thoroughly purified Muhammad and Ali Muhammad are the *rasikhuna fil ilm*. Verse 13 of Luqman says that polytheism (*shirk*) is the most grievous inequity, the worst type of impurity. It is a historical fact that all the companions of the Holy Prophet, before embracing Islam, for a long time in their lives, were idolworshippers. The Holy Prophet, Bibi Fatimah and Ali ibna abi Talib and their children were the only ones who were free from the impurity of polytheism right from the day they were born. All Muslims, in every age, add *karamallahu wajhu* (Allah graced and honoured his face above others) after the name of Ali, because he never worshipped any *ghayrallah* (other than Allah). The Holy Prophet pointed out the essential purity of body and soul in Ali, equal to his own purity, when he said:

"O Ali! Your flesh is my flesh, your blood is my blood. You and I are from one and the same divine light"

Verses 18 of Ali Imran, 162 of al Nisa, 49 of Ankabut, and 11 of al Mujadalah refer to those who have been divinely endowed with knowledge.

As ordinary human beings are unable to know the meanings of the *mutashabihat*, the divine mercy guides the sincere seekers of the truth to turn to the *ahladh dhikr*, the Holy Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt (see commentary of verse 43 of al Nahl and verse 7 of al Anbiya):

"So ask the people of *dhikr* (the reminder or the Quran) if you do not know."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Nothing in the earth or in the heavens is hidden from Allah, the self-subsisting, because He is the author of the book of creation (the development of the embryo has been mentioned in the previous verse as an example). In this verse He says that the author of the book of creation is also the author of the book of legislation (the Quran).

The book of creation (the universe) contains miscellaneous signs. Some are clear. Some are intricate and perplexing. For example (in the book of creation) the function and the significance of every part of the human structure has been studied and defined except the "appendix". Now a rational student of the book of creation will say:

"As no part is without some significance, this also must have some meaning, though I have not yet understood it."

On the contrary a mischief-maker will mix up that which is known with that which is not known and deny both by saying:

"As no reason or significance is found in this part, therefore, there is no reason or significance in the whole."

Likewise in the book of legislation, some signs (verses) are clear and decisive (*muhkam*), and some have several possible meanings (*mutashabih*), therefore, the rational mind will try to understand the *mutashabih* (unclear) verses in the light of the *muhkam* (clear and decisive) verses, by proceeding from the known to the unknown or from the concrete to the abstract; but the perverse mind will judge that which is certainly precise and definite in the light of the complex so as to mislead people by dubious misinterpretations.

Verse 1 of al Hud says that all the verses of the book are well arranged and firmly established. The arrangement of the words in the verses and the verses in the surahs is so accurate and proper that they all form a consistent unity, though they were separately revealed. It implies that the Quran was already arranged and established before its revelation, which is confirmed by verse 105 of Bani Israil. In verse 23 of al Zumar, the book is presented as consistent, consimilar and conformable in its parts (*mutashabihan*). But in this verse *mutashabihat* refers to the meanings, the implications, the connotations and the denotations of the complex passages.

Muhtam (clear) and *mutashabih* (complex) are relative terms. What is unclear to some may be apparent and definite to others. There may be quite a few features and viewpoints inherent in certain ideas, or commands, or narrations. Studying them from a particular angle will make their meaning and purpose crystal clear but their clarity may turn into obscurity when they are viewed from another standpoint. At all events, the complex should be examined and interpreted in the light of that which is clear and decisive, or as explained by the Holy Prophet, or by those whose authority has been established by the Holy Prophet and the Quran (see pages 1 to 7, commentary of verses 6 and 7 of al Fatihah, and verses 2, 30 to 37 and 124 of al Baqarah). In the light of verses 16 to 19 of al Qiyamah, the divine agency collects, recites and interprets the Quran. As the book is a guidance for mankind, there should be no unintelligible or incomprehensible passage in it. There is none. As asserted by the Ahlul Bayt, *rasikhuna fil ilm* is conjuncted with Allah and *yaquluna* is an adverbial clause qualifying the state of knowledge, referring to *rasikhun*. In the Nahj al Balagha, Ali ibna abi Talib says that the *rasikhuna fil ilm* believe in the unknown in the light of the known. As explained in the commentary of verse 3 of al Baqarah the knowledge of the *ghayb* (unknown) is with the infinite, therefore, the awareness of the finite created beings, even if they are endowed with the divine insight, cannot be at par with the absolute wisdom of the *ghayb ul mutlaq*, the *hayyul qayyum* creator. All that which becomes (in obedience) effective, as soon as He wills, is knowable to man. A finite being can know as much as the infinite all-wise likes him to know and grow in knowledge, which implies that basically his knowledge was insufficient but he rises towards the level of perfection, with the help of divine endowment, on his own merits, to become aware of the meanings of all that which has been revealed in the book, because, if it is not so, such revelations (*mutashabihat*) would be unprofitable and frustrating. So what Imam Ali ibna abi Talib and Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir have said in this connection is true.

{ رَبَّنَا لَا تُرِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:8]

This is a prayer of the *rasikhuna fil ilm*, a precaution to avoid possible perversion of the mind and the heart, even after receiving the guidance. They pray for Allah's mercy on the day of judgement. The aim and purpose of their lives in the world, a temporary and transient stay, is to make preparation for the eternal life of the hereafter.

{ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ جَامِعُ النَّاسِ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ } 9

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:9] (see commentary for verse 8)

{ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِي عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَأُولَئِكَ هُمْ وَقُودُ النَّارِ } 10

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:10]

This verse and the next two verses, 11 and 12, contain a clear prophecy of the defeat of the Holy Prophet's enemies. After their defeat in the battle of Badr, the Quraysh of Makka began to make highly organised preparations to exterminate the unarmed Muslims, who were not only very few in number but also were surrounded by potential enemies from all sides, and were also exposed to the subversive activities of the hypocrites right in their midst. It was the plan of the pagans to put an end to the new religion of Islam which was uprooting their ignorant and idolatrous life. The Muslims were living under a state of siege, therefore, they were asked to retain their arms while praying (Nisa: 102). Under such adverse circumstances, the almighty Lord inspired the Holy Prophet to make a bold and definite prophecy of the victory of a poorly equipped and helpless few over the vast financial resourcefulness and proven military skill of the allied multitude.

{ كَذَّابِ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ كَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا فَأَخَذَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ } 11

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:11]

Dab means "like the case of" or "wont", but in this verse it points out the resolute efforts the Quraysh were making to take revenge from the Holy Prophet and his few followers. Abu Sufyan, the father of Mu-awiyah and grandfather of Yazid, the chief of the branch of Ummiyah, a zealous votary of the idols, a mortal foe of the Holy Prophet and his Ahlul Bayt, the leader of all the pagan clans of Makka, induced the Jewish and the Christian tribes to take up arms against the small group of Muslims.

{ قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا سَتُغْلَبُونَ وَتُحْشَرُونَ إِلَىٰ جَهَنَّمَ وَبِئْسَ الْمِهَادُ } 12

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:12]

The decisive victory at Badr gave notice of danger to the Jews of Bani Qaniqa who lived in the suburbs of Madina. They wanted to throttle the growing power of the Muslims. They sent a delegation, headed by Kab ibna Ashraf, to Makka to add fuel to the fire of revenge burning in the hearts of the Quraysh and to assure them with their out and out support for the total annihilation of the Muslims. Abu Sufyan went to Madina to enlist the support of the hypocrites who could play a very important role in the overall scheme, hatched against the Muslims, because they were in close contact with the Jews. They had embraced Islam to enjoy the privileges given to the early converts, otherwise at heart they were infidels. They readily joined hands with the intriguer-in-chief, Abu Sufyan, in the house of Salam ibna Mishkan. To revive the old hostilities between the Aus and the Khazraj tribes of Ansars, who had agreed to live in peace after coming into the fold of Islam, was the first objective of the unholy alliance. They took the first step but the Holy Prophet immediately nipped the mischief in the bud. When verse 149 of Ali Imran was revealed the two tribes listened to the Holy Prophet's counsel and remained united.

According to the plan, the Jews began to intimidate the unarmed Muslim men and Muslim women. A typical incident is narrated in the books of history that at a Jew's shop, when a bystander Jew cut

off the garment of a Muslim woman, all the Jew spectators laughed at her nakedness. The Holy Prophet came and warned the Jews by reciting this verse. The Jews lost their temper, announced annulment of the treaty they had made with the Holy Prophet, and avowed to prove their strength in the battlefield. At once their forts were besieged. Neither the pagans of Makka, nor their allies (Bani Nadhir and Bani Qurayza), nor the hypocrites could rescue them. Abdullah ibna Obay tried to negotiate a settlement on their behalf. Ultimately the Holy Prophet agreed to set them free on the condition that they should migrate to some far away place. They were allowed to take all their possessions with them. The Holy Prophet had to take such steps to forestall hostile actions against the believers.

قَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ آيَةٌ فِي فِئَتَيْنِ الْتَقَتَا فِئَةٌ تُقَاتِلُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَأُخْرَى كَافِرَةٌ يَرَوْنَهُمْ مِثْلَيْهِمْ رَأْيَ الْعَيْنِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُؤَيِّدُ بِنَصَرِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِّأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ {13}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:13]

In the battle of Badr 313 Muslims were set to fight 1000 pagans, more than threefold their number, but by Allah's will, the army of the believers, fighting in the way of Allah saw the disbelieving host as twice their number, as has been made known to them in verses 44 and 66 of al Anfal.

The battle of Badr was indeed a turning point in the mission of the Holy Prophet. It was a decisive victory. The slain on the enemy's side included many of his most influential opponents. Who made this promised victory possible? Ibna Kathir has written that on the day of the battle of Badr, the Holy Prophet gave the standard to his twenty years old brother, Ali ibna abi Talib. Tabari and other historians have said that Ali and Hamza were the only two warriors who not only killed the well-known warriors of the enemy in single combats but also destroyed the enemy's fighting force beyond recovery. For details, study the books of history, in which are also mentioned the names of those who conveniently kept themselves aloof from the fighting on this critical day, described as a sign of Allah, but, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, became rulers to deflect and depart from the true purpose of the religion of Allah.

رُزِيَ لِلنَّاسِ حُبُّ الشَّهَوَاتِ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ وَالْبَنِينَ وَالْقَنَاطِيرِ الْمُقَنْطَرَةِ مِنَ الذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ وَالْخَيْلِ الْمُسَوَّمَةِ وَالْأَنْعَامِ وَالْحَرْثِ ۗ ذَلِكَ مَتَاعُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ حُسْنُ الْمَآبِ {14}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:14]

To understand this verse in its true perspective, the meaning of the phrase "love or desire of the lust of earthly pleasures" should be grasped in the light of the teachings of Islam. As Islam does not subscribe to asceticism, lawful use of essential things has not been referred to here. *Hubbush shahawati* means extreme, reckless and infatuated appetite or passion to own and enjoy things for the sake of possession and enjoyment. Islam teaches man not to get irrationally involved even with lawful possessions. A true believer receives good things lawfully as due return for his labour or services but keeps them in trust with himself, to be distributed as and when commanded by Allah. He is always ready to part with them because he does not attach himself to them in the sense of *hubbush shahawati*. Being a man he is allowed to desire happiness and satisfaction but is required to keep his feelings and emotions in check to attain moral and spiritual refinement which, in return, enables him to make an offering of his means of satisfaction to the service of the Lord. It is more trying and demanding to control passions than not to have them at all. Total suppression of feelings and desires and mortification of the flesh betrays an escapist tendency to avoid test and trial.

You shall not attain to righteousness until you spend (in the way of Allah) of what you love. (Ali Imran: 92)

The best example of having good things (property, wives, children, relatives, friends, honour and fame) yet staying detached so as to sacrifice all of them in the way of Allah is found in Karbala. Imam Husayn willingly made an offering of all that which he had to his Lord.

He has created life and death that He may try you (to prove) which of you is best in conduct; (Mulk: 2)

Man has been endowed with life to be tried. In like manner he is tried and tested with family, wealth and other possessions.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

There is an unchanging conflict between the empty and perishable sensuous pleasures and the lasting intellectual and spiritual delight and bliss.

قُلْ أُوْنِبْتُكُمْ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْ دَلِكُمْ ۖ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَأَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَرِضْوَانٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بَصِيرٌ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝ 15

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:15]

The life of the hereafter, after death, is a continuation of the life of the world. It is a state of spiritual bliss for those who have made, here, sincere efforts to safeguard themselves with full awareness Allah's laws-guarding against the evil of transgressing the boundaries of *shari-ah* known as piety, which earns as due recompense, corresponding blessings, to its actual degree of application in the life of this world. The life of the pious in the spiritual realm either ascends or stays stationary, but never droops. Piety trains the soul to ascend towards perfection in the hereafter.

The gardens, the rivers and the purified spouses, promised in this verse, are the minimum recompense that will be made available to the pious, but Allah's pleasure, the most supreme bliss conceivable, is the ultimate destination of the ascension of the human soul for spiritual perfection.

{الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا إِنَّنَا أَمْنَا فَأَغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَنَنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝ 16}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:16]

It is a prayer to prepare for the life of the hereafter. It is essential to make sincere efforts to purify and refine the soul, and in addition one must feel the pain of conscience for not attaching oneself to those who have earned Allah's pleasure- the blessed and beloved friends of Allah.

{الصَّابِرِينَ وَالصَّادِقِينَ وَالْقَانِتِينَ وَالْمُنْفِقِينَ وَالْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ بِالْأَسْحَارِ ۝ 17}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:17]

The patient, the truthful, the devout and those who spend in the way of Allah are entitled to receive the grace of Allah. Also the effectiveness of prayer at early dawn to seek forgiveness has been emphasised in this verse.

{شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُو الْعِلْمِ قَائِمًا بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝ 18}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:18]

Allah himself bears witness to His own unity. It is His infinite mercy that He makes known His

self-subsisting and everliving existence (*wajib ul wujud*) to His created beings who, otherwise, could never know anything about Him. See commentary of verse 255 of al Baqarah. The finite created beings can only say that there is no god save Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In this verse *shahadat* (bearing witness) has been restricted to Allah, the angels and those endowed with (divine) knowledge, although in many other verses it is stated that every being in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah and bears witness to His unity (*tawhid*). The restriction is justified because, in this verse, *shahadat* has been used in the sense of a particular knowledge which contains perceptual insight to realise the truth of His *tawhid* Allah directly knows that "there is no god save He", because He is the known, the knowing and the knower. Those who have attained the perceptual insight of the realisation of truth, by complete mental absorption of the absolute, possess the same quality of knowledge. Whoever reaches this stage naturally becomes entitled to bear witness over His creation. In the Quran such witnesses have been described as *shuhada*. In verses 41 of al-Nisa and 89 of al Nahl, Allah says that He will call the Holy Prophet as witness over other witnesses.

For *ulul ilm* (those endowed with divine knowledge) see commentary of *rasikhuna fil ilm* in verse 7 of this surah.

Qa-iman bil qist means that Allah is the vigilant, enduring and (ever) lasting upholder and maintainer of justice.

Any unjust being, or any being with an iota of iniquity, can never be God, because if arbitrariness had been applied as a primary force to effect and control the universe, no law, physical as well as social, devoid of reason and equity, would be valid and operative. In that case, God could not have an essential existence to be proved by reason, but a contingency that might or might not exist. So it is an imperative fact that absolute justice is ingrained and implanted in the activity of the active factor. Absolute justice, by itself, is one of the aspects of the infinite mercy of the almighty Lord, which regulates and manages His kingdom, the whole universe. It is essentially evident in His every will and act.

He has prescribed for Himself mercy, (An-am: 12)

Justice is one of the 5 fundamental doctrines of Islam-Original, Shi-ism. It distinguishes Shi-ism from other schools of thought. The 5 roots of the faith (*usul al din*) are given below:

(1) Tawhid: There is no god save Allah.

(2) Adl: Allah is all-just.

(3) Risalat: The prophets or messengers of Allah, appointed by Him, were truthful, holy and infallible. The last messenger of Allah, the seal of prophethood, is Muhammad al Mustafa.

(4) Imamah: After the Holy Prophet, the office of the prophethood was terminated, but the divine guidance continued, for which Allah appointed the twelve Imams in the progeny of the Holy Prophet.

(5) Qiyamat: The day of final judgement.

Faith in Allah's justice is essential. The laws made by Him to operate the universe are precise and decisive. These are bound by rules based upon justice, and are not arbitrarily changed. That is why there is complete harmony in the working of the whole creation, otherwise there would have been chaos and confusion. All Allah's acts are just and right.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

If *qa-iman bil qist* is treated as the adverbial clause qualifying the state of *ulul ilm* (those endowed

with knowledge), then grammatically it should have been in plural, therefore, it is true that it qualifies the state of the divine unity. It lays stress on the interrelation between the unity of His essence and His justice, which, as His all embracing attribute, defines and determines His action, and reflects itself in all His attributes. The source of all the attributes manifesting in His justice is the unity of His essence. According to the Holy Prophet the structure of the whole universe stands on the foundation of His justice. So none can perceive Him and His unity unless one upholds and maintains justice. Justice is with unity and unity is with justice. They are correlative and inseparable. Islam teaches us that all excellences flow from the sublime source of justice and all vices proceed from the base root of injustice-see Nisa: 135; Ma-idah: 8; and Hadid :25.

In verse 7 of this surah the Quran refers to the decisive verses (*muhkamat*) as the essence of the book, in the light of which all the other complex verses (*mutashabihat*) should be interpreted. In view of the interrelation between the unity of His essence and His justice, all the verses in His book of creation and in His book of legislation should be interpreted in a manner which must always be in harmony with the unity of His essence and His justice. The logical method, prescribed by the Quran, is to proceed from the known to the unknown. As the whole universe stands on the basis of the unity and justice of the absolute, it is essential to prescribe justice (*adl*) as the second article of faith, immediately after *tawhid*, the first article of faith.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْغِيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ
الْحِسَابِ {19}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:19]

Islam means submission or surrender to the will of Allah. The act of submitting his self by the believer to the will of Allah has been mentioned in verse 112 of al Baqarah and verse 22 of Luqman. The Quran also makes it known that the religion of Islam (submission to the will of Allah) was preached by all the messengers of Allah in the language of the people amongst whom they were sent by Him. Islam is also the natural religion of every human being.

The nature (caused by) Allah, in which He has created man. (Rum: 30)

The Holy Prophet has said:

Every child is born in the mould of nature (Islam). It is the parents who make him (or her) a Jew or a Christian.

Right from the beginning, every messenger of Allah preached Islam, but misunderstanding, bias and hatred among the followers of the prophets corrupted the original message.

Ayat means signs. Every prophet and every *imam* through whom the unity of His essence is proved and made known is His sign. Whoever denies His signs (including the prophets and the *imams*) is a disbeliever.

This verse is also applicable to those who differed after coming into the fold of Islam.

See verses 85 to 87 of this surah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Islam is the only religion of Allah. The differences among the various religions and their sects are due to the tendency of revolt against the truth after it has been made known.

فَإِنْ حَاجُّوكَ فَقُلْ أَسْلَمْتُ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّهِ وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَنِ ۗ وَقُلْ لِلَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ وَالْأُمِّيِّينَ أَسْلَمْتُمْ ۗ فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا ۗ وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا
عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرِ الْعِبَادِ {20}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:20] Allah reveals His will through reason, therefore, when every

evidence, based upon reason, has been established to prove the truth of Islam, every rational human being should discard pride and prejudice and surrender his self (wholly) to Allah. All members of the human society, the Jews and the Christians who have been given the book and those who do not follow any heavenly scripture, will be joined together in one brotherhood, if they see the light of reason and submit to the will of Allah (in other words) by accepting the universal religion of Islam.

"If this be Islam", asks Goethe, "do we not all live in Islam?"

"Yes", answers Carlyle, "all of us that have any moral life, we all live so."

As the Holy Prophet has observed, Islam is the natural religion that a child, left to itself, would develop.

Islam is the religion of common-sense. The Holy Prophet delivered the message and preached it, but he is not responsible if the people, even after being rightly guided, go astray.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ النَّبِيِّينَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ مِنَ النَّاسِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ } 21

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:21]

The consistent rebellious attitude of the Jews towards the prophets of Allah and the righteous who enjoin justice (verse 18 of this surah) is referred to in this verse. Please refer to Matthew 23: 30, 34, 35 in the commentary of verse 61 of al Baqarah. The Jewish plan to kill the Holy Prophet is also inferred through this verse.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The three categories of the rebels, mentioned in this verse, are given below:

(1) Those who disbelieve in the signs of Allah.

(2) Those who slay and persecute the advocates and enjoiners of justice, the holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt, the successors of the Holy Prophet.

{أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ } 22

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:22]

It is a prophetic declaration as well as an admonition that the schemes of the rebels, described in verse 21 of this surah, will come to naught in this world, and on the day of requital no one will save them from the eternal punishment.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Good deeds done by a believer will be rewarded in full, but the good deeds of the above noted rebels, if there be any, shall go to waste. The crimes, listed in the preceding verse as 1, 2 and 3, are so interrelated that one leads to the other, as pointed out in verse 10 of al Rum, which was appropriately quoted by Bibi Zaynab binta Ali in her reply to Yazid when he said, after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, that Muhammad played a game to establish a Hashemite kingdom, otherwise neither any revelation was revealed, nor any angel came to him.

The evil was the consequence (end) to those who wrought (dealt in) evil, because they denied the signs (revelations) of Allah and made fun of them. (Rum: 10)

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيحًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ يُدْعَوْنَ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ لِيَحْكَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ يُتَوَلَّى فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ وَهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ} 23

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:23]

The Tawrat and the Injil are only a portion of revelation, a glimpse of the glory of the truth. A portion of the book, Allah's revealed books in general, was sent down, in all ages, to prepare and train the human soul for the highest level of intelligence and spirituality, at which stage the completed and perfect revelation, the Quran, was revealed to the Holy Prophet, referred to as the book of Allah in this verse.

Prophet Isa had also informed the people that there was still much that he could say to the people, but the burden would be too great for them then. He also added: "When he comes who is the spirit of truth, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but will tell only what he hears; and he will make known to you the things that are coming." See John 16: 12 and 13.

It is reported that in the early days of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet, a married man of large means was caught while committing adultery with a woman. The Jewish priests did not want to punish them by stoning to death as prescribed in the law of Musa. Presuming that the Holy Prophet did not know their scripture, they referred the case to him so that the culprits could avoid the punishment by his misjudgement. The Holy Prophet announced the correct judgement in the light of the Tawrat but the Jews persisted that it was not in their book. The Holy Prophet asked them to bring their own distorted edition of the Tawrat. Even in their corrupted version Leviticus 20: 10 to 21 confirmed the decree pronounced by the Holy Prophet. Yet they did not agree and arrogantly persisted in their point of view.

In John 8: 4 to 7 it is stated that an adulteress should be stoned according to the law of Moses but Jesus had said: Let he who has not sinned stone her. This is a clear example of unauthorised addition because Isa himself announced: Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to complete. I tell you this: so long as heaven and earth endure, not a letter, not a stroke, will disappear from the law until all that must happen has happened. (Matthew 5: 17, 18).

And Musa has said: You shall keep all my rules and my laws and carry them out. (Leviticus 20 : 22).

According to their books Isa could not amend the law of Musa. Holy Quran says that Isa had the authority to amend the law of Musa (see verses 50 and 51 of this surah), but he did not change this law because verse 2 of al Nur confirms it.

The adulterer and the adulteress-scourge you each of them (with) a hundred stripes.

It is related in Safi that once the Holy Prophet went to a school of the Jews. In reply to their question he said that he followed the religion of Ibrahim. "But Ibrahim was a Jew", said the Jews. Then the Holy Prophet asked them to refer to their book, which though profusely tampered with, yet contains various passages about the faith of Ibrahim and other prophets and also information about the advent of the Holy Prophet.

{ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَنْ نَمَسَّنَا النَّارَ إِلَّا أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ وَوَعَّرَهُمْ فِي دِينِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ} 24

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:24]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The arrogant persistence to follow their own opinion, based upon conjecture, in the application of divine laws, created a rebellious tendency in the people of the book, which encouraged them to

presume that ultimate salvation is obtainable only by mere (what is said and nothing else) declaration of the faith, and if there is punishment for misdeeds and wrongdoing, it would be only for a certain number of days. As mentioned in verse 22 of this surah, there shall be no helper for them on the day of reckoning.

{فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جَمَعْنَاهُمْ لِيَوْمٍ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ وَوُفِّيَتْ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ} 25

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:25]

Every soul shall be paid in full that which it has earned in the life of this world, therefore, the true believers cannot be condemned to hell for ever, because the reward of true belief is not eternal punishment. As mentioned in verse 21 of this surah, a true believer does not slay the prophets, nor persecutes and murders those who enjoin justice (the Ahl ul Bayt). Those who believe and follow the 5 roots of religion (*usul al din*) are the true believers. A true believer may be punished for his sins, before he receives the reward owing to his true belief, which is promised in this verse. It is reasonable to conclude that punishment precedes reward. Only the disbelievers, murderers and persecutors of the prophets and of those who enjoin justice (the Ahl ul Bayt) will be condemned to hell for ever.

قُلِ اللَّهُمَّ مَالِكِ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُعِزُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتُذِلُّ مَنْ تَشَاءُ ۗ بِيَدِكَ الْخَيْرُ ۗ إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ} 26

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:26]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Sovereignty belongs to Allah; He is the sole and the ultimate authority in the domains of creation and legislation. Every thing submits to the authority of the master of the universe, the absolute sovereign, because all things in the universe have been created by Him, and therefore, Islam, the only religion of Allah and the only means of salvation, stands for total submission to Allah's will-a truism candidly summed up in these verses in the form of a prayer. The Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt have rightly advised the faithfuls to recite this prayer at all occasions, so that the conviction in the omnipotence of the almighty permeates their hearts and minds to guide them in all their mental and physical activities. A complete resignation to Allah's will is possible only when man believes that it is Allah who alone can do and undo things, conceivable and inconceivable, easy and difficult. Then the grace of the merciful Lord abounds, because in His hand is all good. He is the absolute sovereign. None has any right or claim upon Allah. He bestows His bounties on whomsoever He likes. There should be no complaint, nor grudge, nor frustration. With total resignation to His will, man must pray and invoke His mercy to obtain fulfilment of his legitimate wants and needs. Ibna Abbas says that these verses contain the *ism al azam*, the greatest name of Allah, therefore, its recitation for obtaining fulfilment of desires brings positive results, provided that in thoughts and deeds the supplicant wholeheartedly relies upon Allah's omnipotence and judgement, and remains thankful in all events and under all circumstances. Nothing is impossible for Him.

An usurper or a tyrant, by actual control of the machinery of government, may become a defacto ruler. The Nimruds and the Fir-awns were defacto rulers. They also claimed divinity. A large number of people accepted them as gods, but none of them was a de jure God. The theoreticians, in the employment of the usurpers and tyrants, try to misguide the people by arguing that a de facto wielder of power is also a de jure ruler. It is a fact that there are some chosen representatives of Allah who, by right, are entitled to exercise the authority, given to them by Allah Himself, which they do as the de

jure authorities (Baqarah: 247; Nisa: 54, Munafiqun: 8), although the defacto kingdom may be in the hands of others who are rightly described as usurpers in the political thought of true and original Islam.

Yazid bin Mu-awiyah, the de facto ruler, argued with the Ahl ul Bayt by quoting this verse that he was also the de jure authority. Bibi Zaynab binta Ali proved his deceitful claim false by showing the inherent weakness in the theory of fatalism. In her analytical, objective, and rational discourse she quoted verse 178 of Ali Imran and verse 10 of al Rum to establish the fact that those who disbelieve, imagine that the rein Allah gives them does good to them, whereas, truly Allah gives them rein that they may grow in sinfulness, for which there is a disgraceful punishment for them, because evil is the consequence to those who deal in evil by denying the signs of Allah and making a mockery of them.

The chosen representatives of Allah, His signs, are the real authorities to administer God's kingdom, because of their total submission to Allah's will (Baqarah: 247; Nisa: 54 and Munafiqun: 8). To enable the true faithfuls to identify the rightful inheritors of God's kingdom, an extract from the prayer of Imam Ali bin Husayn al Zaynal Abidin is given below:

O my Allah, this office (administration of the God's kingdom) belongs to the leaders appointed by Thee, Thy chosen friends, because it was founded and preserved for Thy fearless trustees, who have been particularly elected to execute this highest function, but Thy representatives have been wronged by the usurpers, every trick is used to harass them and to snatch from them their rights, again and again intimidated and exposed to dangers. Thy book has been thrown to the winds, commandments made obligatory by Thee have been falsified and put out of context, and Thy prophet's way of life has been discontinued and discarded. Why? Thou knows best.

(Du-a al Jumu-ah-Sahifa al Kamilah)

If the theory of might is right is accepted then usurpation will have no meaning at all.

تُولِجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَتُولِجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ ۖ وَتُخْرِجُ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَمِيتِ وَتُخْرِجُ الْمَمِيتَ مِنَ الْحَيِّ ۖ وَتَرزُقُ مَنْ تَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ
حِسَابٍ {27}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:27] (see commentary for verse 26)

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِي شَيْءٍ إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَّقُوا مِنْهُمْ تُقَاةً ۗ وَيُحَذِّرْكُمْ اللَّهُ
نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ الْمَصِيرُ {28}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:28]

The polytheists who worship false deities stand opposite to those who believe in one true God. There cannot be any friendship between them because friendship is built upon the foundation of mutual love. Love is a very active force. Love between two individuals, more often than not, exercises impending influence upon each other's habits, thoughts and feelings. Due to this active phenomenon in human nature, *tawallah*, love of the Ahl ul Bayt (Shura: 23), has been prescribed as one of the fundamentals of original Islam- Shi-ism, because he who loves the Ahl ul Bayt will accept their teachings, follow their guidance, and reflect their qualities in his character. In the case of friendship between a monotheist and a polytheist, the strict monotheist, under a state of attachment and love, may lose his sense of reasoning and begin to like idolatry, and in the end become a practising idol-worshipper. Therefore the believers have been warned not to take the unbelievers as friends.

Awliya is the plural of *wali* which implies nearness, proximity, contiguity, therefore, it can be used for any of the following: friend, beloved, helper, protector, patron, administrator and master.

In a multilateral political and economic structure the believers are allowed to deal with them as human beings and live in harmony with them in day to day life. Only love or attachment has been

prohibited. The provision of "except when, fearing a danger from them, you (have to) guard yourselves against them" is a very important guideline in this verse. If there is a genuine danger to life, permission is given to make a show of friendship with the adversary, remaining faithful to the true faith at heart. To guard oneself against an unprovoked danger to life in a helpless situation, or to avoid dishonour and ostracism, is known as *taqiyah* in the Shi-a school of thought, prescribed strictly in the light of this verse, because Allah does not want to make less the number of His true believers if there is no occasion or need of their lives to be sacrificed to further His cause and mission. They are allowed to live and serve Him in secret.

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq (according to a Sunni tradition) is reported to have said that "Allah warns you to beware of Him" implies "Allah knows all that which is in the heart, and He wants to see only His love in the hearts, therefore, He warns the people not to allow anything except His love to take possession of their hearts."

Heart is given to man to fill it with the love of God. If love of anything or any person, except love of those enjoined by Allah (Shura: 23), is lodged therein it would be judged as a misappropriation on the day of reckoning.

See Aqa Mahdi Puya's note in verse 31 of this surah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to the doctrine of *taqiyah* under certain circumstances a faithful can make friends with his adversary to save his life and property, otherwise friendship between a believer and an unbeliever is prohibited because it would make the believer drift in the direction of unbelief.

Taqiyah means to hide one's faith to protect one's life and property in the interest of the faith, permissible according to this verse (see books of *fiqh*). *Nifaq* means to pretend to believe what one actually does not believe for worldly gains (Nahl: 106), condemned in the Holy Quran again and again.

Allah's pleasure should be the object of hiding or making known that which is in one's heart.

{قُلْ إِنْ تَخْفُوا مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ أَوْ تُبْدُوهُ يُعَلِّمَهُ اللَّهُ وَيَعْلَمَ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } 29

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:29]

After giving permission of *taqiyah* in the previous verse it is stated in this verse that nothing is hidden from the all-knowing Lord. He knows that which is in the heavens and in the earth, therefore, He is aware of what we hide and what we disclose.

{يَوْمَ تَجِدُ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَّا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ مُحْضَرًا وَمَا عَمِلَتْ مِنْ سُوءٍ تَوَدُّ لَوْ أَنَّ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَمَدًا بَعِيدًا ۗ وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللَّهُ نَفْسَهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ رَءُوفٌ } 30

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:30]

On the day of judgement every soul will be paid back in full what it has earned in this world. Those who safeguard themselves with full awareness of Allah's laws and do good will get back what they have invested here in full on the day of reckoning. Allah is affectionate towards His faithful servants, but those, who are evil doers, will on that day, be in a state of terror. They will wish that there should be an immense distance between them and that evil.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says.

Allah warns man to beware of His retribution. The best and the surest way of becoming His faithful servant so as to deserve His affection is to keep Him in mind and His pleasure (supreme) as the

ultimate purpose of all actions.

{قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ } 31

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:31]

Love of Allah is the basis and essence of Islam. Fear is not the motivating factor, because one who worships Him and obeys His commands out of fear, devoid of love for His grace, comes in the category of idolworshippers who worship the false deities to appease their anger. See the commentary of *rahman and rahim* in surah al Fatihah and know that the heathen syndrome has been destroyed and replaced with love, kindness and compassion by the religion of Allah, Islam. The phrase "God-fearing" actually means guarding oneself against evil with awareness of the boundaries laid down by Allah. Man must refrain from thinking or acting in a way which may hurt the feelings of the beloved whom he intensely loves, reveres and worships.

It is made clear in this verse that he who loves Allah must follow the Holy Prophet. Sincere following of the Holy Prophet in the day to day life is the only proof of the love of Allah, otherwise it is an empty claim. Allah loves the true followers of the Holy Prophet and forgives their sins.

One who loves his beloved also loves those whom his beloved loves, therefore, every sincere follower of Islam (Allah's lover) must love the Holy Prophet and those whom he loves. There are several authentic traditions reported in the books of history written by Muslim scholars, referred to in the commentary of many verses in this book, according to which the Holy Prophet had openly declared his exclusive love for Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn and their children; and in verse 23 of al Shura love of the Ahl ul Bayt has been enjoined on all the true believers. In fact those who do not love the Ahl ul Bayt are not the believers, therefore, the doctrine of *tawalla* is one of the fundamentals of the true faith, Islam original or Shi-ism.

Likewise, in the light of verse 28 of this surah, it is the duty of every Muslim to avoid and dislike the enemies and the allies and friends of the enemies of the Holy Prophet, because a believer cannot be a friend of those who hated and opposed the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt. Therefore, the doctrine of *tabarra* is also one of the fundamentals of the true faith, Shi-ism.

The love of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt makes man follow in their footsteps, which, in fact, is the love of Allah. Those who oppose them and follow their enemies go against Allah and His commandments.

A true lover of Allah becomes a devotee of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, and mindful of the life after death, his true love activates him to always do that which pleases Allah, the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, and refrain from acts of wickedness which certainly displease them; moreover, he remains attached with the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt and refrains from going near their ungodly enemies, be they his own kith and kin.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to An-am: 50;Araf: 203;Yunus: 15; Ahqaf: 9 and Najm: 3 and 4, since the Holy Prophet only followed the divine will, therefore, following in his footsteps is the only proof of the love of Allah, which alone entitles man to receive Allah's love. Any deviation from his word or deed means the deviator not only loses Allah's love but also earns His displeasure.

Ali ibna abi Talib has said:

The words and deeds of the Holy Prophet, from the beginning to the end of his stay in this world, were the truest demonstration of the divine revelations (nothing but a revelation revealed), and I did

not follow any save him.

Therefore, Ali was the beloved of Allah and His prophet because he loved Allah and His prophet.

{قُلْ أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ طَاقِينَ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْكَافِرِينَ } 32

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:32]

The Muslims have been warned in this verse that to disobey or even to show reluctance to obey the Holy Prophet is infidelity.

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ آدَمَ وَنُوحًا وَآلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَآلَ عِمْرَانَ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ } 33

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:33]

In this verse Adam and Nuh are mentioned by their names, whereas Ibrahim and Imran are mentioned with reference to their posterity. *Al* (the posterity) of Adam and Nuh have not been included in the category of the chosen ones, because there were several ungodly and wicked persons in their lineage, but in the *al* (immediate issues) of Ibrahim (Ismail and Is-haq) and Imran (Musa and Harun), holy men of God, were chosen as messengers of Allah.

The mention of Ibrahim and Imran, undisputedly amongst the holiest prophets of Allah, has been made in this verse with reference to their posterity, because according to the religious annotation, in the word *al* the spiritual quality of a posterity automatically includes the immediate ancestor or the founder of a family. *Al* or Ahl ul Bayt, commonly used to address the members of a family, is exclusively reserved, in the religious and spiritual act of referring, for the holiest members of the family of the Holy Prophet who are identical with each other in their personal purity and spiritual sanctity (Ahzab: 33).

The Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt are in the posterity of Ibrahim, therefore, in the light of this verse, they are chosen in preference to all the created beings. They are superior to every human being. (Tafsir Durr al Manthur; and Mawahib al Ladunniya).

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

It has been proved beyond doubt that he who submits to Allah's will (becomes a Muslim) has to love Allah, His Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, then only he will be able to follow the *sunnah* (way of life) of the Holy Prophet, without which he cannot be a Muslim.

What is prophethood? How is a prophet selected or chosen? To know that prophethood is bestowed by a proper course of divine selection in which heredity plays a great part, the following observations should be carefully studied and understood.

(1) In strict compliance with the divine plan, every created being finds itself in the place it deserves in the arc of descent (downward journey from the absolute to the rudimentary matter) as well as in the arc of ascent (return upward journey from the rudimentary matter to the absolute).

(2) Therefore, selection means putting each particle of the universe in the proper place it deserves in the management of existence.

(3) The rudimentary matter, through the process of qualitative change, can take the form of a being, but each of the diverse forms it takes differs from the other in the combined effect of the aptitude and

competency it bears. The solar system is a complex and intricate form of matter, yet all its parts or portions do not have the same ability as the earth does, nor do all the parts or portions of the earth carry the capacity to take the form of a living thing, nor do the parts or portions which carry the capacity to take the form of a living thing can become a human being; and likewise, the parts or portions which have the potential of becoming human beings do not necessarily produce men of superior quality. The part or portion of the matter which has the potential to take the form of a superior human being was selected for Adam. The process of creation is the same but, as education is a process of selection by means of which the latent mental capacities are awakened and used for higher purposes, the men of superior quality and character are made to emerge from that part or portion of the matter which has the potential to become a human being.

(4) It is necessary that the part or portion which has the potential of producing the superior-most human beings should not be contaminated in the course of its development whilst passing through the parental channels. Therefore, vigilant care by the divine agency has to carry the purity and refinement of this superiority through the selected lineage at all stages, till it reaches the desired destination. The Holy Quran refers here to this process of selection and choice of a particular lineage for *risalat* and *imamat*. It starts from Adam and passes through Nuh to Ibrahim. After Ibrahim it was bifurcated in his two sons, Ismail and Is-haq. The descendants of Ismail are known as *ali* Ibrahim, and the descendants of Is-haq are called *ali* Imran. The selection of the line of *ali* Imran for prophethood was terminated after Isa whose birth, disappearance (Allah raised him alive to the heaven) and promised re-appearance (at the end of this world before the day of resurrection) are the signs (miracles) of Allah; but the line of *ali* Ibrahim, through Ismail, remained chosen till Abd al Muttalib, and then again bifurcated through Abdullah and Abu Talib. Muhammad al Mustafa was the son of Abdullah and Ali al Murtada was the son of Abu Talib. When Ali and Bibi Fatimah, the daughter of the Holy Prophet, were joined in the holy matrimony, the line of Ibrahim continued in their progeny:

- Imam Hasan bin Ali al Mujtaba
- Imam Husayn bin Ali al Shahid al Shuhada
- Imam Ali bin Husayn al Zayn al Abidin
- Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir
- Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq
- Imam Musa bin Jafar al Kazim
- Imam Ali bin Musa al Rida
- Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Taqi
- Imam Ali bin Muhammad al Naqi
- Imam Hasan bin Ali al Askari
- Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al Mahdi

The disappearance and the promised re-appearance of the living Imam al Mahdi resembles the disappearance and the promised re-appearance of Isa; both are examples for the house of Ismail and the house of Israil respectively (Zukhruf: 59). When both of them will re-appear at the end of the world, before the day of resurrection, prophet Isa will follow Imam Muhammad al Mahdi, and the whole mankind will follow them.

Allah chose Adam, Nuh, *ali* Ibrahim and *ali* Imran in preference to others for appointing His messengers and guides. It is a selection from the descendants of Adam, Nuh, Ibrahim and Imran, because all their children did not have the superior quality to represent Allah.

The Holy Prophet has said:

Allah selected Adam in preference to all other creatures; from among the descendants of Adam, He selected Nuh; from among the descendants of Nuh, He selected Ibrahim; from among the descendants of Ibrahim, He selected Ismail; from among the Quraysh, He selected Hashim. All of them carried *mynur* (the first light which came forth from the absolute and goes on till the day of resurrection to manifest ultimately in the arc of ascent). It passed through Abd al Muttalib to Abdullah and Abu Talib. I am from Abdullah and Ali is from Abu Talib. Ali and I are one and the same *nur*.

Dhurriyatan ba-duha min ba-din, in the next verse, excludes any possibility of including the followers in *al*, as some commentators try to do by comparing the word *al* used here with *al* used in *ali* Fir-awn, the followers of Fir-awn. Here, heredity is the essential basis of choosing a person for *risalat*, therefore, no follower can be included in the *ali* Muhammad (Ahl ul Bayt) for conferring the office of *imamat*. To acknowledge the excellence of Salman the Holy Prophet bestowed on him the highest honour of belonging to the select group of the Ahl ul Bayt but as he was not an offspring of the Holy Prophet, he could not be appointed as an Imam. In spite of her piety and righteousness Ummi Salimah was not considered one of the Ahl ul Bayt though suitable appreciation by the Holy Prophet consoled her. Some of his other wives also coveted for the inclusion but were refused without even a consolation.

The Holy Prophet, his ancestors and his descendants (*ali* Muhammad) are *ali* Ibrahim (Baqarah: 124, 128, 129; Ibrahim: 37). They were the descendants of Ismail. The descendants of Is-haq are also *ali* Ibrahim. *Ali* Imran may refer to Imran, the father of Musa and Harun, or to Imran, the father of Maryam, mother of Isa. Here *ali* Ibrahim also includes Ibrahim, as Musa and Harun are included in *ali* Musa and *ali* Harun in verse 248 of al Baqarah.

{ذُرِّيَّةً بَعْضُهَا مِنْ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 34

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:34]

"One from the other" suggests continuation of the divine choice, without any break or cessation. It is for Ibrahim and *ali* Ibrahim, Imran and *ali* Imran. The posterity of Adam and Nuh has not been mentioned because some of the sons of Adam and Nuh were unbelievers, sinners and murderers.

As mentioned in the previous verse, the posterity of Ibrahim through Is-haq was not chosen after Isa, who had no offspring, but the descendants of Ibrahim through Ismail remained the chosen representatives of Allah, as His prophets and *imams*, in fulfilment of Ibrahim's prayer (see the commentary of Baqarah: 124, 125). The Holy Prophet and his posterity through Ali and Fatimah (also see the commentary of al Kawthar) are the descendants of Ibrahim. With all the additions and omissions effected in the Tawrat, the Old Testament yet contains the divine prophecies which confirm the above noted facts. See commentary of Baqarah: 124 and 125 wherein the text of Genesis 12: 2 and 3; Genesis 16: 9 to 11; and Genesis 17: 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 20 has been quoted.

The Holy Prophet has said:

- (1) I and Ali are of one and the same light.
 - (2) Ali is a part of me and I am a part of Ali.
 - (3) The root of Ali and me is the same, but all other people come from various other origins.
- (Zaynul Fata; Ibna Maghazali; Shafa-i; Kanzul Ummal, Ahmad ibna Hanbal).

The statement in these two verses, referring to the past, is a declaration of what has already taken place as a partial realisation of the divine will, and is a promised prophecy of its perfection when it refers to the future. Islam was the religion of Ibrahim, but it was completed and perfected through the

Holy Prophet (Ma-idah: 3), and was continued in its pristine purity through Ali and his posterity which is the posterity of the Holy Prophet. In Genesis 17: 20 it is mentioned that Allah promised Ibrahim: He will multiply Ismail's descendants and he (Ismail) shall be father of twelve princes)-twelve Imams in the posterity of Ibrahim, Ismail and the Holy Prophet, from Ali ibna abi Talib to Muhammad bin Hasan al Mahdi, offsprings, one from the other.

Also see commentary of the previous verse for "offspring, one from the other".

{إِذْ قَالَتْ امْرَأَتُ عِمْرَانَ رَبِّ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا فَتَقَبَّلْ مِنِّي إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ } 35

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:35]

An extract from Burckhardt's lectures on Syrian church is quoted below:

Devotees to the temple in the Jewish creed remained as recluses, cut off from worldly life, and practised celibacy. Imran the father of Mary (the mother of Jesus) seems evidently to be of priestly descent. This factor is borne out from the vow which his wife makes about her issue in her womb to dedicate it to the service of God. It is reasonably considered that it is possible that because of the vowful will of his grandmother that her issue be dedicated to God's service, i.e., as a devotee to the temple, Jesus adopted the ascetic mode of life. Otherwise he had great respect for married life.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The word *imra-at* means wife when related to a personal noun, but alone it means a woman. In this verse it is related to Imran, therefore, means wife of Imran. As usual, to create confusion and deny miracles associated with the prophets of Allah, the Ahmadi commentator has translated *imra-at* as "woman" in order to twist and obscure the meanings of the words of this verse.

There are three persons named Imran:

- (1) The father of Musa and Harun.
- (2) The father of Maryam (grandfather of Isa).
- (3) The father of Ali, the paternal uncle of the Holy Prophet, known as Abu Talib.

Imran, the father of Maryam, is referred to in this verse, not Imran, the father of Musa and Harun. There is a long period of time between Musa and Isa, therefore, some of the Christian scholars wrongly conclude that the Quran and the Holy Prophet (God forbid) made a mistake by stating that the mother of Maryam is the sister of Musa. The Holy Prophet knew well that between Musa and Isa there were several prophets of Allah- Dawud, Sulayman, Yunus, Zakariyya, Yahya. Isa was the last prophet of the children of Israil, after whom none was sent as a prophet of Allah save Ahmad, the Holy Prophet himself, a fact recorded in Deuteronomy 18: 18, 19; John 4: 16; 15: 26; 16: 7, 8, 12, 13.

Muharraran means freed or liberated. Here it means freed from worldly attachments, and therefore devoted to Allah's service.

{فَلَمَّا وَضَعَتْهَا قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي وَضَعْتُهَا أُنْثَىٰ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا وَضَعْتَ وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَىٰ وَإِنِّي سَمَّيْتُهَا مَرْيَمَ وَإِنِّي أُعِيذُهَا بِكَ وَذُرِّيَّتَهَا مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ } 36

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:36]

When a female was born, Hanna, wife of Imran, was disappointed, because she had vowed to dedicate her son to the service of Allah, as it was a custom in those days to give one of the sons over to the temple in Jerusalem. Yet she named her daughter Maryam which, in Hebrew, means "maid-servant of God"; and brought her to the sanctuary. The priests unwillingly accepted Maryam on Hanna's plea that her daughter was assigned by her to God's service before her birth. She entrusted

her daughter and her offspring (Isa) to Allah and invoked Him to keep both of them safe from satanic influence. Zakariyya, husband of Hanna's sister, and Maryam's maternal uncle, was chosen by casting lots to take charge of Maryam. As soon as she reached the age of puberty, he erected a high balcony where she used to stay the whole day, praying; and in the evening, he used to take her with him to her abode. The room in which she slept and lived during the night was always locked and its key was kept with him.

Ibna Hajjar and Abu Dawud relate that once the Holy Prophet visited Bibi Fatimah, took some water in his hand from a wooden cup, sprinkled it over her head and shoulders, and repeated the exact words of Hanna's prayer, revealed in this verse.

In fulfilment of the Holy Prophet's prayer, Bibi Fatimah was chosen by Allah as the superior most woman of the worlds, and eleven divinely commissioned guides (Imams) were born in her posterity.

فَتَقَبَّلَهَا رَبُّهَا بِقَبُولٍ حَسَنٍ وَأَنْبَتَهَا نَبَاتًا حَسَنًا وَكَفَّلَهَا زَكَرِيَّا كُلَّمَا دَخَلَ عَلَيْهَا زَكَرِيَّا الْمِحْرَابَ وَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا رِزْقًا فَقَالَ يَا مَرْيَمُ أَنَّى لَكَ هَذَا طَقَالَتْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ {37}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:37]

The desire of Hanna was fulfilled in Isa. The miraculous birth of Isa was a clear sign of the omnipotent will of Allah. As the creator of the laws of nature, He does not depend on their operation because whatever takes place in nature is an immediate effect of His will (see commentary of verse 6 of this surah).

Whenever Zakariyya came to see Maryam in the sanctuary, he found her provided with fresh fruits and eatables from heaven. This naturally excited wonder in him, since none could enter her locked chamber except himself. He used to ask, "Where has this come from?" And always she replied, "From Allah who gives food in abundance to whomsoever He likes".

It is clear from this verse that she received food from Allah direct, miraculously, without the intervention of any physical agency (*yarzuqu man yasha*), therefore, the misinterpretation of the Ahmadi commentator that the food might be the offerings of the worshippers is ridiculously mischievous, because, in reality, the worshippers could not meet Maryam without Zakariyya's knowledge who was the only person who could open the locked door to let them in. The Ahmadi commentator not only slanders Maryam but also tries to present Zakariyya, a prophet of Allah, as a fool who wonders every time (*kullama*) he sees the food near Maryam. It is an attempt to bring the prophets and the chosen friends of Allah to the (low) level of the false prophet of Qadiyan.

Shaykh Sadi says:

The beauty of Yusuf, the breath of Isa (whereby he resuscitated the dead), the white hand of Musa, those excellences they had separately, you (O Muhammad) alone have all of them.

Miracles, similar to those that took place in the lives of the prophets separately, were repeated by the Holy Prophet.

It is written in "Anwar al Tanzil", "Kashshaf" and "Malim al Tanzil" (the books accepted as the most authentic by Sunni scholars) that sometimes the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt had to go without food. On such a day the Holy Prophet went to his daughter and asked for some food. She had no food to give to her father. For the last three days she, her husband and her children had nothing in the house to eat. Fatimah stood on her prayer-mat and invoked Allah to help her so that she could serve food to her father. Suddenly steam began to come out from the vessels lying empty in the kitchen. After removing the lids, she found the best kinds of food in them. She brought the food and told her father:

"It is from Allah, who gives food in abundance to whomsoever He likes."

"Glory be to Allah. He has given you food as He had given to Maryam" said the Holy Prophet. Not only the whole family ate the food but it was also distributed amongst the neighbours.

{ هُنَالِكَ دَعَا زَكَرِيَّا رَبَّهُ فَقَالَ رَبِّ هَبْ لِي مِنْ لَدُنْكَ ذُرِّيَّةً طَيِّبَةً إِنَّكَ سَمِيعُ الدُّعَاءِ } 38

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:38]

The clear evidence of Allah's extraordinary benevolence prompted Zakariyya to pray for a son he longed all his life. *Tayyab* means virtuous, blessed, pure and good.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Prophet Zakariyya's prayer makes it clear that Maryam received her sustenance direct from Allah, the miraculous nature of which made Zakariyya turn to Allah to beseech Him for a son he could not have since his wife was barren; and as a prophet he knew that only a miracle willed by Allah could give him a son. So, what the Ahmadi commentator says is a wilful distortion.

{ فَادَّأْتُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَائِمٌ يُصَلِّي فِي الْمِحْرَابِ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكَ بِيَحْيَى مُصَدِّقًا بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَسَيِّدًا وَحَصُورًا وَنَبِيًّا مَنْ الصَّالِحِينَ } 39

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:39]

In Luke 1: 5 and 13, it is stated that an angel appeared to Zakariyya on the right of the altar of incense (mihrab-the private chamber of a prayer house, partitioned and kept hidden from the eyes of the people) and said to him: "Do not be afraid, your prayer has been heard, your wife will bear a son, and you shall name him John (Yahya)."

Kalimah means a word. In verse 171 of al Nisa also, Isa has been described as a word of Allah, which refers to his birth from a virgin mother, a unique distinction, because he was born at the command of Allah, when He said: "Be". Allah does what He wills. He can create a being by making amendments in the laws of nature, created by Himself, which always obey His will.

A single word may have a meaningful implication. Isa is the *kalimah* of Allah. The Holy Prophet is referred to as *dhikr* (reminder) in verse 10 of al Talaq.

The Ahmadi commentator quotes An-am: 34; Yunus: 64; Kahf: 27, 109; Luqman: 27 and Tahrir: 12 to interpret *kalimah* as prophecy, but he intentionally avoids to mention Ali Imran: 44 and Nisa: 171 where *kalimah* has been used to describe Isa as the "word of Allah".

Yahya (John) was the cousin of Isa, six months older than Isa, who was the first person to believe in Isa as a true prophet of Allah, sent to revive the faithful practice of the law of Musa. Yahya was killed before Isa's ascension to the heavens.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The phrase *bi-kalimat* used here as a common noun (*nakirah*-indefinite) shows that Isa is not the only *kalimah* (or the only "word", in this sense, from Allah) but there are more and he is one of them.

{ قَالَ رَبِّ أَتَىٰ يَكُونُ لِي غُلَامٌ وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي الْكِبَرُ وَامْرَأَتِي عَاقِرٌ فَقَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ } 40

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:40]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In view of Zakariyya's observation that old age has overtaken him and his wife was barren, it becomes clear that the meaning of *anna* is "how", because till then they did not have any child at all; therefore, *anna* cannot be translated as "when" in this verse unless the translator is an Ahmadi

(Qadiyani) who has done so on account of his determined policy to oppose miracles tooth and nail. In verse 47 of this surah he translates *anna* as "how". Although in both these verses *anna* (how) signifies the sense of surprise and indicates the events of the births of Isa and Yahya as miracles effected by the will of Allah, the Ahmadi commentator, in this verse, inserts a wrong word, and in verse 47, after translating *anna* as "how" puts forward lame arguments to deny Maryam's virginity (see commentary of verse 47 of this surah). The statement that "Allah does whatsoever He wills" settles irrevocably the birth of Yahya as a definite miracle.

"But they had no children, for Elizabeth (Zakariyya's wife) was barren, and both were well on in years. Zachariah said to the angel: How can I be sure of this? I am old and my wife is well on in years. (Luke 1: 7 and 18)

Qad balaghaniyal kibaru (when indeed old age has overtaken me) is not a conjunctive clause. It is an adverbial subordinate to the principal clause. The word *wa*, used on two occasions in this verse, means "while", not "and", otherwise the answer would not correspond to the question, clearly suggesting surprise. If it was to mean what the Ahmadi commentator thinks, the answer should have been *mahma yasha* instead of *ma yasha*, because in answer to a question about time "whatsoever" (the way in which) cannot be used.

{قَالَ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ لِي آيَةً ۖ قَالَ آيَتُكَ إِلَّا تُكَلِّمَ النَّاسَ ثَلَاثَةَ أَيَّامٍ إِلَّا رَمْرًا ۗ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ كَثِيرًا وَسَبِّحْ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ } 41

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:41]

Owing to his curiosity to know as to when a son will be born in spite of their natural disability, Zakariyya had asked the Lord to appoint a sign for him.

"You will not speak to men for three days" was the sign given to him.

"You will lose your power of speech, and remain silent until the day when these things happen to you." (Luke 1: 20) The verb *tukallima* is in a tense which is used for the present and the future. It is wrong to translate *la tukallima* as "you should not speak." "You will not speak" is the true translation as explained by Aqa Mahdi Puya in the following note.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In reply to Zakariyya's request for a sign which could let him know that his wife was blessed with a child, the almighty Lord gave him the sign that he would not be able to talk to the people whilst being fully occupied with remembrance and praise and glorification of Allah, day and night. The command was to remember Allah and glorify Him all the time. So it was obvious that a prophet of Allah, while carrying out his Lord's command, would not find time to speak to the people at all, otherwise there was no restriction on uttering words from the mouth. Praise and glorification of Allah takes man into the pure domain of spiritualism through which he overcomes physical disabilities and obstacles, and obtains grace and blessings of Allah. The laws of nature, known to man, can be controlled, modified or altered by the spiritual and divine agency.

It is said that through the science of hypnosis the will of the living being can be controlled, then how can one deny the superior power of the spirit which can effect any change in any natural phenomenon?

{وَإِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَاكِ وَطَهَّرَكِ وَاصْطَفَاكِ عَلَى نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ } 42

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:42]

The position of Bibi Fatimah as the superior-most woman in the universe has been acknowledged by all the Muslim scholars (please refer to Mishkat al Masabih bab al manaqib), therefore, the following note of Aqa Mahdi Puya should be carefully studied.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The first *istafaki* (selection of Maryam) refers to her apostolical lineage (in the seed of Ibrahim) and her purification. The second *istafaki* refers to the fact that she was chosen to become the mother of a prophet without a father, remaining a virgin therefore, up to her time and till the advent of the Holy Prophet, she was the best of the women in the worlds. The Holy Prophet has declared that Bibi Fatimah is the chief of the women in the universe; (because) Bibi Fatimah was the daughter of the superior most prophet of Allah, the seal of prophethood; and the wife of an Imam who alone has the unique distinction of, "Ali's flesh is my flesh, Ali's blood in my blood, and I and he are from the same divine light" (saying of the Holy Prophet), and the mother of eleven holy Imams and through her last son the divine will and justice shall prevail on the earth, and the son of Maryam, Isa, shall follow him. Through verse 33 of Al Ahzab, she, Ali and their sons have been thoroughly purified. Therefore, (as the Holy Prophet has declared) Maryam was chosen and her status remained so till his daughter Fatimah was born and thereafter Fatimah is the most blessed, thoroughly purified, and the choicest woman, the best of all the women in the universe from beginning to the end, in all ages, among whom are included Asiyah, Maryam, and Khadijah al Kubrah.

On account of the charges levelled against Maryam by the Jews, her status has been made clear in this verse, but in view of her thorough purification in verse 33 of al Ahzab and the declaration of the Holy Prophet, whose spoken words are as absolute and true as the word of Allah in the light of verses 2 and 3 of al Najm, no one could, and did not, question the character and the status of Bibi Fatimah; therefore, there was no need to mention her, as no ambiguity or slander ever existed concerning her sublime character. The Holy Prophet's words are enough to establish her as the superior most woman among all the women in the universe for all times.

Muhammad Iqbal, known as the philosopher- poet of the east, accepted as a scholar of great depth and vision by all the Muslims, has given his opinion about Fatimah Zahra in the light of the historical facts mentioned in the books of Islamic history. He says:

Maryam, of one connection with Isa, is venerable; (but) for three relationships Fatimah is revered, respected and glorified; she is the light of the eyes (dearest darling daughter) of the "mercy unto the worlds", the leader of those who have gone by and of those who will come; she is the wife of he who wears the crown of Hal-Ata (Surah al Dahr), the chosen, the divine helper, the fearless overpowering strength of Allah; she is the mother of the axis of the circle of love and devotion, the leader-in-chief of the caravan of lovers and devotees (Hasan and Husayn).

43} يَا مَرْيَمُ اقْنُتِي لِرَبِّكِ وَاسْجُدِي وَارْكَعِي مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:43]

Maryam is neither a goddess nor a mother-God. She is a created being and as such she has been asked to pray like all true and devout servants of Allah.

44} ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يُفُونَ أَفْلامَهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ يَكْفُلُ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا كُنْتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ يَخْتَصِمُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:44]

Ghayb means unseen, mystic, spiritual, unknown, or unknowable through the corrupted extracts of the books in the hands of the Jews and the Christians. The knowledge of all things and events the Holy Prophet had was revealed to him by Allah alone as has been said in al Najm: Nor he speaks of (his own) desire; it is naught save a revelation revealed (to him). There was no means of knowing the dispute among the priests of the sanctuary as to who should have Maryam in his charge (because the accurate records of these events have been obliterated altogether) except by revelation. The Holy Prophet knew about the casting of lots to select Zakariyya to take charge of Maryam, as if he was there when this event took place.

Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir has related that Abd al Muttalib, the grandfather of the Holy Prophet, had nine sons, and he had vowed that if a (tenth) son was born he would sacrifice him in the name of Allah. Then Abdullah, the father of the Holy Prophet, was born, and to fulfil his vow he made preparations to sacrifice him in the name of Allah, but his friends and relatives requested him to ascertain if camels could be sacrificed in Abdullah's place, by casting lots, as was done to select Zakariyya to take charge of Maryam. In the first casting of lots (ten camels against the life of Abdullah) the name of Abdullah appeared. The casting of lots was repeated eight times by adding 10 more camels every time, and on all occasions it was Abdullah who was selected, but at the tenth time, with 100 camels, the casting of lots chose the sacrifice of 100 camels in place of Abdullah. Abd al Muttalib repeated the casting of lots with 100 camels thrice and received the same answer. Then he was satisfied that Allah wanted to spare the life of Abdullah (the father of the Holy Prophet). The Holy Prophet used to say: "I am the sons of two sacrifices-Ismael and Abdullah."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The prophets of Allah did not know the unseen, the unknown, or the unknowable through ordinary means, unless the knowledge of the *ghayb* (the knowledge of the past, right from the beginning of creation and the events of the future which would take place in this world and in the hereafter) was revealed to them as much as Allah wills; therefore it is stated in this verse that Allah informs the Holy Prophet about the *ghayb* through revelation to know not only that which was unknowable through ordinary means but also that which was knowable through regular media.

{إِذْ قَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ يَا مَرْيَمُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُبَشِّرُكِ بِكَلِمَةٍ مِنْهُ اسْمُهُ الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَجِيهًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ } 45

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:45]

For *kalimah* see commentary of verse 39 of this surah. *Masih* literally means the "anointed".

Allah refers to Isa as the son of Maryam, because she gave birth to him without a male partner by keeping her virginity intact.

The Ahmadi commentator interprets *al masih* as he who travels much, just because in his opinion Isa, after escaping crucifixion, came to Kashmir. Further, to deny the miraculous birth of Isa, he finds a father for him, totally ignoring the clear mention of "Isa son of Maryam" as mentioned in this verse and the miraculous birth of Adam and Hawwa without parents, since he wants to bring down the chosen prophets of Allah to the ordinary level of the man whom he (the Ahmadi translator) proclaims as the Messiah. It seems that the deniers of miracles and supernatural powers, one day, will find a father for God also, in order to reject the *wajib al wujud*

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Minal muqarrabin (to be brought nearest to Allah) in the light of verses 10 to 14 of al Waqi-ah, are those who are foremost in faith, virtue and receiving rewards-they are numerous among the

followers of the prophets prior to the Holy Prophet, but a few among his followers. The few righteous among the followers of the Holy Prophet are only his *awsiya*, the Ahl ul Bayt.

{وَيُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ} 46

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:46]

This verse makes it clear that Isa shall speak to people from the cradle in the same style and manner, containing the same substance and content, which he will convey to them in his mature age. If it is wrongly presumed that as a child in the cradle he will speak to people like an ordinary child, not conveying the message of Allah, the information Allah gives to Maryam becomes unnecessary, because there is no sense in recording this fact, if it means nothing more than the "ordinary experience of every child who is not dumb". "And in maturity" confirms that what he will speak to people in maturity, which undoubtedly was the revealed message of Allah to be conveyed to mankind as a messenger of Allah, he will speak and make known even as a child in the cradle. It is a miracle. The Ahmadi commentator, avoiding deliberately with malafide the miraculous life of Isa, says that it was an ordinary child's talk, having no sense or meaning. It is clear that either the commentator had no literary education or he deliberately wanted to ridicule the Quran.

{قَالَتْ رَبِّ أَنَّى يَكُونُ لِي وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ يَمَسِّنِي بَشَرٌ ط قَالَ كَذَلِكَ اللَّهُ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ؕ إِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ} 47

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:47]

Anna means "how", used by Maryam to express her surprise or curiosity as Zakariyya did in verse 40 of this surah. There is no room for translating *anna* as "when" in both the events. *Lam yamsasni basharun* (when no man has touched me) clearly shows that the news of the forthcoming birth of Isa was given to Maryam in her state of virginity, which was going to take place without the agency of a male partner, suspending the natural process necessary for a woman to conceive a child.

As stated in the preceding verse the Ahmadi commentator overlooks and takes no notice of the clear words of this verse and makes desperate attempts to put forward his outlandish theory that though the Quran does not mention the name of Isa's father but as Maryam had other children (the four gospels in which this is stated are inauthentic and come in the category of folklore, therefore, should be rejected in view of the verses of the Quran) there should have been a man who had begotten Isa. By stating that Maryam was not a virgin he belies verses 42, 45, 46 and 47 Of this surah and verses 17 to 22 of Maryam wherein it is clearly mentioned that Isa was a gift from Allah given to Maryam when she, surprised, asks the angel: "How can there be a son (born) to me when no man has touched me?" In between the lines the Ahmadi commentator has tried to tell the Muslims that the reporting of the Quran is incredible, therefore, false, and Maryam's statement (*lam yamsasni basharun*) is a lie, which has not been exposed in the Quran because Allah does not know what she had been doing secretly. The reasons for this mischief-making has been given in the commentary of the preceding verses 45 and 46.

One of the reasons for revealing these verses was to counter and squash doubts and misgivings that people may have and express so as not to believe in the possibility of the birth of a child (Isa) to a virgin female (Maryam) without a male partner, otherwise if Isa was to be born in the ordinary course of nature, there should have been no necessity to mention these events at all.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The religion of Allah, Islam, emphatically states that Maryam, the mother of Isa, was a virgin. She did not have any kind of sexual relation with any man before or after the birth of Isa and remained a

virgin in the strict sense of the word till she departed from this world, as has been mentioned in verse 12 of al Tahrīm that Maryam, the daughter of Imran, guarded her chastity, and Allah breathed into her His spirit (Isa), and she was an obedient servant of Allah, and she testified the truth of the words of her Lord-she neither lied nor kept anything hidden, because, as Allah says, she was truthful.

Kadhalikallahu yakhlaqu ma yasha (even so Allah creates whatsoever He wills) refers to the process of creation in which the principal active factor is His will or command-Ali ibna abi Talib has said that *kun* (be) is not a sound or voice which the ear receives and hears, but Allah's word is His work which takes effect at once whenever He wills.

In this sense every creature is the result of His creative word or the manifestation of the imperative word *kun* (be); therefore, every creature is the word of Allah. The obvious inequality in the creatures is due to the variance in presentation of His notion and attributes by each creature.

48} وَيُعَلِّمُهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:48]

"Allah taught Isa the book and wisdom, and the Tawrat and the Injil" brings up the question as to when Isa received the education promised in this verse. In the light of verse 46 of this surah, he was sent into this world with the knowledge of the book and wisdom, the Tawrat and the Injil. All the Muslims know and acknowledge that the Holy Prophet, the seal of prophethood, is the superior-most prophet of Allah, the chief of all the prophets, whose advent has been continuously promised by Allah long before the birth of Isa-see Deuteronomy 18: 5, 15, 18 and 19 text of which has been mentioned in the commentary of al Baqarah: 253, wherein is also mentioned that which Isa said about the advent of the Holy Prophet (the comforter, the spirit of truth) John: 14: 16, 17; 15: 26; 16: 7 to 13.

Is there any sense in saying that the Holy Prophet was an illiterate who acquired whatever learning he had from ordinary mortals, when Isa came into this world endowed with divine knowledge? Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 78. All Muslims should feel ashamed to believe in the lie that the Holy Prophet took fright at the sight of angel Jibrail on the mountain of Hira; he returned home scared stiff; his wife, Khadija al Kubra, consoled him and took him to Warqa bin Nawfil, a Christian, who informed him that prophethood had been bestowed on him, because it was not a devil that he saw on the mountain of Hira but an angel. May Allah forgive them for believing in such nonsense which the devil must have invented to lead the so-called Muslims astray. Please refer to verses 1 to 4 of al Rahman wherein it is said that Allah, the beneficent, Himself taught the Quran to the Holy Prophet, described as the MAN, the divinely perfected ideal man, to be followed by every man who desires to be a real human being.

The Holy Prophet has said:

I was a prophet when Adam was yet amidst water and clay.

The birth of Isa was a miracle. He lived a godly life, exposed the hypocrisy and corruption of the Jews, and gave the glad tidings of the advent of the Holy Prophet.

Please also refer to verses 27 to 34 of Maryam which confirm that which has been stated in verses 46 and 48 of this surah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Isa, a *muta-allim* (student), was taught the book and wisdom, the Tawrat and the Injil and sent to the children of Israil as a prophet, whereas the Holy Prophet, endowed with the divine wisdom, and knowledge of all creation, with the Quran, was sent as the last prophet to all those who are born to women (*ummi*), all the human beings including the Jews, the Christians and those who do not follow

any heavenly scripture, to rehearse to them the divine signs, to purify them and to teach them.

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ أَنِّي أَخْلَقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيْنِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدْخُرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿49﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:49]

Isa was sent as "a messenger to the children of Bani Israil". Please refer to Matthew 15: 22 to 26 wherein it is also stated that Isa had declared: "I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israil, and to them alone". As per Matthew 10: 5 and 6, Isa commanded his twelve disciples:

"Do not take the road to gentile lands, and do not enter a Samaritan town; but go to the lost sheep of the house of Israil (to proclaim the message)".

Modern Christian scholars have to acknowledge the advice of Isa, and his earliest disciples, not to treat his message as universal.

"The earlier group of disciples, it is true, did not appreciate the universality of the teaching of Jesus, nor did Jesus seek converts outside Israil".

(Encyclopaedia Britannica 29 volumes 11th edition-London)

A miracle (a credential of prophethood) is an extraordinary occurrence which cannot be produced by any natural agency but only by the direct will of Allah. It may be either above natural law or contrary to it or else independent of it. Once the existence of a "*wajib ul wujud*" (Allah) is proved as a fact (see commentary of al Baqarah: 255) there is no *a priori* impediment in believing that He can perform whatever He wills in any manner that He deems fit and necessary. The possibility of miracles can never be questioned by a theist, because a miracle is only an exercise of free-will on the part of the creator and author of the creation with all its laws-a fulfilment of His purpose in a way that appears novel to the onlookers (who can never know that which He knows and controls). It does sometimes happen that the public mind is led to the acceptance of the divine truths not by any rational arguments or moral and spiritual evidence but only by the miraculous manifestations of the divine power at the hands of His approved and appointed representatives to generate conviction in men of average intelligence. So Isa, by Allah's permission, formed, of clay, a thing like a bird and breathed in to it (and Allah made the thing alive), cured blindness and leprosy, put life into the dead and told the people their most secret affairs. Matthew 8: 3, 9 : 18, 19, 23 to 25, 27 to 30; and Mark 8: 22 to 25; and Luke 7 :12 to 15; Luke 17: 12 to 14; and John 9: 1 to 7, 11:11 to 44 refer to the miracles mentioned in this verse. As has been said in the commentary of verse 3 of this surah, the four gospels of the New Testament are not the Injil revealed to Isa but a collection of traditions pertaining to Isa, referring to his activities in Galilee, Jerusalem and other habitations of the Jews; therefore, it is not free from the bias, pride and prejudice of the writers of the four gospels. The Jews and the Christians were always in a state of hostility. Blasphemies have been invented and false reporting made by both of them to glorify their heroes and discredit other's leaders. So whatever is mentioned in their books of traditions cannot be true, and that which has been omitted cannot be rejected as false. For example, the turning of water into wine for a marriage party by Isa, mentioned as the first miracle of Isa, is, by all standards, a fabricated story; or the way in which Isa is reported to have rebuked his mother: "Woman ! what have I to do with you". How can a prophet of Allah say such words to his mother whom Allah had chosen and purified? The Old and the New Testaments are a mixture of truth and falsehood. The Quran, the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahlul Bayt have correctly presented Isa as the holy spirit of Allah and as an infallible prophet of Allah. (See notes "The Tawrat" and "The Injil" at the end of al Ma-idah).

In the days of Isa the people to whom he was particularly sent (the Jews) could not be effectively convinced with the help of arguments based on reason because of their ready inclination to believe in anything which confounded their raw and undeveloped intelligence. For example, magic and witchcraft excited their imagination. More often than not, they responded to suggestions made through either of them, therefore, the purpose of the miraculous manifestation of the divine powers at his hands was to make them believe in him and in that which he preached, as the prophet of Allah. The Holy Prophet, in theory and practice, was endowed with the extraordinary power to perform all or any of the miracles manifested by all the prophets, from Adam to Isa. The Holy Prophet did not have to resort to miracles on account of the following reasons:

(1) His matchless and ideal character before announcing his ministry-His life in Makka convinced the people, among whom he was sent, that he was trustworthy and truthful; therefore, they used to address him as *al-amin* and *al-sadiq*.

(2) His noble lineage-he was a direct descendant of prophet Ibrahim.

(3) He had an everlasting miracle with him-the Quran.

And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant (Muhammad), then produce a surah like it; and call on your witnesses besides Allah, if you are truthful.

But if you do not do it and you will never do it, then, safeguard yourselves with full awareness of divine laws from the fire whose fuel is men and stones-prepared for the unbelievers. (Al Baqarah: 23 and 24)

(4) The Holy Prophet, the last messenger of Allah was commissioned to convey the final divine message and to invite the people to worship one Allah, at a time when the human mind was on the threshold of the era of finding out truth through reason and contemplation. The human mind was ready to listen to rational arguments and reflect, think and judge. Awesome and wondrous manifestations, to bring home to people the truth, were a thing of the past. So the Holy Prophet, in spite of having all the powers to manifest miracles, called mankind unto the way of the Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation (words of good advice), and reasoned with the people in the best way, as has been asked by the Lord in verse 125 of al Nahl.

As stated in al Baqarah: 118 (Please refer to its commentary) not only the Holy Prophet, but also the divinely chosen Imams had performed miracles, whenever they deemed it necessary and thought that it would serve a useful purpose, but refused to put them to use as an answer to the challenge of any antagonistic individual or group, who even after witnessing the same would not accept the truth.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

It is logical to conclude (after rejecting the concocted insinuation of motivated reporters of the traditions, that the Holy Prophet was illiterate, an unimaginable defamation of a prophet of Allah, but held as true by the majority of his followers, except shias) that when Isa, a follower of the Holy Prophet, sent only to the children of Bani Israil, was taught the book and the wisdom by Allah Himself, the Holy Prophet, who came to guide and warn the whole mankind, in all ages, must have been and, in fact, was thoroughly purified from the dirt of ignorance, and was endowed with divine wisdom, and knew not only to read and write but had total and complete knowledge of the book of creation, the book of legislation and all the holy scriptures revealed to other prophets before him. The Holy Quran, in verses 1 to 4 of al Rahman, says that the *rahman* Himself not only taught the *rahmatun lil alamin* the entire process of creation but also blessed him with the faculties of appropriating knowledge and giving expression to that which he was taught, with complete and perfect control. Although the ultimate agent for giving shape or character to a thing, in the domains of creation and

legislation, is the will of Allah, yet His approved intermediaries are also allowed to take action. Therefore it was neither blasphemy nor transgressing the limits when Isa said: "I will create a bird, out of clay, for you", or "I will heal the blind and the leper", or "I will raise the dead", because he did all that he said by Allah's permission. On the other hand, it is a blasphemy to belie the person on whom Allah has bestowed such powers, or to whom He has delegated His authority to act on His behalf. According to verse 69 of al Nahl there is healing for mankind in that which comes out from the abdomen of the bee (honey). So, there is no wonder, if the soil of Karbala, the resting place of His devotee, Imam Husayn, is used to cure and heal many a disease (known as *khaki shifa*). What has been given to whom by Him can be found out by referring to authentic sources.

{وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَلَا حِلَّ لَكُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَجِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا} 50

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:50]

Isa had no new message. He confirmed that which had been conveyed by Musa. He preached the unity of Allah, not trinity. See James 2: 19; John 20: 17; Timothy (1) 2: 5; Jude 25.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to verse 50, Isa had the authority to repeal or amend the laws of Musa, therefore, he cancelled some of the laws of Tawrat, but, in the New Testament, a saying of Isa is reported that: mountains may move but not a word from the Tawrat will be removed. The Quran presents Isa as a law-giver prophet. He asks people to obey him and follow his orders in addition to the testament that they already had. He also asks them to adhere to the right path which implies that adherence is not following a particular legislation but strict compliance with all the laws issued by Allah.

Whoever obeys the laws laid down by the succeeding prophets, in fact, carries out the orders of the preceding prophets, but if one only gives allegiance to the previous prophets and rejects the orders of those prophets who came after, in reality, renounces all the prophets. This applies also to the commandments of Allah. If one obeys Him throughout his life but revolts in the last moments of his life, he will be cursed, as Iblis (Shaytan) was condemned for ever. On the other hand, if one surrenders to Him in obedience and sincerely in the dying hours of his life, his past sins may be forgiven.

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۗ هَذَا صِرَاطٌ مُسْتَقِيمٌ} 51

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:51] (see commentary for verse 50)

{فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَى مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ ۚ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّكَ مُسْلِمُونَ} 52

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:52]

The Jews disbelieved that which Isa had said and planned to kill him. *Hawariyyun* refers to the disciples of Isa, who were usually dressed in white garments, or to those who were deputed by Isa to preach the unity of Allah, the true gospel. In both cases it may also refer to the purity of their hearts.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Man ansari (who will be my helpers unto Allah?) corresponds to an identical event known as *dawat al ashirah*. When the verse "And warn your tribe of near relatives" was revealed, the Holy Prophet asked Ali to invite the tribe of his near relatives at the house of Abu Talib. Before the leaders of the Quraysh, like Isa, he said:

"O kinsmen! By Allah, I and I alone can offer you the most precious of gifts, the good of this world and of the hereafter. Allah has commanded me to call you to that which is the best-His worship.

I, therefore, call upon you to come forward and testify to my prophethood. Who among you will

help me and join me in my task, and be my brother, my lieutenant, my vicegerent and my successor?"

Ali was the only person who came forward in response to the call of the Holy Prophet. Then and there the Holy Prophet declared:

"Verily Ali is my brother, my vicegerent and my successor. From this day it has been made obligatory upon every one to obey the superior authority of Ali."

(See page 4).

The above event and address have been recorded by a large number of notable scholars and prominent traditionists in their books, for example, Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Jarir, Ibn Abu Hatam, Ibn Marduwayh and Abu Na'im, and Bayhaqi, who has recorded it in both of his books, Sunan and Dala'il, and Tha'labi and Tabari in their great commentaries of surah al-Shu'ara'. Tabari has recorded this also in his Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Muluk (i.e. the history of the various people and their rulers), Vol. 2, p. 217, in somewhat different words, and Ibn Athir has recorded this among the traditions universally accepted to be genuine in his Tarikh al Kamil Vol 2, p. 22, under the caption "Allah ordered His messenger to declare his messengership." Abd al-Fida has recorded this event in Vol. 1, p. 116 of his book on history in connection with the account of the person who was the first to embrace Islam, and Abu Jafar al-Iskafi Mu'tazali has recorded it in his book Naqd al-Uthmaniyyah and fully explained its authenticity, as mentioned in Sharh al-Nahj al-Balagha, vol. 3, p. 263, by Ibn Abi Hadid, printed in Egypt. As regards the book Naqd al-Uthmaniyya it is really matchless. The author has thoroughly discussed everything connected with the Prophet's invitation in vol. 3, pp. 257-281, in his comments on the concluding portion of Khutbah al-Qasiah.

Halabi has recorded it in his famous Sirah al-Halabiyah where he has described it in the chapter on the hiding of the Holy Prophet and his companions in the house of Araqam. Please refer to vol. 1, p. 381. The reckless narration of the event and indiscriminate comments thereon by Ibn Taymiyah deserve no attention because of his well-known party spirit, for this event has been recorded even by the socialist writer Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal of Egypt, who has described the event at length in his magazine Al-Siyasah no. 2751, p. 5, col. 2, published on 12 Dhil-Qadah. 1350 A.H. If you refer to no. 2785 of the said magazine, p. 6, col. 4, you will find that he (Mr. Haykal) has recorded this tradition (i.e., the address) on the authority of Muslim's Sahih, Ahmad's Musnad, Abdullah ibn Ahmad's Ziyadat al-Musnad, Ibn Hajar Makki's Jami'al-Fawaid, Ibn Qutaybah's Ayun al-Akhbar, Ahmad ibn Abd Rabbuh's Aqd al-Farid, Umar ibn Bahr al-Hajiz's pamphlet Banu Hashim and Abu Ishaq al-Tha'labi's commentary of the Quran.

In view of the importance and universal fame of this tradition, many European writers (the French, the English and the German, etc.) have mentioned this tradition in their books, and Thomas Carlyle has also mentioned this briefly in his Heroes and Hero Worship.

Besides the above, many notable scholars and traditionists have recorded this tradition in their books with some difference in words but no difference in implication, e.g., Tahawi, Diya Maqdasi in his Mukhtarah, Said ibn Mansur in his Sunan, etc. However, sufficient for our purpose is the tradition recorded by Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who has related the tradition from Ali in his Musnad, vol. 1, pp 111 and 159. He has recorded in Musnad, Vol. 1, beginning of p. 331, another important tradition from Ibn Abbas that enumerates ten such characteristics of Ali which distinguish him from all others; Nasai has also quoted this from Ibn Abbas in his Khasais al Alawiyah (distinguishing qualities of Ali), p. 6; Hakam has recorded it in his Mustadrak, Vol. 3, p. 132, and al-Dhahabi in his Talkhis (abridged edition) of Mustadrak. He has also admitted the genuineness of the tradition. In Kanz al-Ummal, vol. 6, the event has been related at length.

If you will refer to Muntakhabi (selections from) Kanz al-Ummal, which has been printed on the margin of Musnad of Ahmad and peruse the contents of the margins of vol. 5, pp. 41-43, you will find the tradition in its details. This one event of warning to the kinsfolk and the address by the Holy Prophet alone, which has been recorded by almost all the scholars, historians or traditionists, amply prove that the *imamat* and *khilafat* were the right of Ali.

What Ali undertook that day, successfully and truly, was carried out through out his life.

In verse 52, the devoted disciples of Isa bear witness that they have surrendered themselves to His will. In verse 53 they pray for attaining the quality of the witness referred to in verse 17 of al Hud, which refers to the Holy Prophet as a clear sign of Allah and to Ali as a witness, a guide and a mercy, from Allah. The Holy Prophet's declarations ("I and Ali are from one and the same divine light" and "Ali is from me and I am from Ali") are based upon this verse and verse 61 of this surah, through which Ali has been established as the sole "self" (*nafs*) of the Holy Prophet. See Sahih Bukhari, chapter "manaqib".

{ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا بِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ وَاتَّبَعْنَا الرَّسُولَ فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ } 53

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:53] (see commentary for verse 52)

{ وَمَكْرُؤًا وَمَكَرَ اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ خَيْرُ الْمَاكِرِينَ } 54

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:54]

Makr means to employ a plan, not known to the opponent, to outwit and have an upper hand over him. It is condemnable if employed for an evil purpose. It is commendable if employed for a good purpose. The Jews plotted to put Isa to death, but Allah saved him by frustrating his enemies' plot.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

A similar but unsuccessful attempt was made by the hypocrites to kill the Holy Prophet, while he was returning from Tabuk, and also when he was coming back to Madina from Makka, after performing the last Hajj. Hudhayfa, the trusted companion of the Holy Prophet, knew the names of the plotters. Every well-known companion of the Holy Prophet used to ask him if his name was also in the list of plotters.

{ إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِنِّي فَاعِيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ طُتُّمَ } 55

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:55]

As stated in verses 45 to 47 of this surah (please refer to their commentary) the birth of Isa was a miracle. His departure from this world to the heaven, alive, was also a miracle. It is stated in Minhaj al Sadiqin that Isa was kept in custody in a room during the night following which he was to be crucified in the morning. At daybreak, Judas the hypocrite companion of Isa, who had betrayed him to the Roman soldiers, went into the room to escort Isa to the place of crucifixion. As soon as he entered the room, he was miraculously transformed into a person who resembled Isa. When he came out of the room the Roman soldiers took him to the cross and crucified him, in spite of his loud and desperate protestations.

In Badshah Husain's English translation of the Holy Quran, Sale is quoted on page 14 of Vol. 11. as under:

"It is supposed by several that this story was an original of Mohammad's but they are certainly mistaken, for several sectarians held the same opinion, long before his time. The Basilidians (Irrenus

I.I.C 23 and C. Epiphanius Haeres 24 num III) in the very beginning of Christianity, denied that Christ himself suffered, but that Simon the Cyrenian was crucified in his place. The Corinthians before them and the Carpocratians next (to name no more of those who affirmed Jesus to have been a mere man) did believe the same thing; it was not himself, but one of his followers very like him that was crucified. Photius tells us that he read a book entitled "The Journeys of the Apostles", relating the acts of Peter, John, Andrew, Thomas and Paul, and among other things contained therein, this was one, that Christ was not crucified, but another in his stead, and that therefore he laughed at his crucifiers (Photius Bible Cod 114, col. 291) or those who thought they had crucified him (Tolands' Nazrenus p. 17 and c.)"

The Jewish plot to kill Isa was prevented by the best of planners, the almighty Allah.

Tawaffa is to fulfil a promise. *Inni mutawaffika* means "I will complete your term". The word may mean death or to take away. It has been used in both its meanings in the Quran. The Ahmadi commentator, to deny the miraculous escape of Isa from being crucified, misinterprets the word *tawaffa* as Isa's physical death. The Holy Prophet and the holy Imams have said that Isa will come down again from the heaven before the day of resurrection and offer prayers behind Imam Muhammad al Mahdi, the last Imam in the progeny of the Holy Prophet.

"And set those who follow you (victorious) above those who disbelieve", refers to those Christians who accepted Isa as a true prophet of Allah, followed his teachings, and believed in his prophecy about the advent of the Holy Prophet. See Genesis 17: 7, 8, 20; Acts 3: 22 to 25; John 1: 19 to 21; 14: 16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7 to 13. The true believers in Isa, were Muslims. Those who believe in Isa as a son of God or God are infidels.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The incoherent recording of the events of Isa's crucifixion, burial and resurrection in the New Testament, proves that the whole story had been fabricated to suit the doctrines of the Christian church. Paul had distorted the true faith of Isa to accommodate Roman paganism. Their story should be judged in the light of the following analysis:

- (1) Those who came to arrest Isa, in the darkness of night, had never seen his face.
- (2) It was Judas who, standing beside Isa, identified him.
- (3) Judas' features were very much like Isa's.
- (4) As the light was very dim, their faces could not be seen clearly.
- (5) The soldiers were afraid of the people, who certainly would have started a struggle at any moment and made their task difficult, so they were in a great hurry.
- (6) It was Judas who was crucified.
- (7) The crucified body was brought down from the cross in the early hours of dawn.
- (8) The disciples ran away from the scene and did not witness the burial.
- (9) The grave, in which the crucified body was buried, was found empty.
- (10) The only witness of the resurrection was Mary Magdalene whose versions, given in the four gospels, differ from each other. In some, she was there when Isa rose from the grave; and in some, when she approached the grave, she was told by another unknown witness that her Lord was raised to heaven.
- (11) Isa was seen by the disciples after the resurrection

It is a fact that it was not Isa who was crucified. He was saved. His disciples gave currency to the

idea of his crucifixion so that the Jews remained assured of his death, else they would have gone in his pursuit. The Roman soldiers also kept quiet in order to avoid the blame of killing a wrong person and also the certain punishment for not executing Isa. As Sale has observed in his above noted explanation, the early Christians did not believe in Isa's crucifixion.

All the Muslims, in the light of this and other verses of the Quran, do not give any credence to the false story of Isa's crucifixion and resurrection, fabricated by the Christian church.

Tawaffa (to take away), *tahar* (to purify), *raf-a* (to raise) and *nuzul* (to descend) are the four effects of the divine will in connection with Isa, out of which the first three have already taken place and the fourth is expected to happen, before the final resurrection. The religion of Allah shall triumph over all other religions and creeds. The light of truth shall enlighten the world, and a perfect human society shall be established before the world comes to an end. This is His promise. If *tawaffa* means death, then also there should be no doubt in the mind of a believer about Isa's *nuzul* because, as said in verses 258 to 260 of al Baqarah, Allah can give life to the dead or raise up any dead living being to life. In the opinion of Shaykh Saduq, this explanation is more credible.

If *tawaffa* means departure from this world without dying, then his *nuzul* will be re-appearance after his temporary disappearance, similar to Imam Muhammad al Mahdi, who is living on the earth as a necessary link between man and God, while Isa has been raised up unto Allah. So Isa has no jurisdiction in the matters of this world, whereas Imam Mahdi is the sole deputy of Allah to look after and take care of the terrestrial affairs. When both of them shall re-appear Isa shall follow the leadership of Imam al Mahdi.

{ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَأَعَذَّبْنَاهُمْ عَذَابًا شَدِيدًا فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ } 56

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:56]

Those who disbelieved in Isa and those who disbelieved in the Holy Prophet shall be severely punished and there will be no helpers to save them from the hell-fire. It implies that there are some approved intercessors (Muhammad and ali Muhammad) who will help and save those believers who remain attached with them.

{ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ } 57

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:57]

Allah does not love the unjust which includes usurpers, tyrants, and those who associate partners with Allah. Those who persecuted and killed the children of the Holy Prophet are also in the category of unjust usurpers and tyrants.

{ ذَلِكَ نَتْلُوهُ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ } 58

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:58]

The miracles manifested through Isa and other prophets are the signs of Allah.

Dhikr (reminder) is a name given to the Quran. Also refer to Nahl: 43 and Anbiya: 7.

Hakim means wise. The book of all-wise Allah is free from imperfection, incredibility and conjecture. It is wrapped up in wisdom.

{إِنَّ مَثَلَ عِيسَىٰ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ آدَمَ ۖ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ } 59

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:59]

The Christians of Najran came to the Holy Prophet and asked him as to why he had been abusing Jesus (Isa) by saying that he was a man created by God, when he was born without a father. The Holy prophet told them that he could not abuse Isa as he was the "word of Allah" communicated through a purified virgin, Maryam, but the reason (birth of a man without a father) put forward by them to accept him as a son of God or God was untenable because Allah created Adam without a father and a mother.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The process of creation has been discussed in verses 6 and 37 of this surah according to which Allah's will is the principal factor in the process of creation. The birth of Isa to a virgin mother, without a male partner, was an immediate effect of His will, manifested to the world as a miracle, just as the birth of Adam took place without the agency of a father and a mother. When He wills a thing to "be", it becomes. Even in the theory of evolution there comes a stage, while backtracking, when one has to accept the fact that a living being must have come into being without the agency of a sexual procedure. Whatever once happened in the process of creation can take place any time, may be once in a great while but not altogether impossible. There are several examples in nature, which are inexplicable through any law known to man. The only explanation, as the Quran points out, is the imperative word of Allah. As has been stated in the commentary of verse 6 of this surah, the hand of Allah is visible in the working of the whole universe.

The likeness of Isa with Allah is as the likeness of Adam. Therefore, as the Christian church argues, if Isa was a son of God because he was born without a father, Adam deserved more to be God or son of God as he came into being without a father and a mother .

The creation of Isa has been compared to the creation of Adam, the first human being. There would be no point in comparing Isa to a (universal) man as the Ahmadi commentator conveys has been done in this verse.

{الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكَ فَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْمُمْتَرِينَ } 60

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:60]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In this verse the people (the whole mankind) is addressed through the Holy Prophet.

That which has been said in the preceding verse is the truth. A general principle has been laid down that Allah is the absolute truth. The material aspects of nature, known to us, are unable to explain every thing. The truth which proceeds from the absolute truth should be accepted as true, otherwise the unusual events in the working of creation will lead to confusion and doubt.

{فَمَنْ حَاجَّكَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَعْنَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ } 61

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:61]

This verse refers to the well-known event of *mubahilah* mentioned in every book of history, traditions and *tafsir* written by Muslim scholars.

The Holy Prophet was sending invitations to all to accept the true religion of Allah. Tribe after tribe, region after region, were coming into the fold of Islam. One such invitation was sent to the

Christians of Najran, a town in Yemen, in the 9th year of Hijra. A deputation of 60 scholars came to discuss the matter with the Holy Prophet. Abdul Masih, the chief monk, asked him as to who was the father of Isa, thinking that the Holy Prophet would accept (God as the father of Isa. Verse 59 of this surah was revealed and presented to the Christians as a reply but they did not listen to reason. Then this verse was revealed to call them to a spiritual contest by invoking the curse of Allah on the liars *mubahilah*. The Christians agreed to this contest.

Early next morning, the 24th of the month of Dhilhijjah, the Holy Prophet sent Salman to the selected site, outside the city area, to set up a shelter for those whom he would take with him, as his sons, women and selves.

A large number of companions assembled in the *masjid*, making themselves available for the selection. On the opposite side of the field, selected for the contest, the Christians, with their selected men, women and children appeared on the scene.

At the appointed hour, a huge crowd, standing in wait, saw the Holy Prophet coming in, Imam Husayn in his arms, Imam Hasan holding his index finger, walking beside him, Bibi Fatimah Zahra, close to his heels and Imam Ali just behind her-as his sons, women, and selves. It should be noted that although there was provision for "women" and "selves" the Holy Prophet selected one "woman" and one "self"-Fatimah and Ali, because there was no woman and no man among his followers at that time who could be brought into the contest of invoking the curse of Allah on the liars. They alone were the truthful ones. (see commentary of al Tawbah: 119).

The Holy Prophet raised his hands to the heaven and said:

"O my Lord! These are the people of my house".

The chief monk looked up and down at the faces of the Pure Five (*Panjatan Pak*), from whom emanated a radiant and brilliant glow; and this sight filled him with awe and anguish. He cried out aloud:

"By Jesus! I see the faces that if they turn upward to the heavens and pray, the mountains shall move. Believers in Jesus of Nazareth, I tell you the truth. Should you fail to come to some agreement with Muhammad, he, along with the godly souls with him, shall wipe out your existence for ever, should they invoke the curse of God on you."

The Christians saw the wisdom of their chief and readily agreed to arrive at a settlement. As there is no compulsion in religion (Baqarah 256), the Holy Prophet gave them complete freedom to practise their faith. He also agreed to protect their lives and possessions; and for this service the Christians consented to pay a nominal fee (*Jizya*). It was an extraordinary manifestation of the glory of Islam; therefore, the followers of Muhammad and ali Muhammad celebrate this unique blessings of Allah (bestowed on the Ahl ul Bayt) as a "thanksgiving" occasion of great joy and comfort.

Many Muslim scholars, commentators and traditionists whom the *ummah* acclaim with one voice, have given the details of this event with following conclusions:

(1) The seriousness of the occasion demanded absolute purity, physical as well as spiritual, to take part in the fateful event.

(2) Only the best of Allah's creations (the Ahl ul Bayt) were selected by the Holy Prophet under Allah's guidance.

(3) It, beyond all doubts, established the purity, the truthfulness and the sublime holiness of the Ahl ul Bayt.

(4) It also unquestionably confirmed as to who were the members of the family of the Holy Prophet.

(References:-Mahmud bin Umar Zamakhshari in al Khashshaf; Fakhr al Din al Razi in Tafsir

Kabir; Jalal al Din al Suyuti in Tafsir Durr al Manthur; Tafsir Baydawi; Tafsir Nafsi; Tafsir Ibna Kathir; Sahih al Muslim and Sahih al Tirmidhi.)

A very large number of Muslims (and also nonmuslims) witnessed the contest and came to know that Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn were the "Ahlul Bayt" addressed in verse 33 of al Ahzab, known as *ayah al tat-hir* or the verse of purification.

In this verse, the divine command allows the Holy prophet to take with him "sons", "women" and "selves"; therefore, had there been "women" and "selves" worthy to be selected for this symbolic contest, among his companions, he would certainly have selected them, but as it was seen by one and all, only Fatimah and Ali (and their two sons) were chosen, because none of the anxiously waiting companions (among whom were the three caliphs and the wives of the Holy Prophet) was truthful or so thoroughly purified as to deserve selection for an event which was divinely decreed in order to also make known the true successors of the Holy Prophet.

The word *anfus* is the plural of *nafs* which means soul or self. When used in relation to an individual, it implies another being of the same identity with complete unity in equality; therefore, one is the true reflection of the other in thought, action and status, to the extent that at any occasion or for any purpose, any one of them can represent the other. Even if the word *nafs* is interpreted as "the people", it is clear that Ali alone is "the people" of the Holy Prophet.

After the departure of the Holy Prophet, within a year, the symbolic event of *mubahilah* was ignored by his followers. The house of Fatimah was set on fire. A well-known companion kicked the door of her house which fell on her. The injury caused by the falling door finally killed her. In view of the following saying (Sahih Bukhari-Vol. 2, page 206) of the Holy Prophet her killer stands condemned for ever:

"Fatimah is my flesh and blood, whoso causes suffering to her in fact causes suffering to me. He who has pained me in fact has pained Allah; and, indeed, he is a disbeliever", said the Holy Prophet in the light of verse 57 of al Ahzab.

It happened when a large crowd under the leadership of the above said companion came to arrest Ali ibna abi Talib, the *nafs* of the Holy Prophet, his brother, his vicegerent and his successor, who was deprived of his rightful mission to administer the affairs of the *ummah*, after the Holy Prophet, so as to enable some to distort and corrupt the true religion of Allah and utilise its name to enforce tyranny, injustice and ignorance of the pagan days. Finally Ali was killed in the *masjid* of Kufa when he was praying the *fajr salat*. Imam Hasan was killed by a deadly poison administered by a woman hired by Mu-awiyah bin Abu Sufyan. Imam Husayn, along with his friends and relatives, was killed in the desert of Karbala, by the army of Yazid bin Mu-awiyah, and the ladies and the children of the house of the Holy Prophet were held captive, taken from town to town, tortured and harassed. The body of the martyred Imam was left unburied for several days. The perpetrators of this tyranny and injustice were those who had seen with their own eyes Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn going to the contest with the Holy Prophet as his sons on the day of *mabahilah*.

The followers of the Ahlul Bayt are on the path of truth, and their enemies are the upholders of falsehood, but strangely so, those who follow the true path are described as dissenters, and on this basis have been harassed, persecuted and killed by those who denied, belied and ignored not only the *ayah al mabahilah* and *ayah al tat-hir* but also many such verses of the Quran and clear traditions of the Holy Prophet. The followers of the Ahl ul Bayt have been suffering death and destruction on account of their adherence to the true path, at the hands of the enemies of the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt, yet they never give up their faith because neither they longed for

worldly possessions nor they feared death and destruction, in the true tradition of their Imams.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

(1) When reason and facts failed to convince the opponents, the medium of *mubahilah* (prayer to curse the liars) had to be used. It was a test of the truthfulness of the persons chosen to establish the truth and carry out the divine mission.

(2) The nearest and the dearest have to be exposed to danger.

(3) The nearest and the dearest of a prophet (who has devoted himself and whatever belonged to him to Allah and has been purified from all likes and dislikes based upon self interest, mundane desires and carnal passions) must naturally be of his class and quality in devotion and purification.

(4) According to verse 46 of al Ahzab the Holy Prophet was a summoner unto Allah by His permission; therefore, it was not his choice but Allah's will to summon a certain class of people to invoke the curse of Allah on the liars.

(5) Right from the commencement of his mission to the last moment of his departure from this world, the Holy Prophet called only Ali on all important occasions.

(a) He called the ten year old Ali at the time of making known his mission.

(b) At the time of inviting his tribe to the worship of one Allah, it was the thirteen year old Ali who gave answer to the call of the last prophet of Allah.

(c) At the time of migration from Makka to Madina, he called Ali and asked him to lie down on his bed to face his enemies, who had planned to kill him during that night, and Ali wholeheartedly agreed to give his life to save the messenger of Allah.

(d) It was Ali, who was designated, as his executor of will, to return the deposits entrusted by the residents of Makka to the *al-amin* prophet after the Holy Prophet migrated to Madina.

(e) In the battle of Badr, Ali was asked by him to fight and repulse the hordes of enemy soldiers when many of his companions were quietly watching the fighting from a safe distance.

(f) In the battle of Uhud, when the enemy had an upper hand and the danger to the Holy Prophet's life was imminent, because all his companions had run away from the battlefield and disappeared, it was Ali who stood by the Holy Prophet and brought to naught all the plans of the enemy.

(g) In the battle of Khundaq, Ali was called, as the embodiment of faith to fight against the incarnation of disbelief, Amr bin Abdwud, to win victory for the disheartened Muslims.

(h) In Khaybar, when all the companions of the Holy Prophet tried and failed to subdue the enemy, Ali was called to come to the rescue of the deficient and depressed Muslims and conquer the fort of Khaybar single-handedly.

(i) At the time of going to Tabuk, the Holy Prophet designated Ali, as his vicegerent, to take charge of the affairs in Madina, saying that Ali was to him as Harun was to Musa.

(j) Ali was called to preach the verses of al Barat which contain complete disassociation from idolatry, because only he or the Holy Prophet, according to the command of Allah, were competent to convey them to the people (on account of exact similarity or equality between the two). So Ali went to Makka and relieved Abu Bakr who had earlier been sent to do this job.

Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn, the four thoroughly purified members of the chosen group, were the "selves" of the Holy Prophet, but Hasan and Husayn, the two sons of Ali, as *abna-ana* (sons), and Fatimah, the wife of Ali, as *nisa-ana* (women) and Ali himself as *anfusana* (*selves*) came out to represent the party of Allah. In Sahih Muslim it is mentioned that at the time of coming out from the canopy, the Holy Prophet looked skyward and said:

"O my Lord, these are my Ahl ul Bayt."

Even Ibna Hazm, a staunch advocate of the Umayyid point of view, has stated that at the time of *mubahilah*, only Ali, Fatimah, Hasan and Husayn came out with the Holy Prophet to take part in the contest.

The enemies of the Ahlul Bayt, true to their policy of ignoring the matchless symbolic glory of the Ahlul Bayt, either have not referred to this event at all, or, in order to play down its fundamental role in determining the true faith, have made evasive attempts to give misleading meanings to some of the words of this verse, such as saying that in Arabic literature *nisa* has not been used for daughters. It is obvious that their knowledge about the Quran is very limited. In verses 7 to 11 of al Nisa, *nisa* has been used to refer to daughters. Moreover, Fatimah, in addition to her relationship to the Holy Prophet as his daughter, was also chosen as the wife of Ali, who is the self or soul of the Holy Prophet, in which case the significance of *anfusana* becomes more subtle, because no wife of the other constituent of *anfusana* (the Holy Prophet) was found competent to take part in the spiritual contest. In verse 5 of al Tahrim, the almighty Allah says that if the Holy Prophet divorces his wives, the Lord will give him in their stead, wives better than them, which implies that there were women better than his wives, but there was none better than the "pure five", or even equal to them, who could be chosen to become one of the glorious group selected for the *mubahilah* in spite of the latitude accorded by the plurality permitted by the all-wise Allah. Please refer to the commentary of verse 33 of al Ahzab to ascertain that Umme Salimah and A-isha so much desired to be taken under the blanket but were refused by the Holy Prophet.

If the bat (a flying mammal) does not like the sunlight, never shall the beauty of the sunshine become dim. Likewise, if the enemies of the Ahlul Bayt try to distort the facts of history, they shall never be able to tarnish the ever bright source of enlightenment and glory which shall radiate its divinely endowed splendour till eternity.

In spite of the fact that one woman, one man and two boys were chosen, the plural number is used here, because in this holy house, males and females of the class of this divinely chosen group were born to face the challenge of falsehood in the same manner and style. In Karbala, when falsehood incarnate, in its utmost wickedness, challenged the truth from Allah, Imam Husayn, the surviving member of this group, along with the souls, sons, wives and daughters of this holy house, brought down the curse of Allah upon the liars and their followers, and thus truth won an everlasting victory over falsehood.

In the light of Ahzab: 33, Ali Imran: 61 and Tawbah: 119, Ali ibna abi Talib has said:

I am the *sidiq al akbar* (the greatest truthful). I am the *faruq al azam* (the greatest distinguisher between truth and falsehood). He who claims any of these titles (other than me) is the greatest liar.

There was no genuine *sidiq al akbar* among the Holy Prophet's companions (save Ali), otherwise he would have been selected to accompany him at the time of *mubahilah*.

Ali was ten years old at the commencement of the Holy Prophet's mission and thirteen at the time of *dawat al ashira*, and on the occasion of *mubahilah*, Imam Hasan was six and Imam Husayn was five years old, yet the Lord commanded his messenger to select them for His cause and purpose as He had found in these particular children that which He had noticed in Isa, because of which He

bestowed prophethood on him and gave him the book and the wisdom when he was but a baby in the cradle. Although, ordinarily, intellectual maturity, which does not develop fully in children, is essential to shoulder any kind of responsibility, the

{إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْقَصَصُ الْحَقُّ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ} 62

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:62]

Isa was like Adam, a prophet of Allah created by Him. He was neither God nor a son of God. There is no god save Allah. Whoso turns away, even after these exhortations and arguments, is a mischief-maker. Rejection of the evidences and repudiation of the doctrine of monotheism (there is no god save Allah) constitute corruption of religion and faith.

{فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ} 63

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:63] (see commentary for verse 62)

{فُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ} 64

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:64]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The Holy Prophet, while preaching the truth, adhered to the policy of peace and rational adjustment with the non-Muslims. The original scriptures of the Jews and the Christians also preached monotheism. See commentary of al Baqarah: 255. Even the corrupted editions of the Old and the New Testaments contain the truth in Exodus 20: 1 to 4; Deut 6: 4; Isaiah 42: 8, 44: 6-45: 5, 18, 21, 22-48: 12; (1) Corinthians 8: 4, 6; Ephesians 4: 5, 6. The worship of human-gods crept into their religion when they began to consider their rabbis and monks and Isa to be as gods, apart from Allah (see Tawbah: 30 and 31). Therefore, in this verse, the Jews and the Christians are invited to agree to worship none save Allah and not to associate anything with Him, which is a common doctrine between them and the Muslims. If they do not agree, the Muslims have been asked not to accommodate them in any way, since their false faith could contaminate the pure monotheism that the Muslims believe in and hold dear to their hearts.

From the beginning of this chapter the Quran refers to the unity of God (*tawhid*), not only as the creator but also as the absolute sovereign of all that has been created by Him (and everything has been created by Him), unto whose legislative will all have to submit. Every one must obey Him, revere Him, and worship Him.

All the created beings, on the earth and in the heavens and in between them (may be some of them are superior to others) are His slaves, servants and subordinates. To associate any thing, in any way, as a separate authority, with Him is polytheism (*shirk*). "There is no god save Allah" is the divine declaration. All the followers of the heavenly scriptures have been commanded, after giving undeniable proofs that all the prophets including Musa and Isa were the created beings, to base their views and doctrines on this fundamental principle. The views and the theories laid down by any individual or by a group of individuals, concerning the truth, have no value at all. Adherence to such views and doctrines, replacing the divine declarations, means choosing others as an authority besides Allah. "The religion with Allah is Islam" (see verse 19 of this surah) is the final divine announcement, after which there is no room for the controversies which have created many schools of thought, contradictory and hostile to each other, among the followers of the prophets. If all the followers of the prophets had kept intact the revealed books, and held fast to the true teachings of the messengers of Allah, instead of lending ear to the conjectural theorising of the rabbis and the priests,

there would have not been so many dissenting divisions.

Some followers of the Holy Prophet also ignored the teachings of the Quran and the declaration of the Holy Prophet regarding his Ahl ul Bayt and have gone astray, because they have turned to others, instead of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, for the truth, although the truth had been made clear by the Holy Prophet (see commentary of Ma'idah: 67). To rely on others and ignore the messenger of Allah is to obey a *ghayrallah* (other than Allah), which is *shirk*. Here it must be kept in mind that to pay respect, love, or adore those who, in obedience and submission to Allah, are acclaimed as models or ideals, is in itself obedience and submission to Allah. Remembrance or commemoration of such godly servants of Allah serves the purpose of service and devotion to Allah, as has been stated in verses 48 and 49 of al Sad. The surest way to worship and obey Allah is to follow the teachings and directions given by His prophets, messengers, and their appointed successors (please refer to verses 69 and 80 of al Nisa). But if they are held in esteem more or less than that which Allah has determined for them, or some other individuals are given the same status without any divine declaration, then it is like taking others to be gods apart from Allah (Tawbah: 3)

{يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِي إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَا أُنزِلَتِ التَّوْرَةُ وَالْإِنْجِيلُ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ } 65

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:65]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Judaism and Christianity were instituted after the revelation of the Tawrah and the Injil to Musa and Isa respectively, whereas, according to the Quran, the religion of Allah, Islam, was preached and practised by all His prophets from Adam to Muhammad. From the beginning of the world to its end, Islam (total submission to the will of Allah) remains to be the only religion of Allah. Therefore to argue whether Ibrahim was a Jew or a Christian is a meaningless dispute between the two religions conjured out after centuries and centuries of Ibrahim's time. According to Baqarah: 128 and Hajj: 78. Ibrahim and his descendants were Muslims. Islam is the universal religion. All His prophets and their true followers were Muslims.

Badshah Husain, in his English translation of the Quran, writes as under;

The Jewish belief is also difficult to define. Time was when it was grossly anthropomorphic and 'monolatros' (as Charles expressively calls it). The Yahweh was only the tribal God of Israel, the gods of other nations were not false, but it was the duty of Israelites to reject them. As culture extended, the other gods began to be denied and Yahweh remained the sole Lord and anthropomorphism also decreased and explanations were devised to interpret passages in the Pentateuch that spoke of God as walking in the gardens, fighting duels with men and the like. (Vol. II p. 53)

The Jews and the Christians dispute about the identity of the Holy Prophet whose advent has been clearly mentioned in the Tawrat and the Injil, of which they are fully aware. They do not know anything about the religion of Ibrahim, yet they, out of ignorance, say that he was a Jew or a Christian, whereas only Allah knows that he was a Muslim, neither a Jew nor a Christian. Whoso has submitted to the will of Allah, at any time and in any age, is a Muslim. To every people a prophet had been sent to preach Islam (submission to Allah) but each successive dispensation had been abused by its votaries, who in the course of time had turned aside from the true religion of Allah. It was the mission of the Holy Prophet to re-affirm, complete and perfect the religion of Allah in its minutest details, and

make arrangements to let it prevail in all ages for all times to come, through the final book of Allah (the Quran), his Ahl ul Bayt and his way of life (*sunnah*).

{ هَا أَنْتُمْ هُوَ لَاءِ حَاجَبْتُمْ فِيمَا لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلِمَ تُحَاجُّونَ فِيمَا لَيْسَ لَكُمْ بِهِ عِلْمٌ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ } 66

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:66] (see commentary for verse 65)

{ مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا وَلَكِنْ كَانَ حَنِيفًا مُسْلِمًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ } 67

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:67] (see commentary for verse 65)

{ إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ } 68

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:68]

The nearest of men to Ibrahim were surely those who followed him and his religion. Nearness takes effect through faithful following, not because of relationship, and that is why the son of Nuh has been condemned (Hud: 45, 46). Ali ibna abi Talib has also said that the nearest to the Holy Prophet is he who obeys Allah, though he may not be related to him, and the enemy of the Holy Prophet is he who disobeys Allah, though he may be related to him. Imam Ali bin Husayn al Zayn al Abidin has said: "Paradise is for the pious, be he a slave; and hell is for the wicked, be he a Quraysh (relative of the Holy Prophet)." And that which was applicable to Ibrahim is applicable to the Holy Prophet and those who believe as the Holy Prophet believes. It must be noted that obedience to Allah is not possible unless one obeys the Holy Prophet, and those whom the Holy Prophet has designated to be obeyed, his beloved Ahl ul Bayt. Those who watched the Holy Prophet, fighting his enemies in the battles, from a safe distance, as if having no interest in the outcome of the war, so as to change sides at will and join the winners, or at least run away from the scene of conflict to save their lives and properties, can never be included among the "men nearest to the Holy Prophet"; as also those who opposed and killed his Ahlul Bayt. They are the worst hypocrites, his hidden enemies.

{ وَدَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ لَوْ يُضِلُّوكُمْ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ } 69

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:69]

Not content with their own corruption, some of the Jews had the ambition of seducing the Muslims, but their tricks had redounded upon themselves. It is reported that the Jews had approached Ammar Yasir and other faithful followers of the Holy Prophet to become Jews; however they not only turned down their offer but also kept them at arm's length.

{ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَأَنْتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ } 70

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:70]

Islam awakens conscience and invites man to use reason for believing in the signs of Allah so that he finds out the truth.

{ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَلْبِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ وَتَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ } 71

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:71]

The Jews and the Christians knew the truth about the unity of God (Exodus: 20: 1 to 4; Deut 6: 4; Isaiah 42: 8; 44: 6; 45: 5, 18, 21, 22; 48:12; (1) Corinthians 8: 4, 6; Esphesians 4: 5, 6) and the promised advent of the Holy Prophet (Acts 3: 22 to 24; Deut 18: 18,19; John 14: 16, 17, 26; 16: 7 to

14) mentioned in their own books, yet they deliberately confounded the truth with falsehood.

Also refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 40,41, 42.

{وَقَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ آمَنُوا بِالَّذِي أُنزِلَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَجَهِ النَّهَارِ وَانكُفَرُوا آخِرَهُ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ } 72

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:72]

It was the policy of the Jews to make a show of belief for a short space of time and then in no time renounce their belief in it, so as to confuse the simple-minded people. Instances of such mendacious conduct are not unknown to Jewish history, but their intrigues to hoodwink the believers never succeeded.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The books of traditions and theology written under the patronage of the Muslim rulers (usurpers of the rights of the Ahlul Bayt) also follow the above noted strategy to lower the glorious merits of the Ahl ul Bayt in the sight of unwary people. They narrate some sayings of the Holy Prophet praising the Ahl ul Bayt to first establish their impartiality, then immediately add spurious traditions to belittle the merit they had reported. Many a so-called impartial orientalist also praises Islam to conceal the venom which is injected shrewdly within the lines.

{وَلَا تُؤْمِنُوا إِلَّا لِمَنْ تَبِعَ دِينَكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْهُدَىٰ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُؤْتَىٰ أَحَدٌ مِثْلَ مَا أُوتِينُمْ أَوْ يُحَاجُّوكُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّكُمْ قُلْ إِنَّ الْفَضْلَ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ } 73

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:73] *Fadl* implies knowledge and wisdom or prophethood. Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 269.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The true grammatical construction is to take the sentence "Do not believe in any but those who follow your religion" as the supplementary to the sentence of the preceding verse 72 (from "believe in" to "may return.") The supplementary clause makes known that the doctrine followed by the Jews is false, therefore, such tricks would not avail anything. They who receive guidance, receive it from Allah; none is able to mislead them. He guides whom He wills to the right faith (as He has given guidance to the people of the book) and also establishes His rightly guided chosen representatives therein so that they can argue against the people of the book before the Lord.

{يَخْتَصُّ بِرَحْمَتِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ } 74

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:74]

In this verse "mercy" implies prophethood, Islam or revelations (of the Quran)..

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Man yasha-Some commentators infer that Allah's blessings are bestowed without taking merits into consideration, but, although His will is not at all restricted by any condition, it cannot be denied that His wisdom and justice, which permeate His will, do not let arbitrariness prevail.

{وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بِقِنطَارٍ يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ إِنْ تَأْمَنَهُ بدينارٍ لَا يُؤَدِّهِ إِلَيْكَ إِلَّا مَا دُمْتَ عَلَيْهِ قَائِمًا ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا لَيْسَ عَلَيْنَا فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ سَبِيلٌ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ } 75

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:75]

Even among the Jews were some whose honesty and integrity has been acknowledged. Such Jews eventually embraced Islam. The discharge of a trust, as has also been underlined in Nisa: 58,

Muminun: 8 and Ahzab: 72, is so emphasised in Islam that it is admired even in the enemies of the faith. Whatever faculties man possesses is an endowment entrusted to him by Allah, therefore, he must use them to fulfil His will and command. All contracts, pacts and treaties, made between men, whether political, economic or social, should be treated as a sacred trust and discharged according to the terms of the agreed covenant. Whoever keeps his pledge and fulfils his engagement to his fellow-creatures is exactly like he who keeps his covenant with Allah. Due to this quality the Holy Prophet was known as *al amin*, the trustworthy, even before he publicly made known his divine mission. His worst enemies used to deposit their valuables with him. At the time of leaving Makka, he handed over the deposits to Ali who returned them to the depositors on his behalf.

After the fall of Makka, he entered the city and took the keys of the Ka-bah from its custodian, and after removing the idols, returned the keys to him, saying that all the customs and regulations of the pagan days had been cancelled by Islam save the fulfilment of trusts. According to the Holy Prophet, a man who prays, fasts and behaves like a believer, but lies when he talks, breaks his promises and cheats if trusted, is in fact a hypocrite.

"There is no reproach attaching to us in the matter of those who are not of our race and faith; we owe no duty to them", sums up the attitude of the Jews towards other nations. As has been rightly observed by Hastings' "Dictionary of the Bible", the Jews were enemies of the human race, and the tendency of the Christians was no better. It is Islam, as explained above, which does not discriminate among people on account of religion, creed or faith but declares that telling the truth, fulfilling the promise and discharging the trust (whoever may be concerned) are the principal requisites of piety. *Qintar* is much property heaped up or maximum measurement of gold.

Dinar is the minimum measurement (unit) of gold.

{بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَوْفَىٰ بِعَهْدِهِ وَاتَّقَىٰ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ} 76

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:76]

As stated in the preceding verse fulfilment of a covenant is a quality of the pious whom Allah loves

It also refers to the covenant the Holy Prophet obtained from his followers at Ghadir Khum-"Of whomsoever I am the *mawla* (lord master) Ali is his *mawla*." (See commentary of al Ma-idah: 67).

Bayat, or allegiance to the Holy Prophet, or acceptance of his order is a covenant with Allah. Those who turned on their heels, or deserted him in the hour of need, or wilfully ignored his declaration, have actually broken the covenant made with Allah. The books of Islamic history clearly mention the names of such persons.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَشْتَرُونَ بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَيْمَانِهِمْ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا أُولَٰئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلَا يُزَكِّيهِمْ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} 77

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:77]

Those who break the covenant made with Allah and His Holy Prophet will have no share in the rewards to be given on the day of judgement; nor will Allah speak to them or look at them (pay attention to their repentance), nor will He purify them-a grievous punishment awaits them which will torment them for ever. Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 174.

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلُؤُونَ أَلْسِنَتَهُمْ بِالْكِتَابِ لِتَحْسَبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَقُولُونَ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَيَقُولُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ {78}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:78] *Yalwuna alsinatahum*-corrupting the correct recital of the book by tongue twisting (with an evil motive to distort the true meanings of the words) was resorted to by the Jews and the Christians to pervert and mutilate the Tawrat and the Injil.

When the half-hearted believers and the hypocrites began to write the Quran, they relied upon the seven different types of recitations which were in vogue in those days, but only Ali and the Ahl ul Bayt knew the correct pronunciation of each word of the book of Allah. It was Ali who was with the Holy Prophet from the beginning of the revelation of the book, and therefore rightly claimed that he alone knew why, when and for whom every verse of the book was revealed. In view of the sayings of the Holy Prophet, mentioned on pages 5 and 6, Ali's claim has never been challenged by any companion of the Holy Prophet, or any of the scholars who follow them as their leaders. Ali and the Ahlul Bayt made it certain that none should distort the true meaning of any verse of the Quran, since the people of the book had bartered Allah's covenant and their oaths at a small price for limited interests, and, after making additions and omissions of their own, falsely claimed that they were from Allah.

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِي مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَكِنْ كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ {79}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:79]

Isa, as a prophet, did not teach people to worship him or to make him as co-equal with Allah in any sense of the word. Every prophet of Allah invited people to follow him to obey Allah, and surely not to worship his self. It is a false accusation and slander to say that any of the prophets had asked people to deify them. *Rabbaniyyina* (root is *rabb*) means those highly learned holy men who are wholly devoted to the Lord, and possess the wisdom of the Lord. Abu Rafi, one of the elders of the Jews of Najran, asked the Holy Prophet:

"Do you invite us to worship you?"

The Holy Prophet answered, "I take refuge with Allah, neither I worship any god save Allah, nor I ask any one to worship any god save Allah".

According to Minhaj al Sadiqin and Umdatul Bayan when the Holy Prophet completed his reply this verse was revealed.

Not only the pagans but also the early Christian church indulged in angel-worship.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Allah had made some of the prophets to excel others (Baqarah: 253), but all of them were the obedient servants of Allah because they were created beings, subordinate to His will and command. People are advised to put into practice the divine commands mentioned in the book which the prophets of Allah used to preach, and reflect the lessons they taught, in letter and spirit, in their deeds.

That which has been said in these two verses is fully incorporated in Islam, submission to the will of Allah, so it is a warning to the followers of the Holy Prophet also.

{وَلَا يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تَتَّخِذُوا الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ أَرْبَابًا أَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِالْكُفْرِ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ {80}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:80] (see commentary for verse 79)

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَا آتَيْنُكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:81]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Mithaq (covenant) in this verse refers to an individual's accountability for his actions. It is argued by some commentators that wherever *mithaq* is used in the Quran reference is made to the era prior to the existence of man in general and the prophets in particular. As there is no possibility of retaining any kind of conscious state prior to the physical birth of man, this assumption will be discussed when *ruh* (soul) and *nafs* (self) are dealt with.

Whatever is the grammatical implication (whether the phrase *lima* or *lama* is relative or conditional) the meaning remains as under:

Allah had made a covenant with each of His prophets, as an individual and as the leader of his respective followers (saying)-that which I have given you of the book and wisdom, (and) when a prophet will come to you confirming that which is with you, you shall surely believe in him and help him. All the prophets accepted the conditions of the covenant and promised and witnessed that their followers will carry out the terms of the covenant. This promise was fulfilled by every prophet concerning his succeeding prophet (and every succeeding prophet confirmed his predecessor), so all the prophets and their followers have to believe in the last prophet and help him. A true follower of Musa should fulfil the covenant Musa made with his Lord by believing in Isa; likewise a true follower of Isa should fulfil the covenant Isa made with his Lord by believing in Muhammad. If the Jews and the Christians do not believe in the last prophet of Allah, they render the covenant, Musa and Isa made with the Lord of worlds, null and void. They will be punished for breaking the covenant, not Musa and Isa, who fulfilled their promise in letter and spirit. Please refer to the commentary of al Ma-idah: 67 for the last covenant Allah took from the Muslims through the Holy Prophet about the *wilayah* (authority) of Ali ibna abi Talib at Ghadir Khum. It was the last divine guidance made available to man through the grace of the merciful Lord, so that an Imam after Imam, in the progeny of Ali, should guide mankind in every age till the day of resurrection.

Every human being perceives his coming into the conscious state from an insensitive condition through the agency of an active will, dominating him and his environment, which stimulates natural submission. In these verses (preceding and succeeding) the Quran introduces the universal religion (based upon reason and facts) prescribed for mankind which not only awakens positive response but also demolishes the myths fabricated by the Jews, the Christians and the pagans.

The old and the New Testaments, though not the original Tawrat and Injil (see "The Tawrat" and "The Injil" at the end of al Ma-idah), yet contain enough material to establish the fact that Musa and Isa fulfilled their covenant made with Allah. See Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18, 19; Acts 3: 22 to 24, 7: 37; John 1: 19 to 21; 14: 16, 17; 15: 26; 16: 7 to 14. (Text of these have been mentioned in the commentary of al Baqarah: 40). The advent of the Holy Prophet had been made known in clear words by Musa and Isa. In John 1: 19 to 21, it is stated that when Levites asked John the Baptist who he was, he confessed that he was not the Messiah nor Elijah. "Are you the prophet we await?" "No", he said. It shows that the people remembered the prophecies about the last prophet made by the previous prophets, and eagerly awaited his advent.

In John 14: 16, 17; 15: 26 and 16: 7 to 14, Isa refers to the Holy Prophet as comforter and spirit of truth, who will guide mankind into all truth. And "who will be with you for ever" implies that there shall always be a representative of him (his flesh and blood) on the earth, identical to him in purity (Ahzab: 33), who will carry out his mission.

The Holy Prophet has said:
The first of us is Muhammad,
the middle of us is Muhammad,
the last of us is Muhammad,
everyone of us is Muhammad.

In every age, one of his sons (his descendant), in the progeny of Ali and Fatimah, will guide mankind as an Imam of the time till the day of resurrection. The Holy Prophet, Ali, Fatimah and the eleven holy Imams are of the one and the same divine light, manifesting the glory of the Lord of the worlds.

A sincere seeker of truth, in his quest, comes to the conclusion that the divine source of guidance is Muhammad al Mustafa, the last prophet of Allah, and the Imams among his Ahl ul Bayt, whom the merciful Allah has particularly chosen to show the path of love, harmony and salvation to mankind.

{فَمَنْ تَوَلَّى بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ} 82

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:82]

After the covenant, so solemnly made and witnessed, whoever does not believe in the Holy Prophet (whose advent had been foretold by all the prophets of Allah) is an infidel.

{أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ} 83

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:83]

All things in nature, whether celestial or terrestrial, bow down to His decrees and submit to His (physical) laws-so exalted is He ! His religion alone is worthy of acceptance.

According to the Holy Prophet, those who willingly submit to Allah are the angels and his sincere companions.

Those who, in thoughts and deeds, do not consciously submit to Him, have (of necessity) to submit to the laws of nature (enforced by Him) which operate the whole creation in total submission to His will.

Islam is Allah's own religion.

As man is making rapid progress in the field of inquiry and discovery about the laws (made by Allah), governing the universe, the truthfulness of Islam is becoming clearer each day to the man in the street as well as to the intellectual scholar in the cloister. The religions, historically based upon polytheism, are making adjustments to give up idolworship, and introducing the idea of "One God" in theory at least. In social life, caste system has been abolished, women's rights are being incorporated in the constitutions of the countries where they were not allowed to remarry after the death of their husbands, or where there was no way of separation from the tyrannical husbands through divorce, now laws have been enacted to give right of divorce to women. Prohibition (the forbidding of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks), in theory, has been accepted by all the civilised societies. The idea of universal brotherhood, preached by Islam, is being experimented through the United Nations Organisation.

The world is moving towards Islam.

Only if the majority of Muslims review and revise their confused and irrational tendency of

glorifying the usurpers and tyrants, who, from the time of the departure of the Holy Prophet till now, have been terrorising the ruled communities all over the world, in the name of the glory of an ideology (common among all the ruling despots from the beginning of the human society) wrongly proclaimed as Islam, the people belonging to other religions and creeds would not feel uncomfortable or hesitate to come near the true principles of Islam as preached by the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Islam is a universal religion approved by Allah. The celestial as well as the terrestrial beings (all beings) are submissive to Allah. There is no one in the heavens and the earth but comes before Him in all obedience (Maryam: 93). No event in the universe can take place without His creative will. Every living being, in order to please the absolute authority, consciously or subconsciously, follow His legislative will. "Willingly or unwillingly" refers to the conscious or subconscious submission to the will of Allah. The Holy Prophet developed this inherent and natural tendency to mindful awareness. Any religion other than Islam (complete submission to the absolute sovereignty of Allah) shall not be accepted by Him.

قُلْ أَمَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَالنَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ {84}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:84]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 136, 177, 253, 285 and al Nisa: 136, 152. Islam is a universal religion.

{وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ {85}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:85]

Islam, the religion preached by the Holy Prophet is the religion of resignation-submission to the will, the service, and the command of Allah. It has been the religion of all prophets in all climes. Other so-called religions are deviations from it. No religion is acceptable with Allah save Islam, which consists in believing the unity of Allah (*tawhid*) and His justice (*adl*), and accepting the Holy Prophet as the last messenger of Allah and following his teachings, and, after him, following the guidance of his successors from among his Ahl ul Bayt, and believing in the final day of judgement. This path of Islam is the only path of salvation. The idea of individual choice in view of likes and dislikes of certain persons or their deeds and ideologies certainly leads to the path of deviation. Such people will be among the losers on the day of judgement.

{كَيْفَ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ قَوْمًا كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ وَشَهِدُوا أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ حَقٌّ وَجَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ {86}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:86]

Those who, having come to faith (and had borne witness that the messenger, the Holy Prophet, was true), turned away, shall be deprived of inner guidance with which Allah blesses His creatures. In view of the commentary of verse 81 of this surah all the prophets believed in the Holy Prophet, therefore, their followers also must believe in him. Denial of the prophets (succeeding the prophet in whom one believes) is a subversive act tantamount to disbelief (*Kufr*).

87} {أَوْلَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ أَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:87]

For such disbelievers (mentioned in the preceding verse) the requital is the curse of Allah and the angels and of men. They shall live under it for ever, and their agony shall not decrease, nor there will be respite for them. Please note that *la-nat* (cursing the wicked) is an "act of God" therefore, *tabarra*, prescribed by Islam-original (Shiaism) is in full agreement with the divine will and command.

88} {خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يُخَفَّفُ عَنْهُمْ الْعَذَابُ وَلَا هُمْ يُنظَرُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:88] (see commentary for verse 87)

89} {إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَأَصْلَحُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:89]

Sincere repentance followed by efficient improvement is the key to open the doors of forgiveness beyond which a new life, full of promised blessings, awaits the deviators.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Tawba means "return penitently to God" with reference to the creature, and "admit the penitent to God's mercy" with reference to the creator Lord; just as *salat* (with reference to the creature) means bending before the creator Lord to express wants and needs for obtaining fulfilment, and (with reference to the creator Lord) turning towards the supplicant creature to give that which he deserves.

He who does not carry out Allah's command, disobeys Him. It is a sin which earns punishment. Although there are various degrees of disobedience, minor sins lead to major sins. Infidelity (denial of Allah's absolute sovereignty) is the worst sin. Punishment of each sin differs according to its degree. "Verily Allah forgives all sins" (Zumar: 53). Of whatever degree the sin is, if the sinner turns repentantly to Allah, sincerely seeking to amend his ways in future, Allah will admit him to His mercy. *Tawba* is a cleansing procedure to remove ignorance and obstinacy from the heart and the mind and to wipe out the dirt of theoretical and practical "deviation from the right path".

Allah may admit the sinner to His mercy at any time before the punishment comes upon him when no one will come for his help (Zumar: 54); or He may admit the sinner to His mercy if he does evil in ignorance (and) then turn quickly (in repentance) to Allah (Nisa: 17). But repentance is not (profitable) for those who do ill deeds until, when death comes to one of them (Nisa: 18), and shall not benefit them their faith when they see His punishment (Mu-min: 85). The doors of repentance are open till the agony of death overcomes the body.

In Yunus: 98, the removal of punishment at the last moment shows that sincere repentance is effective, but Mu-min: 85 makes it clear that repentance to avoid punishment brings no result. Imam Ali bin Muhammad al Naqi had quoted this verse to give his decision when Mutawakkil referred the case of a Jew who committed adultery with a Muslim woman and recited *kalimah* as soon as he was brought in the court of the ruler. The jurists of the court had wrongly advised him to acquit the Jew on the basis of a tradition which states that when a man becomes a Muslim his past is separated from him. But as, in this case, the Jew accepted Islam to avoid punishment, therefore the holy Imam judged him guilty.

90} {إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بَعْدَ إِيمَانِهِمْ ثُمَّ ازدادوا كُفْرًا لَنْ نَقْبَلَ تَوْبَتَهُمْ وَأَوْلَٰئِكَ هُمُ الضَّالُّونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:90]

Unacceptable is the repentance of those who, having once come to faith, disbelieve and persist in

their apostasy, like the Jews who believed in Musa and the Tawrat but disbelieved in Isa and the Injil, and then continued and aggravated their disbelief by denying the Holy Prophet, or also like those who believed in the Holy Prophet, but after his departure, turned on their heels, went astray and persisted in their deviations. They shall remain unredeemed in spite of their repentance. Also refer to Nisa: 137.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ افْتَدَىٰ بِهِ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ ﴿٩١﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:91]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The rebellious heart and the indifferent attitude toward Allah's laws and commandments, of a disbeliever, render him liable for an everlasting painful punishment, and from him shall not be accepted an earthful of gold if he were to give it in alms in this world to ransom himself from punishment in the hereafter. The decree of punishment for him is final and definite. No amount of charity will be of any use to alleviate the deserved punishment from Allah.

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّىٰ تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٩٢﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:92]

Please refer to al Baqarah: 3, 195, 215, 254. "That which you love" means all that you hold dear and near to your heart. The term covers the spending of one's wealth and possessions and the sacrificing of one's personal significance and pride as well as the shedding of one's blood in the service of Allah. At a time when the religion of Allah and the overall welfare of the human society are in danger of mutilation, a true Muslim (one who has surrendered himself to Allah) acts without any regard to his own interests (selflessness), a hallmark of the truly righteous. The best, the greatest and the most perfect example of "spending that which you love" in the service of Allah was set in Karbala, where Imam Husayn sacrificed his social status, wealth, children, and life in the service of Allah to establish the supremacy of the highest human values without which no human society can survive and progress. In fact it was the Holy Prophet who manifested himself through his grandson, Imam Husayn, to prove his declaration that: "Husayn is from me and I am from Husayn".

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Some passages of the Bible give the impression that the doors of the heavenly kingdom are closed for the rich. It is not true. If a man, be he poor or rich, willingly submits to Allah and spends "that which he loves" in the service of Allah, he becomes entitled to the everlasting bliss of the life of the hereafter.

The Holy Prophet has said:

The wealthy who does not wait to spend in the way of Allah until a needy comes to his door but goes to the abode of the poor to mitigate his suffering is the true God-fearing pious.

There is no restriction or fixation so as to what and how much should be spent in the way of Allah. That which is to be given has to be determined according to the degree of attachment with the commodity. A rich man may not care for the money, he has in abundance, but will not part with some of his belongings he holds near and dear to him, in which case no amount of money, spent in lieu of

the things he loves most, can earn for him the righteousness or virtue referred to in this verse. For how much is to be given (the limit), the example has been set in Karbala by Imam Husayn. It should be noted that *zakat* and *khums*, the minimum prescribed amounts to be given by every Muslim, have not been referred to here. The spending of "that which you love" is optional. The demand made in this verse can be taken up and fulfilled by only a true believer in Allah who alone can selflessly put aside his own interests to give preference to the overall welfare of his fellow beings, which alone brings harmony and social justice in the human society.

كُلُّ الطَّعَامِ كَانَ جَلًا لِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ إِلَّا مَا حَرَّمَ إِسْرَائِيلُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُنَزَّلَ التَّوْرَةُ ۗ قُلْ فَأَتُوا بِالتَّوْرَةِ فَاتْلُوهَا إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ {93}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:93]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The Jews in the Holy Prophet's time were accusing the Muslims of taking certain foods which, they said, had been unlawful since the days of Ibrahim. The Quran denies the charge, and puts the Jews to silence by a reference to their own scripture, the Tawrat. The original law of Musa contained the same prohibitions and permissions, concerning eatables, prescribed by Islam, but the Jews had corrupted the book revealed to Musa and replaced it with fanciful customs, acquired paganish points of view and introduced them in their faith over the years.

Bahimatul an-am (four-footed animals such as goats, sheep, oxen and camels and those like them who eat grass and vegetation) are allowed (Ma-idah: 1) except a few of them (the clawed flesh-eating animals like tigers, lions, cats, dogs- known as *Siba'*), eating of which is not allowed. See books of *fiqh*. According to An-am: 142 to 146 certain parts of the lawful animals were prohibited as a punishment because of the perverse and rebellious attitude of the Jews, otherwise none of the animals which eat grass or vegetation were forbidden even in the law of Musa, but due to the introduction of folklore in their religion, the Jews wrongly presumed that camel and its milk were the forbidden items since the days of Ibrahim. This verse exposes their ignorance.

Islam (submission to Allah's will and command) was the religion of Ibrahim. The Tawrat and the Injil also contained the fundamentals of the true religion of Allah which purify the mind and the body in a practical and harmonious way. The harshness of Judaism and leniency of Christianity are far from the universal truth with reference to actuality.

{فَمَنْ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكُذِبَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ} 94

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:94]

In the preceding verse the ignorance of the Jews in connection with the eating of the lawful animals was pointed out and their point of view was refuted, and in this verse the habit of their criticism, based upon conjecture and heathen influence, is described as fabrication of falsehood by corrupting the words of Allah and His messengers. Whoso follows this tendency of the Jews, be he a Christian or a Muslim, is included among the unjust. Also refer to Saf: 7.

{قُلْ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ ۖ فَاتَّبِعُوا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ} 95

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:95]

Through the Holy Prophet, Allah has made known the truth. The faith of Ibrahim was no other than

Islam. He was the fountainhead of the true faith, the indivisible absolute unity (of Allah) without any separation between (His) entity and (His) attributes (any other belief contrary to this is shirk-polytheism). Also refer to Baqarah: 130, 135.

{إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ } 96

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:96]

See commentary of al Ahzab: 33 for the first house (*awwala baytin*). Also refer to Baqarah: 125, 127 and al Hajj: 29, 33.

Bakka is a variant for Makka, either derived from *tabakk* i.e. press one another in a crowd, or *bakk* i.e. break one's neck, because whenever it was attacked by an invader his neck had been broken-defeated and crushed. Another version is that Bakka means the holy house of Kabah, a guidance unto the worlds.

Mubarakan means rich in blessings; abounding in good.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The great antiquity of this house is undisputed. It had been throughout the ages, even before Ibrahim, the object of the greatest veneration

It is reported on the authority of the Ahl ul Bayt that the valley of Makka was the first part of the earth which emerged above the surface of the water and cooled down when the heavens and the earth (an integrated mass) were split by Allah's command (Anbiya: 30, 31), in support of which there are a number of geological evidences. Many a non-Muslim scholar agrees that this holy place, dedicated to the worship of the Lord of the lords, was not only known to the people of Semitic origin but also to the ancient inhabitants of India according to the references available in pre-Sanskrit literature. Ibrahim's prayer in Ibrahim : 37 confirms its antiquity. In Baqarah: 125 and 129, it is implied that Allah commanded Ibrahim to renew its foundations, purify it and establish it as a place of worship of the almighty Lord, and settle down there along with his family. The family of Ismail was chosen as the first human family to inhabit this land with the sole purpose of dedicating themselves wholly to the worship and the service of the Lord of the worlds. The family of Ismail was the first to be called "the people of the house" (Ahl ul Bayt), then Is-haq and his mother (Hud: 73) and after that Musa and his mother (Qasas: 12) were referred to as Ahl ul Bayt. The term Ahl ul Bayt has been used for the descendants of Ibrahim (the lineage of Ibrahim through Is-haq was cut off after Isa). Actually *al-bayt* (the house) refers to the house of Allah, and the descendants of Isma-il have been referred to as Ahl ul Bayt because they had devoted themselves, without any deviation, gap or drift, to the service of Allah and His house. They were the founders and the protectors of the house of Allah, and it is to their lineage references have been made in verses 36 and 37 of al Nur.

The place they founded and established for the remembrance of Allah has been described as a blessed, sacred sanctuary, and a guidance unto the worlds, because they devoted their lives to its service and attracted mankind to its ultimate purpose through their ideal virtues and righteousness. The house and the people of the house are inseparable. Their house, wherever it may be, is the house of Allah. As they cannot be separated from the Quran (*hadith al thaqalayn*) the house of Allah can never be without their presence. The house is a guidance if the people of the house are identified and kept in view. The house is a sanctuary and a blessing if one enters it by the permission and pleasure of the Ahl ul Bayt, described as *safinatul Nuh*.

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:97]

The station or the standing place of Ibrahim, the model believer in the unity of Allah, has the following points of significance (clear signs).

(1) The standing place of Ibrahim has been made the permanent religious centre of all monotheists, because his faith (belief in the unity of Allah) was perfect, an ideal for every believer.

(2) It is a sacred sanctuary. Whoso enters it is safe from the clutches of the disbelievers. It is a historic fact that all invaders who attacked this holy precinct were destroyed.

(The grandson of the Holy Prophet, Imam Husayn, was deprived of the security in Kabah in 60 Hijra by the order of Yazid bin Mu-awiyah).

(3) Pilgrimage to the Kabah to seek spiritual guidance has been made obligatory on mankind for ever. The believers shall go to Kabah to carry out the command of Allah till the day of resurrection. It should be noted that this prophecy was made at a time when the Muslims were in danger of being exterminated by their enemies.

See the commentary of al Baqarah: 196.

This institution of pilgrimage (*hajj*) has taken root in the lives of the Muslims. Every year a great many pilgrims come to Kabah to translate their faith into action. There is no sponsor, no convenor, no invitation, no compulsion. At Kabah, during the pilgrimage, they forget their social status, ideology, race, colour, and nationality and become a single party of the servants of Allah, dressed in a simple identical garment, standing in rows, shoulder to shoulder, before their Lord, in front of His holy house, praying to one God, in the language of the Quran, which, truly, is the everlasting miracle of the prophet of Islam, a clear sign of the victory of truth.

In the end it is made clear that one who has sufficient means must perform the *hajj*. Wilful neglect of this commandment of Allah amounts to the abandonment of His faith (infidelity). So he who wilfully neglects the pilgrimage does so at his own peril, and not to any hurt to his Lord, because He is independent of the worlds. He is self-sufficient. Whether the whole mankind serve Him or none observe His commandments, it makes no difference to Him whatsoever. The *hajj* has been prescribed for man's own good. There is no profit or gain for Him. It is an escape from the sins a man commits (and its consequences) to take refuge under the shelter of Allah's mercy.

The Holy Prophet has said:

He who wilfully does not perform the *hajj* shall rise on the day of resurrection in the state of infidelity, having no vision.

Hajj wipes out the sins as fire removes corrosion from the iron.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

(1) "Who can afford" means ability with ease concerning wealth, health and security. In the case of any adverse condition this ordinance is not applicable.

(2) *Man kafara* (whosoever denies) shows the importance of the pilgrimage. As the Holy Prophet has said "the able but wilful non-performer" becomes an infidel. It is a positive test of the submission to Allah's will and a sure remedy to cure the evil disease of egotism.

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:98]

The address is to the Jews and the Christians who, in spite of their knowledge about the truthfulness of the mission of the Holy Prophet, foretold in their books (see Baqarah: 40) disbelieved in the signs of Allah. Allah is the everliving and ever-present witness of all human actions, passions and motives. If not His love, then the consciousness of His omniscience should prompt man to believe in the truth of His signs.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Whenever the Quran addresses the people of the book to reproach them for their mischievous deviation from the right path, shown by all the scriptures, it should not be confined to those Jews and Christians who opposed Islam and the Holy Prophet in his time, but as Imam Jafar al Sadiq has pointed out, it includes all the people of the book in post-Islamic era and also all those who claim their religions to be divinely revealed, in all ages, till the day of resurrection. The holy Ahl ul Bayt have said that the pagans of Arabia and the trans-caspian sea are excluded from the "people of the book", as their doctrines were not based upon the revealed word of Allah.

At all events the Muslims are not kept out from the application of the censure wherever notified in the Quran. There are instances of mischievous deviation from the right path, denial of the divine signs, creation of obstacles in the path of Allah, and attempts to twist the words of Allah and His Holy Prophet to serve selfish ends, which gave rise to sectarianism in the early stages.

The Holy Prophet has said:

You will go back to infidelity after me when discord and strife, among you, will divide you.

{قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لِمَ تَصُدُّونَ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَن آمَنَ تَبِعُونَهَا عَوَجًا وَأَنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءٌ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ بِغَافِلٍ عَمَّا تَعْمَلُونَ} 99

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:99]

By guile and deceit the people of the book used to plot to seduce the believers so as to create doubts in the verity of Islam, while they were aware of the truthfulness of the religion of Allah preached by the Holy Prophet.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا فَرِيقًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ يَرُدُّوكُم بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ كَافِرِينَ} 100

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:100]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

What has been said in the note of verse 98 of this surah is made clear in this verse that for the Muslims, to fall to fighting among themselves, in effect, is to go back to paganism and infidelity. Dissension among the people of the book surfaced because of the deviation from the right path on account of rebellious tendency (Ali Imran: 19).

(VERSES 101 TO 115 ARE CLOSELY RELATED TO EACH OTHER)

{وَكَيْفَ تَكْفُرُونَ وَأَنْتُمْ تُنَلَّىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ وَفِيكُمْ رَسُولُهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْتَصِمْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ} 101

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:101]

No rational and intelligent person can remain a disbeliever after the arrival of the Holy Prophet in this world with the Quran. So long as the people hold fast to the Quran and his Ahl ul Bayt, the two weighty things (see *hadith al thaqalayn* on page 6) they will not go back to paganism.

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ } 102

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:102]

Ittaqullah means to safeguard oneself with awareness of the boundaries (physical, moral and spiritual laws) laid down by Allah so as to keep clear of sins and transgressions. There is no room for "fear" in Islam. Please refer to the commentary of Fatihah: 1 to 4; Baqarah: 2; Ali Imran 31. *Taqwa* means piety or to ward off evil and take refuge with Allah, not out of fear, but because of the awareness and insight of the consequences if one breaks or tampers with the laws made and enforced by Allah for the benefit and welfare of mankind.

Haqqa tuqatihi means it is the duty of the creature to be aware of the creator's will and command. It is His prerogative that His creatures should, willingly or unwillingly, obey Him and carry out His commands.

Wa antum muslimun means full of faith, perfect in conduct, and strict in the observance of the law, which is possible when one surrenders and submits oneself unconditionally to Allah.

{ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا^ع وَادْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَى شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا^ك كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ } 103

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:103]

"Hold fast, all of you together, to the cord of Allah"-gives a mental impression that a rope is hanging from the heaven so that those who are lying down on the ground (earth) may climb up, by holding it, in the presence of the Lord to seek His nearness.

Abu Sa-id Khudri reports that he heard the Holy Prophet saying:

I leave behind me, among you, two ropes. If my people hold fast to these two ropes, after me, they shall not go astray. They are the book of Allah, hung from the heaven unto the earth, and my Ahl ul Bayt. One of them is greater than the other. Be it known that these two shall never be separated from each other; and joined together, they shall meet me at the spring of Kawthar.

(Tafsir Kabir and Durr al Manthur) The other similar declaration of the Holy Prophet, known as *hadith al thaqalayn*, has been mentioned on page 6.

The Holy Prophet has also said:

My Ahl ul Bayt, among you, are like the ark of Nuh. He who sails on it will be safe, but he who holds back shall perish.

There are several traditions of the Holy Prophet, mentioned on page 5 and 6, which confirm, beyond doubt, that Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad were the *natiq* Quran and the revealed book of Allah is the *samit* Quran (see commentary of al Baqarah: 2).

The Holy Prophet has said:

Verily the Quran has been revealed in seven letters. There is no letter which has not an evident and a latent meaning; and verily Ali knows the evident as well as the latent.

(Itiqan-Sahih Bukhari)

Also refer to *urwatil wuthqa* in al Baqarah: 256.

The holding fast to the book of Allah and "Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad" means total attachment with and devotion to them because all good generates from this act which enables man to rise upward and reach nearness to Allah. The life of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt is the best example of the teachings of the Quran.

"Do not become disunited"-Those who rely on and make use of theories and methods formulated and put in practice by mortal men, by avoiding or neglecting the commandments of Allah and the teachings of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, are bound to go astray and create discord and disagreement among the united community of the believers.

This sentence warns the Muslims not to misinterpret the verses of the Quran or have doubts about the authority of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt to explain the true meanings of the word of Allah, because these two are the inseparably interwoven cord of Allah; else they will be divided into several sects. So to remain on the right path shown by the Holy Prophet follow him and his Ahl ul Bayt in letter and spirit.

In Minhaj al Sadiqin it is written that once, Jalut, the chief rabbi, along with some of his very learned disciples, came to Ali ibna abi Talib to prove that Islam was not a true religion of God.

The first question Ali asked was:

"Do you know the number of sects the followers of Musa were divided into after his departure?"

"I will have to refer to the book", he replied.

"You are a rabbi, yet do not know what is written in your book. What will you do if your book is lost?" Ali asked.

Jalut referred to his book and said that there were 45 sects.

"You are wrong. I know the Tawrat and the Injil. The followers of Musa were divided into 71 sects, out of which only one is on the right path. Also the followers of Isa were divided into 71 sects, out of which only one is on the right path. The followers of our prophet will be divided into 73 sects, out of which only one will be on the right path and the rest will be among the losers."

Earlier the Holy Prophet had also said the same about his and Musa's followers. When asked as-to which sect of his followers is on the right path, he put his hand on the shoulder of Ali and said:

"This man and his descendants and their followers." Then he recited this verse:

"You became brothers by His grace"-Deadly warfare in pre-islamic Arabia has been proverbial, and pagan Arabia, divided into hostile clans and tribes, presented the sight of a veritable armed camp. In the time of ignorance, hostility was embittered with the rancour of civil faction. The recital of an obsolete feud, in prose or verse, was sufficient to rekindle the same passion among the descendants of the hostile tribes. In private life, every man, at best every family, was the judge and avenger of its own cause. A petty affront or unpremeditated blow involved whole tribes and tracts of country in protracted and bloody strife. It was the Holy Prophet who introduced and implanted into the anarchical society of his time sentiments of brotherhood, sense of meaningful life and consciousness of rights and duties towards one another. In this way the Holy Prophet united together classes and tribes that hitherto had been continually at feud with one another. Within a brief span of time, he called forth out of uncompromising material a nation never united before, bound in common faith, suppressing every distinction of race and kindred, and regarding each other as brothers, by active efforts and the immaculate pattern of his personal way of life, which mere preaching could never accomplish. It was the genius of the Holy Prophet which not only united wild enemies to create a universal brotherhood composed of all men of every race, who would obey and worship one God and follow the teachings and guidance of His prophet, but also made them vie with each other in generous emulation of courage and fidelity.

"Haply or so that" indicate that the creation of brotherhood was not an end in itself, but it was a pre-requisite to follow the true guidance kept alive through the holy Ahl ul Bayt, in every age, till the day of resurrection.

Only the mischievous mind of the Ahmadi scholar can translate *habl* as covenant and *nar* as strife,

otherwise not even a far-fetched implication gives any room for such misinterpretation.

{وَأُولَئِكَ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ} 104

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:104]

Since the duty of enjoining the right (*amr bil ma-ruf*) and forbidding the wrong (*nahya anil munkar*) entails conditions which every Muslim cannot fulfil, the Quran while addressing the entire Muslim people, points out a select group from among the community, each member of which has been thoroughly purified by the creator Himself (Ahzab: 33). for this divine mission- Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad. "My Ahlul Bayt are like the ark of Nuh. Whoso sails on it is saved, and he who stays back is drowned and lost", said the Holy Prophet.

The Muslims are warned not to split into sects, hostile to each other, like the Jews and the Christians, who, moved by self-interest and other ignoble motives, made amendments and corrupted the words of Allah and His messengers, Musa and Isa, but the Muslims paid no attention, and, after the departure of the Holy Prophet, instead of following the Quran and his Ahlul Bayt, relied upon the guidance and leadership of those who neither were chosen by Allah and His Prophet, nor deserved to lead the *ummah* on the strength of their learning and character, otherwise they would have been selected in the party of Allah which represented Him in *mabahilah* (Ali Imran: 61), or would have been included in *ayah al tat-hir* (Ahzab: 33). It is a historical fact that such self-proclaimed leaders enacted laws and made judgements, in the name of *ijtihad*, against the teachings of the Holy Prophet and the book of Allah, because of which the Muslim *ummah* was divided into many sects. There is a great punishment for such *mujtahids* and their followers on the day of judgement.

{وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ} 105

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:105] (see commentary for verse 104)

{يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْوَدَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ أَكْفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْفُرُونَ} 106

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:106]

On the day of judgement the face of the believers (who followed the teachings of the Holy Prophet in letter and spirit) will shine bright with the radiance of joy. And (as Hasan al Basari has also said) the faces of those turncoats who went back to infidelity after their profession of faith (by rejecting the teachings of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt and introducing their own theories) shall turn black with gloom of fear, because they had disobeyed the instructions of the Holy Prophet to obey his Ahl ul Bayt and follow their guidance. They did so in order to fulfil their ambition to rule over vast lands and multitude of people, as they desired. They shall be thrown into the fire with contempt. Also refer to Yunus: 27 and Zumar: 60. The believers (mentioned above) shall be in Allah's mercy, therein (in its eternal bliss) they shall abide for ever.

{وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ ابْيَضَّتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ فَفِي رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} 107

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:107] (see commentary for verse 106)

{تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِلْعَالَمِينَ} 108

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:108]

His judgement shall be, in every instance, absolutely just and equitable. Each shall get the recompense earned in this life.

{وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ } 109

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:109]

To Allah all matters shall return because He is the sole judge and arbiter, the Lord of the worlds, the omnipotent almighty; none is His co-partner; none is comparable to Him.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ آمَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِمَّنْهُمْ
{الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ } 110

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:110]

Khayra ummatin means the best group of people. As has been said in verse 104 of this surah that there is a select group of people who call others to virtue and enjoin that which is good (*amr bil maruf*) and forbid evil (*nahya anil munkar*), in this verse also the entire Muslim people are addressed through the best group of people who enjoin good and forbid evil because enjoining good and forbidding evil entails conditions in which the whole community cannot share. The torturers of the Holy Prophet's daughter, Bibi Fatimah Zahra, and the persecutors and the murderers of the holy Imams (from Imam Ali Murtada to Imam Hasan Askari) were Muslims. Mu-awiyah bin abu Sufyan persecuted Imam Hasan and poisoned him through a woman. Yazid bin Mu-awiyah bin Abu Sufyan killed Imam Husayn, his sons and relatives and friends, including his 6 months old son, Ali Asghar, in Karbala; and thereafter imprisoned and tortured the ladies and the children of the house of the Holy Prophet for several months. Almost all the Umayyid and Abbaside caliphs were drunkards and libertines. They killed all the holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt, from Imam Ali bin Husayn to Imam Hasan bin Ali, and some of them desecrated the holy Kabah and the holy *masjid nabawwi*.

The torturers, persecutors and murderers, mentioned above, are not only considered Muslims but respected as the *khalifatul muslimin* or *khalifatur rasul* by the majority of the Muslims except the followers of Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad (Shi-as) who acknowledge the Ahl ul Bayt only as the best group of people because of their learning, knowledge and wisdom and because of their highmindedness, generosity, bravery, justice and refinement of character-a true reflection of the way of life of the Holy Prophet.

The abominable features of the "heroes of the Muslims", described in "Stanley's lectures on Eastern Church" and "Albiruni's India", have been driving away the seekers of truth, among nonmuslims, from the religion of Islam. But when some of them happen to come across the life accounts of the *khayra ummatin* (the best group of people), the Ahl ul Bayt, they willingly come into the fold of Islam. Even the worst enemies of Islam have greatly praised the irresistible glory of the godly members of the family of the Holy Prophet. In the light of the Quranic verses and traditions of the Holy Prophet, mentioned in the commentary of various relevant verses in this book, the Ahl ul Bayt are the "best group of people" thoroughly purified by Allah Himself (Ahzab: 33), inseparably attached with the Quran, flesh and blood of the Holy Prophet, who are from him and he is from them (reflecting one and the same light of Allah). Therefore, to harass them is to harass Allah and the Prophet of Allah, for which Allah curses such people in this world and the hereafter (Ahzab: 57); and to make less their status or to bring others to their position earns the wrath of Allah (Fatihah: 7).

{لَنْ يَضُرُّوَكُمْ إِلَّا أَدَىٰ ۖ وَإِنْ يَفَاتِلُوكُمْ يُؤَلُّوْكُمْ الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يُنصَرُونَ } 111

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:111]

The Jews, rich and powerful, in league with the pagan tribes of Makka, tried their best to destroy the small and unarmed community of the Muslims, but not only failed to overcome them at all occasions, but also (as in the case of the tribes of Qurayza and Nadhir, the Bani Qaynuqa and the Jews of Khaybar) faced crushing defeats at the hand of Ali ibn abi Talib, as has been foretold in this verse. In the commentaries written by the Muslim scholars no reference is made to Ali ibn abi Talib, in spite of the historic truth that each time the Muslims were on the brink of total annihilation, Ali came forward, in all the battles fought against the Jews and the pagans of Makka, and changed sure defeats into victories. Ali was the hand of Allah, His aid and support, His promise and His blessing. Most probably his name is not mentioned because, in that event, they also have to take the names of those companions who either watched the battle from a safe distance or, when the going was rough, ran away from the scene of fighting to save their lives, but surprisingly took control of the destiny of the Muslims as soon as the Holy Prophet left this world, although he emphatically told the *ummah* that he was leaving behind, for their guidance, the book of Allah and his Ahl ul Bayt (*hadith thaqalayn*- see page 6), and irrevocably established the authority of Ali at Ghadir Khum (see commentary of al Ma'idah: 67).

ضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الذِّلَّةُ أَيْنَ مَا تَقْفُوا إِلَّا بِحَبْلٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَحَبْلٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَضُرِبَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَسْكَنَةُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا
{يَكْفُرُونَ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَيَقْتُلُونَ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّ ذَٰلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ} 112

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:112]

Please refer to al Baqarah : 61 and Ali Imran: 21 to know the trend and tendency of the Jews- disbelieving in the signs of Allah and slaying His prophets. Humiliation is their requital. To the Muslims and the Christians and other monotheists they are more detestable than the disbelieving polytheists. Although they dominate the realm of international finance and may even dictate in the realm of international politics, yet they seem still to exist on sufferance, as aliens, more or less, undesirable .

For *illa bihablin* see commentary of verse 103 of this surah.

The frequent reference to the treacherous character of the Jews in the Quran warns the Muslims that if they also discard the Ahlul Bayt and the book of Allah or separate them from one another (*hadith thaqalayn*), and kill the children of the Holy Prophet, abasement and disgrace would also stick to them (because according to many reliable traditions the Ahl ul Bayt are from the Holy Prophet and the Holy Prophet is from the Ahlul Bayt, and all of them are from one divine light).

{لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۗ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتَّبِعُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ أَنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ} 113

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:113]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 62. Those Jews and Christians, who believe in the original books sent to their prophets and follow their true teachings, have to believe in the Quran and the prophethood of the last prophet of Allah, therefore, in all fairness, the Quran recognises the goodness and righteousness found in the true followers of Musa and Isa for rewarding them with proper recompense.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Verses 101 to 115 contain the fundamental directions essential for a peaceful, just and pious human society. In addition to man-God relationship, the religion of Allah, Islam, also lays down the

principles which direct, develop and sustain interrelations between the human beings as well as their true position in the universe. Islam not only establishes peace, unity and harmony between man and man but also effects co-ordination between mankind, as a part, and the universe, as a whole, viewed in a perspective beyond the limitation of time and space. Many attempts had been made, and the quest continues, to unite mankind to usher in an era of peace and harmony, but each venture has created new divisions. Unless man agrees not to exercise his will and choice in preference to the common good of the society universal brotherhood cannot be established. He must sacrifice his will and choice by curtailing his independence in the interest of the common good, which means submission of his will. The social, economic and political sciences deal with the question as to in whose interest (family, community, race or country) man should sacrifice his independence, and to whose authority he should submit!? Islam puts the universal interest above the individual interest, and makes it clear that there is no authority save the authority of the almighty Allah to which every individual must submit. Keeping this in view the Quran refers to the establishment of an institution which not only would call people to Allah (the absolute goodness) but also exercise authority over mankind to guide them to that which is approved by the human conscience as well as by the divine sanction; and would prevent them from doing that which is unprofitable and harmful, an evil rejected by the human conscience as well as forbidden by the divine decree Verse 104 says that the authority to enjoin the right (*amr bil ma-ruf*) and forbid the wrong (*nahya anil munkar*) entails conditions in which all the members of the society cannot share. They can assist the divinely established authority in the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil, because only those who know the ultimate and the absolute good have been found competent and qualified to be chosen for this assignment. The most essential prerequisite to shoulder this responsibility is to be in a state of perfect awareness for doing good and avoiding evil so that there is no need to be guided by any one to do *ma-ruf* and abstain from *munkar*.

In verse 104 *ummat* means *a-imma*, because *ummat* is derived from *amm* (meaning) to intend, to lead, to give an example to others, or to command. In the sense of tending or intending it becomes the "way" intended to or to move on (*tariq*), or *imam*, the person intended to be followed, or *mamun*, the person who intends to follow-to follow certain persons or principles. The word *ummat* has been used in all these senses in the verses of the Quran. In verses 104 and 113 of Ali Imran and verses 128 and 143 of al Baqarah the context shows that *ummat* stands for an *imam*, who exercises authority, not for *mamun*.

Verses 101 to 103 make it clear that once a man becomes a Muslim (submits to the absolute sovereignty of Allah) he shall not follow any other path except the guidance revealed through the Quran and made known by the Holy Prophet, which, in fact, is the substance of the surah Ali Imran. Even a slightest deviation from this path, by relying on personal discretion in order to make amendment in the guidance provided by Allah and His Prophet, has been declared as going back to the days of ignorance (partisanship and sectarianism) or falling into the abyss of eternal damnation.

He who holds fast to the rope of Allah (adheres to His book, His prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt) is described as orthodox (sound and upright in belief and doctrine, not dogmatic or irrational), and he who relies on his own judgement or on the conjectural or arbitrary discretion of those who have not been endowed by the divine wisdom, nor ever declared by the Holy Prophet as the inheritors of his wisdom, is described as heterodox. In verse 153 of al An-am Allah says that only His path is right, follow it, and do not follow other ways, because that will deviate you from His path and lead to heresy and heterodoxy. Some early commentators wrongly presumed that verse 16 of al Taghabun abrogates the contents of verse 103 of Ali Imran. A proper study of these verses shows that one supports the other. Please refer to the commentary of Taghabun: 16. It is said that the occasion for the

revelation of verse 103 was a dispute, took place between the two groups of ansars, on the instigation of a Jew. Whatever be the cause "the enjoining good and forbidding evil" by a select group, as said in verse 104 is the basis of the social structure of the human society.

The establishment of an institution to save mankind from dissension and discord, which would lead to total perdition, has been justified in verses 104 to 108. The purpose in view is to promote universal justice and harmony and safeguard the interests of all creation, on the earth, in the heavens and in between them. To control and operate this institution suitable persons are chosen by Allah Himself on merit. Human choice or discretion has no place.

And your Lord creates what He wills, and (also) chooses. They (the created beings) have never any choice.

(Qasas: 68)

The inseparable second person masculine gender pronoun in verse 104, refers to a particular group of men, purposefully brought forth from the fold of His providence, to guide mankind. Please refer to the commentary of verses 104 and 110 for identifying those who have the competency, efficiency and authority to enjoin good and forbid evil.

Once Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq asked a scholar whether he thought the pronoun *tum* in *kuntum* (in verse 110 of Ali Imran) referred to the Muslims in general? "Yes" was his reply.

"It means you, who killed the grandson of the Holy Prophet and tortured his family in captivity, are the best people brought forth by Allah to guide and benefit the mankind". the Imam said.

"No. It cannot be!" The scholar exclaimed. "Behold! It refers only to those who are competent to lead mankind to truth", the Imam advised him.

Therefore if it is inferred that *waltakun min kum* gives permission to the Muslims to elect, appoint or nominate a person or a group of persons to guide or lead people, the implication would be a far-fetched heretical innovation, because the verse only points out to the necessity of such an institution, just as the necessity of the prophets of Allah to convey His message of guidance to the people, but does not give permission to the people (in either case) to elect, nominate or appoint the prophets or those who enjoin good and forbid evil. Verse 110 asserts that such a group (from the descendants of Ibrahim) has been brought forth for the guidance of mankind. Al Baqarah: 124, 128, 143 and al Hajj: 77 and 78 refer to those descendants of Ibrahim who have been chosen to inherit the book, the wisdom and the great kingdom, and whose obedience has been enjoined on mankind. Only these are they who are authorised to exercise *amr bil ma-ruf* and *nahya anil munkar*. Those who follow them in letter and spirit and are thoroughly well-versed in their knowledge and wisdom can work as their subordinates. Verse 113 and 114 contain the qualities the above noted select group of man possess to the point of highest perfection. Verse 165 of al-An-am says that it is Allah who has made the believers successors in the earth but has raised some of them over others in degrees, therefore all the believers are not equal. Those who are lower in degree should function as the subordinates of those who occupy the higher grade, otherwise there will be no harmony and order in the system. Having failed to understand the true meanings of these verses many Muslim scholars have suggested a chaotic and inconsistent form of Islamic government because of which the Muslim society has been, so far, administered by despots, tyrants and usurpers.

{يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَأُولَئِكَ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ} 114

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:114] (see commentary for verse 113)

{وَمَا يَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَنْ يُكْفَرُوهُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُتَّقِينَ} 115

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:115] (see commentary for verse 113)

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَنْ تُغْنِيَ عَنْهُمْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ۗ وَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۗ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ} 116

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:116]

Neither the riches nor the children of the enemies of Islam shall be able (either by way of compensation or by way of offering sacrifices on behalf of their disbelieving ancestors) to save them from the fire. The disbelievers spend to gain fame, or out of vanity, or from fear. No amount of charity without the true belief can be of any use to any one. By spending their riches in a way disapproved by Allah they bring to nothing what they spend. It is like a frosty wind which smites and destroys the herbage and the seed produce of the tilth.

That which has been said in these verses is comparable to verses 17 to 35 of al Qalam.

{مَثَلٌ مَا يَنْفِقُونَ فِي هَذِهِ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ رِيحٍ فِيهَا صِرٌّ أَصَابَتْ حَرْثَ قَوْمٍ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ فَأَهْلَكَتْهُ ۗ وَمَا ظَلَمَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَكِنْ أَنفُسُهُمْ ۗ يَظْلِمُونَ} 117

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:117] (see commentary for verse 116)

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بِطَانَةً مِنْ دُونِكُمْ لَا يَأْلُونَكُمْ خَبَالًا وَدُؤًا مَا عَنِتُّمْ قَدْ بَدَتِ الْبَغْضَاءُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ أَكْبَرُ ۗ قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ ۗ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ} 118

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:118]

Please refer to verse 28 of Ali Imran.

The believers are warned not to make friends with the enemies of Islam, their associates and relatives. Tolerance is desirable only when it is known that there is no joining of hands to launch an offensive against the true faith. It is a wise maxim to preserve the faith from the contaminating influence of impiety and infidelity. The disbelievers will not fall short in corrupting or vitiating the true belief of the believers, because they cannot control their hatred. The believers are bound to believe in all revealed books, but their enemies do not believe in the final book of Allah. To make mischief they pose as believers and plot to harm the faithfuls, but the end they seek shall never be achieved. The glory of the true believers shall continue and increase and shall never perish. Allah knows the spite that is rankling in the breasts of the enemies of the true faithfuls, and has laid it bare.

{هَآ أَنْتُمْ أَوْلَاءُ تُحِبُّونَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِبُّونَكُمْ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ كُلِّهِ وَإِذَا لَفُوكُمْ قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَإِذَا خَلَوْا عَضُّوا عَلَيْكُمْ الْأُنَامِلَ مِنَ الْغَيْظِ ۗ قُلْ مُؤْتُوا بِعَيْظِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ} 119

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:119] (see commentary for verse 118)

{إِنْ تَمَسَسْتُمْ حَسَنَةً تَسَوْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُصِيبْكُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَفْرَحُوا بِهَا وَإِنْ تُصِيبُوا وَتَنْتَفُوا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطٌ} 120

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:120]

They are spiteful . They are malicious. They are deceitful. But their mischief-making and intrigues shall not harm the believers who safeguard themselves with full awareness of Allah's commands and patiently wait for Allah's help.

{وَإِذْ عَدَّوْتُمْ مِنْ أَهْلِكُمْ تَبَوُّئِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مَقَاعِدَ لِلْقِتَالِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 121

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:121]

Twelve months after the battle of Badr, when the third year of the Holy Prophet's stay at Madina was drawing to a close, there burst out a storm of unprecedented violence. Abu Sufyan, a zealous votary of the idols, a mortal foe of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, the chief of the pagan Makkan tribes and head of the brand of Umayyah, had mobilised an army of 3000 warriors to avenge the defeat at Badr. He secretly negotiated an alliance with the Jews of Madina who agreed to attack the small band of Muslims when the major offensive would begin. After exceedingly elaborate preparations, the Quraysh commenced their march, 3000 strong; 700 were mailed warriors, and 200 well-mounted cavalry; the remainder rode on camels. Women were allowed to accompany them. Taking timbrels in their hands, they sang to their wild cadence songs of vengeance for kinsmen slain at Badr.

The Muslims, able to fight, all told, were one thousand. To confront the enemy in an open field, the Holy Prophet reached Uhad. At the last moment on the pretext that his advice to wait and offer defence in Madina was not accepted Abdullah bin Ubay along with his 300 followers suddenly turned round and, deserting the Muslims, took the road back to Madina. Thus the Holy Prophet was left with 700 followers, facing a well-equipped army four times their number.

There was a pass in the hills of Uhad through which the enemy soldiers could come and attack, so, the Holy Prophet stationed 50 archers under the command of Abdullah bin Jubayr at the mouth of the pass with strict instructions not to leave the post at any event.

All the authentic books of history record that as soon as the fight began Ali and Hamza slashed the rows after rows of the enemy soldiers and sooner than expected the enemy took to their heels. Fascinated by the abrupt flight of the Makkan pagans, the unscrupulous companions of the Holy Prophet went in for loot and plunder. The archers also yielded to temptation and left their post by disobeying the orders of their commander. Khalid bin Walid, who was yet an unbeliever, with his men, attacked the unwary Muslims busy in collecting the booty from this opening and caught them off their guard. There was confusion and disorder. The pagans availed the opportunity and surrounded the Holy Prophet. He was wounded and fell into a pit. At this time some one or Shaytan raised the cry "Muhammad has been killed." On hearing this cry even some of the closest companions of the Holy Prophet (who later became the leaders of the Muslims) also took to flight. The whereabouts of some of them became known after three days. One deserter suggested to send a messenger to Abdullah bin Obay so that he might obtain amnesty from Abu Sufyan. Tabari, Ibn Hisham and Tarikh al Khamis report that the second caliph was also among the deserters. Shibli says desperate despondency had seized the companions. All deserted the messenger of Allah except Ali, Abu Dajjana and Sahl ibn Hunayf. The hand of Allah (*yadullah*), Ali, unsheathed his sword; the fearless, unconquerable and ever-overpowering strength of Allah (*asadullah*), Ali, demonstrated his singular prowess as the executor of wonders (*mazhar al aja-ib*). Ali put so memorable a fight that Jibrail gloried Ali's action with the celebrated sentence: "*la fata illa Ali*" (there is no man save Ali) and "*la sayf illa dhulfiqar*" (there is no sword save *dhulfiqar*). The scene again changed and the three thousand proud warriors of Arabia ran from the battlefield like frightened rats, with Abu Sufyan in the front, and stopped at Hamra ul Asad, 8 miles away from Uhad. There he reviewed his misadventure to know the reason which changed certain victory into humiliating defeat. He was planning to launch another attack, but, before he could regroup the disheartened soldiers, the news of a possible pursuit by Ali ibn abi Talib broke his spirit and he at once took the road to Makka.

Hamza, a valiant warrior, the uncle of the Holy Prophet, was martyred in this battle. Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan, the mother of Mu-awiyah, had hired an Abyssinian slave to kill the Holy Prophet,

Hamza and Ali. He took out the liver of Hamza and gave it to Hinda. She chewed it and tried to eat it but could not. Then she washed the pieces, made a garland and wore it around her neck.

In view of verses 2 to 4 of al Ankabut it can be stated that the battle of Uhad was a trial and a test for those who professed to believe in Allah and His messenger.

{ إِذْ هَمَّتْ طَائِفَتَانِ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ تَفْشَلَا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيَهُمَا ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ } 122

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:122] (see commentary for verse 121)

{ وَلَقَدْ نَصَرَكُمُ اللَّهُ بِبَدْرٍ وَأَنْتُمْ أَذِلَّةٌ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ } 123

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:123]

For the battle of Badr see commentary of Ali Imran: 10 to 13.

Badr was a camping ground and market, about twenty miles south-west of Madina. Hamza and Ali were the heroes of the battle of Badr, which was of the greatest importance for the spread of Islam. On the hands of Hamza and Ali, under the command of the Holy Prophet, Islam had won its first and decisive military victory.

Allah had reinforced the Muslims with three thousand angels, a heavenly aid given to the Holy Prophet, not actually to fight the enemy but to increase the very small group of men he had with him so that the Muslims could muster courage; and the enemy might be frightened at the sight of a large assemblage. It was Allah alone, not the angels, who really caused victory through the valour of Ali and Hamza which brought the enemy to their knees.

The Muslim were poor in numbers, mounts and armour. The spirit of discipline and contempt of death manifested by the heroes of Badr (mentioned above), evident in all the battles the Holy Prophet fought, was due to their total reliance on Allah with whom they always took refuge and unto whom they always turned thankful.

Verse 127 infers the facts that seventy of the chosen chiefs of the Quraysh were slain and seventy others were taken captive, a complete rout, through Ali (*yadullah*-hand of Allah) after which, broken, in utter despair they went back to their homes.

{ إِذْ تَقُولُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَلَنْ يَكْفِيَكُمْ أَنْ يُمِدَّكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِثَلَاثَةِ آفَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُنَزَّلِينَ } 124

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:124] (see commentary for verse 123)

{ بَلَىٰ ۗ إِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا وَيَأْتُوكُم مِّن فَوْرِهِمْ هَذَا يُمِدِّدْكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ بِخَمْسَةِ آفَافٍ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ مُسَوِّمِينَ } 125

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:125] (see commentary for verse 123)

{ وَمَا جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بُشْرَىٰ لَكُمْ وَلِتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُكُم بِهِ ۗ وَمَا النَّصْرُ إِلَّا مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ } 126

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:126] (see commentary for verse 123)

{ لِيَقْطَعَ طَرَفًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَوْ يَكْبِتَهُمْ فَيَنْقَلِبُوا خَائِبِينَ } 127

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:127] (see commentary for verse 123)

{ لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَأِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ } 128

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:128]

With this verse is resumed the account of Uhad. The Holy Prophet, as he sat wounded in his face and as the blood was being wiped off him, reflected on the conduct of his close companions who deserted him in the hour of need, as their conduct exposed their uncertain faith and hypocrite tendency, and so he wondered as to how such people would behave after his departure from this world. It showed how much he was concerned with the future of his people. Thereupon this verse was revealed. Allah knew that as the "mercy unto the worlds" the Holy Prophet was very much

interested in the welfare of the people, so He put him at ease by saying that it was He who might open their hearts to true faith or inflict immediate punishment.

{وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ } 129

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:129]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah : 255.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا الرِّبَا أَضْعَافًا مُّضَاعَفَةً ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ } 130

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:130]

Neither lend nor borrow money on interest, simple or compound. Islam has forbidden usury for all ages and in all circumstances, regardless of any "commercial" consideration. "Multiplied manifold" implies an unjust economic system by making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The basis of prosperity and success, both in this world and the hereafter, is love of Allah and awareness of His laws, not greed of gold.

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 275 to 280.

{وَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ } 131

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:131]

Allah invites mankind to obey Him and His messenger, the Holy Prophet (without making adjustments in what he has said and done by making use of one's own discretion) if forgiveness from the Lord is to be obtained so as to deserve an abode in the land of eternal bliss and happiness of unimaginable depth and dimensions, otherwise the hell, prepared for the disbelievers, shall also welcome the deviators who amended and changed the commands of the Holy Prophet.

{وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ } 132

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:132] (see commentary for verse 131)

{وَسَارِعُوا إِلَى مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ } 133

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:133] (see commentary for verse 131)

{الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكَاطِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ } 134

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:134]

See commentary of verses 3, 195, 215, 245, 254, 261 to 273 of al Baqarah for spending in the way of Allah.

The Holy Prophet has said:

A generous spender in the way of Allah is very near to Allah, paradise and men; but the gap between a miser and Allah, on one side, and paradise and men on the other, can never be bridged.

Allah loves an illiterate generous spender more than a miserly scholar.

Repressors of rage are those who refrain from giving vent to their wrath while they have the power to inflict harm, and pardoners of men are those who refrain from punishing when they have a right as well as capability to punish.

Imam Hasan, the Holy Prophet's eldest grandson, was once being served his meal by his slave servant, who accidentally threw on him a dish boiling hot, and fearing a severe punishment,

immediately recited the words "the repressors of rage". Hasan said, "I am not angry." "And the forgivers of men", proceeded the servant. "I forgive", replied the Imam. "And Allah loves the doers of good", concluded the servant. "Since it is so, I give you liberty and four hundred pieces of silver;" replied the Imam.

The Holy Prophet is the "mercy unto the worlds" (Ambiya: 107), and Ali is a guide and mercy (Hud: 17). Therefore, there are several events in their lives, mentioned in the authentic books of history, which establish Muhammad and Ali as the perfect models, divinely set up for the guidance of mankind.

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ لَهُ لَا يَأْتِ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ {135}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:135]

Those who do ill-deeds, in fact, wrong themselves. Every sinner corrupts his own soul and deserves punishment. If by remorse and making amends in the way prescribed by the divine law he turns repentant to Allah, his sins may be forgiven. It is Allah who alone can forgive those sinners who do not persist in that which they have done.

{أُولَٰئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ {136}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:136]

In Islam mere ideological or theoretical belief is of no use. Islam lays stress on action.

{قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ سُنَنٌ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكْذِبِينَ {137}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:137]

Ruin and perdition in the world was the fate of those who belied the messengers of Allah. The vestiges of their destruction are visible everywhere.

{هُذَا بَيَانٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ {138}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:138]

Those who are aware of the boundaries laid down by Allah, guard themselves against evil and take refuge with Allah, alone can understand and teach the Quran. See commentary of *muttaqin* in verses 2 and 177 of al Baqarah.

Shirk (polytheism) is the greatest evil. The Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, historically, were the only persons who never worshipped any one other than Allah, therefore, it is the will of Allah that mankind should learn the meaning and purport of the Quran from the Ahl ul Bayt, confirmed by the Holy Prophet in his farewell address to the nation (*hadith al thaqalayn*).

{وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ {139}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:139]

After the battle of Uhad this verse was revealed to create confidence in the Muslims so that they might not grieve excessively for the loss of relatives and lose heart because of a partial set back in

the battlefield (due to their own greed and lack of discipline).

إِنْ يَمْسَسْكُمْ قَرْحٌ فَقَدْ مَسَّ الْقَوْمَ قَرْحٌ مِثْلُهُ ۚ وَتِلْكَ الْأَيَّامُ نُدَاوِلُهَا بَيْنَ النَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَاءَ ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ
{الظَّالِمِينَ} 140

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:140]

As stated in the commentary of verses 121 and 122 of this surah due to the fearless overpowering valour of Ali the enemy suffered heavy losses in men and material and finally ran away from the scene of combat, inflicted with a humiliating defeat. The setback the Muslims encountered (due to their greed and lack of discipline) can be described as the vicissitudes of success and failure. Allah intended, by this reverse, to sift the true from the false among those who professed Islam. He wanted to test those who came into the fold of Islam for material gain, pride and glory of victories. They failed miserably. Running away from the battlefield by deserting the Holy Prophet was a shameful deed, as stated in verse 135 of this surah, exposing their inherent falsehood. The early converts, more often than not, due to weakness in their faith, availed every opportunity to save their skin in the time of trouble. They were infidels at heart in the garb of hypocrisy. They were the hidden enemies of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt. On the other hand there was Ali, the representative of the Ahl ul Bayt in the battle of Uhad, who not only stood by the Holy Prophet and protected him from the assassins but also turned the sure defeat into victory by dispersing the enemy through his steadfastness.

This verse guides mankind, in all ages, to identify the sincere supporter of the Holy Prophet and his mission, and to distinctly name those deserters and hypocrites who have been described as the unjust (*zalimin*), whose names have been written in all the authentic books of history compiled by the well-known authors. Allah does not love the unjust.

Mere companionship of the Holy Prophet is not enough to be blessed. Those who claim "striving hard" must undergo hard test.

{وَلِيُمَحِّصَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَيَمْحَقَ الْكَافِرِينَ} 141

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:141] (see commentary for verse 140)

{أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تُدْخَلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمِ الصَّابِرِينَ} 142

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:142] (see commentary for verse 140)

{وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ تَمَنَّوْنَ الْمَوْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَلْفُوهُ فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمُوهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ} 143

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:143]

Persons who were not at Badr desired to be present with the Holy Prophet at another battle in order to gain the distinction (of being known as victors or martyrs) obtained by the heroes of Badr. When they had seen the battle of Uhad and brought back their slain and wounded relatives, they indulged in lamentation and felt miserable.

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ۗ أَفَأَنْ مَاتَ أَوْ قُتِلَ انْقَلَبْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يَنْقَلِبْ عَلَىٰ عَقْبَيْهِ فَلَنْ يَضُرَّ اللَّهَ شَيْئًا ۗ
{وَسَيَجْزِي اللَّهُ الشَّاكِرِينَ} 144

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:144]

Muhammad (literally means a man praised much, or repeatedly, or time and again; endowed with divine wisdom) to the end of his life claimed for himself the title of "the prophet of Allah" only.

"Your comrade neither errs, nor is deceived, nor does he speak of his own desire, it is but a revelation revealed", says the Quran in al Najm: 2 to 5.

Those who had run away from the battlefield returned to Madina after three days and told the Holy Prophet that they took to flight because they heard a cry announcing his death. In reply this verse was revealed. Truth, at all events, remains positive and reliable. Therefore, if the messenger of Allah departs from this world there is no excuse to turn on one's heels and forsake his teachings. He who does so hurts himself. Those who ran away from the battle of Uhad have been referred to in this verse. See commentary of verses 121 and 122 of this surah. Some of the companions said, "Had he been a prophet, he would not have been killed, return therefore to your brethren and your ancestral religion". Anas bin Nadar exhorted the fleeing deserters not to give up the fight because the God of Muhammad is ever-living and eternal, even if the Holy Prophet was no more among them.

وَمَا كَانَ لِنَفْسٍ أَنْ تَمُوتَ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ كِتَابًا مُؤَجَّلًا ۗ وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَنْ يُرِدْ ثَوَابَ الْآخِرَةِ نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا ۗ وَسَخَّرْنَا لِرَسُولِنَا مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُنذِرَ الْبَشَرَ لَعَلَّ هُمْ يَتَّقُونَ {الشَّاكِرِينَ} 145

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:145]

No one can die unless Allah dispenses, or his appointed term expires. Death shall come neither before nor after that time. It is not possible to delay death by keeping away from battle. Verse 8 of al Jumu-ah also confirms this fact.

Those who desire benefits of this world shall be deprived of their portion in the hereafter, because they do not sacrifice their lives, property and that which they hold dear, in the cause of Allah. Those who are thankful for Allah's bounties and never hesitate to put at Allah's disposal everything they receive from Him, shall be rewarded.

وَكَايُنْ مِنْ نَبِيِّ قَاتِلٍ مَعَهُ رَبِّيُونَ كَثِيرٌ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ {146}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:146]

Many a prophet has fought, with a number of godly men beside him, against the infidels, in the cause of Allah, and disasters befell them but their zeal did not diminish in the least, nor did they humble themselves before the enemy. Therefore, He helped them and exalted their position.

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ {147}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:147]

Verse 147 is the prayer of every prophet. Pure and sincere, far from any faltering in act and deed, the godly and pious, in the fervour of their prayers and purity of their hearts, in order to humble themselves before Allah, ascribe excesses to themselves. By reason of their steadfastness and their asking forgiveness and seeking refuge with Allah, Allah grants them victory against infidels, glorifies their mission and enhances their reputation in this world, and gives an excellent reward in the hereafter, which alone is of consequence with Allah.

فَاتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ {148}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:148] (see commentary for verse 147)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَطِيعُوا الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَرُدُّوكُمْ عَلَى أَعْقَابِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ {149}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:149]

When the Jews of Bani Qaynqa were plotting to create hostility between the two Muslim tribes (Aus and Khazraj) this verse was revealed. It is a warning to the Muslims "not to pay attention to the disbelievers because they will make you turn on your heels; and you will be the losers. Allah is your guardian and He is the best of helpers (if you are sincere and steadfast in your faith and have implicit confidence in His guardianship and in His help)".

{بَلِ اللَّهِ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ النَّاصِرِينَ } 150

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:150] (see commentary for verse 149)

{سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانًا ۖ وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ ۖ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الظَّالِمِينَ } 151

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:151]

The events of the battle of Uhad described in the commentary of verses 121 and 122 should be carefully studied to understand the meaning of the "terror" Allah had cast into the hearts of the disbelievers. It was through Ali (*yadullah*-the hand of Allah) that the Almighty turned the Makkans, after their show of a victory, into a terror-stricken bunch of rats, hastily fleeing to Hamra ul Asad-a curious sight indeed of a "victorious" army in humiliating retreat instead of advancing to Madina to lay it in ruins.

{وَلَقَدْ صَدَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ إِذْ تَحُسُّونَهُم بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فَشِلْتُمْ وَتَنَزَّعْتُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ وَعَصَيْتُمْ مِمَّا بَعَدَ مَا أَرَاكُمْ مَا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ مِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الدُّنْيَا وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ ۚ تَمَّ صَرَفَكُم عَنْهُمْ لِيَبْتَلِيَكُمْ ۖ وَلَقَدْ عَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ } 152

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:152]

Refer to the commentary of verses 121 and 122 of this surah to know how Ali and Hamza were extirpating the enemy but, when the victory was in sight, the Muslims fell to plundering the enemy's camp, by casting the Holy Prophet's strict injunction to the winds. This "worldliness" put them in an awkward position. Fearing total destruction they ran away to save their lives, and failed in the test Allah planned for them. There were they who desired this world. There were some who desired the hereafter, so, on account of their steadfastness and readiness to die in the cause of Allah, He forgave all of them and through Ali, as *asadullah*, created terror in the hearts of the enemy soldiers who made a hasty retreat in spite of having an upper hand.

{إِذْ تُصْعِدُونَ وَلَا تَلْوُونَ عَلَىٰ أَحَدٍ وَالرَّسُولُ يَدْعُوكُمْ فِي أُحْرَاكُمْ فَأَتَابَكُمْ غَمًّا بِغَمِّ لِكَيْلَا تَحْزَنُوا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا مَا أَصَابَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ } 153

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:153]

The names of those who ran off and did not turn back to look, though the Holy Prophet was calling them from the rear, have been given in Tarikh Tabari, Tarikh Khamis by Husayn Dayarbakri, Tarikh Kamil by Ibn Athir, Izalatul Khifa by Shah Waliullah, and Al-Faruq by Shibli. Please refer to the commentary of verses 121 and 122 of this surah.

{ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْعَمِّ أَمَنَةً نُعَاسًا يَغْشَىٰ طَائِفَةً مِنْكُمْ ۖ وَطَائِفَةٌ قَدْ أَهَمَّتْهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ يَظُنُّونَ بِاللَّهِ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ ظَنَّ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ ۗ يُخْفُونَ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ مَا لَا يُبْدُونَ لَكَ يَقُولُونَ لَوْ كَانَ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ مَا قُتِلْنَا هَاهُنَا قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَىٰ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ ۗ وَلِيَبْتَلِيَ اللَّهُ مَا فِي صُدُورِكُمْ وَلِيُمَحِّصَ مَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ } 154

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:154]

Those who had fought hard to create panic in the enemy's camp had an agreeable and refreshing sleep, because their faith in Allah and His prophet was certain and they knew what would ultimately happen. It was a divine blessing the true faithfuls enjoyed on that day as a recompense for their selfless and devotional service in the cause of Allah. There was another group which questioned and doubted the Holy Prophet's promise of divine interposition. They harboured inwardly disapproval and unbelief, and spoke into their (like-minded) comrades' ears about the sure defeat against a formidable enemy; and also grumbled regarding their advice to remain in Madina instead of coming to Uhad where their friends and relatives had been killed. Disbelief in Allah and His prophet, in the end, incited them to abandon the Holy Prophet in the time of trouble. Even if they stayed at home, those of them, who were destined to die, would have gone to their place of death.

Allah has made known that which was in their hearts (hypocrisy) to the people who will come in this world till the day of resurrection.

155} إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَلَّوْا مِنْكُمْ يَوْمَ الْتَقَى الْجَمْعَانِ إِنَّمَا اسْتَزَلَّهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ بِبَعْضِ مَا كَسَبُوا وَلَقَدْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ حَلِيمٌ {

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:155]

Because of their long association with idolatry, the deserters, who either had embraced Islam under unavoidable circumstances or with ulterior motives, fell an easy prey to the satanic promptings.

As Allah is oft-forgiving and forbearing, He pardons those who repent and ask forgiveness, but it should be noted that such pardoned sinners cannot and should not be chosen as the leaders of the faithfuls. Moreover, about those who avoid fighting against an aggressor, the Quran says in verses 15 and 16 of Anfal:

When you meet unbelievers on the field of battle, do not turn backs to them.

For any one who turns his back on that day, except to manoeuvre or rally to his side, will bring the wrath of Allah on himself, and have hell as abode-an evil destination.

As per verse 11 of al Tawbah Islam means "selling of self" to Allah. Once a thing is sold it must be handed over to the purchaser. If one does not do so, it means, one is deceiving Allah.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَقَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ إِذَا ضَرَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أَوْ كَانُوا غُرَىٰ لَوْ كَانُوا عِنْدَنَا مَا مَاتُوا وَمَا قُتِلُوا لِيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ حَسْرَةً فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ يُحْيِي وَيُمِيتُ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ {

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:156]

"Their brethren" means the Muslim relatives and friends of the infidels and the hypocrites who had to journey in the cause of Islam and face hardship or fight the enemies of Islam and die in the battlefield.

The infidels ridiculed the deserters when they reached Madina for having lost their friends and relatives in the battle of Uhad and assured them that if they had been with them (the infidels) they would not have suffered the misfortune. The ignorant infidels and "their brethren" did not know that Allah is the giver of life and death and that ultimately the infidels themselves had to regret for not becoming Muslims, because finally Islam was to emerge victorious.

157} وَلَئِن قُتِلْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ مُتُّمْ لَمَغْفِرَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَحْمَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ {

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:157]

If campaigning in the cause of Allah brings about death, it obtains His mercy and forgiveness which is immensely better than what the others amass of this world and its comforts. The teachings of the Holy Prophet, within a few years, had produced a group of faithfuls who were always ready to sacrifice their lives and possessions in the path of Allah to earn His mercy and blessings.

{وَلَيْنٌ مُتُّمٌ أَوْ قَتَلْتُمْ لَّيْلَى اللَّهِ تُحْشَرُونَ } 158

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:158] (see commentary for verse 157)

فِيمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَأْمُرْ بِالْعِفَّةِ لَأَخَذُوا مِنْكُمْ مَالَكُمْ غُلًّا مُضْمَرًا وَكَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُجْرِمِينَ }
{عَزَمْتُ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ } 159

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:159]

The deserters who had caused a disaster at Uhad deserved to be punished but the leniency shown to them did not wipe out their evil deed of desertion. If the Holy Prophet had been stern and hard of heart they would surely have broken away from him. So he was asked to pardon them in order to prevent them from making mischief and let the divine mission of guidance and salvation progress unhampered.

As an individual the Holy Prophet was always inclined to mildness. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man's palm. He never struck any one in his life. He was the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him. He was generous and considerate even to his enemies, both open and hidden. He was sent by Allah as the "mercy unto the worlds". His kind and generous attitude towards his erring companions does not mean that their actual low station in the spiritual realm can be raised to the level of the true faithfuls, because they remain in the category of those described in verse 16 of al Anfal, particularly when time and again they showed the same tendency of defection and renunciation demonstrated at Uhad.

The Holy Prophet received the book and wisdom directly from Allah. He was the city of knowledge (and Ali its gate). He needed no advice from any body.

"Take their counsel in the affairs" has been mentioned in this verse to educate the companions to reflect and use their intelligence, to understand the issues which confronted them in their lives so that by consulting each other they might arrive at a rational conclusion and follow the reasonable advice. Whatever be the counsel of the companions but the Holy Prophet has been asked to put his trust in Allah and act according to his own judgement.

{إِنْ يَنْصُرْكُمُ اللَّهُ فَلَا غَالِبَ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ يَخْذُلْكُمْ فَمَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَنْصُرْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ } 160

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:160]

The believers should rely on Allah. If He helps them none will overcome them, and if He forsakes them none can help them.

{وَمَا كَانَ لِنَبِيِّ أَنْ يَغُلَّ ۗ وَمَنْ يَغْلُلْ يَأْتِ بِمَا غَلَّ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ تَتَمَّ تَوْفَىٰ كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مِمَّا كَسَبَتْ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ } 161

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:161]

On the division of booty at Badr a garment was found missing. Some companions remarked that it might have been taken away privately by the Holy Prophet himself. The Holy Prophet has been

exalted by Allah to the highest pinnacles of honour and glory, therefore those who wrongly try to blacken the fair name of the Holy Prophet shall be punished on the day of reckoning

162) He who follows the please of Allah has been described in verse 207 of al Baqarah:

And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah (see commentary of al Baqarah: 207).

It was Ali who stood by the Holy Prophet in the battle of Uhad to the end (see commentary of verses 121 and 122 of this surah).

Those who ran away from the battlefield had incurred the wrath of Allah. Verse 16 of Al Anfal also confirms that he who turns his back (in the battlefield) brings the wrath of Allah on himself. It is a warning to those who manipulate to elevate and exalt the men of ordinary character (deserters) to the higher status of the thoroughly purified spiritual leaders, the holy Imams of the house of the Holy Prophet-Ahl ul Bayt.

{ أَفَمَنْ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ كَمَنْ بَاءَ بِسَخَطِ اللَّهِ وَمَأْوَاهُ جَهَنَّمُ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ } 162

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:162]

{ هُمْ دَرَجَاتٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ } 163

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:163]

There are different ranks with Allah for those who follow the pleasure of Allah as well as for those who earn His wrath.

{ لَقَدْ مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِذْ بَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ } 164

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:164]

The Holy Prophet was a teacher, interpreter and expounder of the religion of Allah. Before him the people, all over the world, were steeped in evil, idolatry and slavery. It was a great favour of Allah that He sent the Holy Prophet to show them the right path. As has been made clear in verse 17 of al Hujurat those who became Muslims (submitted to Allah) should not deem it a favour to the Holy Prophet. It is Allah who conferred a favour on them, inasmuch as He has led them to the faith. Also see verses 129 and 151 of al Baqarah. "To purify them" does not refer to the Ahl ul Bayt, because they have been thoroughly purified by Allah Himself (Ahzab: 33).

{ أَوْلَمَّا أَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَدْ أَصَبْتُمْ مِنْهَا قُلْتُمْ أَنَّى هَذَا قُلْ هُوَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } 165

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:165]

"What!" is a reproach. Those converts who accepted Islam with half a heart showed their dissatisfaction at the slightest reverse or disadvantage. They began to waver after the battle of Uhad on the pretext as to how that reverse came about when they were believers. It is pointed out to them that it was due to their disobeying the Holy Prophet's command and yielding to satanic promptings. Verse 14 of al Hujurat says that those who had become Muslims were not sincere believers.

{ وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ يَوْمَ النِّقْيِ الْجَمْعَانَ فَبِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ } 166

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:166]

The events which took place in the battle of Uhad have been described and discussed from verse 121 of this surah onwards. That which befell the Muslims was by Allah's will so that the believers and the hypocrites could be identified openly, and the faith of the one group and the hypocrisy of the other made clear. Allah knew best that which the hypocrites concealed. When they were asked to come and fight in the way of Allah, they thought that it was not a fair fight (because the enemy was killing them, therefore, they took to flight). Nearer were the hypocrite deserters on that day to infidelity. They also assumed that had those who were slain in the battle stayed at home they would have remained alive. Those who do not believe in Allah are ignorant of the fact that the hour of death is certain whether they go to the field of battle or stay at home.

It shows that the Holy Prophet had carried out his mission in the presence of open and hidden hostile forces of antagonism. Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 8 to 20 to know about the hypocrites. Also refer to al Munafiqun.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ الَّذِينَ نَافَقُوا وَقِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا قَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ ادْفَعُوا قَاتِلُوا لَوْ نَعْلَمُ قِتَالًا لَا تَبْعَانَاكُمْ هُمْ لِلْكَفْرِ يَوْمَئِذٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ
 {يَقُولُونَ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ مَا لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا يَكْتُمُونَ} 167

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:167] (see commentary for verse 166)

{الَّذِينَ قَالُوا لِإِخْوَانِهِمْ وَقَعَدُوا لَوْ أَطَاعُونَا مَا قُتِلُوا قُلْ فَادْرَءُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمُ الْمَوْتَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ} 168

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:168] (see commentary for verse 166)

{وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزُقُونَ} 169

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:169]

Those slain in the way of Allah are not dead. They are alive, getting sustenance from their Lord. The unending life or continuous existence of the martyrs has been fully discussed in the commentary of al Baqarah: 154 and 155.

Death is not the destruction of the ruh (spirit). It applies to all human beings, but as said in verse 163 of this surah "of diverse ranks they shall be with Allah", therefore, the martyrs who are nearest to Him and occupy highest positions are in direct communion with their Lord. Their active consciousness perceives that which is happening in this world even after their departure from here. They can reach us and we can have access to them. Through the grace of Allah, on account of their direct relationship with Him, they can carry into effect that which they desire by His permission. As mentioned in al Baqarah: 154 and 155, they are the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt.

{فَرِحِينَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَيَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِالَّذِينَ لَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ أَلَّا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ} 170

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:170] (see commentary for verse 169)

{يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ بِنِعْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ} 171

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:171] (see commentary for verse 169)

{الَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِلَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْقَرْحُ لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا مِنْهُمْ وَاتَّقُوا أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ} 172

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:172]

Study these verses with reference to verses 140 to 142, 144 and 153 of this surah.

In spite of having an upper hand at Uhad the Makkan army (on account of Ali's valour) retreated and camped at Hamra ul Asad where Abu Sufyan made it known that next year he would attack again and destroy the Muslims. The allies of Abu Sufyan in Madina gave forth an exaggerated account of the preparations at Makka in the hope that, with the battle of Uhad yet fresh in memory, the Muslims might be deterred from setting out for another fight. When it was reported to the Holy Prophet, Ali ibn abi

Talib said: "Sufficient unto us is Allah." At the appointed time the Holy Prophet went to encounter the Makkan army but they did not come.

{الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ} 173

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:173] (see commentary for verse 172)

{فَانْقَلَبُوا بِنِعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَفَضْلٍ لَّمْ يَمَسْسَهُمْ سُوءٌ وَاتَّبَعُوا رِضْوَانَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو فَضْلٍ عَظِيمٍ} 174

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:174] (see commentary for verse 172)

{إِنَّمَا ذَلِكَ الشَّيْطَانُ يُخَوِّفُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ فَلَا تَخَافُوهُمْ وَخَافُوا مِنِّي إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ} 175

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:175] (see commentary for verse 172)

{وَلَا يَحْزُنُكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ إِنَّهُمْ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَلَّا يَجْعَلَ لَهُمْ حِزْبًا فِي الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ} 176

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:176]

The hypocrites, who at the slightest turn of scales against the Holy Prophet began to avow their unbelief openly, could not harm or retard the mission of the Holy Prophet at all, because, at all times, "the hand of Allah" (Ali) was there to frustrate their designs.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ اشْتَرُوا الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ لَن يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ} 177

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:177] (see commentary for verse 176)

{وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّمَا نُطْمِئِنُّ لَهُمْ خَيْرٌ لِّأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ إِنَّمَا نُطْمِئِنُّ لَهُمْ لِيَرُدَّادُوا إِلَيْنَا ۗ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ} 178

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:178]

The worldly possessions the unbelievers had was a respite, a temporary well-being, which pulled them deeper and deeper into the abyss of infidelity from where they could never come out.

{مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَذَرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّىٰ يَمِيزَ الْخَبِيثَ مِنَ الطَّيِّبِ ۗ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَى الْغَيْبِ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَجْتَبِي مِن} 179

{رُسُلِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ فَأَمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ ۗ وَإِن تَوَمَّنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَلَكُمْ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ} 179

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:179]

Allah did not want to keep the believers mixed with the hypocrites, therefore, by means of repeated trials and tribulations He separated the impure from the pure, the wicked from the good.

The hypocrites had said:

"If Muhammad is a true prophet of Allah, let him tell us who of us believes and who does not."

In reply the Holy Prophet recited this verse. He was the chosen messenger whom Allah had acquainted with the unseen. A man, who did not know his parentage, asked him to tell the name of his father, which no one knew. When the Holy Prophet announced the name of his father, Umar bin Khattab, the second caliph, said:

"O Messenger of Allah! We accept Allah as our God, Islam as our religion, you as our prophet. So forgive us."

The Holy Prophet said:

"Will you (then) desist?"

According to Badshah Husain's English translation of the Quran, Vol. II, the above noted event has been mentioned by a Sunni scholar.

{وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا لَّهُمْ ۗ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَّهُمْ ۗ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخُلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ مِيرَاثُ} 179

{السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ} 180

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:180]

Whatever a man possesses, he receives it from Allah, therefore, it is incumbent upon him to spend His bounties in His way. See al Baqarah: 3, 177, 215, 219 and 245.

Niggardliness is a curse which will cleave to the neck of every miser on the day of judgement, like a neck-ring (in the form of a biting serpent twisting about).

لَقَدْ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ قَوْلَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ فَقِيرٌ وَنَحْنُ أَغْنِيَاءُ سَنَكْتُبُ مَا قَالُوا وَقَتْلَهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَتَقُولُ ذُوقُوا عَذَابَ
{الْحَرِيقِ} 181

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:181]

Banu Qaynqa, a Jewish tribe, were money-lenders and goldsmiths. They were invited to embrace Islam, and the Holy Prophet wrote to them exhorting, among other things, to "lend unto Allah a goodly loan" (refer to commentary of al Baqarah: 245). Phineas bin Azura, a leading Jew, thought it fit to make fun of the expression, and mockingly remarked: "Surely God is poor, since they seek to borrow for Him". The Jews who had the hardihood to slay their own prophets wantonly (al Baqarah: 61) were not unlikely persons to utter words like these. They mocked at the messengers of Allah, killed them, despised Allah's words and belied His prophets. They shall, surely, taste the torment of the burning.

And the Jews say: "Allah's hand is tied-up". Tied be their own hands, and damned be they for saying what they say! Nay, both His hands are open wide: He expends as He pleases. That which has been revealed to you from your Lord will certainly increase many of them in rebellion and infidelity. So We have caused enmity and hatred among them (which will last) till the day of resurrection. As often as they ignite a fire for war, Allah extinguishes it. Yet they strive to spread corruption in the land, and Allah does not love corrupters. (Ma-idah: 64)

Those who attach importance to temporal power and possessions, like the Jews, fail to assess the true potential and force of the spiritual and godly ability and authority.

{ذَلِكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ} 182

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:182]

Allah is not unjust to any of His creatures. Punishment is only an outcome of the culprit's own doings. In this connection refer to Ha Mim Sajdah: 46; Jathiyah: 15 and Zilzal: 7 and 8.

(183)

"And the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people. Fire came out from before the Lord and consumed the whole-offering." (Leviticus 9: 23 and 24).

Also refer to John 13: 20 to 23; the First book of King 18: 38; The first book of the Chronicles 21: 26; The second book of the Chronicles 7: 1.

Fire was regarded by the Jews "as one of the agents of divine will", and divine fire was expected to consume the acceptable offering. In the ancient Jewish religion and many others fire is the means whereby offerings are transmitted to the deity. And it was also perhaps this deep-rooted superstition that led the Jews of later times to offer their children as sacrifice to Molch, the god of fire.

So, the Jews said to the Holy Prophet that God had charged them to believe in no prophet until he works this miracle. Firstly Allah's power may not always manifest through one and the same miracle, because the intellect and the temperament of the people have been undergoing a constant change in

upward direction. The appearance of fire to consume sacrifices offered was only suitable to the intellect of the Jews of the ancient times. In Islam, the final, perfected and completed religion of Allah, God is beneficent and merciful, and so in all accounts where a manifestation of Allah is spoken of allegorically, He is represented as light (nur), never as fire. It is stated in verse 35 of al Nur that the glow is without fire-no fire has touched it (light upon light). It is not the meat or blood of the sacrificed animals that reaches Allah. It is the fealty of your heart that reaches Him (Hajj: 37). Secondly, if it was the working of this particular miracle that could generate belief in the Jews, and their hesitating and refusing to believe in the Holy Prophet was on account of it, why then did they refuse to believe in those prophets who had wrought it (among other miracles), and even impetuously murdered them!

الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَهْدَ إِلَيْنَا أَلَّا نُؤْمِنَ لِرَسُولٍ حَتَّىٰ يَأْتِينَا بِفُرْقَانٍ تَأْكُلُهُ النَّارُ ۗ قُلْ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِي بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَبِالذِّكْرِ فَلَمَّا قَتَلْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ {183}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:183]

{فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ رَسُولٌ مِّن قَبْلِكَ جَاءُوا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَالزُّبُرِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمُنِيرِ {184}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:184]

Those who belied the Holy Prophet had already belied other prophets, before him, although they had come with clear evidences (miracles), scriptures (zukur-laws and ordinances revealed to prophets) and the enlightening books (Tawrat and Injil). All the heavenly scriptures have been accommodated in the universal book (Hijr: 1).

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۗ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّوْنَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۖ فَمَن رُّحِزَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۗ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعٌ {الْعُرُورِ {185}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:185]

Everything, beside Allah, will know the taste of death. Nothing, save Allah, is permanent in its existence. Also refer to verse 8 of al Jumu-ah and verses 9 to 11 of al Munafiqun.

This awareness of certain death makes man do good and avoid evil, so as to prepare himself for the inevitable day of reckoning, because the life of this world is a merchandise of vanity-deceptive, unreal, insubstantial, as compared with the everlasting hereafter.

لَتُبْلَوْنَ فِي أَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعَنَّ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا أَذًى كَثِيرًا ۚ وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ {مِن عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ {186}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:186]

The believers will, nonetheless, be tried in their possessions and in their persons. The people of the book, the Jews and the Christians, and the polytheists will say many hurtful sayings in the way of ridicule of the prophet and other things provocative to the believers. So they ought to accustom themselves to patience and piety because it is Allah's resolve about human affairs.

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ لَتُبَيِّنُنَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَكْتُمُونَهُ فَنَبَذُوهُ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ وَاشْتَرَوْا بِهِ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۖ فَبَيِّنْسَ مَا {يَشْتَرُونَ {187}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:187]

Please refer to al Baqarah: 40. The Jews and the Christians knew fully well that the Holy Prophet was the promised prophet clearly mentioned in their books, but not only did they suppress the information but also made changes in the revealed books so as to keep the people in darkness. They did not fulfil the covenant they made with Allah for the sake of the worldly gains. They bartered it for a small price.

The followers of the Holy Prophet also failed to fulfil the covenant they made with Allah through the Holy Prophet at Ghadeer Khum. See commentary of al Ma-idah: 67.

Imam Ali says that Allah takes a promise from the ignorant to learn from those who know the truth, and the knowing scholars undertake to teach those who know very little or do not know anything at all. Vile is the scholar who does not make known the truth, and lets the unknowing remain ignorant.

{ لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَفْرَحُونَ بِمَا أَتَوْا وَيُجِبُونَ أَنَّ يُحْمَدُوا بِمَا لَمْ يَفْعَلُوا فَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّاهُمْ بِمَفَازَةٍ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ } 188

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:188]

Refer to the commentary of verse 178 of this surah.

{ وَ لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ } 189

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:189]

Refer to the last part of verse 180 of this surah.

"Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and Allah has power over all things"

is repeatedly mentioned in several verses so that this fundamental fact takes root, and man, ever mindful, must always worship Allah, the Lord of the worlds.

{ إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ } 190

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:190]

The Holy Prophet said:

"Woe to him who reads this verse and does not ponder thereon".

The men of understanding, who study the working of the universe and the laws governing the operation of creation, know the significance of drawing the attention of mankind to the factors mentioned in this verse.

Imam Muhammad bin Ali al Baqir said:

Observe and examine the creation of Allah.

(191)

The Holy Prophet said:

"There is no form of devotion like meditation."

Those who know that Allah has not created the universe in vain and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (to gain guidance and admonition), remember Allah in thought and in words constantly, and in all attitudes and actions. The glory of Allah occupies an "abiding place" in the minds of such devout high ranking servants of Allah. They know that the whole universe, created by Allah, is not an illusion. The phenomena, we perceive by senses, are real (creation of Allah), not a phantasm of imagination because far is He from creating anything aimlessly. (Refer to Ali's sayings on page 20 and 33 of this book, and his sermons in the Nahj al Balagha dealing with the creation of the heavens and the earth).

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:191]

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:192]

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:193] (see commentary for verse 192)

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:194] (see commentary for verse 192)

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:195]

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:196]

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:197] (see commentary for verse 196)

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:198]

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:199]

There are some among the people of the book who are not like the people mentioned in verses 187, 196 and 197 of this surah. They believe in Allah and the Holy Prophet as the promised prophet mentioned in their book (see al Baqrah: 40).

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اصْبِرُوا وَصَابِرُوا وَرَابِطُوا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ } 200

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 3:200]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Rabita means to participate in the garrisoning of the frontiers. This was a duty imposed by the Holy Prophet. It could be performed by turns-the minimum period is 3 days, and the maximum is 40 days.

To persevere (have endurance in suffering) and excel in perseverance, be ever ready to defend, and safeguard oneself with full awareness of Allah's laws are the ruling principles for the human soul to journey through this world to salvation and eternal bliss.

4

Chapter

Tafsir Surah An-Nisaa' (The Women)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ۝ 1}

By *ya ayyuhun nas* (O mankind), the entire mankind, irrespective of sex, rank, age, colour, race and nationality, has been addressed. They are the children of a common ancestor, Adam, created by Allah as the first basic self (*nafs*). *Nafs* means "the self" as well as "the whole of a thing with its essence". The first woman, Hawwa or Eve (see Genesis 2: 18, 21 to 26) was created from that single soul. All mankind descended from one original stock. The basic unity of mankind has been positively asserted in this verse. Therefore, all the peoples of the world are one family, a united brotherhood. They should safeguard themselves with full awareness of divine laws before their Rabb (Lord) whose love for His creatures manifests in the laws He has made for their own good. They must be ever vigilant in their duties towards Him and obey His laws. Then alone they will be able to live in peace and harmony in this world as a single community of Muslims (those who submit themselves to the will of their Lord).

Arham (plural of *rihm*) implies kinship. Kinship in Islam is regarded as one of the most important social institutions. One of the reasons for making the love of the Ahl ul Bayt (a self-generative good which encompasses all human activities) obligatory, as a recompense of prophethood, is to make man reflect the characteristics of his cherished ideals in practical life (Shura: 23).

Much has been said and practised by the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt to lay emphasis on the love of near relatives, brotherhood of mankind and peace and harmony in human society.

{وَأْتُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْخَبِيثَ بِالطَّيِّبِ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَمْوَالِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حُوبًا كَبِيرًا ۝ 2}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:2]

The Holy Prophet had shown conspicuous solitude for the poor and the young orphans who were deprived of their natural guardians.

Also refer to al-Baqarah: 220. In verses 11 to 16 of al-Balad to take care of the orphans and the poor has been described as a steep ascent (an uphill task). Again and again the Holy Prophet asked his followers to serve the needy and the orphans selflessly.

وَأِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوا فِي الْيَتَامَىٰ فَانكِحُوا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ مَنِّي وَثَلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۖ فإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:3]

If a man fears that he cannot; be fair to an orphan girl in regard to her dower and other conjugal rights, helpless as she is and in his charge, then he may, instead of taking the orphan-girls in marriage, marry women who are pleasing to him-two, three, or four, but not more; but if he thinks he cannot treat so many with equity, he must marry only one. Thus monogamy is the ideal; and polygamy is only allowed as a safeguard against greater social evils.

The so-called civilised ideologies have maligned the "permission to marry four women", in complete disregard to all natural facts, overlooking the miserable conditions prevalent, in the world, before Islam. Islam, in fact, has provided a rational positive direction to the sexual anarchy and topsy-turvy man-woman relationship the human society had been living through till the advent of the Holy Prophet in Arabia, and continues to so live in societies where formal permission to marry more than one women does not exist.

Whatever Allah enjoins on mankind is in their own interest. It is the nature of man to raise questions, but those who sincerely make efforts, after trial and error, come to the conclusion that the divine injunctions alone can solve their problems.

The opinion of some of the anthropologists and sociologists of repute are given below:

"In general a gregarious life, a life in association, favours polygamy. The most civilised nations must have begun with polygamy, and, in reality, it has been thus everywhere and always. In the various civilised societies, living or dead, marriage has commenced by being polygamous. It is a law which has few exceptions."

(Evolution of marriage-M. Letourneau)

"Monogamy far from being defended on the scope of its "naturalness" no anthropologist of note has even maintained that monogamic marriage was natural to male human being. The evidence is all the other way, and we learn on the best authorities that "as an institution polygamy exists in all parts of the world, and that it has flourished among the Hebrews, the Slavs, the Teutons, the Irish and the Indians, none of the Hindu law-givers ever restricting the number of wives a man is allowed to marry." Polygamy was the rule in Biblical days, among the ancient Jews, and was permitted and even enjoined in certain cases by the Mosaic law. It is nowhere forbidden, except to "bishops" in the New Testament."

(Encyclopaedia Britannica)

"The practice of polygamy among the Vedic Indians is abundantly proved by direct references in the Rig Veda and other texts. The heroes and Brahmans of the epic are frequently represented as having several wives."

(Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics).

"Woman is, by nature, a monogamist; man has in him the element of a polygamist."

(Conduct and its disorders biologically considered-Dr. Mercier)

"Lifelong monogamy is perverse, and would prove harmful to our race. Were this institution ever really enforced-and fortunately this is almost never the case in reality-the race must decay." (Professor Earnest Bergman) "The fact that polygamy has been practised is in itself a proof that the sexes do not exist in the uniform proportion. It is mischievously and foolishly thought, and implied in our social practice that the sexual needs of men and women are identical. Nothing is farther from the truth. A woman's urgent need of man has, as its ultimate instinctive motive the bearing of the children; when that is achieved the desire for a man becomes quite a secondary matter. On the other hand, a man needs women for himself. Both desires are complementary and fulfil each other; they are not identical."

(Macfarlane, the case for polygamy)

If he takes another woman, he shall not deprive the first of meat, clothes, and conjugal rights.
(Exodus 21: 10)

I gave you (David) your master's daughter and his wives to be your own,
(2 Samuel 12: 8)

"And so it was understood by the leaders of Christendom at various times that there is no intrinsic immorality or sinfulness in plurality of wives. One of the greatest fathers of the Christian Church (St. Augustine) has declared that polygamy is not a crime where it is a legal institution of a country, and the German reformers, even as late as the sixteenth century, allowed and declared valid the taking of a second or even a third wife, contemporaneously with the first, in default of issue, or any other cause."
(Ameer Ali-Life and Teachings of Muhammad.)

"In the definition which I have given (i.e. of marriage) I have not said, in compliance with the common opinion, 'of one man with one woman', lest I should by implication charge the holy patriarchs and pillars of our faith, Abraham, and the others who had more than one wife at the same time, with habitual fornication and adultery, lest I should be forced to exclude from the sanctuary of God as spurious the holy offspring which sprang from them, yes, the whole of the sons of Israel, for whom the sanctuary itself was made. For it is said (Deut. 22: 2): "A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of Jehovah, even to his tenth generation". Either, therefore, polygamy is a true marriage or all children born in that state are spurious: which would include the whole race of Jacob, the twelve holy tribes chosen by God. But as such an assertion would be absurd in the extreme, not to say impious, and as it is the height of injustice, as well as an example of most dangerous tendency in religion, 'to account as sin what is not such in reality', it appears true that, so far from the question respecting the lawfulness of polygamy being trivial, it is of the highest importance that it should be decided."

(John Milton-A treatise on Christian Doctrine)

"Before Islam, a woman was not free to contract her marriage. It was the right of the father, brother, cousin, or any other male guardian, to give her in marriage, whether she was old or young, widow or virgin, to whomsoever he chose. Her consent was of no significance. There was even a practice prevalent of marrying women by force. This often happened on the death of a man leaving widows. His son or other heir would immediately cast a sheet of cloth on each of the widows (excepting his natural mother), and this was a symbol that he had annexed them to himself. If a widow escaped to her relations before the sheet was thrown over her, the heirs of the deceased would refuse to pay the

dower. This custom is described as the inheriting of a deceased man's widows by his heirs, who in such cases would divide them among themselves like goods. There was no restriction as to the number of wives a man could take. The only limit was that imposed by his means, opportunity and inclinations. Unrestricted polygamy which was sanctioned by usage was freely rampant. This was exclusive of the number of slave girls which a man might possess.

The limits of relationship within which marriage was prohibited were narrow and defined only by close degrees of consanguinity. There can be no doubt that a man could not marry his mother, grandmother, sister, daughter or grand-daughter, and perhaps he was not allowed to marry his aunt or niece. But those among them "that followed the Magian religion could marry their own daughters and sisters." An Arab was permitted to take as his wife his step-mother, cousin, wife's sisters, and could combine in marriage two sisters or a woman and her niece. It is doubtful whether he could marry his mother-in-law or step-daughter. Unrestrained as an Arab was in the number of his wives, he was likewise absolutely free to release himself from the marital tie. His power in this connection was absolute and he was not required or expected to assign any reason for its exercise, nor was he under the necessity of observing any particular procedure. The word commonly used for this purpose was 'Talaq'. It depended upon his discretion whether he would dissolve the marriage absolutely and thus set the woman free to marry or not. He might, if he so chose, revoke the divorce and resume marital connection. Sometimes an Arab would pronounce 'Talaq' ten times and take his wife back, and again divorce her and again take her back, and so on. The wife in such a predicament was entirely at the mercy of the husband, and would not know when she was free. Sometimes the husband would renounce his wife by means of what was called a suspensory divorce. This procedure did not dissolve the marriage, but it only enabled the husband to refuse to live with his wife, while the latter was not at liberty to marry again. The wife among the Arabs had no corresponding right to release herself from the marriage bond. But her parents by a friendly arrangement with the husband could obtain a separation by returning the dower if it had been paid, or by agreeing to forego it if not paid. Such an arrangement was called 'Khula', and by it the marriage tie would be absolutely dissolved."

(Abdur Rahim-Muhammadan Jurisprudence.)

"Where polygamy exists, it is sometimes the chiefs who are permitted to have a plurality of wives. Besides, just as in the case of polyandry, almost everywhere it is confined to a very small part of the people, the majority being monogamous. It is so among all Muhammadan people, in Asia and Europe, as well as in Africa.' 'Ninety-five per cent of the Muhammadans of India, for instance, are said to be monogamists,' and in Persia, it is reported, only two per cent of the population enjoy the questionable luxury of 'plurality of wives.'"

(Howard-History of Matrimonial Institutions.)

"He (Muhammad) restrained polygamy by limiting the maximum number of contemporaneous marriages and by making absolute equity towards all obligatory for the man. It is worthy of note that the clause in the Quran, which contains the permission to contract four contemporaneous marriages is immediately followed by a sentence which cuts down the significance of the preceding passage to its normal and legitimate dimensions. The former passage says: 'you may marry two three or four wives but no more'. The subsequent lines declare: 'But if you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, you shall marry only one.' The extreme importance of this provision bearing especially in mind the meaning which is attached to the word equity (*adl*) in the Quranic teachings, has not been lost sight of

by the great thinkers of the Muslim world."

(Ameer Ali-Muhammadan Law)

"The Muhammadan law undoubtedly contemplates monogamy as the ideal to be aimed at, but concedes to a man the right to have more than one wife, not exceeding four, at one and the same time, provided he is able to deal with them on a footing of equality and justice. This is in accord with the scheme of Islamic legislation which sets up certain moral ideals to be gradually realised by the community, positively forbidding only such acts as must clearly be injurious to social and individual life at all times."

(Abdur Rahim).

Verse 177 of al-Baqarah says that piety does not lie in turning the face to east or west-piety lies (among other deeds mentioned therein) in "freeing the slaves", therefore, the application of what your right hands own" has become, step by step, beyond the bounds of possibility.

In verse 195 of Ali Imran the parenthetical phrase "one of you from the other" makes it clear that men and women are counter-parts to each other and of the same human status.

In the end we quote below verse 129 of this surah which is self-explanatory:

Howsoever you may try you will never be able to treat your wives justly. But do not incline (to one) exclusively and leave (the other) . suspended (as it were). Yet if you effect a reconciliation and safeguard yourselves with full awareness of divine laws, Allah is offorgiving, merciful.

Concisely, Islam, in unequivocal terms, though indirectly, deprecates polygamy.

{ وَأَتُوا النِّسَاءَ صَدَقَاتِهِنَّ نِحْلَةً فَإِنْ طِبْنَ لَكُمْ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْهُ نَفْسًا فَكُلُوهُ هَنِيئًا مَرِيئًا } 4

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:4]

The translation itself contains the clear guidance. Payment of dowry, either a sum of money or other form of property, to the wife is no obligation, prescribed by the law, on the husband.

The right to receive husband's wealth gives the woman an honourable status as a human being. Also refer to verse 7 of this surah.

{ وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا } 5

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:5]

Before handing over the property to an orphan, when he or she attains the age of majority, it must be positively ascertained that the orphan is not immature, because property, as a means of support and sustenance, is a thing to be valued, and not to be spent away wastefully or to be foolishly squandered; otherwise it should be managed by a guardian. The property of a ward should be managed in a profitable way by investing it in trade or industry so that from its profit the ward or wards may be

properly maintained, without consuming the capital.

"Speaking to them (treating them) with kindness" could only be prescribed by a religion which has been completed and perfected by a kind and merciful Lord.

وَابْتَلُوا الْيَتَامَىٰ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغُوا النِّكَاحَ فَإِنْ آنَسْتُمْ مِنْهُمْ رُشْدًا فَادْفَعُوا إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا تَأْكُلُوهَا إِسْرَافًا وَبِدَارًا أَنْ يَكْبَرُوا ۗ وَمَنْ كَانَ
{6} غَنِيًّا فَلْيَسْتَعْفِفْ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ فَقِيرًا فَلْيَأْكُلْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۗ فَإِذَا دَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فَأَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:6]

The translation itself provides the clear directions.

لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ وَلِلنِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ مِمَّا قَلَّ مِنْهُ أَوْ كَثُرَ ۗ نَصِيبًا
{7} مَّفْرُوضًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:7]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 180.

In Islam womanhood or childhood is no bar to the inheritance as it had been in the past, not only in Arabia but in many parts of the ancient world.

This Islamic law of inheritance is a land-mark in the history of legal and social reform. In pre-Islamic world wives, daughters and sisters were excluded altogether from inheritance.

In Islam both the men and women are given the right of inheritance. The cardinal principle of inheritance is to distribute the wealth among all near relatives, and not to let it accumulate in the hands of one person-a wise and effective check on concentration of wealth in few hands.

{8} وَإِذَا حَضَرَ الْقِسْمَةَ أُولُو الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينُ فَارْزُقُوهُمْ مِنْهُ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:8]

Distant and remote relatives, who are not legal heirs of the deceased, have also been accommodated in the most benevolent social order of the world-Islam.

{9} وَلْيَخْشَ الَّذِينَ لَوْ تَرَكَوْا مِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّةً ضِعَافًا خَافُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَلْيَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلْيَقُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:9]

The Holy Prophet said:

Those who have devoured the possessions of the orphans unjustly will breathe blazing fire on the day of resurrection. Such people must fear the situation if they were to leave weak children behind them. How concerned would they be for them? So they must safeguard themselves with full

awareness of Allah's laws, otherwise they will surely burn in hell.

{ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتَامَىٰ ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُونَ فِي بُطُونِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيرًا } 10

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:10] (see commentary for verse 9)

يُوصِيكُمُ اللَّهُ فِي أَوْلَادِكُمْ لِلَّذِ كَرٍ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَىٰ إِن كَانَ كُنَّ نِسَاءً فَوْقَ اثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُنَّ ثُلُثَا مَا تَرَكَ وَإِن كَانَتْ وَاحِدَةً فَلَهَا النِّصْفُ ۚ وَلِأَبَوَيْهِ لِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ مِمَّا تَرَكَ إِن كَانَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ فَإِن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَوَرِثَهُ آبَاؤُهُ فَلِلَّذِي تَلَثُ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُ إِخْوَةٌ فَلِلَّذِي تَلَثُ السُّدُسُ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ أَيُّهُمْ أَقْرَبُ لَكُمْ نَفَعًا ۚ فَرِيضَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا } 11

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:11]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In these two verses the issue of distribution of wealth, left by the deceased, has been precisely settled, taking into consideration the interest of every individual related by blood. In view of al-Anfal: 75 and al-Ahzab: 6, the standard principle is to prefer those who are related by blood; and among such relatives the closer prevents the more remote in the chain of relation, and lineage is more eligible than the distant kinship; and among the distant kinship those closer to the lineage restrict the less-connected; and those who are paternally and maternally related are preferred over those who are either only paternally related Or only maternally related. (For details refer to fiqh).

By violating the Quranic law, those who took the power after the departure of the Holy Prophet, deprived Fatimah from his inheritance, although the Holy Prophet had bequeathed the garden of Fadak to his daughter, Bibi Fatimah Zahra. (Durr al-Manthur, Yanabi al-Muwaddah, Jawahir al-Tafsir, Kanz al-Ummal). Refer to the biography of Fatimah Zahra published by the Peermohammed Ebrahim Trust to know the full account of the issue of Fadak.

وَأَكْمُ نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ أَرْوَاجِكُمْ إِن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَإِن كَانَ لَهُنَّ وَلَدٌ فَلِكُمْ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصِي بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَلَهُنَّ الرُّبْعُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ إِن لَّمْ يَكُنْ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ ۚ فَإِن كَانَ لَكُمْ وَلَدٌ فَلَهُنَّ الثَّمَنُ مِمَّا تَرَكَنَّ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ تُوصُونَ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ ۚ وَإِن كَانَ رَجُلٌ يُورِثُ كَالِأَنَّ أَوْ امْرَأَةً وَهِيَ أختٌ أَوْ أُخْتُ فَلِكُلِّ وَاحِدٍ مِّنْهُمَا السُّدُسُ ۚ فَإِن كَانُوا أَكْثَرَ مِن ذَلِكَ فَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ فِي التَّلَاثِ ۚ مِن بَعْدِ وَصِيَّةٍ يُوصَىٰ بِهَا أَوْ دَيْنٍ غَيْرِ مُضَارٍّ ۚ وَصِيَّةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَلِيمٌ } 12

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:12] (see commentary for verse 11)

{ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ } 13

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:13]

In continuation of the preceding verses it is clearly pointed out here that the Quranic law cannot be subjected to human interference. Complying with the commandments of Allah and His prophet is the duty of the faithfuls, then alone they will enter the land of eternal bliss.

Those who either bring in "fabricated sayings" of the Holy Prophet or act on their own judgement to set aside the decrees of Allah (as had been done in the case of Fadak in complete disregard to the final decrees of Allah) shall go to hell.

{وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَهُ يُدْخِلْهُ نَارًا خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَلَهُ عَذَابٌ مُهِينٌ} 14

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:14] (see commentary for verse 13)

وَاللَّاتِي يَأْتِينَ الْفَاحِشَةَ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمْ فاسْتَشْهَدُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةً مِنْكُمْ فَإِنْ شَهِدُوا فَأَمْسِكُوهُنَّ فِي الْبُيُوتِ حَتَّىٰ يَتَوَقَّاهُنَّ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُنَّ سَبِيلًا} 15

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:15]

Fahisha in its general significance is "an excess, an enormity, anything exceeding the bounds of rectitude", but when particularised, signifies "adultery or fornication", and, in this context, evidently means an act of adultery.

The evidence in the case of adultery must be, according to the law of Islam, ocular, not hearsay, conjectural or circumstantial. Every possible safeguard is taken against hasty and unfounded accusations. When four men testify that they saw with their eyes the actual carnal conjunction, punishments mentioned in this verse, can be inflicted.

For "or Allah provides some other way for them" (through His Prophet) refer to *fiqh*.

{وَالَّذَانِ يَأْتِيَانِيهَا مِنْكُمْ فَأَذُوهُمَا فَإِنْ تَابَا وَأَصْلَحَا فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا} 16

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:16]

The crime, mentioned here, is adultery. *Adhuhuma*-hurt or punish both of them.

If they sincerely repent and reform, Allah accepts repentance because He is merciful.

Repentance has for its elements:-

- (i) no premeditation but ignorance,
- (ii) immediate realisation of the offence,
- (iii) enlightenment of the heart,
- (iv) detestation of the sin,
- (v) a resolve to avoid it in the future,
- (vi) an earnest craving for Allah's forgiveness.

It is stated that a faithful commits a sin, inspite of the knowledge of the law, under the satanic influence, in a fit of passion or in a moment of forgetfulness.

Allah does not accept the repentance of those who continue indulging in sin until death draws near, nor of those who die disbelieving.

{إِنَّمَا التَّوْبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السُّوءَ بِجَهَالَةٍ ثُمَّ يَتُوبُونَ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَتُوبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا} 17

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:17] (see commentary for verse 16)

وَلَيْسَتِ التَّوْبَةُ لِلَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَهُمُ الْمَوْتُ قَالَ إِنِّي تُبْتُ الْآنَ وَلَا الَّذِينَ يَمُوتُونَ وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ ۗ أُولَٰئِكَ أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:18] (see commentary for verse 16)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا مَرطًا وَلَا تَعْضَلُوهُنَّ لِتَذْهَبُوا بِبَعْضِ مَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَأْتِيَنَّ بِفَاحِشَةٍ مُبَيِّنَةٍ
{ وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنْ كَرِهْتُمُوهُنَّ فَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَيَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا } 19

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:19]

In pagan Arabia, widows were divided amongst the heirs of a deceased as goods and cattle. The heir either married the widow to some one else and kept her dower, or refused to let her marry unless he was paid a handsome amount as a settlement, or else married her himself. Another manoeuvring was to harass the wives by imprisoning them in their houses in order that they might be forced to claim separation and thus to relinquish their dower or their inheritance. All such barbaric customs were swept aside by this verse.

If the wife is at fault, then it is she who must relinquish her dower, whole or in part, to obtain separation. For details refer to *fiqh*.

Understanding the biological handicaps of women, men should live with them with tolerance and justice, even if they do not love them, because men may not like a thing, yet Allah might have endued it with goodness. Love, justice, goodwill and fair treatment is the essence of the matrimonial code of Islam.

{ وَإِنْ أَرَدْتُمْ اسْتِبْدَالَ زَوْجٍ مَكَانَ زَوْجٍ وَآتَيْتُمْ إِحْدَاهُنَّ قِنطَارًا فَلَا تَأْخُذُوا مِنْهُ شَيْئًا ۚ أَتَأْخُذُونَهُ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُبِينًا } 20

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:20]

It is prohibited to falsely accuse a woman of adultery to obtain a divorce by forfeiting her dowry. For details refer to *fiqh*.

{ وَكَيْفَ تَأْخُذُونَهُ وَقَدْ أَفْضَىٰ بَعْضُكُمْ إِلَىٰ بَعْضٍ وَأَخَذْنَ مِنْكُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا } 21

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:21] (see commentary for verse 20)

{ وَلَا تَنْكِحُوا مَا نَكَحَ آبَاؤُكُمْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۚ إِنَّهُ كَانَ فَاحِشَةً وَمَقْتًا وَسَاءَ سَبِيلًا } 22

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:22]

It has been prohibited to marry the women who were the wives of one's father.

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ أُمَّهَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ وَعَمَّاتُكُمْ وَخَالَاتُكُمْ وَبَنَاتُ الْأَخِ وَبَنَاتُ الْأُخْتِ وَأُمَّهَاتُكُمْ اللَّاتِي أَرْضَعْتُمْ وَأَخَوَاتُكُمْ مِنَ الرِّضَاعَةِ وَأُمَّهَاتُ نِسَائِكُمْ وَرَبَائِبُكُمْ اللَّاتِي فِي حُجُورِكُمْ مِنْ نِسَائِكُمُ اللَّاتِي دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُونُوا دَخَلْتُمْ بِهِنَّ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۚ وَحَلَائِلُ أَبْنَائِكُمُ الَّذِينَ مِنْ أَصْلَابِكُمْ وَأَنْ تَجْمَعُوا بَيْنَ الْأُخْتَيْنِ إِلَّا مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا } 23

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:23]

This verse contains the list of women whom one cannot marry. For details refer to *fiqh*.

For comparison refer to Leviticus 18: 6 to 18.

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَأَجَلٌ لَكُمْ مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ تَبْتَغُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ ۚ
فَمَا اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْهُنَّ فَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ فَرِيضَةً ۚ وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي مَا تَرَضَيْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ الْفَرِيضَةِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا
حَكِيمًا {24}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:24] *Muhsanat* means well-guarded or protected. They are married women (free and slave), minors and insane females.

"Save those whom your right hands own" signifies "such married women as shall come in your possession as prisoners of war". Such women, when not taken back on payment of ransom or through negotiation, are lawful as wives, even though their previous marriage has not been formally dissolved, provided the infidel woman becomes a Muslim.

Famastamta-tum bihi provides for a temporary marriage, known as *muta*. It has been specifically made lawful by the Quran and the Holy Prophet, therefore, this provision subsists as unrescinded.

One day, for no reason at all, and having no authority to amend a law given and practised by the Holy Prophet, the second caliph declared from the pulpit:

"Two *mutas* (temporary marriage and combining *hajj* with *umra*) were in force during the time of the Holy Prophet, but now I decree both of them as unlawful; and I will punish those who practise them."

(Tafsir Kabir, Durr al-Manthur, Kashshaf, Mustadrak and others).

According to Tirmidhi even his son, Ibn Umar, refused to agree with his father's action because it was made lawful by Allah and His Prophet, whose pronouncements could never be revoked by any one after him.

Therefore the Shia school of thought (Islam-original) holds both the *mutas* lawful. Ali ibn abi Talib reversed the uncalled-for innovation of the second caliph, and thereafter it was never again prohibited.

The Maliki school of thought also holds *muta* as lawful.

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ مِنْكُمْ طَوْلًا أَنْ يَنْكِحَ الْمُحْصَنَاتِ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ فَمِنْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ مِنْ فَنَيَاتِكُمُ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِإِيمَانِكُمْ ۚ بَعْضُكُمْ مِنْ بَعْضٍ ۚ فَانكِحُوهُنَّ بِإِذْنِ أَهْلِهِنَّ وَآتُوهُنَّ أُجُورَهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ ۚ مُحْصَنَاتٍ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحَاتٍ وَلَا مُتَّخِذَاتِ أَخْدَانٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَحْصَيْنَ فَإِنْ أَتَيْنَ بِفَاحِشَةٍ فَعَلَيْهِنَّ نِصْفُ مَا عَلَى الْمُحْصَنَاتِ مِنَ الْعَذَابِ ۚ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ خَشِيَ الْعَنَتَ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَأَنْ تَصْبِرُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ {25}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:25]

Those who do not afford to marry a free believing woman and fear to fall into sin of adultery can marry a believing bondswoman, with the consent of her guardian and after paying the dowry to her.

"Allah knows best your faith" implies that a bondswoman may be more honourable with her Lord than her free husband.

If the married bondswoman is guilty of adultery inflict on her half the punishment enjoined for free women.

{ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سُنْنَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَيَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ } 26

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:26]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

From Adam to Muhammad the right path unto Allah remained the same, so the tendency of man to rebel against the divine authority also did not change.

The Holy Prophet said:

"You will continue to walk on the path of earlier people of the book. If they had crept into the hole of a lizard, you will also do as they did."

{ وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَيُرِيدُ الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الشَّهَوَاتِ أَنْ تَمِيلُوا مَيْلًا عَظِيمًا } 27

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:27]

Allah desires to bestow His grace on His creatures by showing them the right path, but those who are lost in the pleasures of the world wish to lead them astray, far away from true guidance.

{ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا } 28

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:28] (see commentary for verse 27)

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُم بَيْنَكُم بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ ۗ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ

{ رَحِيمًا } 29

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:29]

Every believer's property is his own-Islam gives the right to own private property.

Fairplay and honesty in trade has been emphasised, and dishonesty has been described as killing one another.

{ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ عُدْوَانًا وَظُلْمًا فَسَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِ نَارًا ۗ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا } 30

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:30]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The punishment announced in this verse indicates the importance Islam gives to honesty and fairplay in trade and commerce. The breach of the law of property and murder are grave crimes, severely punishable; and whoso denies its validity is an infidel.

{إِنْ تَجْتَنِبُوا كَبَائِرَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ نُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَنُدْخِلْكُمْ مُدْخَلًا كَرِيمًا } 31

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:31]

One should keep away from the grave and deadly sins that have been forbidden, but any sin, however trivial, becomes deadly if done under the impression that "after all it is pardonable"; and *israr* (obstinate persistence) makes it deadlier than the deadliest sins.

Sin, committed at the spur of a moment, or in a heat of passion without the thought of Allah in the mind, are pardonable; but if at any moment the thought of Allah comes into mind as a punisher or pardoner, while committing the sin, yet carried out, then the sin is grave and deadly, and therefore, unpardonable.

وَلَا تَتَمَنَّوْا مَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بِهِ بَعْضَكُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ۚ لِلرِّجَالِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا كَتَبْنَا وَاللِّسَاءِ نَصِيبٌ مِمَّا كَتَبْنَا ۗ وَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا } 32

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:32]

Allah has preferred some people over others. There is no place for jealousy and covetousness. Yet each will be recompensed in the hereafter justly. There will be no discrimination in the matter of reward and punishment. In Allah's sight, as responsible moral agents, both men and women are equal. Therefore, instead of coveting for what "the other" has one should invoke Allah for moral perfection and spiritual development.

{وَلِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مَوَالِي مِمَّا تَرَكَ الْوَالِدَانِ وَالْأَقْرَبُونَ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ عَقَدَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَآتُوهُمْ نَصِيبَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدًا } 33

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:33]

Mawaliya means legal heirs (as described in verses 11 and 12 of this surah).

"Those with whom your right hands have made a pledge" implies successors by covenant without prejudice to the right of the legal heirs.

الرِّجَالُ قَوَّامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ بِمَا فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ وَبِمَا أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ ۗ فَالصَّالِحَاتُ قَانِتَاتٌ حَافِظَاتٌ لِّلْغَيْبِ بِمَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَاللَّاتِي تَخَافُونَ نُشُورَهُنَّ فَعِظُوهُنَّ وَاهْجُرُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ وَاصْرَبُوهُنَّ ۗ فَإِنْ أَطَعْنَكُمْ فَلَا تَبْغُوا عَلَيْهِنَّ سَبِيلًا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا كَبِيرًا } 34

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:34]

In verse 228 of al-Baqarah Allah says that women also have rights as men have but men are a degree above women. In this verse it is again stated that men are the guardians of women as He has made the male sex excel over the female sex. This is the will of an all-wise and almighty Lord.

The equality before law should not be confused with the equality of the complex of subjective and original qualities. Even the messengers and prophets of Allah are not equal in status due to their innate and endowed essence. "We have made some of these messengers to excel others", says the almighty, Allah in verse 253 of al-Baqarah.

Qanitatun means devoted to Allah, therefore, a woman who obeys Allah must accept His command and acknowledge her duties she has to perform to please her husband who spends of his wealth to provide for her. She must also watch over his property and his interests, attend to his needs, and above all guard her chastity.

In case a perverse woman (wife) refuses to mend her ways (very common among the low-bred and ignorant women of easy virtue) then the husband can admonish her, and even stop sleeping with her, but if the corrective measures fail to refine her, he can take harsher steps to make her *qanitatun* (devoted and obedient to Allah).

To understand the true purport of this verse, it is essential to keep in mind verse 21 of al-Rum.

"Another of His signs is that He created out of you mates of your own kind so that you may find repose in them, and has instilled (ordained) love and kindness between you. Verily there are signs in this for those who reflect."

In many verses it has been ordained to, treat women with kindness and to speak to them gently.

The Holy Prophet said:

"Never beat Allah's handmaidens."

"The best of you is he who is kind to his wife."

There is not a single event of wife-beating or child-abuse in the lives of the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt.

Fala tabghu alayhinna is a warning to the unscrupulous husbands not to seek an excuse for resorting to the conditional provision allowed to discipline the depraved women only.

{ وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا إِنْ يُرِيدَا إِصْلَاحًا يُوَفِّقِ اللَّهُ بَيْنَهُمَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلِيمًا خَبِيرًا } 35

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:35]

If reconciliation between the husband and the wife cannot be made by themselves, the matter should be referred to the arbiters-one from the husband's family and one from the wife's family.

Reconciliation through compromise and settlement is better than separation (divorce). Allah

desires harmony among the husband and wife. Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 227, according to which (unto Allah and the Holy Prophet) divorce is the most loathsome of the permissible acts.

وَأَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا^ط وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ
وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ^ط إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَالًا فَخُورًا {36}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:36]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 215. The translation itself contains the clear instructions.

{الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ وَيَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبُخْلِ وَيَكْتُمُونَ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ^ط وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا {37}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:37]

Those who are miserly and bid others to be so, and hide what Allah has given them, or spend of their wealth to show off have been condemned as unbelievers, the companions of Shaytan.

{وَالَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَا بِالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ^ط وَمَنْ يَكُنِ الشَّيْطَانُ لَهُ قَرِينًا فَسَاءَ قَرِينًا {38}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:38] (see commentary for verse 37)

{وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِمْ لَوْ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَأَنْفَقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَهُمُ اللَّهُ^ط وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ عَلِيمًا {39}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:39] (see commentary for verse 37)

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ^ط وَإِنْ تَكَ حَسَنَةً يُضَاعِفْهَا وَيُؤْتِ مِنْ لَدُنْهُ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا {40}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:40]

Allah is just. He not only rewards in full every good action but also lets goodness generate more goodness.

{فَكَيْفَ إِذَا جِئْنَا مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ بِشَهِيدٍ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ شَهِيدًا {41}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:41]

Shahid means a witness, and when *ala* follows *shahid* it means a *raqib* or *muhaymin* (a close watcher and a careful observer). Please refer to al-Baqarah: 143. Also refer to al-Rad: 43; al-Hud: 17; al-Nahl: 84 and 89. Allah shall bring, from among every people, a witness, and bring the Holy Prophet as a witness over those witnesses. It indicates that the Holy Prophet was present in the times of all the prophets. He is also a witness over the holy Imams. His spiritual and essential presence in all times to witness the performance of the divinely commissioned messengers and guides proves that he was fully aware of the revelations revealed to Allah's messengers and the agency which communicated the revelations, so it is a blasphemy to say that he did not recognise angel Jibrail when he first came to him to convey Allah's message. (Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 2).

The Holy Prophet said:

I existed as messenger of Allah even before the creation of Adam.

"Those who disbelieved and disobeyed the prophet" have been warned that in the hereafter they shall be punished just like the disbelievers. Those who persecuted, tortured and caused the death of the daughter of the Holy Prophet and her children (Ahl ul Bayt) come into the category of those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Holy Prophet. Please refer to the commentary of verses 8 to 20 on page 51.

{يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُوا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّىٰ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا} 42

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:42] (see commentary for verse 41)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَعْلَمُوا مَا تَقُولُونَ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّىٰ تَغْتَسِلُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُم مِّنَ الْعَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ 43 {إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا غَدُورًا}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:43] *Sukara* may mean the state of intoxication, or, according to Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Baqir, slumber and sleepiness.

Junuban means the state of seminal pollution- after the emission of semen, either in waking or in sleep. A total ablution or bathing is obligatory before praying the *salat*. Physical cleanliness, in Islam, is a *sine qua non* for moral and spiritual purification. If water is unobtainable (or injurious to health) *tayammum* should be performed.

(For method of performing *tayammum* please refer to books *on fiqh*.)

{الَّذِينَ أَوْتُوا نَصِيبًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُشْتَرُونَ الضَّلَالَةَ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَضَلُّوا السَّبِيلَ} 44

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:44]

"A portion of the book" indicates that the Tawrat and the Injil were not whole or complete. Please refer to John 16: 12 and 13 (mentioned on page 79). Also refer to Matthew 15: 22 to 26 wherein Isa says that he was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and to them alone, therefore, he had commanded his disciples not to take the road to gentile lands, nor enter any Samaritan town; but to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel to preach the Gospel. (Matthew 10 : 5 to 7).

What Allah says about the Quran and the Holy Prophet is as follows:-

O People of the book! Now Our messenger has come to you, expounding to you much of that which you used to hide in the scripture, and passing over much. Now has come to you light from Allah and a plain scripture.

(Ma-idah: 15)

We have not sent you save as mercy for the worlds.

(Anbiya: 107)

We have sent you as a messenger unto mankind and Allah is sufficient as witness.

(Nisa: 79)

We have not sent you save as a bearer of good tidings and a warner unto all mankind, but most of mankind know not.

(Saba: 28)

{ وَاللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِأَعْدَائِكُمْ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ نَصِيرًا } 45

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:45]

The believers have been exhorted to depend upon Allah alone who is their guardian and protector .

{ مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا وَعَصَيْنَا وَاسْمَعْتَ غَيْرَ مُسْمِعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لِيَّا بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ وَطَعْنَا فِي الدِّينِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَاسْمَعْتَ وَانظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَكِنْ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا } 46

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:46]

Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 75 to 79 and 104.

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ آمِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ ۚ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا } 47

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:47]

Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 40 to 42, and for "sabbath" al-Baqarah: 65.

"Before We alter their faces" means disfigure their visages beyond recognition.

"Turn them towards their back" means (according to Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Baqir) reverting the people of the book to their previous position when there was no divine guidance.

It is reported that there were Jews like Abdullah bin Salam and Kabul Ahbar who were sure that the Holy Prophet was the promised prophet but due to false pride had not openly embraced the true faith of Islam. On hearing this verse they openly became Muslim.

{ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا } 48

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:48]

This verse makes clear the indescribable enormity of the sin of polytheism. The most loathsome heresy is *shirk*, giving to Allah a partner. The exposition of the existence of Allah should be set forth in such a way as always to emphasise His absolute unity.

"Giving currency to an innovation (in the sense of alteration and deviation) and praising those who

follow it and condemning those who oppose it" is the starting point of *shirk*, in the opinion of Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al-Sadiq, according to Umdatul Bayan by Sayyid Ammar Ali.

{ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يُرَكُّونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ ۗ بَلِ اللَّهُ يُرَكِّي مَن يَشَاءُ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ فَتِيلًا } 49

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:49]

Those who falsely claim themselves purified are the liars. It is Allah who purifies whomsoever He wills as has been done through al-Ahzab: 33. The holy Ahl ul Bayt are the only people who have been thoroughly purified by Allah.

Any false claim about one's own self or others in the matter of religious facts is like fabricating a lie against Allah, which is a manifest sin, severely punishable.

{ انظُرْ كَيْفَ يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِهِ إِثْمًا مُّبِينًا } 50

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:50] (see commentary for verse 49)

{ أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا نَصِيحًا مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْجِبْتِ وَالطَّاغُوتِ وَيَقُولُونَ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا هَؤُلَاءِ أَهْدَىٰ مِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا سَبِيلًا } 51

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:51]

Jibt means sorcery and *taghut* means rebel or devil-also the names of the two idols the Quraysh worshipped. Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 256. The reference is to the Jews who, by going astray from the path of pure monotheism of Musa, had given currency to sorcery and devildom in order to form an alliance with the idolatrous Arabs. By siding with the pagans the Jews showed their preference for idolatry. Their tacit approval of idolatry has been pointed out in this verse. The Jews said openly that the pagans were better guided than the Muslims.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The words *Jibt* and *taghut* refer to any ungodly authority which claims inspiration, intuition or special communion with the unseen. This also applies to any temporal authority without the divine sanction.

{ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَمَن يَلْعَنِ اللَّهُ فَلَن تَجِدَ لَهُ نَصِيرًا } 52

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:52]

"Allah has cursed" indicates that cursing those who have gone astray (and by throwing the commandments of Allah and the teachings of the Holy Prophet to the winds inflicted pain and misery on the Ahl ul Bayt) is a godly act.

"And whosoever Allah curses, for him you shall not find a helper" means that neither their ostentatious good deeds, nor the invocations of blessings by their friends and followers on their behalf will save them from the eternal punishment.

{أَمْ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِنَ الْمُلْكِ فَإِذَا لَا يُؤْتُونَ النَّاسَ نَقِيرًا 53}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:53]

The kingdom of Allah granted to the children of Is-haq was taken away from them after Isa, and was transferred to the children of Ismail. Refer to Matthew 21: 41 to 45.

So niggardly of spirit are the Jews that no one will be benefited if they happen to own a kingdom.

{أَمْ يَحْسُدُونَ النَّاسَ عَلَىٰ مَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ فَقَدْ آتَيْنَا آلَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا 54}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:54]

It was the "house of Ibrahim" which was promised leadership in religion and greatness as a nation. Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 124 to know how the divine kingdom was transferred to the descendants of Ismail, the son of Ibrahim,-the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, whom Allah has given the book, the wisdom and a great kingdom.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to this verse the descendants of Ibrahim, through Ismail, have been given the book and the wisdom and the authority to guide and lead mankind, because they are foremost in total submission to Allah. Mankind has been enjoined to follow and obey them, even if they do not hold any defacto power, which the descendants of Ismail had for a very brief period in the times of the Holy Prophet and Ali ibn abi Talib. If authority means defacto temporal power, then there is no room for dividing the people into believers and unbelievers in verse 55.

{فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ آمَنَ بِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ صَدَّ عَنْهُ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِجَهَنَّمَ سَعِيرًا 55}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:55] (see commentary for verse 54)

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِنَا سَوْفَ نُصَلِّيهِمْ نَارًا كَلَّمَا تَضَجَّتْ جُلُودُهُمْ بَدَّلْنَاهُمْ جُلُودًا غَيْرَهَا لِيَذُوقُوا الْعَذَابَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَزِيمًا 56}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:56]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Those who disbelieve Allah's signs shall be cast into fire, and when their skin (*jild*) is burnt up, then Allah shall give them a new skin so that they may go on tasting the agony of punishment. The continuous torment or comfort will be physical as well as spiritual. The outer structure of the body communicates the feelings of pain or pleasure to the soul, and as the cognitive self is not changed, the renewed outer structure, though had not committed the sin, yet will be used to convey pain or pleasure to the unchangeable soul. None of the senses will ever be destroyed but will be made sharper to taste pain or pleasure. Refer to al-Qaf: 20 to 22. This verse refers to the continuity of a process, therefore,

it negates the theory of transmigration of the soul-return of the departed soul to another body which has a soul of its own.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا لَّهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا ظِلٌّ
57} ظِلِيلًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:57]

See the commentary of al-Baqarah: 25.

"Coolest of shades" means the blissful shadow of the divine attributes and the holy names referred to in verses 31, 32, 33, 37 of al-Baqarah. In view of verse 61 of Ali Imran, verse 33 of al-Ahzab and verse 23 of Al Shura, a believer must love and cherish the Ahl ul Bayt to deserve the rewards mentioned in this verse. Without love and attachment with the Ahl ul Bayt one cannot truly follow the right path, moreover, a person who does not pay the wages of prophethood (Shura: 23) is not a believer at all.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا
58} بَصِيرًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:58]

Please refer to the commentary of verses 11 to 14 of this surah and our publication "Biography of Bibi Fatimah Zahra" to know how those who took power after the departure of the Holy Prophet violated the divine commands enjoined in this verse when the property of "Fadak", bequeathed to his daughter by the Holy Prophet, was forcibly taken away from Bibi Fatimah Zahra.

Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Baqir said:

Rendering to the owners what is held in trust (*amanat*) is one of the pillars of faith (*Iman*), be the owner a murderer of Imam Husayn.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُؤْمِنُونَ
59} بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۚ ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ وَأَحْسَنُ تَأْوِيلًا

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:59]

"Obey Allah and obey the messenger and the *ulil amr* (those vested with authority through His messenger)."

The command to obey is infinite-total obedience in all material, religious and spiritual matters, therefore, as this verse clearly signifies, the *ulil amr* must also be as just, wise and merciful as Allah and the Holy Prophet are, and he who - administers the affairs of mankind should be the *khalifatullah* (vicegerent of Allah) and the *waliallah* (representative of Allah whom He chooses after equipping him with His wisdom). Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 30 to 39 and 124; and al-Ma'idah: 55 and 56 and 3 and 67 with reference to the event at Ghadir Khum; and al-

Rad: 43; and al-Hud: 17. A careful study of the above references discloses that Ali, and after him, the remaining eleven Imams, in the progeny of the Holy Prophet, Ali and Fatimah, are the true successors of the Holy Prophet who have been referred to as *ulil amr* in this verse. So the Shias obey and follow the Holy Prophet and the twelve Imams.

It is irrational and senseless to accept any ruler as *ulil amr*, otherwise men like Yazid bin Mu-awiya will have to be included in the category of *ulil amr*; and no sane person would say that Allah has enjoined to obey men like Yazid (prototypes of whom were and are many and in abundance since the departure of the Holy Prophet till today) just as one obeys Allah and the Holy Prophet.

From the event of *ashira* (feast of the near relatives to carry out the divine command of "warn your tribe of near relatives") to the day at Ghadir Khum, the Holy Prophet repeatedly announced the successorship of Ali, therefore, the first step a true Muslim must take to obey the messenger of Allah is to obey and follow Ali ibn abi Talib. Also refer to the "Right Path" and "Peshawar Nights", published by the Peermohammed Ebrahim Trust or Zahra Publications, because the issue of *ulil amr* and *wali* has been discussed in depth in these books with authentic references from the well-known books of *tafsir* (exegesis) and *hadith* (traditions) written by the Muslim scholars.

Today the Muslim *ummah* (from Indonesia to Morocco) is in a quandary, because the theoreticians who directly or indirectly served the interests of the despotic rulers, have presented "the obedience to ruler" (even if he is an usurper, a rogue or a ruffian) as a fundamental of religion (known as the theory of *ghlu* and *ghalba*-violence and conquest) by misinterpreting this verse. Such theoreticians are their Imams. There is no way leading to emancipation from terror and exploitation if this theory is not rightly rejected once and for all. It is not possible unless the sincere Muslims submit to the teachings of the Ahl ul Bayt.

أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّهُمْ آمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا نُزِّلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَحَاكَمُوا إِلَى الطَّاغُوتِ وَقَدْ أُمِرُوا أَنْ يَكْفُرُوا بِهِ
{وَيُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُضِلَّهُمْ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا } 60

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:60]

"What has been revealed to you" is the Quran, and "what had been revealed before you" are the Tawrat and the Injil.

It is reported that Kab bin Ashraff, a Jew, is compared to the *taghut*.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Taghut, in this verse, means a devil in human form. According to the Ahl ul Bayt, *taghut* invariably refers to any unauthorised claimant of power whom men may obey and follow. Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 256.

{وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ رَأَيْتَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَصُدُّونَ عَنْكَ صُدُودًا } 61

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:61]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

"What Allah has sent down to the messenger" means the Quran.

This verse refers to those who submit to the opinions of others in the matters of religion instead of obtaining guidance from the Quran and the teachings of the Holy Prophet. For example to rely on *ijma* (opinion of the unauthorised persons) to settle a religious issue, which is described to be the method of the hypocrites.

{فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ جَاءُوكَ يَخْلِفُونَ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ آرْدُنَا إِلَّا إِحْسَانًا وَتَوْفِيقًا} 62

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:62]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

It refers to those who, by nature hypocrites, introduce unwarranted reforms and innovations, contrary to the teachings of the Quran and the Holy Prophet, to accommodate non-Islamic theories; and when evil consequences confront them, they say that it was done to bring good and amity.

{أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا} 63

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:63]

Qawlan baligha means effective, chaste, rational, impressive and penetrating arguments.

{وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا} 64

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:64]

It is the will of Allah that people should obey the Holy Prophet. If the sinners approach the Holy Prophet, he will speak on their behalf to Allah, because He has given him the authority to intercede on behalf of the repentant sinners; and on his (and his Ahl ul Bayt's) recommendation. Allah forgives the sinners, as has been clearly mentioned in this verse. Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 48.

{فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّىٰ يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا} 65

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:65]

The opening phrase of this verse (No, by your Lord) asserts that the decision of Allah is final and irrevocable. Allah has decreed that the Holy Prophet's judgements, decisions and directions (concerning all material, spiritual, personal and public matters) should be accepted and carried out by his followers, else profession of their faith would not be genuine and sincere.

Fima shajara baynahum gives unlimited powers to the Holy Prophet.

Thumma la yajidu fi anfusihim seals the decisive nature of the Holy Prophet's judgements, decisions and directions. No one has any right whatsoever to disagree with him in thought and action.

Yusallimu taslima implies total surrender to him without any reservation.

From the "feast of the near relatives" to the event at Ghadir Khum the Holy Prophet had clearly given his judgement, decision and direction (under the command of Allah) to his followers to follow Ali, after him, in all material, spiritual, personal and public matters. Please refer to the commentary of al-Ma-idah: 67.

The companions of the Holy Prophet, after him, in a great hurry, held conferences in Saqifa bani Sa-ida to choose his successor, by ignoring his clear directions, inspite of this verse. It was a deliberate scheme to deprive the Muslim *ummah* from the divinely decreed leadership of Ali and his descendants. By doing so they not only violated the commands of Allah and the directions of the Holy Prophet but also condemned the Muslim *ummah* to an everlasting perdition.

There are two groups of the Holy Prophet's successors:

(1) The twelve Imams, the descendants of Ibrahim, Ismail and the Holy Prophet, well-known to the Muslim *ummah*, from Imam Ali ibn abi Talib to Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Mahdi (refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 124).

(2) The crafty rulers openly opposed and persecuted the twelve Imams and their families, friends and followers. Most of them were drunkards, gamblers and ruffians. To know the true colour of the Umayyid and Abbaside caliphs please refer to Hitti's History of the Arabs or any important book of history written by a Muslim or a non-Muslim historian.

The sincere seekers of truth can easily select their Imams whom they want to follow from among these two groups.

It was the misfortune of the Muslim *ummah* that they made a wrong decision after the departure of the Holy Prophet. Even at the last moment he asked his companions to bring a sheet of paper and a pen so that he could write that which would prevent them from going astray, after him, but the people around him did not want him to commit his will in writing. One of them said:

"The book of Allah is sufficient for us."

(Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Fat-hul Bari, Tabrani, Tarikh Ahmadi).

This declaration by one of the companions, who also observed that "the old man was in a delirium" was a wilful contravention of this and many such verses of the Quran, because we cannot say that he was an ignorant fool who was not aware of the book of Allah.

The above-noted tradition is known as *hadith al-qartas*.

We again invite our readers to study pages 1 to 7, the commentary of al-Baqarah: 30 to 39; 124, 248, 249, 251; al-Ma-idah: 67 and of many verses in this book to know the fact that Imam Ali was the only true successor of the Holy Prophet, and after Imam Ali, his descendants upto Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Mahdi.

وَلَوْ أَنَّا كَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ اقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ أَوْ اخْرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ مَا فَعَلُوهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ مِنْهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ فَعَلُوا مَا يُوعَظُونَ بِهِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ
{وَأَشَدَّ تَنْبِيئًا} 66

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:66]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Unquestioning obedience and devotion to the Holy Prophet has been again ordained in this verse, as done in the preceding verse.

Just like the Jews, the followers of the Holy Prophet used to back out of the battles whenever commanded to lay down their lives and go forth from their homes. The battles of Badr, Uhad and Khandaq bear testimony to this fact. For details refer to Tabari and other historians. The majority of the companions failed to submit to the will of Allah.

Obedience to the Holy Prophet is not restricted to any people or age but its application is universal, till the end of this world.

Verse 159 of Ali Imran says that the Holy Prophet had been gentle with the fresh converts who were guilty of disobedience and indiscipline at Uhad, because being weak in faith they might have gone back to infidelity.

In the end, it makes the Holy Prophet's authority final and decisive- "and when you have resolved (come to your own decision) put your trust in Allah".

As far as the "consultation" is concerned the Holy Prophet used to hear even Abdullah bin Obay whenever he came to give him his advice (before the battle of Uhad he advised the Holy Prophet not to go to Uhad but wait in Madina to fight against the Quraysh).

{وَإِذَا لَأْتَيْنَاهُمْ مِنْ لَدُنَّا أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا} 67

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:67]

The rewards mentioned in these verses are for those who unconditionally obey and follow the judgements, decisions and directions of the Holy Prophet, (which in fact is the will of Allah), in all ages, till the end of this world. They are with those who are blessed by Allah (study this verse in the light of the commentary of verse 65 of this surah).

Nabiyyin refers to the Holy prophet.

Siddiqin refers to Imam Ali ibn abi Talib, the first man who believed in the Holy Prophet, and never worshipped a *ghayrallah*, was free from the dirt of polytheism from his birth to the end. Hafiz Abu Nu-aym, Muwaffaq ibn Ahmed and Ibn Hajar Makki say that verse 119 of al-Tawbah (be with the truthfals) refers to the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt.

Shuhada and *salihin* refer to Imam Hasan, Imam Husayn (the greatest martyr) and the holy Imams among the Ahl ul Bayt who are unanimously acknowledged as *shuhada* and *salihin*.

68} {وَلَهَدَيْنَاهُمْ صِرَاطًا مُسْتَقِيمًا}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:68] (see commentary for verse 67)

69} {وَمَنْ يُطِعِ اللَّهَ وَالرَّسُولَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاءِ وَالصَّالِحِينَ وَحَسُنَ أُولَٰئِكَ رَفِيقًا}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:69] (see commentary for verse 67)

70} {ذَٰلِكَ الْفَضْلُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ عَلِيمًا}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:70]

To be in the company of the Holy Prophet, Imam Ali ibn abi Talib and the holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt is the highest possible elevation, therefore, certainly this is the grace of Allah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

In verse 40 of al-Naml, through the grace of Allah (bestowed on a person who had a partial knowledge of the book) the queen of Shiba was brought before Sulayman in the twinkling of an eye. It is therefore logical to state that as Allah has bestowed (all) His grace on the Holy Prophet (the complete knowledge of the whole book), he had the ability and power to effect extraordinary events (miracles) whenever he wanted to do so. Besides the Holy Prophet, in the light of al-Hud: 17 and al-Rad: 43, and Allah's injunction for first recitation of surah Bara-at before the infidels of Makka by the Holy Prophet himself or by one who is from the Holy Prophet, Ali ibn abi Talib is the person who had the complete knowledge of the book, therefore he is also known as *mazhar al-ajajib*. The "*Imaman wa rahmatan* (guide and mercy)" and "the witness between the Holy Prophet and the people is he who has the knowledge of the book" is Imam Ali (see commentary of al-Hud : 17 and al-Rad 43 for authentic references).

71} {يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا خُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ فَانفِرُوا تُبَاتٍ أَوْ الْفِرُوا جَمِيعًا}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:71]

Fight against your enemies to defend yourselves and your faith.

72} {وَإِنَّ مِنْكُمْ لَمَنْ لِيُبْتَغَىٰ فَرَأَىٰ مِنْهُ خِيَابًا فَكَذَّبَ وَقَالَ لَا بَأْسَ بِي إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ أَتَىٰ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ فَحَرَسْتُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّمَا اتَّخَذْتُم مَّنَافِئَ لَبِيسًا لَّئِي مَكِّنَ لَكُمْ يُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَشَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:72]

These verses refer to the conduct of the hypocrites.

{وَأَلَيْنُ أَصَابَكُمْ فَضْلٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِيَقُولَنَّ كَأَن لَّمْ تَكُنْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُ مَوَدَّةٌ يَا لَيْتَنِي كُنْتُ مَعَهُمْ فَأَفُوزَ فَوْزًا عَظِيمًا } 73

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:73] (see commentary for verse 72)

{فَلْيُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يَشْرُونَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَمَنْ يُقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَيُقْتَلْ أَوْ يَغْلِبْ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا } 74

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:74]

"In the way of Allah" implies taking part in the holy war with pure heart and clean motives, not for booty. A believing and devout warrior either wins a victory or gives his life to attain martyrdom, because ignominy of defeat is not for him. There is a mighty reward awaiting for him in the hereafter.

{وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانَ الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا ۗ وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ وَلِيًّا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ نَصِيرًا } 75

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:75]

The primary motive to fight should be to defend the cause of Allah and also to protect or liberate the oppressed among men, women and children.

The pagans of Makka were ungodly and oppressive. When in Makka the Muslims used to ask the Holy Prophet to fight against them, the Holy Prophet could not take the desired action because he did not receive any such command from Allah; but when the divine command to fight was revealed in Madina, most of the companions never came forward. They either watched the fighting from a safe distance or ran away from the battlefield. It was Ali who fought fearlessly and won victories in all the important battles-Badr, Uhad, Khandaq, Khaybar and many other wars.

{الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ الطَّاغُوتِ فَقَاتِلُوا أَوْلِيَاءَ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّ كَيْدَ الشَّيْطَانِ كَانَ ضَعِيفًا } 76

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:76]

The disbelievers were the soldiers of Shaytan, and as the craft of Shaytan was rendered ineffective, they were defeated and destroyed.

{أَلَمْ تَرَ إِلَى الَّذِينَ قِيلَ لَهُمْ كُفُّوا أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَلَمَّا كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقِتَالُ إِذَا فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَخْشَوْنَ النَّاسَ كَخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ أَوْ أَشَدَّ خَشْيَةً ۗ وَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا لِمَ كَتَبْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْقِتَالَ لَوْلَا أَخَّرْتَنَا إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ قَرِيبٍ ۗ قُلْ مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا قَلِيلٌ وَالْآخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لِّمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ } 77

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:77]

Refer to the uncertain and hypocritical behaviour of the companions described in verse 75 of this surah. They were filled with fear of mortal men as though it were the fear of Allah and even more.

"Why did you O Lord, make war compulsory for us? Why did you not allow us to live a little more?"

These lamentations betray the hidden hypocrisy in their hearts which had tempted them to come into the fold of Islam for worldly gains and enjoyment of the pleasures of life, but when death loomed huge before their eyes they began to cry and wanted to stay safe in their homes.

أَيَّمَا تَكُونُوا يُدْرِكُكُمُ الْمَوْتُ وَلَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُرُوجٍ مُّشَيَّدَةٍ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ حَسَنَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ تُصِيبُهُمْ سَيِّئَةٌ يَقُولُوا هَذِهِ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ قُلْ كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ فَمَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَا يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ حَدِيثًا {78}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:78]

Death is certain. It overtakes every mortal created being wheresoever he or she be, even in the safest of fortresses.

It is reported that in the year of *hijrat* the harvest in Madina was not as good as it used to be, therefore, the Jews availed the opportunity to attribute the bad harvest to the arrival of the Holy Prophet in order to create doubts in the minds of the newly converts. It has been made clear that everything is from Allah but what comes to us of good is verily from Allah and what comes to us of evil is from our own selves (our actions).

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Please refer to the commentary of al-Fatihah: 5 pertaining to "action and reaction".

Good and evil, blessings and punishment, are from Allah, but no distress afflicts a man unless he earns it by his own mistakes or blunders. Like bounties and blessings, misfortune also comes from the Lord but is earned by man through his own wrongdoing.

After the battle of Uhad the hypocrites held the Holy Prophet responsible for the fiasco which in fact was the result of not obeying his orders and running away from the battlefield. It was a misfortune they themselves caused to happen. To hold the Holy Prophet responsible for any thing means to hold Allah responsible.

The Holy Prophet was sent to the whole mankind as a messenger for all times. Also refer to al-Araf: 158; al-Anbiya.: 107; Saba: 28.

Matthew 10: 5, 6; and 15: 22 to 26 confirm that Isa was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israil.

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا {79}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:79] (see commentary for verse 78)

مَنْ يُطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَمَنْ تَوَلَّىٰ فَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَفِيظًا {80}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:80]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Obedience to the Holy Prophet has been declared as obedience to Allah, therefore, it must be absolute and unconditional. Refer to the commentary of verses 59 and 64 to 69 of this surah and judge the statement of the companion who refused to bring the pen and paper on the pretext that the old man was in a delirium and the book of Allah was sufficient for the Muslims.

In the light of "nor does he speak of his own desire (Najm: 3)", if any event, contrary to this divine declaration, is stated in Sahihs or Musnads or Tafsirs of the Muslim scholars, it should be rejected outright.

وَيَقُولُونَ طَاعَةٌ فَإِذَا بَرَرُوا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ بَيَّتَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ غَيْرَ الَّذِي تَقُولُ وَاللَّهُ يَكْتُبُ مَا يُبَيِّنُونَ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهُمْ وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَفَىٰ
{ بِاللَّهِ وَكَيْلًا } 81

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:81]

This refers to the hypocrites who professed obedience to the Holy Prophet in front of him, but when alone, conspired against him.

{ أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ ۚ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا } 82

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:82]

By using reason, objective observation and independent contemplation every intelligent person comes to the conclusion that the Quran is a book from Allah, free from all human conjectures and discrepancies.

وَإِذَا جَاءَهُمْ أَمْرٌ مِنَ الْأَمْنِ أَوْ الْخَوْفِ أَذَاعُوا بِهِ ۚ وَلَوْ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ وَإِلَىٰ أُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْهُمْ لَعَلِمَهُ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَنْبِطُونَهُ مِنْهُمْ ۚ وَلَوْ لَا
{ فَضَّلُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَا تَبَعْتُمْ الشَّيْطَانَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا } 83

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:83]

In this verse Allah again invites people to refer to the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt (*ulil azm*-see the commentary of verse 59 of this surah) all their affairs and problems because they alone know the truth and are authorised to guide; and if they do not, surely they will go astray in the direction of Shaytan.

And had there not been Allah's grace (*fadl*) and mercy (*rahmat*) present among the Muslims, they would also have lived in total darkness of infidelity. *Fadl* and *rahmat* stand for the Holy Prophet and Ali ibn abi Talib. In the "feast of the near relatives" when the Holy Prophet had said that he had been commanded by Allah to call them to His worship, therefore, who would, among them, testify to his prophethood and join him to support his mission and be his brother, lieutenant, and successor, it was Ali who stood up and offered his services unconditionally. Then the Holy Prophet said, "Verily Ali is my brother and my successor. From this day it has been made obligatory upon everyone to obey the authority of Ali." (Ibn Jarir Tabari, Ahmed ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, Hakim in Mustadrak). So, from the "feast of the near relatives" to 11 Hijra Ali stood by the Holy Prophet and supported him in his divine mission. In 11 Hijra the Holy Prophet declared at Ghadir Khum that of whomsoever he was the

lord-master Ali was his lord-master (see commentary of al-Maidah: 67).

Ibn Hajar Makki writes in Sawa-iq Muhiraqa that *Fadl* in verse 54 of al-Nisa refers to the Ahl ul Bayt, and Tabari in Majma ul Bayan confirms it.

Please refer to the commentary of al-Hud: 17 to know the authentic references which say that *shahidun* and *imaman wa rahmatan* (witness, guide and mercy) was Imam Ali ibn abi Talib. Also refer to the well-known books of history which clearly mention the decisive role Ali played in the battles of Badr, Uhad, Khandaq, Khaybar and many other wars, to confirm that it was Ali who had saved the Muslim *ummah* from total destruction. The Holy Prophet showed the right path and Ali guarded it.

Ali has been described as the "total faith" by the Holy Prophet in the battle of Khandaq; and after his decisive victory over Amr bin Abduwad which created terror in the hearts of a very large army of 12000 soldiers (refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 214 and 251) who *en masse* took to flight, the Holy Prophet declared that "one strike of Ali, on the day of Khandaq, is superior to all worship of both the worlds," because if this one strike were not dealt there would have been no Muslims on the face of the earth.

{فَقَاتِلْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا تُكَلَّفُ إِلَّا نَفْسَكَ ۚ وَحَرِّضِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْفِكَ بِأَسِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ أَشَدُّ بِأَسًا وَأَشَدُّ تَنْكِيلًا } 84

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:84]

"So fight in the way of Allah" was revealed when the heathens of Makka attacked the Muslims in Madina for no reason at all. So powerful and invincible the anti-Islamic forces seemed to be that the Muslims refused to fight. Only seventy persons alongwith the Holy Prophet marched to the scene of battle, known as Badr al-sughra, but a sudden fright terrified Abu Sufyan and his men, and they went back to Makka.

{مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ نَصِيبٌ مِنْهَا ۗ وَمَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً سَيِّئَةً يَكُنْ لَهُ كِفْلٌ مِنْهَا ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقِيبًا } 85

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:85]

He who takes part in a good cause (by deed, by prayer, or by encouragement) will surely have a share in the recompense; and similarly he who actively participates or abets an evil act will share the burden thereof.

This verse also implies *tawalla* (doing good, associating with the doers of good and remaining attached with them) and *tabarra* (avoiding evil and evildoers and expressing dislike for them).

{وَإِذَا حُيِّئْتُمْ بِهِ فَاَحْسِنُوا ۗ وَأَنتُمْ عَلَىٰ سَبِيلٍ مَقِيَّبِينَ ۗ لَئِنْ رُدُّوهُآءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ كَانُوا عَلَيْهِ حَاسِبِينَ } 86

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:86]

The customary greeting in Islam is: "*Assalamu aleykum*-peace be on you"; while "*wassalamu*

alaykam wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu-and on you be peace and blessings of Allah"; replies another.

These gentle and cordial words of greeting each other have created a unique sense of brotherhood among the Muslims-master and servant, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlettered, greet each other with the same dignity on both sides, leading to no loss of self-respect to either.

{ اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا } 87

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:87]

See the commentary of al-Baqarah: 255 for "Allah, there is no god but He".

Certain Makkans, professing Islam, obtained leave from the Holy Prophet to go back to Makka to fetch their merchandise, but they never returned; some joined the pagans and some went to Yemen. These verses refer to this brand of hypocrites.

{ فَمَا لَكُمْ فِي الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِتْنَةٍ وَاللَّهُ أَركَسَهُمْ بِمَا كَسَبُوا ۗ أَتُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَهْدُوا مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُضِلِلِ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا } 88

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:88] (see commentary for verse 87)

وَدُّوا لَوْ تَكْفُرُونَ كَمَا كَفَرُوا فَتَكُونُونَ سَوَاءً ۗ فَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ حَتَّىٰ يُهَاجِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۗ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَخُذُوهُمْ وَأَقْتُلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ وَجَدْتُمُوهُمْ ۗ وَلَا تَتَّخِذُوا مِنْهُمْ وُلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا } 89

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:89]

Do not make the disbelievers and hypocrites your friends or allies. This verse also justifies the article of *tabarra* (avoiding evil and evildoers and expressing dislike for them).

{ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ إِلَىٰ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ أَوْ جَاءُوكُمْ حَصِرَتْ صُدُورُهُمْ أَنْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ أَوْ يُقَاتِلُوا قَوْمَهُمْ ۗ وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَسَلَّطَهُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ فَلَقَاتِلُوكُمْ ۗ فَإِنْ اعْتَزَلُوكُمْ فَلَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ وَأَلْفَوْا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلْمَ فَمَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبِيلًا } 90

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:90]

Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 190 to 194 to know the Islamic injunctions regarding fighting in the way of Allah- when to fight defensive wars and when to desist from confrontation.

To destroy the aggressors, in order to dislodge the power base of infidelity, fighting has been ordained, but those who take refuge with a people allied to you, or those who, weary of fighting you or their people, come over to you and offer peace, there is no reason to fight them.

It is also true that out of their cunning and design some people wage war upon the Muslims with the help of the open and avowed enemies of Islam. If they do not keep away from you, nor offer peace, nor restrain their hands, seize them and destroy them wherever they are.

The tribes of Ghaftan and Asad were at peace with the Muslims, but when they returned to their people, they joined them to fight against the Muslims.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Fitna, in this verse, means war.

Ya-manukum, in my opinion, means giving assurance of security (not desiring it), as was the policy of the hypocrites.

سَتَجِدُونَ آخِرِينَ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَأْمَنُوكُمْ وَيَأْمَنُوا قَوْمَهُمْ كُلًّا مَا رُدُّوا إِلَى الْفِتْنَةِ أُرْكَسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنْ لَمْ يَعْتَزُّ لَكُمْ وَيُفُوا إِلَيْكُمْ السَّلَامَ وَيَكْفُوا
{أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَخُدُّوهُمْ وَأَقْلُوهُمْ حَيْثُ تَقِفْتُمُوهُمْ وَأُولَئِكُمْ جَعَلْنَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا } 91

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:91] (see commentary for verse 90)

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ أَنْ يَقْتُلَ مُؤْمِنًا إِلَّا خَطَأً وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا أَنْ يَصَدَّقُوا فَإِنْ كَانَ
مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَدُوٌّ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِنْ قَوْمٍ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ مِيثَاقٌ فَدِيَةٌ مُسَلَّمَةٌ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ وَتَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ مُؤْمِنَةٍ
{فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ شَهْرَيْنِ مُتَتَابِعَيْنِ تَوْبَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا } 92

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:92]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

If *ma kana* is translated as "unlawful" then the following exception (by mischance) is cut off, not included in its antecedent, therefore, this clause has been translated as in verse 60 of al-Naml, because the exception remains real; and the expression becomes more emphatic.

If a believer takes another believer's life by mistake or mischance, the ransom or redemption (money) to be paid, in different cases, have been mentioned in this verse.

Ayash bin Rabiya, the step-brother of Abu Jahl and Harith, had become a Muslim before *hijrat*, but kept it a secret. One day, unnoticed, he left Makka to join the Muslims in Madina. His mother raised a hue and cry to bring back her son. Harith, at once, went after Ayash and caught him just on the outskirts of Madina. He convinced him that no one would harm him if he returned to Makka with him. When they came back, Ayash was

flogged and was thrown on burning sand, his hands and legs tightly tied with a rope. To escape torture he renounced his faith in Islam but avowed to kill Harith. As soon as he got a chance, he slipped out and reached Madina as a Muslim. It so happened that Harith also became a Muslim and lived in Madina. Ayash was not aware of this fact, therefore, when he saw Harith in Madina, he killed him to take his revenge. When people told him that he had killed a believer, he immediately went to the Holy Prophet and told him that he was ashamed of his act and pleaded for acceptance of his repentance. Then this verse was revealed

(Minhajus Sadiqin, Umdatul Bayan).

{وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاؤُهُ جَهَنَّمُ خَالِدًا فِيهَا وَغَضِبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَلَعَنَهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ عَذَابًا عَظِيمًا } 93

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:93]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse supports the meaning of *wa ma kana li-muminin* explained in the preceding verse-the killer of a believer cannot be a *mumin*.

This verse contains the law for the killer of a believer. If the punishment for the murder of an ordinary believer is eternal damnation, what will be the fate of the killers of the Ahl ul Bayt?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَتَبَيَّنُوا وَلَا تَقُولُوا لِمَنْ أَلْقَى إِلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامَ لَسْتَ مُؤْمِنًا تَبْتَغُونَ عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَغَانِمٌ كَثِيرَةٌ كَذَلِكَ كُنْتُمْ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَمَنْ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكُمْ فَتَبَيَّنُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿94﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:94]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

A contingent of the Muslim soldiers, appointed by the Holy Prophet, was passing through a field in which a shepherd was tending his sheep. Being a new convert to Islam, as soon as he saw the soldiers, he said, "*Assalamu alaykum*" but Usman bin Zayd killed him and took possession of his herd. In this verse Allah warns the Muslims to be discreet and careful when a person greets them in peace (says *assalamu alaykum*) and not to say: "you are not a believer", in order to usurp the gains of earthly life.

Immediately after the departure of the Holy Prophet from this world, Khalid bin Walid, the commander of the Muslim army, mercilessly butchered a whole tribe of devout Muslims when he was sent to negotiate with Malik ibn Nuwayra. After killing Malik, Khalid bin Walid raped his widow and then killed her also. After that it became a routine for the Muslim rulers and commanders to kill, loot and plunder the Muslim communities for worldly gains.

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقَاعِدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿95﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:95]

This verse was revealed when Kab bin Malik, Rawah bin Rabi, Hilal bin Umiyah and Abdullah bin Maktum, without reasonable cause, stayed at Madina and did not join the defensive expedition of Tabuk. Allah has exalted those in rank, who fight for the faith with their wealth and selves, over those who sit idle (holding back). For the soldiers of Allah there are higher ranks with Him.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Darajat is not a second object of *faddalallah*, but is in an adverbial position specifying the distinction in rank or degree, otherwise it would not be consistent with the objective *ajran azima* in the end of verse 95.

{دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا} 96

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:96] (see commentary for verse 95)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَالُوا فِيمَ كُنْتُمْ قَالُوا كُنَّا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ تَكُنْ أَرْضُ اللَّهِ وَاسِعَةً فَتُهَاجِرُوا فِيهَا قَالُوا لَنْ نَبْرَأَ لَكَ مَا أَوانَهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا} 97

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:97]

Mustad-afin are those who neither let their disbelief lose its grip over them nor try to find a way leading to the right path. Their abode is hell-an evil destination.

If the proper observation of the obligations of the faith is not possible in the land of one's birth and dwelling, one can migrate to some other place on Allah's wide and spacious earth.

{إِلَّا الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانَ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ حِيلَةً وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ سَبِيلًا} 98

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:98]

Those who are helpless (on account of physical weakness), and can neither contrive a plan nor do they know the way, have been promised mercy and forgiveness.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt have pointed out that this principle is also applicable to the followers of other religions whose mental capacity, by nature, is too weak to grasp the truth of Islam, or unfavourable circumstances, beyond their control, keep them in darkness, provided they do good and do not wilfully make mischief in the land.

{فَأُولَئِكَ عَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَعْفُوَ عَنْهُمْ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا} 99

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:99] (see commentary for verse 98)

وَمَنْ يُهَاجِرْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ يَجِدْ فِي الْأَرْضِ مُرَاحِمًا كَثِيرًا وَسِعَةً وَمَنْ يَخْرُجْ مِنْ بَيْتِهِ مُهَاجِرًا إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ثُمَّ يُدْرِكُهُ الْمَوْتُ فَقَدْ وَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا} 100

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:100]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to the holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt verses 95 to 100 (pertaining to *hijrat*) not only deal with physical migration but also signify the spiritual stride one takes to reject the cognitive self (I or ego) so as to absorb oneself into the universal self, like the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt, who alone can guide such a journey.

Whether there is gain or not in this act but attachment with the spiritual leaders to follow into their footsteps, for the sake of Allah, brings complete peace of mind to the "*emigre*" and makes the material loss insignificant.

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ إِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنَّ الْكَافِرِينَ كَانُوا لَكُمْ عَدُوًّا مُّبِينًا } 101

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:101]

This verse refers to *salat ul khawf* (offering of *salat* while facing an enemy in a battle) and *salat ul qasr* (offering of *salat* during a journey)- curtailing the *salat* (*zuhr, asr* and *isha*) by half. The journey should be for a lawful purpose and for not less than (nearly) 27 miles. For details refer to books of *fiqh*.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Laysa alaykum junah or *la junaha* (used in several verses of the Quran) signifies the negation of obligation, but the Holy Prophet had acted as if it was an obligation, as per verse 158 of al-Baqarah. So *salatul khawf* and *salatul qasr* must be prayed in its curtailed form.

The conditional clause (if you fear) pertains to the form of prayer to be offered when there is imminent danger of an enemy attack, because the first part of the verse has already dealt with the form of prayer prescribed for a traveller. It must also be noted that the conditional clause does not restrict the order (to curtail prayer) to the circumstances of fear, because there was "fear" at that time at all hours. It is like the phrase in verse 23 of this surah which does not restrict the prohibition.

وَإِذَا كُنْتَ فِيهِمْ فَأَقَمْتَ لَهُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَلْتَقُمْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا أَسْلِحَتَهُمْ فَإِذَا سَجَدُوا فَلْيَكُونُوا مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلْتَأْتِ طَائِفَةٌ أُخْرَى لَمْ يُصَلُّوا فَلْيُصَلُّوا مَعَكَ وَلْيَأْخُذُوا حِذْرَهُمْ وَأَسْلِحَتَهُمْ وَدَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ تَغْفُلُونَ عَنْ أَسْلِحَتِكُمْ وَأَمْتِعَتِكُمْ فَيَمِيلُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ مَيْلَةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِنْ كَانَ بِكُمْ أَدَى مِنْ مَطَرٍ أَوْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَى أَنْ تَضَعُوا أَسْلِحَتَكُمْ وَخُذُوا حِذْرَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا } 102

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:102]

Verse 102 lays down the method of offering congregational *salat* when an attack by the enemy is imminent. Even in such moments of danger, prayer can not be put off. So pre-eminently important the duty of offering *salat* is in the code of Islam that it must be offered in every circumstance and at the appointed hours. The religion of a faithful is continually present with him. It brings the individual (his self) into closer touch with his Lord, and his self escapes from enslavement to freedom. On the 10th of Muharram in 61 Hijra, Imam Husayn, while offering the *dhahibhin azim* (see commentary of al-Saffat: 107), translated the ordinance of this verse into action. For three days the Imam, his friends and relatives were without food and water. From all sides they were surrounded by the enemy. At dawn the Imam asked his son Ali Akbar to recite the *azan*. *Tayammum* was performed. The Holy Imam led the congregational *fajr salat*. The devotees who stood in front of the Imam to guard the prayers fell on the ground when arrows shot by the enemy hit them. In the evening, the holy Imam was alone, every pore of his body a bleeding wound, he slid over the burning sand of Naynawa from his horse, and prayed the *asr salat*. Swords, arrows, spears, daggers, lances, stones hit him from all directions. The sacred blood of Muhammad, Ali and Fatimah flowed (from the Imam's body) in a stream over the sandy soil.

At Hdaybiyah the Muslims were fighting against the advance troopers of the infidels, commanded by Khalid bin Walid. The Holy Prophet asked Bilal to recite *azan* for *zuhr* prayers. When

the *salat* was completed Khalid regreted very much to have missed the golden opportunity of attacking the Muslims while they were praying, and decided not to do it again next time. Through this verse Allah asked the Holy Prophet to adopt the method mentioned in it in future under such circumstances.

Do not infringe the prescribed law of prayer in any of its details. When out of danger or not journeying pray the *salat* in its proper, regular form as duly prescribed.

Kitaban mawqutan means it must be offered at appointed hours in every circumstance. The obligatory prayers are unavoidable so far as man is in possession of his senses.

فَإِذَا قُضِيَتْهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ ۚ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ ۗ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْفُوتًا {103}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:103] (see commentary for verse 102)

وَلَا تَهِنُوا فِي ابْتِغَاءِ الْقَوْمِ ۗ إِن تَكُونُوا تَأْلَمُونَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يَأْلَمُونَ كَمَا تَأْلَمُونَ ۗ وَتَرْجُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَرْجُونَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا {104}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:104]

The conduct of the hypocrites in the battle of Uhad has been referred to in this verse. Please refer to the commentary of verses 151 to 168 of Ali Imran.

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا {105}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:105]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Bashir, Mubashshir and Bashr, the sons of Ta-ma of Ubayraq tribe, had stolen some items from the house of the uncle of Qatada, and concealed them in the house of a Jew. When the theft was detected they put the blame on the Jew. Although the Jews were actively hostile to the Holy Prophet, he upheld the cause of justice, acquitted the accused Jew, and announced the three Muslim brothers guilty of theft. Justice has to be strictly applied whether the crime is committed by a friend or a foe. It was a time when every individual was very important for the small community of the Muslims. The tribe of Ubayraq was a large clan. Yet the Holy Prophet put justice above the exigencies of diplomacy.

The plural pronoun in verse 109 makes it clear that in verse 106 the Muslims have been asked, through the Holy Prophet, to beg forgiveness of Allah for expecting favouritism from the Holy Prophet. Verse 108 refers to the men of the tribe of Ubayraq who went to the Holy Prophet to plead for the offenders. Verse 107 clearly lays down the principle that there should be no pleading for those who deceive their own selves, because Allah does not love the treacherous and the iniquitous. People may support such offenders in this world but on the day of judgement no one will be able to plead for them. They will burn in hell for ever.

Many Muslims respect Yazid (and despots like him) as the rightful caliph (*khalifatullah*) although

he was a Shaytan in human form, who mercilessly killed and destroyed the beloved children of the Holy Prophet. His supporters argue that the Holy Prophet may ask Allah's forgiveness for him and the despots like him. Verse 6 of al-Munafiqun says:

"Whether you ask forgiveness for them or do not ask, it is all the same; Allah will not forgive them."

The verdict of Allah is clear. To imagine that the tyrants will be pardoned, inspite of the expressed decree of the almighty Lord, is the worst type of hypocrisy.

If man turns to Allah and remembers Him in any condition of fear, shame or hope, mindful of eternal joy and pain, it develops an inner preventive force to combat the urge and tendency to commit individual or collective crimes. Verses 110 and 111 I say that the door of repentance, in order to seek forgiveness, is open for those who hurt their own selves, not others. He who earns the wages of sin does so for himself. No one shall bear the burden of another. Verse 112 refers to the offenders of Ubayraq tribe and lays down the principle that he who commits a mistake or iniquity (even if Muslim) and ascribes it to one who is innocent (even if non-Muslim) is guilty of calumny and brazen sin.

Verse 113 refers to the subterfuge the people of Ubayraq employed to mislead the Holy Prophet. The "book and wisdom" was with the Holy Prophet at all times. There is no interval of time in His giving existence to the Holy Prophet and bestowing the "book and wisdom" on him. Verse 2 of al-Najm and verse 7 of al-Duha confirm it.

In Najm: 7 the *fa* implies that there is no lapse of time between finding and guiding a being.

Verse 114 refers to the event mentioned in verse 105. The hypocrites in their counsels mostly talked in whispers because they knew that they were supporting falsehood; and the faithful openly talked of charity and goodness in their gatherings.

106 { وَاسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:106] (see commentary for verse 105)

107 { وَلَا تُجَادِلْ عَنِ الَّذِينَ يَخْتَانُونَ أَنفُسَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَن كَانَ خَوَافًا أَثِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:107] (see commentary for verse 105)

108 { يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يَسْتَخْفُونَ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَهُوَ مَعَهُمْ إِذْ يُبَيِّتُونَ مَا لَا يَرْضَى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ مُحِيطًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:108] (see commentary for verse 105)

109 { هَا أَنْتُمْ هَؤُلَاءِ جَادَلْتُمْ عَنْهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا فَمَنْ يُجَادِلُ اللَّهَ عَنْهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَمْ مَنْ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَكِيلًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:109] (see commentary for verse 105)

110 { وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهُ يَجِدِ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:110] (see commentary for verse 105)

111 { وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ إِثْمًا فَإِنَّمَا يَكْسِبُهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا حَكِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:111] (see commentary for verse 105)

112 { وَمَنْ يَكْسِبْ خَطِيئَةً أَوْ إِثْمًا ثُمَّ يَرْمِ بِهِ بَرِيئًا فَقَدِ احْتَمَلَ بُهْتَانًا وَإِثْمًا مُّبِينًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:112] (see commentary for verse 105)

وَلَوْ لَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ وَرَحْمَتُهُ لَهَمَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ أَنْ يُضِلُّوكَ وَمَا يُضِلُّونَ إِلَّا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَمَا يَضُرُّونَكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ {الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ ۗ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا} 113

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:113] (see commentary for verse 105)

لَا خَيْرَ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْ نَجْوَاهُمْ إِلَّا مَنْ أَمَرَ بِصَدَقَةٍ أَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ إِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ ۗ وَمَنْ يَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ فَسَوْفَ نُؤْتِيهِ {أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا} 114

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:114] (see commentary for verse 105)

{وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ نُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصَلِّهِ ۖ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا} 115

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:115]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse clearly says that a true believer neither can oppose the Holy Prophet (his judgements, decisions and instructions) nor differ, deviate or depart from his teachings and commands. He has to obey and follow him in every walk of life, like those believers who are closely attached with him and whose way of life has become just like his way of life. Refer to the commentary of verse 65 of this surah.

If *ijma* means the conduct of the majority of Muslims which may have no connection with the teachings and commands of the Holy Prophet, then its introduction and application shall take them to hell.

Please refer to the commentary of Baqarah: 2 to 5 (on page 51); 97 and 98 (on page 105) to know how the companions of the Holy Prophet displeased him by disobeying his commands.

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا} 116

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:116]

Polytheism is an unpardonable sin. Although it does not affect His glory in the least, but by destroying the faculty of reason, it renders man incapable of any spiritual progress; therefore, a polytheist can never attain heavenly bliss.

{إِنْ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَّا إِنَاثًا وَإِنْ يَدْعُونَ إِلَّا شَيْطَانًا مَرِيدًا} 117

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:117]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Inatha (females) refers to the historical motive of idolatry. In primitive ages man could not understand any productive action except the sexual relationship. The pagans thought that their idols were the daughters of God. The cult of goddesses had been almost universal, partly through the association of maternity. The goddess was the fountain and source of human life. *Inatha* also signifies inanimate things as trees, stones and wood.

Through verse 49 of al-Dhariyat (We created pairs of everything) the Quran guides the idol worshippers to get rid of their stupid delusion.

The idolworshippers, in fact, submit to Shaytan who, devoid of good, invites his followers to lawlessness, anarchy and evil.

{لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَ لَاتَّخِذَنَّ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا} 118

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:118]

The accursed Shaytan's share (determined in regard to time) implies his ability to lead man astray from the path of faith and truth.

"To alter Allah's creation" means using created things for a purpose other than what they have been created to fulfil.

If *khalq* is interpreted as the system planned by Allah to operate His creation and legislation, it should not be stretched out of proportion so as to jeopardise the omnipotence of the divine authority.

"To slit the ears of animals" refers to the slitting the ears of animals by invoking the names of their gods and goddesses by the pagan Arabs, so that those animals could not be slaughtered or used for gainful purposes.

Whatever the promises Shaytan makes, whatever the desires he enkindles, and whatever the hopes he rouses in men, are no more than delusions. The abode of those who follow him is hell from which they will find no escape.

{وَأَضَلَّاهُمْ وَلَأْمَنَّا لَهُمْ وَلَأْمَنَّا لَهُمْ فَلْيُبَيِّنَنَّ آدَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مُرْتَهُمْ فَلْيُعَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ} 119

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:119] (see commentary for verse 118)

{يَعِدُّهُمْ وَيُمَنِّيهِمْ وَمَا يَعِدُّهُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ إِلَّا غُرُورًا} 120

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:120] (see commentary for verse 118)

{أُولَئِكَ مَاؤَاهُمْ جَهَنَّمُ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ عَنْهَا مَحِيصًا} 121

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:121] (see commentary for verse 118)

{وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَنُدْخِلُهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقًّا وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ} 122

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:122]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 25 and 266; and Ali Imran: 198.

{لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِي أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ وَلَا يَجِدْ لَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا} 123

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:123]

Mere wish and desire, shorn of good deeds, will not avail anything. Neither the Jews, nor the Christians, nor the Muslims are the favourites of Allah. Whosoever does good will be rewarded, and

whosoever does evil will be punished. This is the Islamic law of requital. The proviso "and a believer" is vital, for without right faith (Islam) good deeds are meaningless.

So far as spiritual merits are concerned there is no difference between man and woman. Refer to Ali Imran: 195.

{وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِنَ الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ نَقِيرًا } 124

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:124] (see commentary for verse 123)

{وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا ۗ وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا } 125

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:125]

Submission to Allah (Islam) is the only religion approved by Allah.

Hanif means wholly devoted to the right path. Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 124 to understand why *millata ibrahima hanifa* has been repeatedly used in the Quran as identical to Islam. The mission of Ibrahim was universal while the teachings of Musa and Isa were restricted to the Jews.

Wajha literally means face. In the Quran it is used to refer to the distinctive aspects of a being. Man is recognised by his cognitive self; Allah is distinguished by His absolute universal excellence. See commentary of al-Baqarah: 112.

{وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّحِيطًا } 126

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:126]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 255.

{وَيَسْتَفْتُونَكَ فِي النِّسَاءِ ۗ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِيهِنَّ وَمَا يُنلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ فِي يَتَامَى النِّسَاءِ اللَّاتِي لَا تُؤْتُونَهُنَّ مَا كُتِبَ لَهُنَّ وَتَرْغَبُونَ أَنْ تَنْكِحُوهُنَّ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الْوِلْدَانِ وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِهِ عَلِيمًا } 127

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:127]

The divine decrees concerning women have already been dealt with in verses 3 to 35 of this surah.

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 220 and al-Nisa: 4 for *yataman nisa*-the orphan women.

{وَإِنْ امْرَأَةٌ خَافَتْ مِنْ بَعْلِهَا نُشُورًا أَوْ إِعْرَاضًا فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُصْلِحَا بَيْنَهُمَا صُلْحًا ۗ وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ ۗ وَأُخْضِرَتِ الْأَنْفُسُ الشُّحَّ ۗ وَإِنْ تُحْسِنُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا } 128

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:128]

Avarice is a part of man's nature, but if one gives more as a present to the other as a favour (*ihsan*) and both safeguard themselves with full awareness of Allah's laws (*taqwa*) there can

be reconciliation between the dissatisfied pair of husband and wife, because peace is an excellent thing. It is reported that Khuwaylad, the ageing wife of Salma bin Nafi, who wanted to marry another woman after divorcing her, came to the Holy Prophet and said that she was prepared to forego her conjugal right if her husband did not divorce her. This verse was revealed on that occasion.

وَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعُوا أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا بَيْنَ النِّسَاءِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتُمْ فَلَا تَمِيلُوا كُلَّ الْمَيْلِ فَتَذَرُوهَا كَالْمُعَلَّقَةِ وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَّقُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا {129}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:129]

Refer to the commentary of verse 3 of this surah.

Howsoever one may try one will never be able to treat one's wives equally to fulfil the demands of justice, but one can at least avoid inclination to any wife exclusively so that the others may not be left suspended. One may not be able to observe perfect equality among one's wives in respect of love and attachment, yet one is not, on that account, by any means warranted in showing voluntary favours exclusively to any wife to the utter neglect of the others. The lives of the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt are a model, in this connection, to all Muslims. They did not even perform ablution in the house of the wife whose "turn" was terminated. In all events *ihsan* and *taqwa* are the best means to effect reconciliation and harmony.

{وَإِنْ يَتَفَرَّقَا يُغْنِ اللَّهُ كُلًّا مِنْ سَعَتِهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ وَاسِعًا حَكِيمًا {130}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:130]

If both decide to separate in an approved and legal way, after all attempts at reconciliation have failed, Allah promises His grace and bounties for both of them.

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ لَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَنِيًّا حَمِيدًا {131}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:131]

For "all that is in the heavens and the earth belongs to Allah" see commentary of al-Baqarah: 255. The commands of the almighty, self-sufficient and glorious Lord are to be carried out most implicitly and in every little detail, which is only possible for those who safeguard themselves with full awareness of Allah's laws.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The whole universe is administered by Allah's laws, therefore, man who is a part of the whole, cannot be unmindful of the universal laws and act in contradiction to the operation of such laws, physical as well as spiritual, because he is not independent of their application. Only Allah, the creator of these laws, is independent and self-sufficient.

{وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا } 132

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:132] (see commentary for verse 131)

{إِن يَشَأْ يُذْهِبْكُمْ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَيَأْتِ بِآخَرِينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ قَدِيرًا } 133

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:133]

If mankind acts against the will of Allah (manifest in the laws made by Him) it shall be wiped out from the face of the earth, and He will replace them with other creatures. He does what He wills. Refer to al-Fajr: 6 to 13 and al-Shams: 11 to 15.

{مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ ثَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا } 134

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:134]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۚ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۗ وَإِنْ تَلَّوْا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا } 135

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:135]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The translation of this verse contains the clear guidance of maintaining justice without fear or favour.

According to Ma-idah: 8, justice and *taqwa* go together inseparably. Shiba: 46 also urges man to stand for Allah individually and collectively.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا آمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ وَالْكِتَابِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِن قَبْلُ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا } 136

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:136]

There is no phase of believer's life which the religion of Allah, preached through a messenger par *excellence*, leaves untouched. Nothing that a believer does or even thinks lies outside the authority of Allah, His messenger and his Ahl ul Bayt. Therefore, belief in and obedience to Allah, His messenger and his successors (*ulil amr*-see commentary of verse 59 of this surah) has been ordained .

The religion of Allah, Islam, is a universal religion. So belief in all the messengers of Allah and the books revealed to them is also essential. See al-Baqarah: 136, 285; Ali Imran 84, and Nisa: 152.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ آمَنُوا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوا ثُمَّ أزدَادُوا كُفْرًا ۗ لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيُغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيلًا } 137

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:137]

As has been mentioned in Ali Imran: 90 and 91, for those who backslide, having once come in to

faith (like the Jews and the hypocrites in the life time of the Holy Prophet and after his departure), and go on wavering wilfully, there is no guidance. A painful doom awaits them. *Bashshir* (generally used for giving glad tidings) has been used here to ridicule the hypocrites contemptuously.

{بَشِّرِ الْمُنَافِقِينَ بِأَنَّ لَهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا} 138

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:138] (see commentary for verse 137)

{الَّذِينَ يَتَّخِذُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ أَيْتَعُونَٰ عِنْدَهُمُ الْعِزَّةَ فَإِنَّ الْعِزَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا} 139

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:139]

Instead of taking unbelievers as their friends (to seek favours from them) people should prefer believers who depend on the grace and glory of Allah and seek His nearness and protection (refer to al-Fatihah: 4).

وَقَدْ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الْكِتَابِ أَنْ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ يُكْفَرُ بِهَا وَيُسْتَهْزَأُ بِهَا فَلَا تَقْعُدُوا مَعَهُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَخُوضُوا فِي حَدِيثٍ غَيْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّكُمْ إِذَا
{مِثْلَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ جَامِعُ الْمُنَافِقِينَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ جَمِيعًا} 140

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:140]

In verse 68 of al-An-am also the believers in Allah have been advised not to sit in the company of scoffers and blasphemers, otherwise they will be no different from them. As the guilt of the infidels and the hypocrites is the same, the punishment will also be the same-eternal burning in hell.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

If the aim is to understand the truth, a meaningful discussion can be made with the critics of Islam as has been enjoined in verse 125 of al-Nahl.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ بِكُفْرٍ فَإِنَّ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِتْحٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَكُنْ مَعَكُمْ وَإِنْ كَانَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَصِيبٌ قَالُوا أَلَمْ نَسْتَحْوِذْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَنَمْنَعُكُم مِّنَ
{الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَلَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا} 141

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:141]

"Allah will never give the unbelievers a way over the believers", is a divine promise to always keep an individual, among the believers, as the custodian of the true faith, who is from the Holy Prophet, and like him in purity of mind and soul. "I and Ali are from one divine light", said the Holy Prophet. It points to the existence of an Imam in every age.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The last sentence of this verse lays down a vital decree of legislation which governs the social, economic and political life of the Muslim community.

142} { إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يُخَادِعُونَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ خَادِعُهُمْ وَإِذَا قَامُوا إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ قَامُوا كَسَالَى يُرَاءُونَ النَّاسَ وَلَا يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:142]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 8 to 20.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Huwa khadi-uhum implies that He outwits them or requites them for their deceit. The literal meaning of *khada* is to deceive, but use of deception is not applicable to Allah. He gives the hypocrites and the unbelievers respite which ultimately cause their downfall.

The psychological state of some of the new converts has been discussed in the commentary of verses 8 to 20 of al-Baqarah.

Ali was the only one whose *wajh* (face) has been glorified by Allah because he never turned to any one or anything save Allah. Even today the Muslims acknowledge this unique merit of Ali by referring to him as *karramallahu wajhahu* (Allah generously honoured his face), whereas to others they refer to as *radi-allahu anhu* (may Allah be pleased with him).

143} { مُذَبذَبِينَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ لَا إِلَى هُوَاءٍ وَلَا إِلَى هُوَاءٍ ۚ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ اللَّهُ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ سَبِيلًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:143] (see commentary for verse 142)

144} { يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ مِنْ دُونِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۚ أُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:144]

Refer to the commentary of verse 139 of this surah.

145} { إِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ فِي الدَّرَكِ الْأَسْفَلِ مِنَ النَّارِ وَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُمْ نَصِيرًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:145]

The hypocrites are the hidden enemies of Allah, His messenger and his Ahl ul Bayt; therefore, they will be more severely punished than the open enemies, the infidels.

146} { إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا وَأَصْلَحُوا وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِاللَّهِ وَأَخْلَصُوا دِينَهُمْ لِلَّهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَعَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ۗ وَسَوْفَ يُؤْتِي اللَّهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:146]

Those who sincerely turn repentant to Allah, amend, hold fast to Allah and make their religion pure for Allah are with the believers. Holding fast to Allah is not possible unless a *wasila*(approach) is available as per verse 35 of al-Ma-idah.

147} { مَا يَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ إِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَآمَنْتُمْ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ شَاكِرًا عَلِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:147]

The most benign Allah is not like the vindictive deities of paganism. Mercy, compassion and loving kindness are part and parcel of His essence, while His retributive justice is only called forth by the handiwork of the rebellious creatures who follow the accursed Shaytan. He is responsive to gratitude.

{ لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا } 148

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:148]

Islam bans all forms of calumny and slander, and interdicts the utterance likely to defame others unless it be for justifiable reason or to distinguish truth from falsehood-as done in verse 159 of al-Baqarah and verse 87 of Ali Imran wherein Allah, His servants and His angels curse those who conceal the clear signs and the guidance. Therefore, the followers of Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad curse the enemies of Allah and of His messenger and his Ahl ul Bayt.

{ إِنْ تُبَدُّوا خَيْرًا أَوْ تُخَفُّوهُ أَوْ تَعْفُوا عَنْ سُوءِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَفُوًّا قَدِيرًا } 149

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:149]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ نُؤْمِنُ بِبَعْضٍ وَنَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ سَبِيلًا } 150

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:150]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 136 and 177.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The Holy Prophet was sent to mankind for all times. To say that his authority came to an end after his departure and thereafter the book of Allah is sufficient for us, is a declaration of revolt against Allah and His messenger.

{ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا } 151

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:151] (see commentary for verse 150)

{ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا } 152

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:152] (see commentary for verse 150)

يَسْأَلُكَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ أَنْ تُنزِلَ عَلَيْهِمْ كِتَابًا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ ۗ فَقَدْ سَأَلُوا مُوسَىٰ أَكْبَرَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالُوا أَرِنَا اللَّهَ جَهْرَةً فَأَخَذَتْهُمُ الصَّاعِقَةُ بِظُلْمِهِمْ ۗ ثُمَّ اتَّخَذُوا الْعِجْلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ فَعَفَوْنَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ ۗ وَآتَيْنَا مُوسَىٰ سُلْطَانًا مُبِينًا } 153

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:153]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 51 and 55.

{ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَهُمُ الطُّورَ بِمِثْقَاتِهِمْ وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ ادْخُلُوا الْبَابَ سُجَّدًا وَقُلْنَا لَهُمْ لَا تَعْدُوا فِي السَّبْتِ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُمْ مِيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا } 154

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:154]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 58, 63, 65.

فَبِمَا نَفَضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَكُفْرِهِمْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ وَقَتْلِهِمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ وَقَوْلِهِمْ قُلُوبُنَا غُلْفٌ ۚ بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا } 155

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:155]

Refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 61, 87.

{ وَبِكُفْرِهِمْ وَقَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بُهْتَانًا عَظِيمًا } 156

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:156]

The Jews not only disbelieved in Isa but also spoke dreadful calumnies of Maryam, going to any length in accusing her of immorality. In the ancient Jewish "Life of Jesus" (the Toldoth Jeshu) it is written that she was seduced by Joseph, the son of Pandera, because she was under the impression that he was her betrothed. For this outrageous slander Allah had sealed their hearts (refer to the preceding verse).

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن سُبُّهُ لَهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِنْهُ ۗ مَا لَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۗ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا } 157

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:157]

The Jews boast and brag that they had slain Isa, but neither they slew him nor they crucified him. Allah raised him unto Himself. For details please refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 55, which clearly expose the myth of crucifixion and resurrection of Isa.

Wama salabuhu (nor they crucified him) has been misinterpreted by the Ahmadi commentators. They say: "The words of the Quran do not deny the fact that Jesus was nailed to the cross and that he was wounded but did not die; and that he was taken away by a faithful disciple who put him in an open grave from where he escaped unnoticed; because he had prayed throughout the night before his arrest to be saved from the accursed death; and again reminded his Lord on the cross by saying: 'O Lord, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?'"

The commentary of Ali Imran: 55 also deals with the conjectures of the Ahmadi commentators. They rely on the book corrupted by the Christian church and do not accept the clear words of the Quran (nor they crucified him).

As has been proved, on the authority of Christian books, in the commentary of Ali Imran: 55, it was another man who actually suffered the agony of crucifixion; and as recorded in the 80th psalm and in Daniel's vision Isa was raised to heaven.

Isa was *ruhullah* (spirit of Allah), therefore, he was not forsaken. A man forsaken by Allah cannot be His prophet.

{بَلْ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا } 158

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:158] (see commentary for verse 157)

{وَإِنْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا لَيُؤْمِنَنَّ بِهِ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ ۖ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ يَكُونُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا } 159

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:159]

The Jews will ultimately believe in Isa and the Christians will recognise his true position when he will come down from heaven to assist and support Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Mahdi as a Muslim, and pray *salat* behind him. Islam will be the religion of the whole world. Then Isa will die and the Muslims will offer his funeral prayer. (Minhajus Sadiqin and Umdatul Bayan).

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt have said that Isa would come in this world again. The whole world will embrace Islam and believe in Isa and Al Mahdi, the representative of the Holy Prophet. All disputes will disappear before the death of Isa.

Imam Ali ibn abi Talib has said:

Whoever dies sees me; be he a believer or a hypocrite. To see Ali means to witness the truth. The personal pronoun (whoever) refers to Isa, or to one who dies, or both, because an authentic tradition of the Ahl ul Bayt says that Isa, a witness over all the people of the book, since the beginning to the end, will at last die. Therefore the pronoun refers to both.

{فَيُظْلَمُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا حَرَّمْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ طَيِّبَاتٍ أُجِلَّتْ لَهُمْ وَبِصَدِّهِمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا } 160

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:160]

The Jews corrupted the Tawrat, opposed Isa and plotted to kill him, and, in the days of the Holy Prophet, dissuaded many pagans from embracing Islam and hatched plots in league of the hypocrites to hinder the mission of the Holy Prophet by saying that he was not the promised prophet although they knew about his promised advent in their book (see al-Baqarah; 40).

Usury has been forbidden in the religion of Allah (see commentary of al-Baqarah: 275), and also in Tawrat:

You shall fear your God, and your brother shall live with you; you shall not charge interest when advancing him money nor add interest to the payment due for food supplied on credit.

(Leviticus 25: 36 + 37)

Yet they always practised usury for usurping other's wealth unjustly. Their long and unbroken record of wrongdoing will land them in hell to suffer painful torment forever.

161} وَأَخَذَهُمُ الرَّبُّ وَقَدْ نُفُوا عَنْهُ وَأَكَلِهِمْ أَمْوَالَ النَّاسِ بِالْبَاطِلِ ۗ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:161] (see commentary for verse 160)

لَكِنَّ الرَّاٰسِخُوْنَ فِي الْعِلْمِ مِنْهُمْ وَالْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ ۗ وَالْمُقِيمِينَ الصَّلَاةَ ۗ وَالْمُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ
162} وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ أُولَٰئِكَ سَنُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:162]

For *rasikhuna fil ilm* refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 7.

Verse 49 of al-Ankabut says that the Quran is in the hearts or chests of those who have been endowed with divine knowledge. It is a gift of Allah. No mortal had taught or tutored such men described as *rasikhuna fil ilm* in this verse. The Holy Prophet, Ali, Fatimah and the Imams in their progeny, historically, had never been taught and tutored by any individual or group, yet the Holy Prophet is the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate. They are the fountainhead of wisdom and indisputable authority on any branch of knowledge, physical as well as spiritual. Although the other human beings have also attained distinction in knowledge and learning but the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt are the ultimate in awareness of all the divine laws governing the whole universe.

Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 136, 177 and 285; Ali Imran: 84, and Nisa: 136 and 152 for belief in all the messengers of Allah and the books given to them.

The Quran clearly states that all the infallible prophets and the messengers of Allah were the bearers of glad tidings and warners in order that there be no plea for mankind against Allah after these messengers had come to them with His commandments and guidance. Although the essence and origin of all revelations were similar, yet, as some of the prophets have been exalted over others (Baqarah: 253), the final message, the Quran, revealed to the last and the most superior messenger of Allah, the Holy Prophet, is complete and perfect in all dimensions and in its scope and application.

Several of the prophets are mentioned by name in the Quran while others are not. "For every people there was a messenger", says verse 36 of al-Nahl and also verse 24 of al-Fatir. All the messengers of Allah gave the glad tidings of the advent of the Holy Prophet. See commentary of al-Baqarah: 40. For *kallamallah* see commentary of al-Baqarah: 253.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Grammatically *wal muqimin*, like *wal rasikhun*, is in possessive and objective case, whereas *wal mutunuz zakat* and *wal muminun* are in nominative case. All commentators agree that in certain circumstances by giving the form of the possessive and objective case to the verb and the nominative case vice versa, it will receive a distinction for the sake of emphasis. According to a tradition A-isha observed that this is one of the mistakes committed by the scribes who wrote the Quran under the supervision of a committee appointed by Uthman but she and other companions, who used to criticise the government for less important issues did not object to it.

For *awhina* see commentary of al-Fatihah: 7.

The word *Kama* implies that in essence the revelation revealed to the Holy Prophet was similar to

that which was revealed to other prophets and that he had the experience of all the specific forms and the manners of the revelations used separately for the earlier prophets (see commentary of al-Baqarah: 253). *Qaba qawsayni aw adna* (two bows or nearer) in verse 9 of al-Najm puts the Holy Prophet on the highest pedestal of the nearest nearness to Allah.

The well-known Persian poet Rumi says:

The holy name of Ahmed bears all the names of the prophets. Since the hundred-per-cent (out-and-out) has come, the lesser than that is certainly with us.

إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ ۗ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَىٰ وَأَيُّوبَ
{وَيُوسُفَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ ۗ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زَبُورًا ۗ} 163

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:163] (see commentary for verse 162)

{وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ تَقْصُصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ ۗ وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَىٰ تَكْلِيمًا} 164

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:164] (see commentary for verse 162)

{رُسُلًا مُبْتَلِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِيَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا} 165

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:165] (see commentary for verse 162)

{لَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَشْهَدُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ ۗ أَنْزَلَهُ بِعِلْمِهِ ۗ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ يَشْهَدُونَ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا} 166

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:166]

Allah's testimony is the convincing force of the Quran, which represents His knowledge.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ قَدْ ضَلُّوا ضَلَالًا بَعِيدًا} 167

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:167]

The translation of these verses are clear, and therefore should be carefully studied and kept in mind as a warning so that we may safeguard ourselves with full awareness of divine laws and commandment, obey and follow the teachings and sayings of the Holy Prophet, without ever deviating from his path.

{إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَظَلَمُوا لَمْ يَكُنِ اللَّهُ لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ طَرِيقًا} 168

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:168] (see commentary for verse 167)

{إِلَّا طَرِيقَ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ وَكَانَ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرًا} 169

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:169] (see commentary for verse 167)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُولُ بِالْحَقِّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَآمِنُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ ۗ وَإِنْ تَكْفُرُوا فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلِيمًا
{حَكِيمًا} 170

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:170] (see commentary for verse 167)

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ وَلَا تَقُولُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْحَقَّ ۗ إِنَّمَا الْمَسِيحُ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَلَّمْتُهُ آفَاقًا إِلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ
وَرُوحٌ مِنْهُ ۗ فَآمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَقُولُوا ثَلَاثَةً ۗ انْتَهُوا خَيْرًا لَكُمْ ۗ إِنَّمَا اللَّهُ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ ۗ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ وَلَدٌ ۗ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ
{وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ وَكِيلًا} 171

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:171]

Please refer to the commentary of al-Fatihah: 7; al-Baqarah: 255; Ali Imran: 2, 45 to 63 for *ghulu* and *taqdir*, trinity, Maryam and Isa, and oneness and omnipotent authority of Allah.

{لَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ وَمَنْ يَسْتَنْكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا} 172

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:172] (see commentary for verse 171)

{فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ فَيُوَفِّيهِمْ أُجُورَهُمْ وَيَزِيدُهُمْ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ اسْتَنكَفُوا وَاسْتَكْبَرُوا فَيَعَذِّبُهُمْ عَذَابًا أَلِيمًا وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا} 173

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:173]

The basis of reward and punishment has been made clear in these verses. [DILP Note: The original text had split this verse into two, and therefore, this commentary applied to verses 173 and 174.]

{يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا} 174

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:174]

According to the Ahl ul Bayt *burhan* (the finest, strongest and most valid evidence which necessarily implies truth and veracity as its consequence or concomitant) is the Holy Prophet.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Nuram mubina (a manifest light) is similar to *imamum mubin* in verse 12 of Ya Sin. Please refer to the commentary of al-Baqarah: 2 to know how they explain each other. In verses 35 to 38 of al-Nur it is stated that Allah guides unto His light (*nur*) whom He wills. The light is lit in the houses Allah has allowed to be exalted and His name remembered in them, when His praises are sung morning and evening by men whose attention is never drawn to the worldly gains, nor do they ever cease to remember Him. The light of guidance can never reach any man except through such men. They are the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt, particularly chosen by Allah after thoroughly purifying them (Ahzab: 33).

Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al-Sadiq said:

Through us (the Ahl ul Bayt) Allah is recognised and worshipped.

{فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَاعْتَصَمُوا بِهِ فَسَيُدْخِلُهُمْ فِي رَحْمَةٍ مِنْهُ وَفَضْلٍ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمًا} 175

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:175]

Refer to commentary of al-Baqarah: 256 and Ali Imran: 103.

{يَسْتَفْتُونَكَ قُلِ اللَّهُ يُفْتِيكُمْ فِي الْكَلَالَةِ ۚ إِنِ امْرُؤٌ هَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَهُ وَالدُّ وَلَهُ أُخْتٌ فَلَهَا نِصْفُ مَا تَرَكَ ۚ وَهُوَ يَرِثُهَا إِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهَا وَالدُّ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَتْ

اِثْنَتَيْنِ فَلَهُمَا التَّلْثَانِ مِمَّا تَرَكَ ۚ وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رِجَالًا وَنِسَاءً فَلِلذَكَرِ مِثْلُ حَظِّ الْأُنثَيَيْنِ ۗ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ أَن تَضِلُّوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ } 176

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 4:176]

The law of inheritance mentioned in this verse is in continuation of verse 12 of this surah.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Kalalah means one who has no parents or children, in which case it implies the existence of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and their children.

In verse 12 of this surah *kalalah* implies the maternal relations, whereas, here, it refers to the paternal relatives.

Walad stands for an issue and not for a son only.

5

Chapter

Tafsir Surah Al- Maaida (The Table)

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ ۖ أُحِلَّتْ لَكُمْ بَهِيمَةُ الْأَنْعَامِ إِلَّا مَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ غَيْرَ مُحِلِّي الصَّيْدِ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْكُمُ مَا يُرِيدُ } 1

Aqd literally means tying together. *Uqud* (plural) here may mean covenants, contracts agreements, promises, treaties-between man and God or (any of) His prophets, or between human beings.

For peace and harmony in this world fulfilment of *uqud* has been enjoined by Islam. Islam means complete surrender and submission to the divine will manifested through the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet, because "He does not speak of his own will; it is naught but revelation revealed" (Najm: 2, 3); and verse 7 of al Hashr enjoins upon the believers: "whatever the Holy Prophet gives you accept it; and whatever he forbids, abstain from it."

There are covenants which constitute the basis of the religion of Allah-belief in Allah, His prophets, His books, His guidance, His justice; and the covenant taken by the Holy Prophet on the day of Ghadir Khum (see commentary of al Ma-idah: 67). The divine guidance made available to mankind (from His mercy and grace), without which the *din* of Allah would have not been found in its true and original colour, has been clearly made known by the Holy Prophet in his last pronouncement known as *hadith al thaqalayn*.

According to the Ahl ul Bayt the covenants referred to in this verse are those taken by the Holy Prophet from his followers on various occasions to follow and obey the holy Imams of the Ahl ul Bayt after the conclusion of his *risalat*.

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 196 for "unlawful during *hajj is game*". Verse 95 of this surah also says not to kill game when one is on pilgrimage.

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْلُوا شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ وَلَا الشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَلَا الْهَدْيَ وَلَا الْقَلَائِدَ وَلَا آمِينَ الْبَيْتِ الْحَرَامِ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَرِضْوَانًا ۖ وَإِذَا حَلَلْتُمْ فَاصْطَادُوا ۗ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ أَنْ صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَنْ تَعْتَدُوا ۗ وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ } 2

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:2]

See commentary of al Baqarah : 158 for *sha-irallah*.

Hadya and *qala-id* stands for the animals chosen and reserved for sacrifice, with garlands in their necks to mark them off as sacred.

Let not hatred of any people lead to aggression in the sacred city of Makka. There should be no hindrance at all to the pilgrims while they are proceeding to Ka-bah.

Co-operate in righteousness (*tawallah*) but do not assist in crime and transgression (*tabarra*)- these two commandments are the universal maxims of justice.

حَرَّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةَ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةَ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةَ وَالنَّطِيحَةَ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ذَلِكُمْ فِسْقٌ ۗ الْيَوْمَ يَبْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ ۗ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۗ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرِ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمِهِ ۗ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ {3}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:3]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 173 for carrion (corpse of a dead animal), blood flesh of swine, and that over which is invoked the name a *ghayrallah* (other than Allah). Also forbidden are the strangled, the beaten down, the fallen down, the gored, that which has been devoured by beasts of prey, and that which has been slaughtered at altars; and also dividing the meat by casting lots with arrows is forbidden.

Illa ma dhakkaytun-tadhkiyah means to cleanse (allowing the heat in the body to pass away through the Islamic way of slaughter).

From *alyawm* to *Islama dina* was revealed when the Holy Prophet announced at Ghadir Khum: "Of whomsoever I am the *mawla* (master) Ali is his *mawla* (master)". Please study the event of Ghadir Khum in the commentary of verse 67 of this surah.

Ahmad bin Hanbal, the founder of Hanbali sect, writes in his Musnad that a Jew had told the second caliph: "If there were a similar declaration in the Pentateuch, the Jews would have celebrated the day as a great festival."

This verse is also a clear testimony to the perfection of the religion of Islam. Please refer to the commentary of al Fatihah: 7.

Allah has completed and perfected Islam only when, under His command (Ma-idah: 67), the Holy Prophet had announced the *imamat* of Ali after the termination of *risalat*-he being the last messenger of Allah. Fakhruddin Razi has said that the Holy Prophet died 81 or 82 days after the revelation of this verse. All authorities agree that no law-giving verse was revealed after this verse. So without believing in Ali as the immediate successor of the Holy Prophet, according to this verse, the faith is neither complete nor perfect. The institution of *imamat* is necessary to keep intact the final word of Allah (the Quran) and to guide mankind unto the right path till the day of resurrection.

As verse 67 of this surah is inevitably connected with this verse, please study its commentary very carefully. To avoid repetition, all the historical, logical and rational arguments with authentic references pertaining to the *imamah* of Ali and his descendants mentioned in verse 67 of this surah have not been related here. This verse should be read as an immediate corollary of verse 67 of this surah.

This fact stands confirmed by a large number of non-Shia scholars, therefore, if any tradition contrary to this fact is narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, based upon diplomacy and political pressures, should be reviewed in the light of the bias and hostility they, and men like them, display whenever they deal with the merits of the Ahl ul Bayt. Please refer to Peshawar Nights, a well-known book published by Peermahomed Ebrahim Trust and Zahra Publications.

In the first verse of this surah it is said: "Verily Allah commands whatsoever He intends". So there is no sense in questioning the will of Allah if He intermingles various issues in any chapter, or in one verse, or two closely connected verses, or passages are placed away from each other. This arrangement was made by the Holy Prophet in his own lifetime. Please refer to "Genuineness of the Quran" (by Aqa Mahdi Puya) in this book.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

After *islama dina*, *fa*, in *faman*, connects its following clause to the prohibitory clause preceding *alyawma* to *islama dina*, making the two clauses in *alyawma toislama dina* parenthetical. In its esoteric significance *fa* may be connected with the immediately preceding clauses to mean that Islam in its true form is that which was made known at Ghadir Khum in pursuance of verse 67 of this surah.

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۗ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُمْ مِنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ
{ وَأذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ } 4

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:4]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Jawrihi means any hunting animal, but *mimma amsakna* restricts the animal to be that who can hold the prey for its master. The adverb *makallibin* refers to dogs only.

According to the Ahl ul Bayt Allah's name should be mentioned at the time of setting the dog to catch the prey. For details refer to *fiqh*.

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ ۖ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حَلَّلٌ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حَلَّلٌ لَهُمْ ۗ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ
أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ مُحْصِنِينَ غَيْرَ مُسَافِحِينَ وَلَا مُتَّخِذِي أَخْدَانٍ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُ وَهُوَ
{ فِي الْأَخْرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ } 5

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:5]

According to Imam Jafar bin Muhammad al Sadiq the word *ta-am* implies food made of grains not containing flesh of permitted animals.

The Jews and the Christians do not follow the prescribed method of slaughtering the animals, nor do they seek Allah's pleasure before killing the animal, therefore, to eat flesh of any animal offered by

them is not lawful for the Muslims.

"Whosoever denies the faith, his deeds will be rendered useless" clearly lays down the principle that good deeds cannot be of any use unless one believes in Allah, His messengers and guides appointed by Him, and the day of judgement .

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse gives permission to the Muslims to eat the food (made of grains) offered by the people of the book; and also the chaste women of the people of the book are lawful for the Muslims. *Wal muhsanat* should be understood with reference to *ujurakunna*, because both these words have been used in verse 24 of an Nisa while allowing *mutatun nisa* (temporary marriage). Therefore, instead of permanent wedlock, this permission relates to *mutatun nisa*.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا ۚ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ ۗ مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهَّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ {6}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:6]

Wudu and tayammum, the two methods of cleansing for praying *salat*, have been prescribed in this verse.

The emission of seed, whether in waking or in sleep, makes bathing (*ghusl*) obligatory.

Wudu (ablution) is done with water. If water is not available, or there is a genuine danger to health if used, then *tayammum* (use of dust to cleanse) has been prescribed. For details refer to *fiqh*. It is written in Sahih Bukhari and other books of history that the second caliph disliked this divine ordinance so much that he was prepared not to pray at all rather than observe these commands.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Those who wipe the whole head with a wet hand and wash the feet instead of wiping them with the wet hands do not take into consideration that which the *ba* in *biru-usikum* implies.

In *tayammum*, again due to the possessive particle *ba* in *biwujuhikum*, only a portion of the face and the hands have to be wiped-the parts which have to be washed in *wudu* are wiped in *tayammum*, and the parts which are wiped in *wudu* are omitted in *tayammum*.

The intention of Allah is to purify and complete His favour. This verse is legislative. It implies that whoever submits to Allah's command will get His blessings. The will of Allah as in Ahzab: 33 is creative which means "Be; and it becomes".

{وَأَذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمِيثَاقَهُ الَّذِي وَاثَقَكُمْ بِهِ إِذْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُورِ } 7

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:7]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The covenant, mentioned in this verse, wherewith Allah has bound the faithful, and by virtue of which His favour has been bestowed on them, is that which has been referred to in verse 3 of this surah-the last covenant taken from the faithfuls at Ghadir Khum (please refer to the commentary of verse 3 of this surah pertaining to "today I have perfected for you your religion and have completed My favour upon you").

"When you said" refers to the reply they gave to the Holy Prophet when he told them "of whomsoever I am the master (*mawla*) Ali is his master (*mawla*)." Please refer to the commentary of verse 67 of this surah for authentic references from the books written by well-known Muslim (non-Shia) scholars; and to know the names of the historians, traditionists and commentators who have reported the proceedings of the historic event at Ghadir Khum.

"And fear Allah; verily Allah knows that which is (hidden) in your breasts (hearts)" refers to the spirit of revolt, which at last manifested itself in Saqifa Bani Sa-idah after the departure of the Holy Prophet .

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۗ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۗ اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ } 8

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:8]

Refer to the commentary of an Nisa: 135.

{وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ وَأَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ } 9

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:9]

{وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ } 10

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:10]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ أَنْ يَبْسُطُوا إِلَيْكُمْ أَيْدِيَهُمْ فَكَفَّ أَيْدِيَهُمْ عَنْكُمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ } 11

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:11]

Many attempts were made by the enemies of Allah and the Holy Prophet to kill him so as to prevent the march of Islam which was uprooting the pagan society, but Allah saved him and His religion on all occasions through His *wali*, Ali ibn abi Talib, who is known as *yadullah* (the hand of Allah).

وَلَقَدْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَبَعَثْنَا مِنْهُمُ اثْنَيْ عَشَرَ نَقِيبًا وَقَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مَعَكُمْ ۗ لَئِنْ أَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَيْتُمُ الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَنْتُمْ بِرُسُلِي وَعَزَّرْتُمُوهُمْ وَأَقْرَضْتُمُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا لَأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ وَلَأُدْخِلَنَّكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ ۗ فَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ } 12

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:12]

For the covenant taken from the Jews refer to Deut 26: 16 and 17 mentioned in the commentary of al Baqarah: 40; and for the goodly loan, refer to the commentary of al Baqarah : 245; and for the twelve leaders, refer to Numbers 1: 1 to 15; and 13: 3 to 15. If righteousness (as defined in this verse and in al Baqarah: 177) is adopted and put in practice Allah absolves man of his sins, but whosoever deviates, after coming into the fold of the religion of Allah, shall go astray into the camp of Shaytan-a warning to those who had broken the covenant taken by the Holy Prophet at Ghadir Khum, and their followers till the day of resurrection.

فِيمَا نَفَضِهِمْ مِيثَاقَهُمْ لَعَنَّاهُمْ وَجَعَلْنَا قُلُوبَهُمْ قَاسِيَةً يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ ۗ وَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ ۗ وَلَا تَزَالُ تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى
{ خَائِنَةٍ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا مِنْهُمْ ۗ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاصْفَحْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ } 13

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:13]

Refer to al Baqarah: 40 for the covenant taken from Bani Israil to accept the Holy Prophet as the promised prophet, which they did not fulfil; and to deny the genuineness of his divine mission they corrupted the books sent to their prophets.

Allah curses the people who break their pledge. So the Muslims should take precaution and avoid to act like the Jews. It is incumbent upon the Muslims to remain attached with the covenant the Holy Prophet bound them with at Ghadir Khum. They must also safeguard themselves from misinterpreting the Quran in order to keep away the curse of Allah which will certainly be upon them if they, like the Jews, distort the true meanings of the book of Allah to serve their worldly interests.

وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَهُمْ فَنَسُوا حَظًّا مِمَّا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ فَأَغْرَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۗ وَسَوْفَ يُنَبِّئُهُمُ
{ اللَّهُ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ } 14

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:14]

Please refer to John 14: 16, 17; 15: 26; and 16: 7 to 13 mentioned in the commentary of al Baqarah: 253, according to which the comforter, the advocate and the spirit of truth (the Holy Prophet) will be with mankind for ever- through his descendants (the twelve holy Imams), because the Holy Prophet said:

The first of us is Muhammad, the middle of us is Muhammad the last of us is Muhammad, everyone of us is Muhammad.

Please refer to pages 1 to 7, and the commentary of al Fatihah: 6, 7; al Baqarah: 2 to 5, 27, 30 to 39, 51, 83, 93, 124 to 126, 207, 247 to 251; Ali Imran: 7,13,61.

The Jews had corrupted their written book revealed to Musa, and the Christians had forgotten the verbal announcements of Isa.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِمَّا كُنْتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ
مُبِينٌ {15}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:15]

"Hide" implies both suppression or concealment and distortion or misinterpretation, which the Jews and the Christians employed to deny the prophethood of the Holy Prophet; and "you" refers to them and their forefathers.

In their books there were many clear prophecies of the advent of the Holy Prophet, but they changed some and disguised others. There were also other truths, concealed by them, which have been again revealed in the Quran, omitting those which pertained to the particular age of their earlier prophets, and were not needed for mankind any more.

The "light" stands for that light about which the Holy Prophet had said:

"I and Ali are of one and the same light which Allah created as the first creation."

Kitabun mubin refers to the *samit* (silent) as well the *natiq* (speaking) Quran-Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad. See commentary of al Baqarah:2. Through the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt and the Quran Allah guides those who follow His pleasure to the path of peace, out of darkness into light, by His will (*bi-idhnihi*).

"Darkness" implies *ghulu* and *taqsir*-refer to the commentary al Fatihah: 7.

{يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ {16}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:16] (see commentary for verse 15)

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ قُلْ فَمَنْ يَمْلِكُ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا إِنْ أَرَادَ أَنْ يُهْلِكَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَأُمُّهُ وَمَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
جَمِيعًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ {17}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:17]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 253, 255; Ali Imran: 2, 3, 7, 42 to 55, 59 to 63; and al Nisa : 171, to know about the *hayyal qayyam* Allah and the false beliefs of the Christians regarding Isa in the form of trinity. Isa was a man, a created being, like Adam (Ali Imran: 59) or any other prophet. He was neither the soul-incarnate of God, nor the son of God, nor the redeemer of the sins of mankind. In fact trinitarianism is a flagrant variety of polytheism. The relationship between God and His created beings is, as per verses 91 to 93 of Maryam, of the master and His slaves, with no exception; the highest and the lowest among them are equal in submission to His lordship, because they all come before the beneficent Lord in all obedience, and the most obedient is nearest to Him.

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ وَالنَّصَارَى نَحْنُ أَبْنَاءُ اللَّهِ وَأَحِبَّاؤُهُ قُلْ فَلِمَ يُعَذِّبُكُمْ بِذُنُوبِكُمْ ۗ بَلْ أَنْتُمْ بَشَرٌ مِّمَّنْ خَلَقَ ۗ يَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ
وَاللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا ۗ وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ {18}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:18]

The theory of atonement of sins by Isa is a fanciful conjecture.

It has no effect. It cannot and does not change the law of retribution. His mercy is available to His created beings. He forgives whomsoever He wills and punishes whomsoever He wills. He is just. The kingdom (sovereignty) of the whole universe belongs to Him, and everything will go back to Him.

Verses 7 and 8 of al Zilzal render the doctrine of atonement null and void.

Whomsoever had done (even) an atom's weight of good will behold it; and whosoever has done (even) an atom's weight of evil will behold it. Islam is a religion of justice, rightness and exactitude.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ عَلَى فَنْرَةٍ مِنَ الرَّسُلِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا جَاءَنَا مِنْ بَشِيرٍ وَلَا نَذِيرٍ ۗ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بَشِيرٌ وَنَذِيرٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿19﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:19]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Fatratin means an interval in the process of preaching, not discontinuation or breakdown of the institution of vicegerency of Allah on the earth. Refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 30.

The promise of sending the comforter or the spirit of God was fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet but the Jews and the Christians disbelieved in him.

وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿20﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:20]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 40 to 147 to know the favours and bounties Allah had bestowed on Bani Israil, and how they always rebelled against Allah and His messengers, earning (in consequence) His displeasure.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The order to enter a holy land, or turn from one direction to another (change of *qibla*), or to remain stationed at a certain place (battle of Uhad), was given to test the degree of submission to the divine commands. The Quran refers to such instances to warn the Muslims to avoid disobedience displayed by the Jews in similar circumstances .

The following extract is given from Milman's History of the Jews:-

"At length the nation arrived on the southern frontier of the promised land (Vr. 21) . Twelve spies, one from each tribe, are sent out to make observations on the fruitfulness of the land, the character of

the inhabitants and the strength of their fortifications. Among these the most distinguished are Caleb of the tribe of Judah and Joshua of Ephraim-In one respect their report is most satisfactory: Canaan had undergone vast improvements, since the time when Abraham and Isaac had pastured their flocks in the open and unoccupied plains. But on the other hand, the intelligence, exaggerated by the fears of the rest of the twelve spies, overwhelms the people with terror. Their treasures were guarded by fierce and warlike tribes, not likely to abandon their native plains without an obstinate bloody conquest. Their cities were strongly fortified, and above all the first enemies they would have to encounter would be men of colossal stature, the descendants of the gigantic people, celebrated in their early national traditions, people before whom they would be grasshoppers (Verse 22)-The confidence in the divine protection gave way at once before their sense of physical inferiority, and the total deficiency of moral courage, 'Back' to Egypt' is the general cry. The brave Joshua and Caleb in vain reprove the general pusillanimity (Verse 23); their own lives are in danger; and in bitter disappointment the great law-giver perceives that a people- inured to slavery from their birth, are not the z material from which he can construct a bold conquering and independent nation. (Verse 25)

The decision instantly formed-they are neither to return to Egypt nor assail an easier conquest; but . they are condemned to wander for a definite period of forty years, in the barren and dismal regions through which they had marched (Verse 26)."

Some quotations from the Old Testament are given below:

Thus their report to the Israelites about the land which they had explored was discouraging: "The country we explored", they said "will swallow up any who go to live in it. All the people we saw there are men of gigantic size." (Numbers 13: 32)

And two of those who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, rent their clothes and addressed the whole community: "The country we penetrated and explored", they said, "is very good land in deed. If the Lord is pleased with us, He will bring us into this land which flows with milk and honey, and give it to us. But you must not rebel against the Lord. You need not fear the people of the land; for there we shall find food. They have lost the protection that they had; the Lord is with us. (Numbers 14: 6 to 9)

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Only two God-fearing men (Joshua and Caleb), from among the several followers of Musa, believed in Allah and His Prophet and relied upon them. Similarly a large majority of the Muslims, present at Ghadir Khum also turned disloyal to the covenant they bound themselves with on that day and till the day of *zahur* (appearance of the living Imam and Isa) their followers shall continue to do as the Jews and their own leaders did.

In Minhaj us Sadiqin it is stated that *rabbuka* before *faqatila* (fight you two) implies Harun because he was the elder brother of Musa, which has been made clear in verse 25 when Musa mentions the name of Harun.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The impertinent disobedience of the Muslims to the order of the Holy Prophet to march under the command of Usamah, or of some of the companions to his order to bring paper and pen (*hadith al qirtas*), bears similarity to the conduct of the followers of Musa. Not only the paper and pen demanded by the Holy Prophet was not provided to him but also it was observed that the old man (Holy Prophet) was in a delirium, uttering nonsense. Like Musa the Holy Prophet said:

Go away. Leave me alone.

The forty years wandering of the Bani Israil lasted, according to Sir Charles Marston's computation, from 1440 B.C. to 1400 B.C.

Refer to Numbers 14: 29 to 34.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The wandering of the children of Israil was for forty years, but the wandering of those who have broken the covenant made at Ghadir Khum shall last till the reappearance of the last Imam of the house of the Holy Prophet.

"Do not grieve for (these) rebellious people." shows that Musa, inspite of all the injuries and slanders heaped upon him, pitied his rebellious people, and was moved at their miseries.

21 { يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:21] (see commentary for verse 20)

22 { قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمًا جَبَّارِينَ وَإِنَّا لَنَنُودُكَ بِالْكُفْرِ لَوْلَا سُلُوكُنَا الْأَرْضَ بِمَا كَرِهْتَ لَسَبَّوْاكَ سَبًّا مُّبِينًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:22] (see commentary for verse 20)

23 { قَالَ رَجُلَانِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخَافُونَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِمَا ادْخُلُوا عَلَيْهِمُ الْبَابَ فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمُوهُ فَإِنَّكُمْ غَالِبُونَ ۚ وَعَلَىٰ اللَّهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:23] (see commentary for verse 20)

24 { قَالُوا يَا مُوسَىٰ إِنَّا لَنَنُودُكَ بِالْكُفْرِ لَوْلَا سُلُوكُنَا الْأَرْضَ بِمَا كَرِهْتَ لَسَبَّوْاكَ سَبًّا مُّبِينًا }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:24] (see commentary for verse 20)

25 { قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي ۚ فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:25] (see commentary for verse 20)

26 { قَالَ فَإِنَّهَا مُحَرَّمَةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً يَتِيهُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:26] (see commentary for verse 20)

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ ابْنَيْ آدَمَ بِالْحَقِّ إِذْ قَرَّبَا قُرْبَانًا فَتُقُبِّلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمَا وَلَمْ يُتَقَبَّلْ مِنَ الْآخَرِ قَالَ لَأَقْتُلَنَّكَ قَالَ إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ } 27

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:27]

Habil (Abel) and Qabil (Cain) were the two sons of Adam. Adam had nominated the younger son Habil as his successor. The elder son, Qabil, disputed his father's judgement. Thereupon Adam asked each of them to offer a sacrifice to Allah separately so that Allah might accept the sacrifice of one whom He found deserving to succeed him. Habil was a shepherd and Qabil a tiller of the soil. Habil brought the best of his flock as a gift to the Lord; and Qabil brought some dried up ears of corn. Allah received Habil's gift with favour; but He did not receive Qabil's gift. Qabil was very angry and his face fell. He attacked his brother Habil and murdered him. As this was the first murder, in fact, first human death, Qabil did not know what to do with the corpse and stood puzzled. A raven was sent by Allah to show him how to bury a dead body. Adam was greatly disturbed. Allah had granted him another son, Shith, in place of Habil. Shith, a prophet of Allah, succeeded Adam. Qabil's descendants were drowned when the waters of the great flood came upon the earth in the days of Nuh.

Allah only accepts sacrifice from those who are pious and safeguard themselves against evil with full awareness of Allah's laws. Three loaves of bread given to the needy by such men have earned highest praise from Allah (see commentary of al Dahr: 5 to 22); while verse 264 of al Baqarah condemns those who spend large quantities with ungodly motives.

The murderer bears the sins of the person he has slain. If the murdered person is a prophet, as Habil was, the murderer bears the sins of those who might have been guided to the right path, by the slain prophet or the guide appointed by Allah, till the day of resurrection. Every prophet or guide, divinely chosen, represents his people, and the sins of the people are laid at his door, so that Allah may pardon them on account of His chosen representative, as has been indicated in verse 2 of al Fath.

In verse 31 Qabil is sorry for his ignorance (not repentant) and condemns himself for not knowing even that which a raven knew.

{لَئِن بَسَطْتَ إِلَيَّ يَدَكَ لِتَقْتُلَنِي مَا أَنَا بِبَاسٍ بِيَدَيْكَ لِأَفْتُلَنَّكَ إِنِّي أَخَافُ اللَّهَ رَبَّ الْعَالَمِينَ } 28

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:28] (see commentary for verse 27)

{إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ تَبُوءَ بِإِثْمِي وَإِثْمِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّارِ ۗ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الظَّالِمِينَ } 29

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:29] (see commentary for verse 27)

{فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ } 30

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:30] (see commentary for verse 27)

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ ۗ قَالَ يَا وَيْلَتَا أَعَجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُوَارِيَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِي ۗ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ } 31

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:31] (see commentary for verse 27)

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا ۗ وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ } 32

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:32]

Murder of an individual has been compared to "killing all humanity", in order to lay emphasis on

the establishment of peace and harmony on the earth.

Keeping this verse and the preceding verse in view the conduct of the so-called followers of the Holy Prophet has to be condemned and cursed, who, immediately after his departure from this world, raided the house of Ali and Fatimah's and set it on fire; and afterwards killed Imam Hasan, and murdered Imam Husayn together with other members of the holy house and their friends and followers, and put to death all the holy Imams in the progeny of the Holy Prophet till the last Imam Muhammad al Mahdi had to go from among them by the command of Allah. Besides this the followers of the holy Imams had been persecuted and murdered by the *khalifatul muslimin* and their agents in every age, and still the persecution and killing continue.

In the time of the first caliph, Khalid bin Walid killed Malik ibn Nuwayra, raped his wife, and murdered all the men, women and children of his tribe in one single night and burned their bodies to cook food for his army. To ridicule the divine declaration in these verses all these atrocities were described as the result of *khata al ijthadi*(error of judgement) so as to set the pattern which despot after despot followed to annihilate the descendants of the Holy Prophet and their followers.

إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِنْ خِلَافٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا
33 { مِنْ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ }

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:33]

Those who wage war against Allah and His prophet, kill the believers and plunder their property shall be disgraced in this world, and for them is a dreadful doom in the hereafter.

Refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 48, 97 and 98 and the preceding verse to know how the so-called followers of the Holy Prophet waged war against the holy house of the Holy Prophet and committed heinous crimes while carrying out their ugly plan to eliminate them for ever. No doubt they have been disgraced in this world (all the sincere believers curse and condemn them), and they shall be severely punished on the day of judgement .

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Waging war against Allah and His prophet means hostility against His chosen representatives; or deviation from His laws by overstepping the boundaries laid down by Him; or letting loose a reign of terror to persecute and frighten innocent people in order to deprive them of their rights; or attempts to undermine the cause of Islam and the overall interests of the Muslims; or activities to enslave, exploit and destroy human beings.

Allah forgives only those who turn repentant to Him before *they* are proved guilty of the crime.

{إِلَّا الَّذِينَ تَابُوا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَقْدِرُوا عَلَيْهِمْ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ } 34

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:34] (see commentary for verse 33)

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَابْتَغُوا إِلَيْهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ وَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ } 35

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:35]

Wasilah is a means of access to a thing or a being.

If Allah had willed He could have guided mankind directly through inspiration, but in His infinite wisdom, He had not deemed it desirable. He selected and appointed His representatives to convey His message and laws to people and administer their affairs in every age. Please refer to pages 1 to 7, and the commentary of al Baqarah: 2 to 5, 30 to 38, 48, and 124 to know that the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt are the only means of approach to Allah.

Thus *wasilah* or means of access to Allah is to faithfully follow the Holy Prophet and the holy *Imams* of his holy house, who have been thoroughly purified by Allah (Ahzab: 33).

The Holy Prophet said:

"I and Ali are from one divine light."

"I will soon be called back, so I will have to go away from you, but I leave behind, amid you, the *thaqalayn* (two weighty indispensable influential authorities), the book of Allah and my Ahl ul Bayt. Should you be attached to these two, never, never shall you go astray, after me, for verily these two will never be separated from each other; and, joined together, they shall meet me at the spring of Kawthar."

"My Ahl ul Bayt amongst you are like the ark of Nuh. He who sails on it will be safe; but he who holds back shall be drowned and lost."

{ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوْ أَنَّ لَهُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا وَمِثْلَهُ مَعَهُ لَيَفْتَدُوا بِهِ مِنْ عَذَابِ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ مَا تُقْبَلُ مِنْهُمْ^ط وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ } 36

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:36]

All the riches of the world, and two times more, shall be of no use if the disbelievers offer it as ransom on the day of judgement to save themselves from the painful punishment of the fire wherein they shall abide for ever.

{ يُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُخْرَجُوا مِنَ النَّارِ وَمَا هُمْ بِخَارِجِينَ مِنْهَا^ط وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُقِيمٌ } 37

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:37] (see commentary for verse 36)

{ وَالسَّارِقُ وَالسَّارِقَةُ فَاقْطَعُوا أَيْدِيَهُمَا جِزَاءً بِمَا كَسَبَا نَكَالًا مِنَ اللَّهِ^ط وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ } 38

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:38]

Next to high moral education and deep religious upbringing, it is fear of consequences, as experience proves, that keeps in check the tendency to steal and thief. Adultery destroys purity of character and rends asunder the peace and harmony of human society. Thievery upsets the social and economic structure of the social life of a community. It snatches away happiness from the people and exposes them to misery. Therefore, these two crimes have been particularly underlined for severe punishment. The penalty prescribed in this verse is a divine statute, and is not to be taken lightly.

Adultery and thievery are the "hallmark" of modern (so-called) civilised nations. They have failed to keep these crimes in check because they do not agree with the injunctions prescribed by Islam. One day they will be destroyed by adultery and thievery if not by their nuclear weapons.

{فَمَنْ تَابَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ} 39

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:39]

Refer to verse 34 of this surah.

{أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَغْفِرُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ} 40

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:40]

Refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 255 for Allah's dominion of the heavens and the earth.

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ لَا يَحْزُنْكَ الَّذِينَ يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْكُفْرِ مِنَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا آمَنَّا بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَلَمْ تُؤْمِنْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا سَمَّاعُونَ
لِلْكَذِبِ سَمَّاعُونَ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ لَمْ يَأْتُوكَ يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَوَاضِعِهِ يَقُولُونَ إِنْ أُوتِينَاهُمْ هَذَا فِخْذُوهُ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُؤْتُوهُ فَاخْذَرُوا وَمَنْ
يُرِدِ اللَّهُ فِتْنَتَهُ فَلَنْ تَمْلِكَ لَهُ مِنْ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُطَهِّرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ لَهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ
عَظِيمٌ} 41

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:41]

"Those who say: We believe, but do not believe in their hearts and hasten to outpace others in infidelity" are the hypocrites. He who professed the faith with his mouth in the presence of the Holy Prophet was not a believer. Such hypocrites, after the Holy Prophet, persecuted his Ahl ul Bayt, usurped their rights, and killed them. They have been grouped with the Jews who used to give ear to lies, spy on behalf of others and distort the words of God out of context (see commentary of al Baqarah: 75 to 79 and 104). They only agreed with that which was mentioned in their corrupted books.

According to an agreement between the two Jewish tribes of Madina (Bani Nadhir and Bani Qurayza) if a man of Bani Nadhir killed a man of Bani Qurayza, he would only pay half of the blood-money and would be paraded in the streets sitting on a camel with his face towards its tail. On the other hand the murderer from the Bani Qurayza would pay full blood-money and would also face death if he killed any one of the Bani Nadhir tribe. This unjust arrangement was imposed on Bani Qurayza with the help of Abdullah bin Obayy. After the arrival of the Holy Prophet in Madina, a case of murder was referred to him for arbitration by both the tribes because the murderer, who belonged to Bani Qurayza, refused to comply with the terms of the unjust agreement which, his tribe declared, was against the law of Musa. The tribe of Bani Nadhir tried to influence the Holy Prophet through Abdullah bin Obay for obtaining his judgement in their favour, with the reservation that if he did not oblige them his judgement would not be accepted. It is reported that on that occasion this verse was revealed.

Please refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 23 for the judgement the Holy Prophet gave in a case

of adultery according to the law of Musa. The choice whether to act as an arbitrator in the suits and disputes of the Jews, devourers of gains through unlawful means, entirely lay with the Holy Prophet. The Madinite Jews, true to their traditions of mischief, sometimes submitted their disputes to the Holy Prophet for decision to test and try his knowledge of their law.

They did not approach him as bonafide seekers of justice, with any honest motives at all, because they declined to abide by the decision of the Holy Prophet, made in the light of the law of Musa, whenever it went against them.

سَمَاعُونَ لِلْكَذِبِ أَكَّالُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ فَإِنْ جَاءُوكَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ أَوْ أَعْرَضْ عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ تُعْرَضْ عَنْهُمْ فَلَنْ يَصُرُّوكَ شَيْنًا وَإِنْ حَكَمْتَ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِالْقِسْطِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ } 42

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:42] (see commentary for verse 41)

وَكَيفَ يُحْكُمُونَكَ وَعِنْدَهُمُ التَّوْرَةُ فِيهَا حُكْمُ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ وَمَا أُولَئِكَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ } 43

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:43] (see commentary for verse 41)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُخْفِظُوا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا بآيَاتِي ثَمًّا قَلِيلًا وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ } 44

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:44]

The original Tawrat contained guidance (*huda*) and light (*nur*) in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance, in accordance with which the Israelite prophets, who had submitted to Allah (*aslamu*), gave instructions to the Jews, as did the rabbis and priests who remembered the true wordings of the original book. This verse does not testify the integrity of the corrupted book the Jews now refer to as their revealed book, known as the Old Testament (refer to "The Tawrat" at the end of al-Ma-idah). The rabbis and priests were the witnesses of Allah's writ because they had memorised and kept safe (*istahfizū-* from *hifz*) the true text of the original book.

It should be noted that although the original Tawrat had been corrupted by the Jews but some important and basic essentials were kept safe in the memory of some of their honest scholars; whereas Allah Himself has taken the responsibility of keeping the Quran in original form without any additions or omissions (Hijr: 9). The declaration of the Holy Prophet (refer to *hadith al thaqalayn* on page 6) points to the divinely chosen custodians of the book of Allah.

"Those who do not judge by Allah's revelations are disbelievers indeed" applies also to those Muslims who do not follow the verdict given in verse 65 of an Nisa-unconditional obedience to whatever the Holy Prophet decided. Many of them failed to adhere to his declaration at Ghadir Khum. They neither listened to his advice of "remaining attached to his Ahl ul Bayt and the Quran", nor accepted Ali as his successor; on the contrary they quarrelled among themselves on the issue of his successorship by putting forward their own arguments in Saqifa bani Sa-ida, notwithstanding his clear guidance given to them a few months before at Ghadir Khum.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Only the prophets and the pious divines who had submitted to Allah, were entrusted with the

responsibility of giving judgements according to the Tawrat. The people had no right to use their discretion. Likewise the Quran was not abandoned to the eccentric and unreliable evaluation of common people as wrongly concluded by a group of the Holy Prophet's companions who believed in *hasbuna kitabullah* (sufficient for us is the book of Allah). On the contrary the Holy Prophet joined his Ahl ul Bayt with the Quran as the infallible guardians of its integrity, meanings and application (*hadith al thaqalayn*). There is no doubt about its genuineness. It has been kept safe from corruption. Allah, the Holy Prophet and his Ahl Bayt have preserved its originality for the guidance of mankind till the end of the world. Through the Quran the other heavenly scriptures have also been preserved. Therefore, their original and true texts will be made known to the people by the awaited holy Imam in order to expose the corrupted and distorted editions of these two holy books, the Jews and the Christian present before the world as the word of God.

وَكَتَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَالسِّنَّ بِالسِّنِّ وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصٌ ۚ فَمَنْ تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ ۖ فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَهُ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿45﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:45]

"Wherever hurt is done, you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, bruise for bruise, wound for wound."
(Exodus 21: 23 to 25)

Please refer to Exodus 21: 1 to 36; Exodus 22: 1 to 24; and Leviticus 24: 13 to 23 which confirm the law of retribution prescribed by Islam, but the Christians, for no reason at all, refuse to accept the divine commandments, inspite of the fact that Isa had clearly stated: Do not suppose that I have come to abolish the law (Tawrat) or the prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to complete (Matthew 5: 17).

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۗ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿46﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:46]

In the train of the Israelite prophets Isa was sent to confirm and verify the basic doctrines of the universal religion of Allah-unity and justice of Allah, truthfulness of all the prophets, and prophethood of the last prophet of Allah, the Holy Prophet.

In the end of this verse it is stated that every book of Allah was a guidance to the *muttaqin* (who safeguard themselves against evil with full awareness of Allah's laws), as has been said in verse 2 of al Baqarah.

The original Tawrat, revealed to Musa, has been confirmed by the original Injil, given to Isa. The false books in the hands of the Jews and the Christians have not been referred to here.

وَلِيَحْكُمَ أَهْلَ الْإِنْجِيلِ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ ﴿47﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:47]

The Christians, as the Jews in verse 44 of this surah, have been warned not to use their own discretion but to judge in the light of the revealed books.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

Those who do not act by that which has been revealed have been described as infidels in verse 44, unjust in verse 45, and transgressors in verse 47 (of this surah). There is no justification in restricting the application of these descriptions to the Jews and the Christians only, because any one, Muslim or non-Muslim, who does not submit to the absolute authority of Allah's commands and guidance becomes a *kafir* (infidel), or a *zalim* (unjust), or a *fasiq* (transgressor) according to the degree of disobedience he has employed in his actions.

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ {48}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:48]

"To each of you (every people or community) Allah has given a law and a way and a pattern of life", before the revelation of the final law, the Quran, which confirms the earlier revelations and preserves them from change and corruption. The word "guardian" has been exclusively used for the Quran in connection with the other revealed books. Refer to the commentary of verse 44 of this surah. Therefore Islam is a universal religion. Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 4, 136 and 285; al Nisa: 150.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to verse 42 of this surah, if the people of the book refer their disputes to the Holy Prophet or any of his successor, it can be judged in the light of their books or in accordance with the Islamic law, or it can be referred back to their own jurists.

وَأَنْ احْكُم بَيْنَهُمْ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ وَاحْذَرْهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتِنُوكَ عَنْ بَعْضِ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُصِيبَهُمْ بِبَعْضِ ذُنُوبِهِمْ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنَ النَّاسِ لَفَاسِقُونَ {49}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:49]

These verses should be studied in the light of verses 42 to 48 of this surah. The Jews used to come to the Holy Prophet as contending parties but always flouted his authority after seeking his judgement if it was against their worldly interests; and inspite of their high-sounding talk of the scripture-learning, stooped low to be judged by the laws and customs of paganism.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:..

Verse 50 was quoted by Bibi Fatimah Zahra in her address to the assembly of her father's companions when the first caliph, depriving her of the inheritance she had received from her father (the Holy Prophet), wrongfully confiscated her lands in Fadak. Please refer to her biography published by our Trust to know the issue of Fadak; and study the commentary of al Baqarah: 9 which makes clear the fate of those who harassed annoyed and oppressed her.

{أَفْحَكُمُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةَ يَبْغُونَ ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حُكْمًا لِقَوْمٍ يُوقِنُونَ} 50

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:50] (see commentary for verse 49)

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهُمْ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ} 51

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:51]

The Jews and the Christians had much in common, and therefore readily formed an alliance against Islam. so anyone who makes them his friends must have some points of identity with them. A believer, in order to keep himself safe from the influence of falsehood, must avoid the company of disbelievers. The doctrines of *tawalla* (staying attached with the Ahl ul Bayt) and *tabarra* (avoiding the enemies of Allah, the Holy Prophet and his Ahl ul Bayt) are the articles of the faith of them followers of Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad.

The Holy Prophet said:

Do not adopt the style and mannerism of my enemies, lest you may be considered as one of them. He who appears like a certain type shall be identified as of that type.

{قَتَرَى الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ يُسَارِعُونَ فِيهِمْ يَقُولُونَ نَخْشَىٰ أَنْ تُصِيبَنَا دَائِرَةٌ ۚ فَعَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِالْفَتْحِ أَوْ أَمْرٍ مِنْ عِنْدِهِ فَيُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا أَسْرُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ نَادِمِينَ} 52

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:52]

"In whose hearts is a disease only hasten towards them saying: we fear lest a reverse (misfortune) may befall us" refers to the hypocrites. Victory for the Muslims and punishment for their enemies have been promised in this verse.

{وَيَقُولُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَهَؤُلَاءِ الَّذِينَ أَقْسَمُوا بِاللَّهِ جَهْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ لَمَعَكُمْ ۚ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فَأَصْبَحُوا خَاسِرِينَ} 53

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:53]

The conspiracies and artifices of the hypocrites will be rendered useless. They shall not succeed in their schemes.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَنْ يَرْتَدَّ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِ فَسَوْفَ يَأْتِي اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ يُحِبُّهُمْ وَيُحِبُّونَهُ أَذِلَّةٍ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَعِزَّةٍ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ يُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا يَخَافُونَ لَوْمَةَ لَائِمٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ} 54

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:54]

A careful study of verses 54 and 55 indicates that they have no relation with the preceding verses prohibiting friendship with infidels. The subject matter of verse 54 is quite different. It is in praise of Ali, about his nomination to political and religious leadership; and wherein the renegades have been warned of his might and valour, and frightened of his great overwhelming influence.

The Holy Prophet said:

"The resolute co-operation among the Quraysh will not dissipate unless Allah appoints over you a man whose heart Allah has tested through severe trial of faith. He will strike your necks and you will be as afraid of him as frightened sheep."

Whereupon Abu Bakr inquired if he was that man and Umar inquired if he was that man. The Holy Prophet replied: "No. But the person who is mending shoes inside the room is that man." And Ali turned up with shoes in his hand which he was repairing for the Holy Prophet.

Many traditionists have recorded it with slight variations-Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, Hakim in his Mustadrak, Abu Yala in his Musnad, and Muttaqi in his Kanz al Ummal.

It is a warning about Ali's might, as explained by himself on the day of the battle of Jamal. Tha-labi has mentioned it in his Tafsir and the compiler of Majma al Bayan has reproduced it as related by Ammar, Hudhayfah and Ibn Abbas. This becomes clearer when we notice the fact that verse 55 (*innama waliyukum*) follows this verse, wherein Allah has suggested His superior authority and hinted at the necessity of Ali's leadership (*imamat*). Verse 55 explains and clarifies the reference in verse 54.

"In the battle of Khaybar the second caliph (like other companions) tried to conquer the fort, but took to flight when the Jew soldiers overpowered his contingent. Before the Holy Prophet they blamed each other for showing cowardice in the battlefield."

(Tarikh Tabari Vol. 2; page 300)

The Holy Prophet said:

"Certainly (the next morning) I will send the man whom Allah will never put to shame, who loves Allah and His messenger and is equally loved by Allah and His messenger."

Utter disappointment was the lot of many a companion who yearned for this distinction - "Allah shall bring a people whom He shall love and who shall love Him", as has been clearly pointed out in this verse. Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his Musnad, vol. 1, p. 330; Nisa-i in Khasa-is al Alawiyyah, p. 6; Hakim in his Mustadrak, Vol. 3, p. 123; and Dhahabi in his Talkhis have recorded this tradition in the "ten excellent merits" of Ali, not possessed by anybody else.

"Striving hard in the way of Allah", refers to no one but Ali, who, in all the battles fought by the Holy Prophet (Badr, Uhad, Khandaq, Khaybar and others-refer to authentic books of history written by well-known Muslim scholars), not only defeated and destroyed the enemies of Allah but demolished their power base beyond recovery.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The qualities, mentioned in this verse and verse 29 of al Fat-h (according to well-known traditions written in Sahihs, Musnads and Tafsirs), were owned by no one but Ali. In all the battles fought by the Holy Prophet against the enemies of Allah, the Shaykhayn (the first caliph and the second caliph) never played a decisive role in any battle, nor won victory in single combats or general confrontations; on the contrary they were always either overpowered or ran away from the scene of action. More often they did not carry out the orders given to them by the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet knew that Dhith-Thadiyyah was an apostate, so he asked the Shaykhayn to kill him, but they disobeyed and spared his life; and it was this renegade who, according to Sahih Bukhari and others, became the leader of the Khawarij, and was finally killed by Ali in the battle of Nahrawan.

No doubt the Shaykhan and their adherents were severe and hard against the Ahl ul Bayt and their followers .

"Allah shall bring a people", refers to those who, later on, gathered under the banner of Ali (whose qualities have been clearly described in this verse and verse 29 of al Fat-h), in the battles of Jamal, Siffin and Nahrawan. When Ammar ibn Yasir was asked as to how could he fight against the people who professed Islam, he replied: "We fight under the banner of Ali against those who are under the banner of Mu-awiyah, in keeping with the Quran. They professed Islam but concealed infidelity in their hearts, and have now come out

in their true colour of apostasy." The followers of Ali strive hard in the way of Allah, not fearing the criticism of the apostates. The devotees of the other Imams of Ahl ul Bayt also come in this category, and according to many commentators of all schools of thought in Islam (Majma ul Bayan) at the time of the reappearance of Imam al Mahdi the world will witness the true interpretation of these phrases of the Quran.

The Muslims did not oppose the actions taken against the apostates in the times of the Shaykhayn, but they criticised Ali ibn abi Talib for fighting against A-isha and Mu-awiyah; therefore, this verse refers only to Ali and his devotees.

There is no historical evidence to prove that the Holy Prophet ever referred to any fight by Abu Bakr, Umar or Uthman against the apostates, but he had predicted Ali's fight against three types of apostates-*nakithin* (oath-breakers), *qasitin* (wrong-doers), *maraqin* (strayed ones). It was also foretold by him that Ammar Yasir would be killed by a group of insurgents.

{إِنَّمَا وَلِيُّكُمُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ يُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ رَاكِعُونَ} 55

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:55]

All the commentators unanimously hold, as Qushaji admits in the Sharh al Tajrid on the subject of imamat, that this verse refers to Ali when he gave his ring to a beggar while bowing down in the course of his prayers. Nasa-i has also recorded this tradition in his Sahihah al Nasa-i, and so has the author of Al Jama Bayn al Sihah al Sittah (corroboration of the six authentic books) in discussion of

the commentary on al Ma-idah, and so does Tha-labi in his Tafsir Kabir, and al Balakhi in his Yanabi has copied it from Ahmad bin Hanbal's Musnad, vol. 5, margin of p. 38. Please refer to the commentary on this verse in Wahidi's book Asbab al Nuzul (the circumstances of descent) which contains the tradition related by Ibn Abbas. Al Khatib has recorded the tradition in Al Muttafiq, and Ibn Marduwayh and Abu Shaykh in their Musnads. It is mentioned in Kanz al Ummal, vol. 6, p. 391, tradition no. 5991. In Ghayah al Maram, chapter 18, there are twenty four traditions from sources other than the Ahl ul Bayt, all supporting the above statement about the descent of this verse.

When Abi Ishaq Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Naysaburi al Tha-labi reached this verse he recorded the following in his Tafsir al Kabir on the authority of Abu Dharr al Ghifari, who said "Both of my ears may turn deaf and both my eyes may become blind if I speak a lie. I heard the Holy Prophet saying, 'Ali is the guide of the righteous and the slayer of the infidels. He who has helped him is victorious and he who has abandoned him is forsaken'. One day I said my prayers in the company of the Holy Prophet; a beggar came to the *masjid* and begged for alms, but nobody gave him anything. Ali was in a state of *ruku* in the prayer. He pointed out his ring to the beggar, who approached him and removed the ring from his finger. Thereupon the Holy Prophet implored Allah, saying: 'O Allah! My brother Musa begged You saying: My Lord, delight my heart and make my task easy and undo the knot in my tongue so that they may understand me, and appoint from among my kinsmen, Harun, my brother, as my vizier, and strengthen my back with him and make him participate in my mission so that we may glorify You and remember You more frequently. Certainly You see us-and You inspired him: O Musa! All your requests have been granted. (The Holy Prophet continued) Delight my heart and make my task easy and appoint from among my kinsmen Ali as my vizier and strengthen my back with him'. (Abu Dhar proceeds) By Allah, the Holy Prophet had not yet finished his supplication when the trustworthy Jibril descended to him with this verse". (Ibn Khallikan says that Al Tha-labi was unique as a commentator of the Quran and his Tafsir al Kabir is superior to all other Tafsirs).

In this verse the word *wali* has been used in the meaning of guardian or master or who holds authority superior to others. Please refer to the origin of the word *wali* in Sihah or Mukhtar al Sihah or any other good dictionary. The lexicographers have explained that he who manages the affairs of and exercises authority for another person is the *wali* of that person. This verse, therefore, means that those who manage the affairs of the people (mankind) are superior to all men, and certainly they are Allah, His messenger, the Holy Prophet, and Ali, who possesses all the qualifications enumerated in this verse. Allah has simultaneously confirmed His *wilayah* (superior authority), that of His prophet and his *wali* (Ali) in unbroken succession. Allah's *wilayah* is universal, so likewise, the *wilayah* of the Holy Prophet and his *wali* (Ali) must be so. It is not possible to assign to the word *wali* in this verse the meaning of a helper or a friend, etcetera, for help and friendship are not confined to these three only. All the faithful men and women, according to the holy book, are friends and helpers of one another. It is as obvious as can be that the word *wali* in this verse means, guardian, ruler, possessor of superior authority. It is in this sense that the word *wali* has been used by the Holy Prophet in the abovenoted tradition related by Al Tha-labi in his Tafsir al Kabir on the authority of Abu Dharr al Ghifari whom the Holy Prophet had given the title of *siddiq* (the truthful). There are other authentic traditions, given below, in which the word *wali* indicates its true meaning:

(i) Abu Dawud al Tayalisi has recorded in Isti-ab on the authority of Ibn Abbas, who said: "The Holy Prophet said to Ali, 'You are the master (*wali*) of the faithful after me'."

(ii) After an expedition, under the command of Ali, some of the men, who went with him, complained to the Holy Prophet about Ali's refusal to oblige them favourably. The Holy Prophet turned to them with signs of displeasure on his face and said: "What do you want to do to Ali? Surely Ali is from me and I am from him, and after me he is the master (*wali*) of all the faithful."

Nasa-i has recorded it in his *Khasa-is al Alawiyyah*, p. 17, Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his *Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 438; Hakim in *Mustadrak*, vol. 11, p. 11; Al Dhahabi in his *Talkhis al Mustadrak*; Ibn Shaybah and Jarir both have recorded it from whom Muttaqi of India has copied it in his *Kanz al Ummal*, vol. 6, p. 400; Tirmidhi has recorded it from Asqalani, mentioned in his account of Ali in his *Isabah*; Ibn Hadid has copied it from Tirmidhi in his *Sharh al Nahj al Balagha*, vol. 2, p. 450.

(iii) The Holy Prophet said to Buraydah:

"Am I not a more privileged master (*mawla* or *wali*) of the lives of the faithful than the faithful themselves? Ali is the master (*wali* or *mawla*) of those who believe me to be their master."

Ahmad ibn Hanbal has recorded it in his *Musnad*, vol. 5, p. 356, Hakim has recorded it in his *Mustadrak*, vol. 3, p. 110, besides many other traditionists.

(iv) The Holy Prophet said:

"O Ali! After me you are the master of all the faithful."

Hakim has recorded this tradition as reported by Ibn Abbas in his *Mustadrak*, vol. 3, p. 134; and Dhahabi in his *Talkhis*; Nasa-i in *Khasa-is al Alawiyyah* p. 6; Ahmad ibn Hanbal in *Musnad* vol. 1, p. 331.

"Ali is your *wali* after me", means that Ali and none else will be the master of the faithful after the Holy Prophet. It confines in Ali the authority to manage the affairs of the *ummah* after him. It is, therefore, necessary to attach the same meaning to the word *wali* and to understand it in the same sense as has been pointed out above. Help, affection, love, friendship are not confined to any one person. All faithful men and women love and are friends of one another. If the meaning of *wali* is taken as helper or friend, then why the Holy Prophet took so much interest in, and attached so much importance to, clarifying emphatically what was obvious and evident, so as to repeat the declaration off and on? His perfect wisdom, his thorough impeccability and termination with him of the prophethood make him far above the indulgence of explaining the self-evident, emphasising the obvious and making unnecessary repetitions. Besides, the traditions lay down clearly that Ali is or will be master of the nation after the Holy Prophet, and this makes it all the more necessary to understand the word *wali* in the same sense and fix for it the same meaning as has been stated above. The abovenoted traditionists, commentators and historians also deal with the word *wali* or *mawla* as the "more privileged master of the lives of the faithful than the faithful themselves."

"Those who believe" is in the plural form. How can it be applicable to an individual?

All the annotators, traditionists and historians agree that it was Na-im ibn Mas-ud al Ashja-i, whom Abu Sufyan gave ten camels for discouraging the Muslim, said to them: "Fear your enemies who have united against you and gathered in large numbers to attack you" (Ali Imran: 173), but in this verse "people said to them" (a plural form) has been used.

It was Ghawrath from the tribe of Banu Maharib, some scholars say, while others say that it was Umar ibn Jahash of the tribe of Banu Nadir, (a single man) single man) who drew out his sword to strike the Holy Prophet, but verse 11 of al Ma-idah describes it as "when a group of persons became so bold as to stretch their hands to you"-in plural form. Verse 120 of al Nahl says: "Ibrahim was certainly a people obedient to Allah".

There are plenty of other examples of using the plural form for an individual.

Tabrasi, while commenting on this verse in his Majma al Bayan, says: "The plural form has been used for Ali in order to express his glory and eminence ."

Zamakhshari, in his Tafsir al Kashshaf, says:

"If you inquire how this plural word is applicable to Ali, who is an individual, I shall say that though this verse is about Ali, an individual, the plural form is used in order to persuade others to act similarly and give alms as readily as Ali did."

The Imams among the Ahl ul Bayt have frequently referred to this verse as a proof of their rightful *imamat* and have assigned the same meaning to the word *wali* as we have stated.

The word *innama* makes the decision of Allah (that He, the Holy Prophet and Ali alone are the masters of the believers) final and decisive. The construction of the sentence and the word *wali*, used in singular for all the three, means that *wilayah* of all the three is essentially one in nature as well as in effect. Therefore, obedience to the Holy Prophet must be as it should be to Allah, and obedience to Ali and his successors (the Imams among the Ahl ul Bayt) must be as it should be to the Holy Prophet.

Wa hum raki-un is an adverbial clause qualifying the manner in which the alms were given. If it is taken as a conjunctive clause, then *yuqimunas salat* or this clause becomes an unnecessary repetition.

In fact this verse points out the highest state of spiritual attainment-fully absorbed in witnessing the glory of the absolute Lord and at the same time alive to the needs of His servants so as to solve them at once to their full satisfaction- which alone entitles a man to be a master like the eternal master, the almighty Allah. The Quran asserts this possibility for such a man, not for all the followers because they have been addressed in

second person (*kum*). The plural term "those who believe" is used to include the Imams among the Ahl ul Bayt in the same way as has been done in verse 61 of Ali Imran (*Mubahilah*).

Please also refer to verse 67 of this surah for the event of Ghadir Khum where the Holy Prophet openly declared Ali as the *wali* or *mawla* of the faithfuls just as the Holy Prophet himself is. The entire Muslim nation is unanimous that when the verses of the Quran were collected they were not

arranged in the same order in which they descended. There is many a verse occurring in an irrelevant context, for instance, the verse of purification, which occurs in the account of the wives of the Holy Prophet, but actually is in praise of the five persons of *al kisa*, as has been universally admitted. All Muslims are agreed that arguments are to be preferred to the context, and whenever the implication of the context was opposed to the implication of arguments they ignored the context and yielded to the arguments, because they were doubtful about the context in which a certain verse occurs.

{وَمَنْ يَتَوَلَّ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَإِنَّ حِزْبَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الْغَالِبُونَ} 56

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:56]

Whoever takes Allah, His messenger and "those who believe" (particularised in the preceding verse) as his master, joins Allah's party-only Allah's party will be successful in the end. This verse is in continuation of the preceding verse.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا دِينَكُمْ هُزُؤًا وَلَعِبًا مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ وَالْكَفَّارَ أَوْلِيَاءَ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُفْرَكُمْ} 57

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:57]

See commentary of verse 51 of this surah.

{وَإِذَا نَادَيْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ اتَّخَذُوهَا هُزُؤًا وَلَعِبًا ۚ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَوْمٌ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ} 58

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:58]

The ignorant and stupid people of the book and the infidels, mentioned in the preceding verse, make fun of the *azan* (call to prayers), therefore, they must not be befriended.

{قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ هَلْ تَنْقُمُونَ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِن قَبْلُ وَأَنَّ أَكْثَرَكُمْ فَاسِقُونَ} 59

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:59]

The Muslims believed in Allah and the book sent down to the Holy Prophet and also in the books sent down to earlier prophets, but the Jews and the Christians, rejecting all the books, always found fault with that which the Muslims believed.

Dhalika in verse 60 refers to the statement made in verse 59, comparing those mentioned in verse 59 with those mentioned in verse 60, who are worse than them. Verse 61, wherein the hypocrites have been referred to, should be read alongwith these verses. The words apes and swines may refer to their character which will make them appear as such in the life of the hereafter.

See commentary of al Baqarah: 65 and 256 for apes (*qiradata*) and false gods (*taghut*). Please note that cursing the wicked is a godly act.

law, Allah would surely have forgiven their past sins.

Islam invites people to the right path, walking on which earns pardon for all the past sins.

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ أَقَامُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَأَكَلُوا مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ وَمِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِهِمْ مِّنْهُمْ أُمَّةٌ مُّقْتَصِدَةٌ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ سَاءٌ
{مَا يَعْمَلُونَ} 66

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:66]

If the people of the book had followed the teachings of the Tawrat and the Injil and the Quran they would have enjoyed blessings in both the worlds; but only very few of them become Muslims, and most of them are vile.

يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَّغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
{الْكَافِرِينَ} 67

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:67]

The followers of "Muhammad and *ali* Muhammad" are quite certain that this verse descended about the *wilayah* (regency) of Ali on the day of Ghadir Khum, and the traditions in our records on the subject are numerous and consecutively transmitted through the Imams of the holy posterity of the Holy Prophet, whose reporting is enough for us, and should also be so for the Muslims, because they alone are the truthful (*sadiqin*) as per verse 119 of al Tawbah (refer to Hafiz Abu Nu-aym; Muwaffaq ibn Ahmad; and Ibn Hajar in his Sawa-iq al Muhriqah, chap. 11, p. 90).

Ibn abi Hatim quotes Abu Sa-id Khudri and Antara; Ibn Marduwayh quotes Abdullah bin Masud and Abu Sa-id Khudri; Ibn Asakir quotes Abu Said Khudri; Abu Bakr Shirazi, Muhammad bin Talha Qarshi and Sayyid Ali al Hamdani quote Abdullah bin Abbas; Nizamuddin Nayshapuri quotes Abdullah bin Abbas, Abu Sa-id Khudri and Bara bin Azib, to say that this verse was revealed about the *wilayah* of Ali ibn abi Talib; and Sabbagh Maliki in Fusul al Muhimma; Badruddin Ayni in Umdatul Qari, Muhaddith Shirazi in Kitab al Arba-in; Shahabuddin Ahmad in Tawdih al Dala-il; and Mu-tamad Khan Badakhshani in Miftah al Nijat also confirm it.

Hafiz Abu Bakr bin Marduwayh in Manaqib quotes Abdullah bin Masud that during the life time of the Holy Prophet they used to recite this verse with *Inna Aliyyan Mawla al mu-minin*(Ali is the master of the faithful).

The shortest narration of the event of Ghadir is given below:

While returning from his last *hajj*, in 10 Hijra, the Holy Prophet, alongwith the huge caravan of nearly one hundred thousand Muslims, made a halt at Ghadir Khum, a midway stop between Makka and Madina.

He had received the following verse from Allah:

O Our Messenger! Deliver what has been sent down unto you from your Lord; and if you do not, then you have not delivered His Message; and surely Allah will protect you from men."

(MA-IDA: 67)

The Holy Prophet mounted a tall pulpit and delivered a long sermon, recounting his services towards the fulfilment of his mission as the messenger of Allah. He asked the audience whether he had conveyed to them the commands of Allah, enumerating them one after another.

The huge gathering, in one voice, said "yes". "Do I wield authority over your souls more than you do?" He asked.

"Certainly it is so, O Messenger of Allah" . They replied.

Then he asked Ali to come up. He held him in both his hands, raised him high, so much that the whole assembly of men and women saw him clearly.

He again addressed them:

"O men and women! Allah is my *Mawla* (Lord-Master). I am the *mawla* of the faithfuls. I have a clear authority over their souls, And of whomsoever I am the *mawla* (this) Ali is his *mawla*. O Allah! Love him who loves Ali, hate him who hates Ali."

At the end of this declaration the following verse was revealed:

"This day I have perfected for you, your religion, and have completed my favour on you, and have chosen for you Islam, as religion."

(MA-IDA: 3)

For those whose minds are clouded with the doubts created over the years by the enemies of the Holy Prophet and his holy Ahl ul Bayt, there are sufficient references in the books written by their own scholars whom they acclaim with one voice.

Several eminent traditionists have clearly stated it to be genuine. Even Ibn Hajar has admitted it to be genuine where he has copied the tradition from Tabarani and others; in Sawa-iq, sec. 5, chap. 1. p. 25.

Tabarani and others have recorded the following tradition as related by Zayd ibn Arqam and transmitted through sources unanimously acknowledged to be reliable. Zayd says that the Holy Prophet delivered a sermon at Ghadir Khum under a cloth spread as a canopy on two large trees. The Holy Prophet said:

"O my people! I am going to be recalled shortly and I must comply. I shall be interrogated and you also shall be interrogated. What will you say then?" The entire audience answered: "We shall bear witness that you did convey to us the message of Allah, and tried your best to guide us on the right path and always gave us good counsel. May Allah bless you with a good reward." The Holy Prophet

proceeded: "Why do you not bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, and that paradise is true, hell is true, death is true, resurrection after death is true, that the day of judgement will doubtlessly come and that Allah will raise to life the dead from their graves?" They said: "O Yes! We bear witness to all this." Then he said: "O Allah! You also may witness." Then he said: "O my people! Allah is my *Mawla* and I am *mawla* of the faithful and I have superior right on and control over their lives. And this Ali is the *mawla* of all those of whom I am *mawla*. O Allah! Love him who loves him and hate him who hates him." He further said: "O my people! I will precede you, you also shall arrive at the pool of Kawthar, the pool wider than the distance between Basrah and Sana, and there are on the pool as many goblets of silver as stars. When you shall reach me I shall interrogate you about your behaviour towards the two invaluable assets after my death. The major asset is the book of Allah, one end of which is in the hand of Allah, and the other end in your hands. Grasp it tightly and do not go astray and do not change or amend it. The other asset is my progeny, who are my Ahl al Bayt. Allah has informed me that the two will not part from each other before they reach me at the pool."

First of all he announced that the time of his death was fast approaching. This was a warning to the people that the time had come for the completion of his divine message and ensuring the future spiritual welfare of his followers by appointing his successor. This important matter brooked no delay, lest his death might arrive before properly establishing his successor in office.

As the appointment of his own brother (cousin) was very unpalatable for self-seekers, jealous and malicious persons, and the hypocrites, he thought it fit to appease their feelings and to calm their hearts by prefacing the declaration of appointment with "I shall be interrogated," so that they might know that the Holy Prophet was in command from Allah to make this declaration and would be interrogated about discharging this important duty and, that there was no alternative.

Wahidi has stated in his book *Asbab al Nuzul* through reliable sources culminating with Abu Said al-Khudri that Chap. 5, Verse 67" O Messenger; do proclaim what has descended upon you from your Lord" descended at Ghadir Khum about Ali ibn Abu Talib.

Daylami and others have recorded as related by Abu Said and as stated in *Sawa-iq* that the Holy Prophet said: "Call them to a halt. They will be interrogated about the superior authority and guardianship of Ali." And Wahidi says: "They will be interrogated about the superior authority and guardianship of Ali and the Ahl al Bayt."

This sermon calls for special attention. A careful perusal of it will reveal the truth that belief in the superior authority and guardianship of Ali is one of the fundamental principles of faith and this is what the Shi-as believe. The Holy Prophet first asked the audience to bear witness that Allah is the only God, that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, that the day of judgement is bound to come and that Allah will raise to life the dead from their graves. And when they had promised to bear witness to all these things and expressed their belief therein, he asked them to believe "Ali to be *wali*, i.e. defender of the faith, supreme commander of the faithful and favourite of Allah," so that everybody might know that witnessing of belief in the *wilayah* of Ali was as important an article of faith as belief in the unity of Allah, the prophethood of Muhammad, the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgement, and that he will be interrogated about it too. Anyone who follows the style of the sermon,

the juxtaposition of sentences therein and the import of the words will reach the same unavoidable conclusion.

Mawla means master; lord; guardian; one more deserving of superior authority.

The words *ana awla* (I am superior) indicate that the word *mawla* means *awla*, i.e., superior. What the Holy Prophet meant by this sentence was, "Allah is superior in right and might to him and he is superior in right and might to the faithful and Ali is superior in right and might to all those to whom the Holy Prophet is superior."

These are the words of Zayd ibn Arqam, who related the tradition. Tabarani, Ibn Jarir, Hakim and Tirmidhi all have recorded the tradition in identical words. Ibn Hajar has copied the tradition from Tabarani in his *Sawa-iq*, p. 25, and has stated that the tradition is accepted as genuine by all Muslims. Hakim has recorded in the chapter on the "Virtues of Ali" in *Mustadrak* (vol. 3, p. 109) this tradition as related by Zayd bin Arqam and transmitted through two different sources, and has stated that both the sources are reliable according to the standard set by Bukhari and Muslim. Hakim has recorded it also in the account of Zayd ibn Arqam in *Mustadrak*, vol. 3, p. 533, and held it to be genuine. In spite of his orthodoxy, Dhahabi has copied it from this chapter in his *Talkhis* from the account of Zayd.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal has recorded the tradition related by Zayd ibn Arqam (in his *Musnad*, vol. 4, p. 372). In *Khasa-is al Alawiyyah*, p. 21, Nasa-i has recorded this tradition as related by Zayd ibn Arqam.

Abu Tufayl says: "I asked Zayd if he had personally heard the Holy Prophet uttering the tradition related by him." Zayd replied: "Everyone in the huge crowd saw the Holy Prophet with his own eyes and heard him (making the declaration) with his own ears."

Abu Tufayl's question to Zayd indicates his surprise at the action of the Muslim nation in disregarding the imperative instructions of the Holy Prophet in respect to Ali, in spite of the reports concerning the declaration the Holy Prophet made on the day of Ghadir about the prior right of Ali and his superior authority over the lives of the faithful, similar to the prior right and superior authority over the lives of the faithful held by the Holy Prophet himself. He was either extremely doubtful about the genuineness of the tradition of Ghadir, because the nation had settled the question of succession of the Holy Prophet by vote of allegiance in glaring contradiction of the Holy Prophet's declaration, or astonished at the utter disregard by the followers of the Holy Prophet's important declaration. He therefore inquired if Zayd had himself heard the Holy Prophet making the declaration. Zayd ibn Arqam replied that in spite of there being a huge crowd of men on the occasion there was not a single person who could not see the Holy Prophet with his own eyes and hear his words with his own ears. Zayd's reply convinced him of the truth of what has been expressed by Kumayl, a prominent poet who composed poems in praise of Ali in the following lines:

"In the valley of Ghadir Khum the Holy Prophet had declared Ali to be his successor. Would that the nation had complied with the declaration.

But they decided the matter of succession by vote of allegiance; I have never witnessed casting a vote of allegiance about such an important matter.

I have neither witnessed another day so important as the day of Ghadir;
Nor have I ever seen so serious a destruction of right."

Muslim has also recorded this tradition in the chapter on the 'Virtues of Ali' in his Sahih (vol. 2 p. 325) as related by Zayd ibn Arqam and transmitted through several sources. But he has recorded it briefly in a curtailed form as men of his class are apt to do about such matters.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal has recorded the tradition related by Bara ibn Azib in his Musnad, vol. 4, p. 281, transmitted through two different sources.

Bara says: "We were with the Messenger of Allah. "We alighted at Ghadir Khum. Congregational prayer was in order. An area under two trees was swept and cleaned for the Holy Prophet. He offered midday prayers and he grasped the hand of Ali and said: 'Do you not know that I have greater authority over the lives of the faithful than the faithful themselves?' "Yes you have," they replied. He again inquired: "'Do you not know that I have greater right to the life of every believer than the believer himself?" "Surely, you have," they answered. Then he grasped the hand of Ali and said: "Ali is the *mawla* of all those of whom I am *mawla*. O Allah! Love him who loves him and hate him who hates him." Bara ibn Azib says: "Then Umar came to Ali and said: 'Congratulations to you O the son of Abu Talib. You have become the *mawla* (master) of all the faithful men and women." Nasa-i has recorded a tradition related by A-ishah bint Sad, who says that she heard her father saying that on the day of Ghadir he heard the Holy Prophet delivering a sermon while holding the hand of Ali. He praised and eulogised Allah and then he said: "O my people! I am your master." "True it is, O messenger of Allah," they responded. Then he raised the hand of Ali and said: "He is my *wali*, and he will repay my debts. I am a friend of him who loves him and an enemy of him who hates him."

Sad also relates that he was among the people accompanying the Holy Prophet. When he reached Ghadir Khum he ordered a halt and called back those who had preceded him and waited for those who were lagging behind. When all the people gathered there he said: "O my people! Who is your *wali* (master)?" "Allah and His messenger," they said. Then he grasped the hand of Ali and caused him to stand and said: "He is *wali* of whom Allah and His messenger are *wali*. O Allah! Love him who loves him and hate him who hates him."

Shibli Nu-mani in Siratun Nabi (completed by Sayyid Sulayman Nadvi) writes:

While returning from Makka to Madina, after the last hajj, alongwith his companions, the Holy Prophet broke the journey at a lake, 3 miles away from Juhfa. A small lake is called ghadir in Arabic, so this place is known as Ghadir Khum. There, the Holy Pr

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَسْتُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ حَتَّىٰ تُقِيمُوا التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ۖ أَفَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿68﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:68]

Unless the Jews and the Christians sincerely follow the Tawrat and the Injil and the Quran, their faith is of no use. If they honestly refer to their scriptures they have to accept the Holy Prophet as the promised prophet mentioned in their books (see commentary of al Baqarah: 40), even after the

omissions and additions they have made in the original revealed books of Allah.

The Christians of the first three centuries were Unitarians, but as explained in the commentary of Ali Imran: 2 and 3, the Christian church imposed upon them the idea of trinity.

Ma unzila ilaykum refers to the Quran, and *ma unzila ilayka* refers to that which was revealed to the Holy Prophet in the preceding verse regarding the *wilayah* of Ali ibn abu Talib.

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 62.

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالصَّابِقُونَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ {69}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:69]

لَقَدْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ وَارْسَلْنَا إِلَيْهِمْ رَسُولًا قُلْنَا جَاءَهُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَىٰ أَنفُسُهُمْ فَرِيقًا كَذَّبُوا وَفَرِيقًا يَقْتُلُونَ {70}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:70]

For a similar reference to the covenant taken from the Jews refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 83, and for their belying and slaying the prophets see commentary of al Baqarah: 61, Ali Imran: 21, 112.

وَحَسِبُوا أَلَّا تَكُونَ فِئْتَنَةٌ فَعَمُوا وَصَمُوا ثُمَّ تَابَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ ثُمَّ عَمُوا وَصَمُوا كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرٍ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ {71}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:71]

The Jews wrongly supposed that, as they were once the favourites of Allah, they would never be punished for their evil deeds, so they turned deaf and blind to the truth. Out of His mercy Allah sent many prophets to them but belying the prophets of Allah and slaying them had become their second nature.

Here *fitna* means affliction.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

This verse also refers to the usurpers, tyrants and despots who deviate from the prescribed path of Allah inspite of the warnings they receive from the pious and godly men. Instead of paying attention to the admonition, they persecute and kill the holy devotees of Allah, make some minor adjustments to deceive the people and continue to walk on the path of Shaytan. The so-called Muslim rulers, after breaking the covenant made at Ghadir Khum, followed this line of action, under the disguise of avoiding discord and trouble as if they knew more than Allah and the Holy Prophet.

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ وَقَالَ الْمَسِيحُ يَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ مَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ وَمَأْوَاهُ النَّارُ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ {72}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:72]

The followers of the Christian Church say "Jesus is without qualification God, and the greater the contradiction to the mind, the more the heart responds to the wonder of the mystery". The idea of trinity has been dealt with in the commentary of Ali-Imran: 2 and 3; also refer to al Baqarah: 255 for knowing the true faith of Isa.

"Jesus said: Be gone, Satan! Scripture says, "you shall worship the Lord God and worship him alone'."

(Matthew 4: 10; Luke 4: 8)

"Jesus said to him: Why do you call me good? No one is good save one, that is, God."

(Luke 18: 19)

Cheyne and Black's Encyclopaedia Biblica says:

Jesus never refers to himself as the son of God, and the title upon him by others probably involves no more than the acknowledgement that he was the messiah. A critical study of the synoptical material leads invariably to the conclusion that Jesus never was addressed by that title.

Encyclopaedia Britannica says:

The Trinitarian baptismal formula does not go back to Jesus himself is evident and recognised by all independent critics.

"And for the unjust there shall be no helpers" implies that for those who are not unjust there will be helpers (intercessors).

لَقَدْ كَفَرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ ثَلَاثَةٌ ثَلَاثَةٌ وَمَا مِنْ إِلَهٍ إِلَّا إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْتَهُوا عَمَّا يَقُولُونَ لَيَمَسَّنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ عَذَابٌ
73} {الَيْمِ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:73] (see commentary for verse 72)

74} {أَفَلَا يَتُوبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونََهُ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:74] (see commentary for verse 72)

مَا الْمَسِيحُ ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ وَأُمُّهُ صِدِّيقَةٌ كَانَا يَأْكُلَانِ الطَّعَامَ ۗ أَنْظِرْ كَيْفَ نُبَيِّنُ لَهُمُ الْآيَاتِ ثُمَّ أَنْظِرْ أَنَّى
75} {يُؤْفَكُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:75]

Isa was a mortal born of a mortal woman. Mere mortals and human beings as they were they needed food. Those who are required to support their lives by the same means, and are subject to the same necessities and infirmities as the rest of mankind, cannot be gods. Please refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 35, 42 to 67 and al Ma-idah: 17.

If Isa did really possess the attributes or the nature of a god, he would have been above the common nature of a mortal. In fact he was, like Adam, Nuh, and Ibrahim, a prophet. No prophet however great and eminent and however superior to his fellow beings can, in any case, be God or part of God.

{قُلْ أَتَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَمْلِكُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا ۗ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ } 76

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:76]

The argument of the preceding verse continues that a created being who has no power over loss or gain cannot be worshipped as God. Subject to the laws of nature, as a mortal, Isa did not have any say in the circumstances of his life and death.

"And He (Isa) went on a little, fell on his face in prayer, and said: 'My father, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by; yet not as I will, but as Thou wills.'"

(Matthew 26: 39) It means he himself could not avoid death and prayed to Allah to let the cup pass him by if He willed.

"Eli, Eli, Sabachthani? (My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?)"

(Matthew 27: 46).

Isa wanted to know as to why his God (Allah) had forsaken him.

{قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَنْ سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ } 77

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:77]

The Christians should be loyal to their own faith as preached by Isa, and let not the paganish theories and practices corrupt the true message of Isa. St. Paul, the founder of latter-day Christianity owed much to the Greek philosophy. The contact of the Church with the Hellenic world led very early to the attempt to interpret the mysteries of the Christian faith in the terms of Greek philosophy . The process, however, so far as the books of the New Testament are concerned, is most conspicuous in the fourth gospel. The writer of this life of Isa was clearly influenced by platonism. This verse rightly points out that "they had erred and led many others astray, and wandered away from the right path."

{لَعْنَةُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى لِسَانِ دَاوُودَ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۗ ذَلِكَ بِمَا عَصَوْا وَكَانُوا يَعْتَدُونَ } 78

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:78]

Those who rejected the faith propounded by the prophets of Allah, (such as those) who violated the Sabbath in the days of Dawud, (or those) who rejected the ministry of Isa, have been cursed in this verse. Cursing the disbelievers has been commanded by Allah-tabarra.

Refer to Matthew 21: 41 to 45 and 23: 33 to 35.

{كَانُوا لَا يَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَن مُنْكَرٍ فَعَلُوهُ لَبِئْسَ مَا كَانُوا يَفْعَلُونَ} 79

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:79]

The Jews did not restrain one another from evil (*nahya anil munkar*), therefore, they were so easily led astray. *Nahya anil munkar* has been prescribed by Islam. See commentary of Ali Imran : 101 to 115 (Aqa Puya's note on *amr bil ma-ruf* and *nahya anil munkar*).

{تَرَى كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ يَتَوَلَّوْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَبِئْسَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ لَهُمْ أَنفُسُهُمْ أَن سَخِطَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَفِي الْعَذَابِ هُمْ خَالِدُونَ} 80

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:80]

This verse also commands the faithful to avoid the disbelievers-tabarra.

{وَلَوْ كَانُوا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَالنَّبِيِّ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مَا اتَّخَذُوا لَهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ وَلَكِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ} 81

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:81]

According to Minhaj al Sadiqin *an-nabiyy* refers to the Holy Prophet and *ma unzila ilayhi* refers to the Quran, but some commentators say that the reference is to Musa and the Tawrat; and had the Jews believed in Allah, Musa and the Tawrat they would not have taken the pagans for friends, because there are clear prophecies in the Tawrat about the advent of the Holy Prophet (see commentary of al Baqarah: 40).

{لَتَجِدَنَّ أَشَدَّ النَّاسِ عَدَاوَةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالَّذِينَ أَشْرَكُوا وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَّوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا الَّذِينَ قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصَارَىٰ ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ مِنْهُمْ قِسِيَّيْنَ وَرُهْبَانًا وَأَنَّهُمْ لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ} 82

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:82]

It is impossible to exaggerate the formidable quality of the Jew as an enemy. The Jews and idolaters were most excessive in hatred of the believers, but those who said: "We are the followers of Isa", were closer to the Muslims because the priests and monks among the early Christians were not Trinitarians.

{وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ تَرَىٰ أَعْيُنُهُمْ تَفِيضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا آمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشَّاهِدِينَ} 83

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:83]

When the Holy Prophet began to preach in public at Makka, the Quraysh violently reacted against him. They insulted him in public, threw dust and dirt at him and over him while in prayers, made loud cries, hooted or sang wild songs to drown his voice while he was preaching; but to their discomfiture they could not prevent him. Finding all their efforts of no avail, they began to use violence against his followers. The Holy Prophet, therefore, advised his followers, who had no protection in Makka, to seek refuge elsewhere. Abyssinia was the place proposed for this purpose, and unanimously agreed upon. Accordingly, in the fifth year of bi-that (about 615 A.D.) one hundred and sixteen refugees, headed by Jafar bin Abu Talib, reached Abyssinia in safety, while the Holy Prophet and his family remained in Makka. Baffled by the Muslim converts escaping to Abyssinia, the Quraysh sent an

embassy headed by Amru bin As and Abdullah bin abi Rabi-i with costly presents to the Christian King of Abyssinia, Najashi (Negus). Amru and Abdullah first prostrated themselves to pay Negus their respects, then explained that some of their tribes-men, having adopted a new faith which taught them to think lightly of Isa and Maryam, had forsaken their ancestral religion and escaped to his country. They requested the king, in the name of the Quraysh chiefs, that the fugitives might be delivered up to them. The king sent for the Muslims to hear from them the defence against the heresy of which they were accused. They came in a body headed by Jafar bin Abu Talib. None of the Muslims prostrated himself before the king; but saluted him in their usual manner, 'peace be on you'. The king was not offended, rather admiring their manners, repeated the charges brought against them by the embassy of Quraysh. Jafar, who was . a man of noble mien, pre-possessing countenance and persuasive eloquence, stood forth and expounded the doctrines of Islam with zeal and enthusiasm. The king who was a Nestorian Christian found the doctrines similar to those of his own religion, opposed to polytheism. He asked Jafar to recite some passages from the revelations to the Holy Prophet. Jafar recited the surah of Maryam, which- touched the heart of the king so much that he could not help shedding tears. (Tabari; Ibn Athir, Ibn Hisham). It is reported that on this occasion these verses (83 to 86) were revealed. Then Negus, pleased to hear Jafar explaining the religion of Allah, dismissed the embassy of Quraysh from his court returning their gifts, and received the Muslims into his favour over and above the protection they already enjoyed. The Muslims lived in Abyssinia till the Holy Prophet established the community of his followers in Madina. In the meantime Negus and his courtiers had embraced Islam. The Holy Prophet wrote him to send back the party of Muslims to Madina. While the Holy Prophet was at Khaybar, Jafar reached Khaybar on the day of its conquest by his brother, Ali ibn abu Talib. The Holy Prophet was much pleased to welcome back his cousin after so long a separation, and joyfully explained that he did not know which of the two incidents Jafar's arrival or the conquest of Khaybar by Ali-delighted him most.

Alongwith Jafar came some selected scholars from Abyssinia to learn more about Islam. A group of Christians from Syria headed by the great Christian monk, Buhayra, also came to meet the Holy Prophet. When the Holy Prophet recited the surah Ya Sin before them, their eyes brimmed over with tears and all of them became Muslims.

{ وَمَا لَنَا لَا نُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا جَاءَنَا مِنَ الْحَقِّ وَنَطْمَعُ أَنْ يُدْخِلَنَا رَبُّنَا مَعَ الْقَوْمِ الصَّالِحِينَ } 84

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:84] (see commentary for verse 83)

{ فَأَتَابَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِمَا قَالُوا جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا ۚ وَذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ } 85

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:85] (see commentary for verse 83)

{ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ } 86

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:86] (see commentary for verse 83)

{ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَحْرِمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ } 87

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:87]

Islam does not allow to forbid the good things Allah has made lawful, as the self-denying Christians do.

Some well meaning Muslims, imitating certain self-denying Christians, had vowed not to partake of delicious foods and to abstain from going in to their wives. This the Holy Prophet strongly disapproved, declaring in the assembly of his companions that there is no place for monks and ascetics in Islam because due to asceticism and severity many nations had been destroyed. Verse 93 of this surah, verse 2 of Ta Ha and verse 1 of Tahrim also discourage asceticism. So forbidding anything allowed by Allah and His Prophet is transgression, because either forbidding the lawful or allowing the forbidden (as had been done by many Muslim rulers) amounts to breaking the bounds of the divine law.

{وَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا ۗ وَانْفُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بِهِ مُؤْمِنُونَ 88}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:88] (see commentary for verse 87)

لَا يُؤَاخِذُكُمُ اللَّهُ بِاللَّغْوِ فِي أَيْمَانِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَاخِذُكُمْ بِمَا عَقَّدْتُمُ الْأَيْمَانَ ۖ فَكَفَّارَتُهُ إِطْعَامُ عَشْرَةِ مَسَاكِينَ مِنْ أَوْسَطِ مَا تُطْعَمُونَ أَهْلِيكُمْ أَوْ كِسْوَتُهُمْ أَوْ تَحْرِيرُ رَقَبَةٍ ۖ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ ۚ ذَلِكَ كَفَّارَةُ أَيْمَانِكُمْ إِذَا حَلَفْتُمْ ۗ وَاحْفَظُوا أَيْمَانَكُمْ ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ 89}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:89]

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

To swear to do what is forbidden or not to do what is obligatory is condemnable. To swear to do or not to do that which is optional in *shari-ah* is a binding oath. Also to swear to do that which is commendable or not to do that which is not honourable is a binding oath. For rules of expiation in addition to this verse, please also refer to books of *fiqh*.

{يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ 90}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:90]

Intoxicating agents and gambling have been prohibited through al Baqarah : 219 (see commentary). Many scholars (Abu Hanifa, Hakim Ibn Sad, Suyuti, Shibli, Ibn Hajar) have mentioned in their books about the *nabidh* (barley malt) held lawful and taken by some of the Holy Prophet 's companions.

In Shi-a *fiqh* all intoxicating agents are held unlawful.

The Holy Prophet said: "Do not visit a sick person if he drinks wine (or any intoxicating drink), if he dies do not attend his funeral prayers, if he is in distress do not give him alms; and it is like throwing your daughter into hell if you marry her to a drunkard."

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

According to the Ahl ul Bayt all the prophets of Allah were strict abstainers from intoxicating drinks. Hashim, Abdul Muttalib, Abdullah, Abu Talib, Jafar, Ali and the Holy Prophet, followers of the creed of Ibrahim, never touched any intoxicating drink. Some new converts continued wine-drinking till verse 219 of al Baqarah was revealed. Yet, not satisfied with the manner of its

revelation, they did not altogether abandon their old habit. Then verse 43 of al Nisa was revealed. Still drinking parties were held in secret. Once, in such a gathering, where some of his prominent companions were enjoying wholeheartedly, the Holy Prophet came and recited these verses.

"We will keep away from it. We will keep away from it! O Messenger of Allah!" said the companions.

After that total prohibition prevailed. According to Iqdul Farid even after the total prohibition, a renowned companion of the Holy Prophet used to drink the *nabidh* on the plea that without it he could not digest camel's meat, because of which some Muslim jurists think that use of *nabidh* is permissible.

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ {91}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:91] (see commentary for verse 90)

وَأَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَاحْذَرُوا فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتُمْ فَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا عَلَى رَسُولِنَا الْبَلَاغُ الْمُبِينُ {92}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:92]

Refer to the commentary of Ali Imran: 31, 32 and Nisa: 59.

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ {93}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:93]

Refer to the commentary of verses 87 and 88 of this surah. This verse refers to the case of those Muslims who were dead before wine and gambling were forbidden, provided they safeguarded themselves from evil, did good and believed.

Believing in Allah, doing good and safeguarding oneself (against evil) with full awareness of Allah's laws. have been repeatedly stated to guide the believers that they must always strive to attain perfection in piety and should not be content at any stage, thinking that what they are doing is enough.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

The fear of the people about the fate of those who used to drink intoxicating drinks and gamble, and died before these evils were prohibited shows how decisive is the command of Allah regarding wine-drinking and gambling. It may also refer to verse 87 of this surah in which case it means lawful things.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِيُبَلِّغَنَّكُمْ اللَّهُ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الصَّيِّدِ تَنَالَهُ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَرِمَاحُكُمْ لِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَن يَخَافُهُ بِالْغَيْبِ فَمَن اعْتَدَىٰ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَعَلَهُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ {94}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:94]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 196 and 197. Killing of even the smallest living being has been prohibited while performing *hajj* in the sacred house of Allah, the holy Ka-bah (refer to the commentary of al Baqarah; 125).

"Allah shall surely try you" shows the utmost importance of the command, yet Yazid not only desecrated the holy Ka-bah but planned to kill Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Holy Prophet, in it. Having come to know his wicked scheme in advance Imam Husayn, in order to save the sanctity of the holy sanctuary, substituted *hajj* with *umrah* and left Makka.

Allah is very strict in enforcing His commands and in punishing those who violate what He has sanctified. So man must hasten to ask His forgiveness, turn to Him in repentance, and make amends by following His guidance.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيِّدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ هَدْيًا بَالِغَ الْكَعْبَةِ أَوْ كَفَّارَةٌ طَعَامُ مَسَاكِينَ أَوْ عَدْلٌ ذَلِكَ صِيَامًا لِيَذُوقَ وَبَالَ أَمْرِهُ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَيَنْتَقِمِ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ {95}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:95] (see commentary for verse 94)

{أَحَلَّ لَكُمْ صَيْدَ الْبَحْرِ وَطَعَامَهُ مَتَاعًا لَكُمْ وَلِلسَّيَّارَةِ وَحَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ صَيْدَ الْبَرِّ مَا دُمْتُمْ حُرْمًا وَانْفُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْسِرُونَ {96}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:96] (see commentary for verse 94)

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْبَيْتَ الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ وَالشَّهْرَ الْحَرَامَ وَالْهَدْيَ وَالْقَلَائِدَ ذَلِكَ لِتَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ {97}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:97] (see commentary for verse 94)

{اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ {98}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:98] (see commentary for verse 94)

{مَا عَلَى الرَّسُولِ إِلَّا الْبَلَاغُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا تَكْتُمُونَ {99}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:99]

The Holy Prophet had performed his mission of delivering Allah's message to the full. Allah knows what his followers disclose by words and deeds and what their secret thoughts and inner feelings are.

{قُلْ لَا يَسْتَوِي الْخَبِيثُ وَالطَّيِّبُ وَلَوْ أَعْجَبَكَ كَثْرَةُ الْخَبِيثِ فَانفُوا اللَّهَ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَفْلِحُونَ {100}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:100]

That which wins His approval and pleasure is not equal to that which is disapproved and cursed by Allah. The accursed and the unclean are in abundance, therefore, do not follow the majority or join the crowd which is going in the direction of Shaytan. In all events preponderance or greater number is not the true criterion. The thoroughly purified Ahl ul Bayt (Ahzab: 33) are the most exalted human beings and should not be compared with those who are impure because darkness and light cannot be equal (Rad: 16).

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَسْأَلُوا عَنَ أَشْيَاءٍ إِنْ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ تَسْؤُكُمْ وَإِنْ تَسْأَلُوا عَنْهَا حِينَ يُنَزَّلُ الْقُرْآنُ تُبَدَّ لَكُمْ عَفَا اللَّهُ عَنْهَا وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:101]

Every companion of the Holy Prophet was not endowed with the intelligence to understand Allah, His commands, His creation and that which governs the creation. What was given to Salman was not given to Abu Dharr, and what Abu Dharr knew was out of the reach of other companions. Only the Holy Prophet and Ali were endowed with the full, complete and perfect wisdom (Ya Sin: 12 and Nisa 54). One was the city of knowledge and the other was its gate.

These verses denounce frivolous questioning on the part of the ignorant companions, sometimes merely to abate their idle curiosity, sometimes arising out of a sense of inferiority, sometimes with shrewd cunning in order to obtain scope for individual discretion to be used in future in the name of "the demands of circumstances".

The Holy Prophet said:

"By Allah, I can tell you who among you will go to paradise, and who among you will burn in hell for ever. The whole universe is before my eyes. Beware! If I tell you about things and events, you will not like it. I have already told you all that which brings you near to Allah, so you must carry out those commands, and I have disclosed all that which separates you from Him and takes you to hell, so do not do what I have forbidden. Do not transgress the boundaries laid down by Allah. If you ask questions about the things He has not disclosed, because of His wisdom, you will find yourselves in deep trouble."

Aforetime people have asked questions of their prophets but they disbelieved them afterwards.

102} {فَقَدْ سَأَلَهَا قَوْمٌ مِّنْ قَبْلِكُمْ ثُمَّ أَصْبَحُوا بِهَا كَافِرِينَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:102] (see commentary for verse 101)

103} {مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ بَحِيرَةٍ وَلَا سَائِبَةٍ وَلَا وَصِيلَةٍ وَلَا حَامٍ وَلَا كَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا يَفْتَرُونَ عَلَى اللَّهِ الْكَذِبَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:103]

Bahira was the name given to a mother-camel which had ten young ones, her ear was then slit and she was turned loose.

Sa-iba was a camel, turned loose, exempted from common services; her being so turned out was generally in fulfilment of a vow.

Wasila was a term applied to sheep and goats.

Ham was the dedicated stallion camel, turned loose and exempted from common services.

These superstitious rites were not the ordinances of Allah, but the invention of the ignorant pagans.

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَإِلَى الرَّسُولِ قَالُوا حَسْبُنَا مَا وَجَدْنَا عَلَيْهِ آبَاءَنَا ؕ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَهْتَدُونَ } 104

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:104]

To most of the polytheistic people, like Arab pagans, religion is not a matter of sound reason and divine revelation, but a mere usage-a set of rites and dogmas handed down from the fathers to the sons.

"He who finds the right path does so for himself; and he who goes astray does so to his own loss; and no one who carries a burden bears another's load," says verse 15 of Bani Israil.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ؕ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ } 105

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:105]

The first and foremost duty of every individual is to save his own self, and persuade those who are closely related or associated to follow the right path. The straying of the wicked and the disobedient will not affect those who follow the right guidance. But in the matter of obligatory ordinances *amr bil ma-ruf* and *nahya anil munkar* have to be applied as mentioned in the commentary of Ali Imran: 101 to 115.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا شَهَادَةُ بَيْنِكُمْ إِذَا حَضَرَ أَحَدَكُمُ الْمَوْتُ حِينَ الْوَصِيَّةِ اثْنَانِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِنْكُمْ أَوْ آخَرَانِ مِنْ غَيْرِكُمْ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَأَصَابَتْكُمْ مُصِيبَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۖ تَحْبِسُونَهُمَا مِنْ بَعْدِ الصَّلَاةِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ إِنْ آرْتَبْتُمْ لَا نَشْتَرِي بِهِ ثَمَنًا وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَا قُرْبَىٰ ۗ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ } 106

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:106]

Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 180 to 182.

Witnesses should be men of honour and integrity; they can be non-Muslims if Muslims are not available.

The object of the procedure mentioned in these verses is to eliminate the chances of false evidence. This procedure was followed in an actual case in the Holy Prophet's life-time. Tamin Dari, a companion of the Holy Prophet died abroad, having made over his goods to two Christian fellow travellers, to be delivered to his designated heirs in Madina. They, however, kept back some valuable articles. When this was found out, oaths were taken from those who knew, and justice was done by the Holy Prophet.

فَإِنْ عُرِرَ عَلَىٰ أَنَّهُمَا اسْتَحَقَّا إِثْمًا فَآخَرَانِ يَفُومَانِ مَقَامَهُمَا مِنَ الَّذِينَ اسْتَحَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَوْلِيَانِ فَيُقْسِمَانِ بِاللَّهِ لَشَهَادَتُنَا أَحَقُّ مِنْ شَهَادَتَيْهِمَا } 107

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:107] (see commentary for verse 106)

ذَلِكَ أَذْنَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِالشَّهَادَةِ عَلَىٰ وَجْههَا أَوْ يَحَافُوا أَنْ تُرَدَّ أَيْمَانٌ بَعْدَ أَيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاسْمَعُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ } 108

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:108] (see commentary for verse 106)

{يَوْمَ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ الرُّسُلَ فَيَقُولُ مَاذَا أُجِبْتُمْ قَالُوا لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا بِأَنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ 109}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:109]

Please refer to the commentary of al Nisa: 41.

Allah shall summon all His prophets to question them about their ministries and the response they received from their followers. The prophets will say: "We do not know what was in their minds while we were preaching to them, nor what and how they were going to believe and act after our death, so also how they perverted and mutilated our message after us. You (Allah) alone know the secrets unknown."

Allah knows well those who ran away from the battlefields, leaving the Holy Prophet alone among his enemies or watched the fighting from a safe distance in all the defensive wars he fought against the Jews and the pagans, usurped his successorship, burned his dearest daughter's house, harassed and persecuted his successors, killed his Ahl ul Bayt including the eleven Imams in his progeny.

Aqa Mahdi Puya says:

La ilma lana does not mean "We do not know anything", but it means "the knowledge we have is not ours, it is Yours, gifted to us by You, and that too is limited. You are the infinite, omniscient".

In verse 32 of al Baqarah the angels also say: "Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us; verily, You are the knowing, the wise".

According to Nisa: 41 and Nahl: 84 and 89 every prophet will be called as a witness over his followers and the Holy Prophet will be a witness over all the prophets. The deeds of the people are witnessed by Allah, the Holy Prophet and "those who believe" (the Ahl ul Bayt).

{إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ ادْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخَلَّقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ 110}

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:110]

See commentary of al Baqarah: 253, Ali Imran: 46, 48,49,54,55.

The disbelieving Jews say that "Isa learned magic in Egypt, then deceived and led astray Israel" (Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics) (111) Refer to the commentary of Ali Imran :52.

Awhaytu has been used here in the sense of *Awha* of al Nahl: 68-inspiration.

Revelation (*wahi*) through Jibra-il was sent to prophets only.

111} وَإِذْ أُوحِيَتْ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:111]

112} إِذْ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ هَلْ يَسْتَطِيعُ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يُنْزِلَ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ ط قَالَ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:112]

It was only a miracle of "cooked heavenly food" that the believing disciples asked for, to be blessed thereby, to have additional evidence for firm conviction and to be witnesses of the miracle before others, and to always celebrate it as an occasion of joy and satisfaction. In the same sense Ibrahim wanted to see how Allah gives life to the dead (see commentary of al Baqarah: 260).

NAMES OF ISA'S DISCIPLES:

- (1) Simon or Peter
 - (2) Andrew, brother of Simon
 - (3) James son of Zebedee
 - (4) John, brother of James
 - (5) Philip
 - (6) Bartholomew
 - (7) Thomas
 - (8) Matthew
 - (9) James son of Alphaeus
 - (10) Lebbaeus or Thaddaenus
 - (11) Simon the canaanite
 - (12) Judas Iscariot
- (Matthew 10: 2 to 4)

"One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon, Peter said to him (Isa): "There is a boy here who has five barley leaves and two fishes; but what is that among so many?" Jesus said: "Make the people sit down.' There was plenty of grass there, so the men sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the leaves, gave thanks, and distributed them to the people as they sat there. He did the same with the fishes, and they had as much as they wanted. When everyone had had enough, he said to his disciples: "Collect the pieces left over, so that nothing may be lost.' "

(John 6: 8 to 13)

113} قَالُوا نُرِيدُ أَنْ نَأْكُلَ مِنْهَا وَتَطْمَئِنَّ قُلُوبُنَا وَنَعْلَمَ أَنْ قَدْ صَدَقْتُنَا وَنَكُونَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:113] (see commentary for verse 112)

قَالَ عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا أَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا مَائِدَةً مِنَ السَّمَاءِ تَكُونُ لَنَا عِيدًا لِأَوَّلِنَا وَآخِرِنَا وَآيَةً مِنْكَ ط وَارزُقْنَا وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ

114} الرَّاغِبِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:114] (see commentary for verse 112)

115} قَالَ اللَّهُ إِنِّي مُنَزَّلُهَا عَلَيْكُمْ ط فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بَعْدُ مِنْكُمْ فَإِنِّي أُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا لَا أُعَذِّبُهُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:115] (see commentary for verse 112)

وَإِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ أَلَمْ نَقُلْ لِلنَّاسِ اتَّخِذُونِي وَأُمِّي إِلَهَيْنِ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ ط قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ مَا يَكُونُ لِي أَنْ أَقُولَ مَا لَيْسَ لِي

116} بِحَقِّ إِنْ كُنْتُ قَائِلُهُ فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ ط تَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِي وَلَا أَعْلَمُ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ ط إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:116]

Isa disclaims here any knowledge of the sort of things that are attributed to him by those who profess to follow him. The worship of Maryam, though repudiated by the protestants, was widely spread among the earlier churches, both in the east and the west. Isa further acknowledges that he was mortal, and that his knowledge was limited like that of a mortal, and that Allah alone is the owner of the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them, and that Allah is the almighty, the knowing and the wise. Please refer to the commentary of al Baqarah: 255; Ali Imran: 2 and 3 to know pure unity of Allah and how the ideas of son of God and trinity were introduced by the writers of the New Testament. The perversion of true faith took place after the departure of Isa. For Isa's true preaching see commentary of verses 72 to 74 of this surah; and *fortawaffaytani* (you took me up) see commentary of Ali Imran: 55.

THE TAWRAT AND THE INJIL

The Tawrat and the Injil are frequently referred to in the Quran. It is well to have clear ideas about these two revealed books.

THE TAWRAT

The Tawrat is mentioned with honour as having been, in its purity, a true revelation from Allah. To translate it by the words "The Old Testament" is obviously wrong. The "Old Testament" is a Christian term, applied to a body of old Jewish records. The Protestants and the Roman Catholics are not agreed precisely as to the number of records to be included in the canon of the Old Testament. They use the term in contradiction to the "New Testament" whose composition shall be discussed in "The Injil". Nor is it correct to translate Tawrat as the "Pentateuch", a Greek term meaning the "five books", known as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. A great part of the Jewish law is embodied in these books, which are traditionally ascribed to Musa, but it is certain that they were not written by Musa or in any age contemporary with Musa or within an appreciable distance of time from Musa. They were probably compiled sometime after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity. Some new books such as Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi were admittedly written after the return from captivity. The statement in 2 Esdras (about the first century A.D.) that the law was burnt and Ezra (about 458-457 B.C.) was inspired to rewrite it, is probably true as to the historical fact that what is available now is no earlier than the time of Ezra, and some of it a good deal later.

The Jews divide their scripture into three parts: (1) the law (Torah), (2) the prophets (Nebiiim), and (3) the writings (Kethubim). The corresponding Arabic words are (1) Tawrat, (2) Nabiyyin, (3) Kutub. In Luke 24: 44 Jesus refers to the law and the prophets and psalms. In the Old Testament (2 Chronicles 34: 30), the reference to the "book of the covenant" must be to the Torah or the original law. The Quran frequently refers to the covenant with reference to the Jews. The modern Christian terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament" are substitutes for the older terms "Old Covenant and "New Covenant". The Samaritans, who claim to be the real children of Israel and disavow the Jews as schismatics, only recognise the Pentateuch, their version is slightly different from The Old Testament.

In view of the school of higher criticism, two versions of sacred history existed, different in

language, style and spirit, and they were combined together into a narrative in the reign of Hezekiah (B.C. 727-697). This forms the greater part of the Pentateuch as it exists today. In the reign of Josiah about 622 B.C., certain priests and scribes (with Jeremiah) promulgated a new code, pretending that they had found it in the temple (11 Kings 22: 8). This law (Torah) was the basis of Judaism, the new religion then founded in Palestine.

The primitive Torah must have been in old Hebrew, but there is no Hebrew manuscript of the Old Testament which can be dated with certainty earlier than 916 A.D. For historical purposes the Greek version, known as the Septuagint, and the Latin version, known as the Vulgate, were the most important versions. Therefore there is no standard text of the Old Testament in its Hebrew form. The Pentateuch includes the laws and regulations associated with the name of Musa, but probably compiled and edited by Ezra or Esdras (Uzayr) in the 5th century B.C.

In its original form "The Law" (Tawrat) was promulgated by Musa, and is recognised in Islam as having been a revealed book; but it was distorted or lost before Islam was preached. What passed as "The Law" with the Jews in the Holy Prophet's time was a mass of traditional writing, as explained above.

THE INJIL

Just as the Tawrat is not the Old Testament, or the Pentateuch, so the Injil, mentioned in the Quran, is certainly not the New Testament, and it is not the four gospels as now received by the Christian church, but an original Gospel which was promulgated by Isa, as Tawrat was promulgated by Musa, and the Quran by the Holy Prophet.

The New Testament as now received consists of (a) four gospels with varying contents (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John); and other miscellaneous matter; viz.; (b) The Act of the Apostles (probably written by Luke and purporting to describe the progress of the Christian church under St. Peter and St. Paul from the supposed crucifixion of Jesus to about 61 A.D.); (c) twenty-one letters or epistles (the majority written by St. Paul to various churches or individuals, but a few written by other disciples, and of a general nature); and (d) the book of revelation or Apocalypse (ascribed to St. John, and containing mystic visions and prophecies, of which it is difficult to understand the meanings).

As Prof. F C. Burkitt remarks in the (Canon of the New Testament) it is an odd miscellany. "The four biographies of Jesus Christ are not all independent of each other, and neither of them was intended by its writer to form one of a quartet. But they are all put side by side, unharmonised, one of them being actually imperfect at the end, and one being only the first volume of a large work." All this body of unmethodical literature was casual in its nature. No wonder, because the early Christians expected the end of the world very soon. The four canonical gospels were only four out of many, and some others besides the four have survived. Each writer just wrote down some odd sayings of the master that he recollected. Among the miracles described there is only one which is described in all the four gospels, and others were described and believed in, in other gospels which are not mentioned in any of the four canonical gospels. Some of the epistles contain expositions of doctrine, but this has been interpreted differently by different Churches. There must have been hundreds of such

epistles, and not all the epistles now received as canonical were always so received or intended to be so received. The Apocalypse also was not the only one in the field. There were others. They were prophecies of "things which must shortly come to pass"; they could not have been meant for long preservation, "for the time is at hand".

When were these four gospels written? By the end of the second century A.D. they were in existence, but it does not follow that they had been selected by that date to form a canon. They were merely pious productions comparable to Dean Farrar's Life of Christ. There were other gospels besides. And further, the writers of two of them, Mark and Luke, were not among the twelve disciples "called" by Jesus. About the gospel of St. John there is much controversy as to authorship, date, and even as to whether it was all written by one person. Clement of Rome (about 97 A.D.) and Polycarp (about 112 A.D.) quote sayings of Jesus in a form different from those found in the present canonical gospels. Polycarp (Epistle, vii) inveighs much against men "who prevent the sayings of the Lord to their own lusts," and he wants to turn "to the word handed down to us from the beginning," thus referring to a book (or a tradition) much earlier than the four orthodox gospels. An epistle of St. Barnabas and an Apoclypse of St. Peter were recognised by Presbyter Clement of Alexandria (flourished about 180 A.D.). The Apoclypse of St. John, which is a part of the present canon in the west, forms no part of the Peshitta (Syriac) version of the eastern Christians, which was produced about 411-433 A.D. and which was used by the Nestorian Christians. It is probable that Peshitta was the version (or an Arabic form of it) used by the Christians in Arabia in the time of the Holy Prophet. The final form of the New Testament canon for the west was fixed in the fourth century A.D. (say, about 367 A.D.) by Athanasius and the Nicene creed. The beautiful Codex Sinaiticus which was acquired for the British Museum in 1934, and is one of the earliest complete manuscripts of the Bible, may be dated about the fourth century. It is written in the Greek language. Fragments of unknown gospels have also been discovered, which do not agree with the received canonical gospels.

The Injil (Creek, Evangel = Gospel) spoken of by the Quran is not the New Testament. It is not the four gospels now received as canonical. It is the single Gospel which, Islam teaches, was revealed to Jesus (Isa) and which he taught. Fragments of it survive in the received canonical gospels and in some others, of which traces survive (e.g. the gospel of childhood or the nativity, the gospel of St. Barnabas, etc.). Muslims therefore do not accept the present Bible (New Testament and Old Testament), as "the Injil", but as it contains some portions of "the Injil" revealed to Isa it is paid due respect, yet they reject the peculiar doctrines taught by orthodox Christianity or Judaism. They claim to be in the true tradition of Ibrahim and therefore all that is of value in the older revelations, it is claimed, is incorporated in the teaching of the last of the prophets.

مَا قُلْتُ لَهُمْ إِلَّا مَا أَمَرْتَنِي بِهِ أَنْ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ رَبِّي وَرَبَّكُمْ ۖ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ ۚ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ وَأَنْتَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿117﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:117] (see commentary for verse 116)

﴿إِنْ تُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ عَبْدُكَ ۚ وَإِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿118﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:118] (see commentary for verse 116)

قَالَ اللَّهُ هَذَا يَوْمٌ يَنْفَعُ الصَّادِقِينَ صِدْقُهُمْ ۚ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ ۚ ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ ﴿119﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:119] (see commentary for verse 116)

﴿اللَّهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿120﴾

[Pooya/Ali Commentary 5:120] (see commentary for verse 116)

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65 Talaq (Divorce)

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74 Muddassir (The Cloaked One)

75 Qiyaamah (The Rising of the Dead)

- 76 'Insaan or Dahr (Time or Man)
- 77 Mursalaat (The Emissaries)
- 78 Naba' (The Tidings)
- 79 Naazi-'aat (Those Who Drag Forth)
- 80 'Abasa (He Frowned)
- 81 Takwiir (The Overthrowing)
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- 86 Taariq (The Morning Star)
- 87 'A'-laa (The Most High)
- 88 Gaashiyah (The Overwhelming)
- 89 Fajr (The Dawn)
- 90 Balad (The City)
- 91 Shams (The Sun)
- 92 Layl (The Night)
- 93 Zuhaa (The Morning Hours)
- 94 Inshiraah (Solace)
- 95 Tiim (The Fig)
- 96 'Alaq (The Cloth)
- 97 Qadr (Power)
- 98 Bayyinah (The Clear Proof)
- 99 Zilzaal (The Earthquake)
- 100 'Aadi-yaat (The Coursers)
- 101 'Al-Qaari-'ah (The Calamity)
- 102 Takaasur (Rivalry in Worldly Increase)
- 103 'Asr (The Declining Day)
- 104 Humazah (The Traducer)
- 105 Fil (The Elephant)
- 106 Quraysh ('Winter' or 'Qureysh')
- 107 Maa-'uun (Small Kindness)
- 108 Kawsar (Abundance)
- 109 Kaafiruun (The Disbelievers)
- 110 Nasr (Socour)
- 111 Lahab (Palm Fibre)
- 112 'Ikhlaas (The Unity)
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