

Qur'anic Principles for the Interpretation of the Qur'an

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Preamble

Allah denounces sectarianism in religion as an evil bigger than the evil of going astray. When Hazrat Musâ (pbuh) went to Holy Tûr leaving behind his brother Hazrat Harûn (pbuh) as his vicegerent, a group of Bani Israel took to worshipping of calf in his absence. On returning back, he (pbuh) made his brother accountable for not preventing them harshly asking: “What kept you back when you had seen them going astray, that you followed me? (Surah TâHâ, 20: 92 قَالَ يَا هَٰرُونَ مَا مَنَعَكَ إِذْ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوا ۖ رَأَيْتَهُمْ ضَلُّوا ۖ) Did you then disobeyed my order? (Surah TâHâ, 20: 93 أَلَا تَتَّبِعُنِي أَفَعَصَيْتَ أَمْرِي ۖ) Hazrat Harûn (pbuh) said: My most respected brother! Seeing them bent upon going wrong, I stopped because “I feared lest you should say, “You have caused a sectarian division among the Children of Israel, and did not respect my command.” (Surah TâHâ, 20: 94 إِنِّي خَشِيتُ أَنْ تَقُولَ فَرَّقْتَ بَيْنَ بَنِي إِسْرَٰئِيلَ وَلَمْ تَرْفُقْ بِقَوْلِي ...)

The Qur'an is the Standard of Truth in matters pertaining to *Deen* Islam. Any view, idea, belief, philosophy, ideology, interpretation, principle of interpretation of the Qur'an or of Ḥadīth, or principle of Jurisprudence, discernment or interpretation of religious experience that does not accord with the Qur'an is not true. Any tradition which cannot be interpreted to reconcile with ‘the Best of all Narrations Book’ (*Absan-al-Ḥadīth Book*) and the Most True Ḥadīth (*Ḥadīth-e-Asdaq i.e., the Qur'an*) does not qualify that it is ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh) no matter it appears in commonly popular “The Authentic Six” compilations of Ḥadīth. It can never be a saying of the Prophet (pbuh) no matter it comes up to all other principles of Ḥadīth. An arbitrary interpretation of a Ḥadīth which does not reconcile with the Most True Ḥadīth (*Ḥadīth-e-Asdaq i.e., the Qur'an*) is as false as the arbitrary interpretation of an allegorical verse which is not founded on the imperatival verses of the Qur'an.

Allah denotes the Qur'an as ‘Al-Ḥaqq’ (the Standard of Truth), and as *Al-Furqân* (the Criterion for separating un-truth from truth), and as *Al-Meezân* (the balance for judging the value of human actions). Whatever Allah descends ‘Al-Ḥaqq’ (the Truth), it possesses the status of ‘Authority’ in matters of *deen*. Is there any set of principles given by

the Qur'an for the interpretation of the Qur'an itself so that we reach uncontroversial meanings, and donot drastically differ eachother? Of course it is true. When Allah says: "We have not left any deficiency in it. ()" "It consists of verses, full of wisdom, which appropriately qualify each other." () "Appropriate explanation of everything in it has been given." () "Its details are made comprehensible for the knowledgeable ones." () "It has been made comprehensible with Knowledge." () How can such Qur'an lack in giving principles of its own interpretation! Then why do the exegetes disagree with eachother in its interpretation. How is it then that we have indulged in sectarianism and become devided in sects? The reality is that they are unaware of Qur'anic guidance, as we shall see, to safeguard them from sectarianism. The case is that they have closed their minds, do not apply reason and do not safeguard them from indulging in contradictions. In case they follow the Qur'anic principles, and keep within limits prescribed by the Qur'an, the scope for drawing arbitrary implications or indulging in contradictions eliminates; the scope for inserting their own suggestion, opinion, and conjecture in the Qur'an in the name of traditions, rationality or intuitive experience reduces to the minimum, the scope for using the Qur'an to uphold their sectarian beliefs diminishes.

As for instance, Allah did not make His prophet Hazrat Musâ (pbuh) call those who took to worshipping of calf as infidels, polytheists or apostates, therefore to be beheaded and killed. Musa (pbuh) simply declares them as "those who have gone astray." And in response to Hazrat Musa's question for not preventing them from calf-worship, Allah narrates Hazrat Haroon (pbuh) saying: "Lest you should say, 'I have divided Bani Israel into factions.'" What this instance implies is that 'splitting the believers into sects is more big a crime than going astray, be it as big as the worshipping of a calf.' There are many verses in the Qur'an which corroborate this corollary. In verses 13-14 of Surah ash-Shurâ Allah says:

"He has enjoined on Muslims, the same commandment as He has enjoined on the people of Noah (a.s), Abraham (a.s.) and Moses (a.s.) and Jesus (a.s.) that "Uphold the faith and do not divide into factions within it' — (but) what you [Prophet - pbuh] call upon the idolaters to do is hard for them." (Surah ash-Shurâ, 42: 13)

Alah did not call those, who took to the worship of calf, idolators and polytheists. Allah only called them 'gone astray'. But Allah calls those, who divide the believers into factions and do not keep back from

sectarianism, the polytheists and the idolators in the verse mentioned above. The same judgement is passed on the people in Surah ar-Rome, 30: 31-32) when Allah says: **”وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ ۚ مِنَ الَّذِينَ فَرَّقُوا دِينَهُمْ** ...be not of those who ascribe partners to Allah; those who split their religion into sects, with each party rejoicing in that which they own. (Surah ar-Rome 30: 31-32) The same content is repeated in Surah al-Mo'minun when Allah says:

“Messengers, ...this community of yours is one community – and I am your Lord: be mindful of Me. But they have split their community into sects, each rejoicing in their own. So leave them for a while steeped in their error.” (Surah al-Mo'minun, 23:51-54)

Splitting up believers into sects and factions is such a big crime that Allah says:

“As for those who have divided their *deen* (religion) and broken up the believers' community into factions, the Prophet (pbuh) has no concern in them in the least. Their case rests with Allah.” (Surah al-An'am, 6:159)

It is not the case that those who divide believers into factions and promote sectarianism in them are ignorant of Allah's command. Allah says:

”وَمَا تَفَرَّقُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا ۚ يَبْئَثُ ۚ They divide believers into factions out of transgression, after knowledge has come to them. (Surah ash-Shurâ, 42: 14)

Similarly concerning the People of the Book the Qur'an says: **”وَمَا تَفَرَّقَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَةُ ۚ** As for the People of the Book, they did not split up into factions until after there had come to them the Clear Evidence.” (Surah al-Bayyinah 98:04)

Allah commands the believers not to split up into factions and be united as one community when Allah says: **وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ** “And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah stretches out for you, and be not divided into sects..” (Surah Al-e-Imran, 3:103)

Allah admonishes the believers **وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ تَفَرَّقُوا وَاخْتَلَفُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا** **جَاءَهُمُ الْبَيِّنَاتُ وَأُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ** “Do not be like those who, after they have been given Clear Revelation, split into factions and fall into

conflicts: these are the ones whom a terrible punishment awaits.” (Āl-e-‘Imran, 3:105)

Splitting up of the believers community into discordant factions, and broken into warring sects is a kind of Allah’s torment on the people as He says:

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِنْ فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيْعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُمْ بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۚ... ﴿١٠٥﴾
“Say, He has power to send punishment on you from above or from under your very feet, or to divide you into discordant factions and make some taste the violence of others.” ()

Institutions to bring about schism among Muslims are established on the pretext of doing good to them. Allah commands Muslims not to have any concern with them. One such institution was established in the lifetime of the Prophet (pbuh) in the form of a mosque termed by the Qur’an as az-Zirār (the harmful one) and was demolished and burnt by the Prophet (pbuh). The Qur’an says:

وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مَسْجِدًا ضِرَارًا وَكُفْرًا وَتَفْرِيقًا بَيْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ... ﴿١٠٥﴾
Then there are those who built a mosque—in an attempt to cause harm, disbelief, and disunity among the believers—as an outpost for those who fought God and His Messenger before: they swear, ‘Our intentions were nothing but good,’ but God bears witness that they are liars. [Prophet], never pray in that mosque. You should rather pray in a mosque founded from its first day on consciousness of God: in this mosque there are men who desire to grow in purity— God loves those who seek to purify themselves. Which is better, the person who founds his building on consciousness of God and desire for His good pleasure, or the person who founds his building on the brink of a crumbling precipice that will tumble down into the Fire of Hell, taking him with it? God does not guide the evildoers: the building they have founded will always be a source of doubt within their hearts, until their hearts are cut to pieces. God is all knowing and wise.” (Sura Tauba 9: 107-110)

Now a days such institutions are established at international level in the pretext of Research in Islam, Qur’an, Ḥadīth, Qira’t (recitation) etc. Lucricious jobs, perks and privileges are offered to the teachers and scholarships to the researchers. International workshops and conferences are arranged and certificates and awards are given to encourage researchers on lines chosen by them. It is utmost necessary to beware of such mosques, institutions and traditional schools of religious learning which are working to promote schism among Muslims.

Only Qur'an is the Standard of Truth as '*Qaul*' i.e., as teaching, guidance, criterion between truth and untruth, and as precept. The Text of the Qur'an is Clear Arabic. To prefer the Qur'anic text in determining the meaning of a Qur'anic word or verse is better than consulting the classical dictionary of Arabic usage. Some scholars make it an ideal to determine only one meaning of each and every word of the Qur'an. If the Qur'an has been descended in written form, we definitely have accepted their view. But the Qur'an is revealed as a *Speech*. Of course 'Word of Allah' revealed in the form of *Speech* is compiled as Book. The message of a discourse delivered as speech always makes sense with reference to time, place, situation, and the addressee. In a discourse delivered as speech, purpose and objective of speech gets more importance. In a discourse delivered as writing, meaning and import gets importance. To make the distinction between the objective and purpose of a speech, and meaning and import of a sentence in a writing clear lets present before you verse 28 of Surah al-Kahf (18) as an example to see the difference in its bearing for one who takes it as Speech and its bearing for the one take it just a writing to be recited. As we understand, this verse has a direct bearing on the event of the martyrdom of Hazrat Hussain (r.a.) in Karbla.

The tragic incident that took place at Karbla, basically refers to an incident in which second Umyed ruler Yazid demands allegiance from Hazrat Imam Hussain (a.s.). Hazrat Hussain refuses to take oath of his allegiance at any cost. Ultimately Hazrat Hussain has to sacrifice the lives of the young boys of his family and the companions, including his own life, at the hands of Yazid's army, leaving behind the women folk at the mercy of his enemies.

And the real question is that what compelled Hazrat Hussain to make such a strict decision?

This could never be an urge to seize power. For in the case of being seiged, better it was that he takes oath of allegiance, gain a high post in the government with other benefits and wait for the appropriate time to overthrow him and rise to the throne.

It is the way of the God-fearing, that whenever they are faced with a dire situation, they look towards Allah's Word for guidance and be steadfast.

Nothing less than the obedience of any of Allah's command, which did not allow him allegiance of Yazid, can give a satisfactory explanation of Hazrat Hussain's decision and determination and steadfastness.

Now the question is what is that command of Allah which Hazrat Imam Hussain decided not to defy at whatever cost he has to pay.

Verse 28 of Surah al-Kahf (18) consists of that command which beyond any doubt explains Hazrat Imam Hussain's decision that, come what may, Allah's command will not be disobeyed.

In this verse Allah commands a believer to follow what has been revealed to Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) as Scripture and assures that Allah's words never change. Then He commands:

"And never obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Ziker (i.e., the Qur'an), he who follows his desires, and exceeds all limits in his affairs." (Surah al-Kahf, 18:28)

Hazrat Imam Hussain's act of sacrificing everything, whatever, on his decision of not accepting Yazid's demand of allegiance verifies that Hazrat Hussain did not have any doubt that Yazid had all the three evils in his person, so taking oath of allegiance in him would mean defiance of Allah's Command, which he would never do.

Father of Yazid has made all the governors and high officials take oath of allegiance in favour of Yazid as his successor, in his own life time. Hazrat Imam Hussain never was a governor in Ummayyad's regime nor did he ever challenged this act of his nomination as would be ruler next to his father, nor did he ever make any claim for the throne, that he was compelled to take oath of faithfulness to Yazid's regime.

Feeling of inefficiency and inability for the office one unlawfully occupies, always keep one fearful. Yazid's own courtiers seem to have made him realize of his inefficiency and inability as head of the state as compared to the superb and far more superior personality of Hazrat Imam Hussain, the son of Hazrat Ali (a.s.), the grandson of the Prophet (pbuh). They inculcated in his mind that if Hazrat Imam Hussain takes oath of allegiance in him, none other in the regime could ever be able to pose a challenge to his exceeding to the throne. Governor of Madina was ordered to make Hazrat Hussain fulfill this demand of Yazid.

Hazrat Imam Hussain did not have any political aspirations nor has it ever been expressed in his word, deed or any steps taken by him that he ever wanted to overthrow Yazid. Had it not been against Allah's

command with reference to Surah al-Kahf mentioned above, Hazrat Hussain (a.s.) would have not taken an instant in lending allegiance to Yazid.

Hazrat Hussain made up his mind to leave for Kufa. The people of Madina would love Hazrat Hussain and the family of the Prophet (pbuh) too much. Leaving Madina for Kufa by Hazrat Imam Hussain (a.s.) was to save the Madinites from bloodshed and disaster. He (a.s.) went Kufa enroute Makka. The days to perform Hajj were very close and thousands of the pilgrims all over the country were supposed to gather there within days. Leaving Makka by Hazrat Imam Hussain (a.s.) just few days before Hajj was to save the Muslim regime from civil war. Kufa had been made capital by Hazrat Ali (a.s.) in his period. A large number of the Kufis loved Hazrat Hussain and the family of the Prophet (pbuh). Hazrat Imam Hussain was sure that if he reaches Kufa, he will be in safe hands and it will not be possible for Yazid to pressurize him through official authorities for allegiance. He believed that his presence in Kufa will provide the people a chance to benefit from him with respect to taking guidance in matters of religion. He believed there he will be able to teach *deen* (religion) to the seekers of knowledge in a peaceful environment. The purpose of Hazrat Hussain (a.s.) by leaving for Kufa from Madina, not staying in Makkah till Hajj, and sending Hazrat Uqail (r.a.) to Kufa ahead of him and all other steps taken by Hazrat Hussain (a.s.) was to avoid giving Yazid chance to pressurize him for something which he considered defiance of Allah's command. All stories which try to prove Hazrat Imam Hussain an opponent, a rebel planning to overthrow Yazid, are all fabricated and concocted in their defence by the Ummayyads. Or such stories are created or narrated by those who failed to understand the true reason of denial of Hazrat Hussain for allegiance of Yazid.

This incident has been narrated to make the distinction clear between taking verse 28 of Surah al-Kahf as *Speech* and *Address*, and taking it as a '*general piece of advice in written form*'.

Concentrating on the objective, Hazrat Hussain took this verse as Allah's Command forbidding him from lending allegiance to Yazid. Others took it as a piece of scripture meant for recitation, with no specific obligation to the recitor, and with no specific relevance to the recitor's life. And if the recitor were a scholar of Arabic, he would take

it as a piece of writing in Arabic with a grammatical structure and translate it in general terms like this

“...do not yield to those whose hearts We have made heedless of Our Qur’an, those who follow their own low desires, those whose ways are unbridled.” (18:28)

Or like the following:

“And contain thyself in patience by the side of all who at morn and at evening invoke their Sustainer, seeking His countenance, and let not thine eyes pass beyond them in quest of the beauties of this world's life; and pay no heed to any whose heart We have rendered heedless of all remembrance of Us because he had always followed [only] his own desires, abandoning all that is good and true.” (28:18)

implying no specific guidance, purpose, requirement, obligation or commandment or relevance for him. None visualized it as a command, addressed to him at that present except Ḥazrat Hussain (a.s.). The purpose and objective of Allah’s *Kalām* does not reveal on the recitor just by knowing Arabic diction or gaining competence in grammar and syntax.

No doubt the immediate addressees of ‘the Word of Allah’ were Arabs of the Prophet (pbuh) epoch but the Message of the Qur’an is universal and for all times to come. It addresses each and every individual human being, each and every believer, and each and every people till the dooms day. At times it addresses an individual as individual (*fard*), at times it addresses people as group (*jama’at*), at times it addresses a people as nation (*qawm*) and at times it addresses humanity at large.

Addressing in ‘second person singular’ (*thou*), as in speech, the Qur’an does not necessarily address the Prophet (pbuh); it addresses each and every human being in his capacity as an individual, till the Last Day.

At times Allah addresses believers in ‘third person singular’ too. If anywhere Allah, addresses in ‘third person singular’ for the correction of a follower of the Prophet (pbuh) in the art of preaching, and to hide his fault, to safeguard his dignity, and to maintain the universality of Qur’anic Advice ‘The Concealer of Flaws’ (*as-Sattâr ul-‘Ayyub*) does not disclose the identity of the person referred to in the verse, an exegete puts someone’s name there, is it not defiance of Allah’s Injunction which forbids from stepping ahead of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh)? (Q. 49:1) How disrespectful it would be if the exegete, ascribes the blemish mentioned in this verse to be directed

towards the most beloved servant of Allah (the Prophet—pbuh)? And how disdainful it would be if the exegetes, following an absurd *tradition* (*riwayah*) from the compilations of *tradition*, keep on mentioning it since centuries?

There is no part of the Qur'an, which does not contain universal message, which is devoid of purpose and objective for the recitor in any period of time. By depending upon Arabic dictionary and syntax, you can only determine grammatical meanings of a verse considering it a teaching in the form of a *piece of writing*, but not as a Message or direction addressed to you and everyone else as Speech. So the universal message imbibed in it ever remains out of sight. With these preliminary remarks let us see what the principles are prescribed by the Qur'an for its interpretation.

Qur'anic Principles for the Interpretation of the Qur'an

Significance: Allah says in the Qur'an that the Holy Qur'an is *Qawl* (*i.e.*, speech, word, information, injunction, precept, principle, teaching, criterion, guidance and command.) as He says:

“This is the *Qawl* of the messenger... It is not the *Qawl* of a poet ...! Nor is it the *Qawl* of a soothsayer... It is descended by Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.” (Surah al-Hâqa, 69:40-43)

The Qur'an sent as *Qawl* is the Standard of Truth (*Al-Haqq*) as the Qur'an says:

“That which has been descended towards you is '*Al-Haqq*' from your Lord, but most of the people believe it not.” (Surah ar-R'ad, 13:1)

The stage of action (*'amal*) comes after the stage of speech or information (*qawl*).

The way to act upon the teachings of Allah's descended Qur'an, as taught and enjoined by Allah to the believers, is that they will “follow the way of the one who turns towards Allah” (Surah Luqmân 31:15)

Then there follows the stage of knowledge (*'ilm*).

What one says before acting upon Allah's Advice is only information or *qawl*. The state, one experience after acting

upon Allah's descended Speech (following in the footsteps of the one who turns towards Allah) is knowledge. 'Knowledge' is always post-experience.

Allah enjoins the believers to talk from the stage of knowledge. 'Allah dislikes it most that one says anything which one does not act upon himself.' (cf. Surah as-Saff 61:3)

The Holy Qur'an says about itself that it is 'the Word of Allah (*Kalâm Ullah*). It is Allah's Speech. The Qur'an is not '*a piece of writing*' (*tahrîr*) descended as scripture.

As the Word of Allah, it is free of having doubts in it.

It is clear of contradictions and inconsistency.

Its message is universal and final—No change whatsoever;

Absolutely secure and under Allah's protection;

Everything in it has been explained in detail by Allah. (وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ ۖ

فَصَّلَّنَاهُ تَفْصِيلًا ﴿١٢﴾ **Surah al-Isra', 17:12**)

Purpose of revelation: That the Prophet (pbuh) makes things clear in which the people differ. And it should be a guide and a mercy to those who believe. وَمَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى ۖ وَ مَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى ۖ وَ مَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَهُدًى ۖ (an-Nahl 16: 64) يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿١٦﴾

In view of the above we argue that remaining true to this Book, none can make it the basis for promoting differences, dissensions and sectarianism. But if they do, it means they are deviating from purpose of its revelation consciously and intentionally or unconsciously and inadvertently.

A believer cannot be supposed to deviate from its purpose consciously or intentionally.

Then how did it happen that we are divided into factions?

It happens when an exegete, defying the Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an stipulates arbitrary un-Qur'anic principles of interpretation to derive what suits to his desire, or what suits to his agenda as opposite to what is said in the Qur'an.

It happens when believers, acknowledging such exegete as a scholar, begin to follow the interpretation made by him and the principles of interpretation stipulated by him. This is how the sectarianism gets rooted and divides the Muslims into factions. What follows from this is that:

The root of all sectarianism in Islam lies in arbitrary interpretation of the Qur'an, in not observing the Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an.

Whereas if the Qur'an is interpreted in accordance with its own rules, 'it bestows knowledge to consolidate relationships between individuals', roots out sectarianism and verifies the perfection of inward and outward blessings. (cf. Luqmân 31:20) Because:

The falsehood cannot stand before it. (It is the Way of Allah that "He wipes out the falsehood and establishes the truth with His Words." 08:7-8)

It is the Criterion (*Furqân*) to differentiate truth from untruth. ()

It is also the Measure (*Meezân*) of weighing moral actions.

Falsehood (*bâtil*), error (*ad-dalâl*), absurdity (*laghî*), conjecture /speculation (*ẓann*), concoction (*aftrâ*), moulding truth according to one's desires (*fisq*) are various forms of the expression of untruth and evil. Evil (*ad-dalâl*) has no reality of its own. *Bâtil* (*untruth*) has no permanent place in reality. Reality is based on *Haqq* (*truth*). Deviation from Allah's revealed truth (*Al-Haqq*) is *evil* (*ad-dalâl*).

Holy Qur'an is the only, final and ultimate source of Sharia (divine law) for ever. ()

What Allah has revealed is *Al-Haqq* (*The truth*); Allah is the Descender of *Al-Haqq*. The Qur'an is the final, ultimate and universal revelation of *truth*. Allah has taken upon Him to teach its recitation, guide in the collection of its verses and compilation into Book to save it from all kind of distortion. Allah has also taken upon Him its *Bayân* (i.e. its exposition). (Q. 75: 16-19) Allah designates it as 'The Book Comprising Most Authentic *Ḥadīth*' (*Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth Kitâb*) (Qur'an, 39:23) and 'The Most Authentic *Ḥadīth*' (*Ḥadīth-i-Aṣḍaqq*). (Q. 4:87)

As *Qaṭl* the Qur'an entertains the status of absolute authority.

Word of the Creator of Everything alone can encompass the knowledge of everything in its minutest details.

Allah has made the Qur'an easy to understand for the men who are pure in heart, use reason and sound in knowledge (*ar-rasikhuna fil-ilm*). (Q. 3:7)

Things are repeated in various ways through out the Qur'an. If at one place there is assertion, at another place there is evidence. ()

Allah has detailed His verses for those who show seriousness towards taking advice. (al-An'am 6: 127) ﴿قَدْ فَصَّلْنَا الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَذَّكَّرُونَ﴾

Allah has detailed the verses for the knowledgeable ones. (al-A'raf 7: 32) كَذَلِكَ نَفَصَّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

Allah has detailed this Book with His Knowledge and has sent as guidance and mercy for those who believe. (Surah al-A'raf 7: 52) وَلَقَدْ جِئْنَاهُمْ بِكِتَابٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ عَلَىٰ عِلْمٍ هُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

Shall I seek for Judge anyone other than God?—when He it is Who has sent unto you Book, explained in detail. (al-An'am, 6: 114)

Hâ Mîm. A revelation from Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful. A Book whereof the verses are explained in detail — A Qur'an in Arabic — for the men of knowledge. (Surah Fussilat 41: 1-3)

This Qur'an guides to the most straight path. (??)

Allah has left no shortcoming in it. (??)

These qualities of the Holy Qur'an are not found, all together, in any speech, word, precept, teaching or authority. This is why we are justified to believe that nothing except the Holy Qur'an has the status of authority.

The principles of syntax and composition of Arabic language are neither final nor universal, nor are they clear of ambiguity and vagueness. Holding them standard for determining the content and purpose of Allah's Word is without justification. This is why that all the supermost leaders of any sect inspite of their claim in being authority on syntax of Arabic language, culture could have never been able to reach an agreed upon interpretation of the Qur'an. In order to avoid difference and discord in working out the interpretation of the Qur'an, it is utmost necessary that principles of the interpretation of the Qur'an are taken from the Qur'an itself. Instead of applying syntax of Arabic language, the syntax of the Qur'an is derived from the Qur'an itself. As opposite to Arabic diction derived from Arabic literature of pre-Islamic period, the diction of the Qur'an is derived from the Qur'an itself; and taking Qur'an Speech (Word of Allah) purpose & intention of speech is focused instead of meaning of words and import of the sentences. For instance meaning of the word 'fisq' (فسق) as per dictionary of Arabic language is 'breaking the agreement' or 'to leave or go out of'. But as per intention of Qur'an as speech the word 'fisq' denotes to 'moulding Allah's injunction to accommodate one's desires' or 'intentionally inserting one's own suggestion into Allah's Word or 'interpreting the Qur'an with the intention to make it compatible with one's likes and dislikes.'

The Qur'an confirms that the 'Text of the Qur'an is a Speech descended by Allah in 'Clear Arabic language' and the edited as discourse under Allah Almighty's guidance. So no expression can excel or equal compared to the 'Text of the Qur'an. Can Judging the Qur'anic text with reference to 'beauty of expression' If the standard of 'the beauty of expression' will be seen out of the Qur'an, it will mean judging 'the authority' with 'a lesser authority'.

Can beauty of Qur'anic text be justifiably judged by a discourse other than the Qur'an? Will it not amount to judging 'what is standard and authority in 'beauty of expression' with that 'which itself lacks in perfection'. Is not taking the Arabic literature as standard in determining the objective of a piece of Qur'anic text similar to the above mentioned instance! Will it not be going out of Allah's command: "Follow what Allah has revealed:"(al-Baqarah, 2: 170) It is absolutely impossible that such attempt does not suffer selfcontradiction.

Allah enjoins the believers to give a serious deliberation to the Holy Qur'an when He says: "This is a blessed Book which We have descended to you [Muhammad], for people to deliberate over its message, and for those with understanding to take heed." (Surah Sâd 38:29)

The way to deliberate over the message of the Qur'an is that the Qur'an is believed in as free of contradiction, and Allah's Advice is acted upon. The state that comes after acting upon Allah's Advice is called knowledge. All knowledge is post-experience. Before acting upon an Advise, it is just information (Qaul).

Allah's Revelation is 'the truth'(*Al-Haqq*). It is final and universal. It is not possible to discover and identify *Haqq* (truth) without the Holy Qur'an. The Holy Quran is such an honoured book that falsehood cannot enter into it from before it or from behind it. The previous traditions cannot come into it, nor can it be changed or altered. In this arrangement of protection, Allah's Wisdom and Allah's praise worthiness is manifest. (Surah Fussilat 41: 42) It provides that certain guidance, which keeps the believer steadfast at any place whatever. It has no alternate.

The Holy Qur'an is not for a specific people or a period. "It is Reminder for the whole humanity. And you will certainly come to know of its truth in time. (Surah Sâd 38:87-88)

Again it is said: “We have made this Qur’an easy to take lesson from. Is there anyone who will take heed!” (al-Qamar54: 17)

Then it is said: “...We have left out nothing in the Book...” (al-An’am 6: 38) It is said regarding Hazrat Musâ (pbuh): And We wrote for him on the Tablets, instructions and explanations of all things. Hold them firmly...”(al-A’raf, 7: 145) ‘

If the standard is not certified, it is not possible to evaluate the standard of something.

With an uncertified Standard, you cannot certify anything to be in accordance with the standard.

Conjecture and speculation cannot take anyone to certitude in affairs of *Deen*.

Holy Qur’an is ‘*Al-Haqq*’ (i.e., the certified standard of truth). The Qur’an alone holds the status of ‘Authority’ in affairs of *deen*. وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ. “And those who have been granted knowledge see that what has been revealed to you [to Muhammad pbuh] from your Lord is the truth; and that it guides to the path of the Almighty and Worthy of All Praise.” (Surah Saba34: 6)

This principle applies to the interpretation of the Qur’an, equally as it applies to other matters. When as per Qur’anic claim and as per our belief , Holy Qur’an holds guidance in all affairs, it enlightens the nature of relationship between everything, it expresses blessings of Allah which are visible and those which are not visible, then is it possible that the Qur’an is silent regarding the principles of its own interpretation? It is the exegetes who, instead of taking guidance from the Qur’an concerning its interpretation, and remaining within parameters set by the Qur’an, have preferred to set lines for the interpretation of the Qur’an based on their own conjectures, factional beliefs, and intellectual background. As far as we know, except for Tafseer-e-Fâzli (1992-1998), in the whole history of Qur’anic *Tafseer* literature there is not a single instance of a complete ‘Tafseer e-Qur’an based on the Qur’an.

Allah says in the Qur’an: ﴿وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا...﴾ “And hold fast to Allah’s rope, all of you together, and be not divided...” (Âl-e-Imran, 3: 103) The only way to hold fast Allah’s rope all together which can save us from dissention, and division into factions, is that guidance is taken from the Qur’an in all affairs including taking the principles of the interpretation of the Qur’an from the Qur’an.

‘Word of Allah’ consists of Allah’s guidance and command. Allah’s command is final and universal. The way of the Prophet–pbuh in acting upon Allah’s Command (*i.e., sunnah*) as reported in Ḥadīth, is a precedent, for all times to come, for acting upon Allah’s Commands. Very important fact which has been overlooked by Muslims since centuries is that the implementation of Allah’s injunctions as reported by Ḥadīth, must change with time, place, quantity and capacity to keep the Qur’an applicable in all times to come. The Qur’an is final and universal source of Sharia (Divine Law), *Ḥadīth* is precedent of its implementation by the Prophet (pbuh). A precedent of a law, can never be a law itself. *Ḥadīth* as precedent of the implementation of guidance and injunctions of Sharia can never be a source of Sharia itself. The purpose of all our research should be to contrive the most appropriate way for the implementation of Allah’s commands in the light of *Ḥadīth*. This is the way ‘to hold fast to Allah’s Rope all together. It will eliminate all dissention, hate and sectarian division.

As it is necessary for the interpretation of the *mutashabihāt* (allegorical verses), to reconcile with the *muhkamāt* (imperative verses), it is equally necessary text of a *Ḥadīth*, the interpretation of a *Ḥadīth*, and the ‘principles of interpretation of the Qur’an’ to reconcile with the *Muhkamāt*. This conclusion draws from the fact that the Qur’an calls itself ‘*Ahsan al-Ḥadīth Ktāb*’ and ‘*Ḥadīth-i-Asdaq*’ (the Most Authentic Ḥadīth).

The Qur’an, as stated above, is Allah’s revealed Command (*Hukam*) in Arabic. (Surah ar-R’ad 13:37) ¹ Ḥadīth consists of the reported explanation, interpretation of its verses and implementation of the injunctions of this revealed Arabic Commandment by the Prophet–pbuh. The Arabic Commandment (*i.e., the Qur’an*) is final, universal, lasting and unchangeable source of divine law (*sharia*) till the Last Day.

To ensure the universal applicability and lastingness of the revealed Commandment till the Last Day, it is necessary that its implementation could accommodate the requirements of time, place, quantity and capacity. Ḥadīth as implementation of the Commandment ascribed to the Prophet–pbuh, must not be final, universal and lasting. It must not be a source of sharia at par with the Qur’an. The Qur’an alone is Source of Sharia as revealed Commandment of Allah in Arabic. Ḥadīth, as implementation of this Commandment by the Prophet

(pbuh) is precedent of its implementation for all times to come. A precedent of the implementation of a law is never a law (at par with the law itself). Otherwise it will close down the door of Ijtehad.

We firmly believe that all the problems of Muslim thought, civilization, and division of Ummah into factions are rooted in accepting (i) un-Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an, (ii) and un-Qur'anic view of the Qur'an & Ḥadīth relationship. The solution to the problems relating various dimensions of Muslim thought and civilization, eliminations of factionalism, and bringing about unity among Muslims is possible only by founding the interpretation of the Qur'an on Qur'anic principles, distinguishing muḥkmât from mutashabihât and founding the interpretation of mutashabihât on muḥkmât, and founding the interpretation of Ḥadīth on Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth Kitab (which the Qur'an also calls 'Ḥadīth-e-Asdaqq').

1. Categorization of the Verses of the Qur'an into Muḥkamât and Mutashabihât; and necessity of founding the interpretation of the Mutashabihât on Muḥkmât.

The Qur'an says:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ زَيْغٌ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ مَا تَشَابَهَ مِنْهُ ابْتِغَاءَ الْفِتْنَةِ وَابْتِغَاءَ تَأْوِيلِهِ ۚ وَمَا يَعْلَمُ تَأْوِيلَهُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ۗ وَالرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ يَقُولُونَ آمَنَّا بِهِ لَا كُلٌّ مِنْ عِنْدِ رَبِّنَا ۚ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٣﴾

He it is, Who descended the Book to you,

Of which some verses are *muḥkmât* (definite in meaning);

And these are Umm-ul-Kitâb (the corner-stone of the Book);

And the others are *mutashabihât* (ambiguous).

Those who are perverse at heart,

Always go after the *mutashabihât*, to create trouble,

Seeking to arrive at their meanings arbitrarily;

But except for Allah, none knows their meanings.

Those who have solid knowledge say:

'We believe in it; the whole of it is from our Lord.'

And none grasps the Message except those who are endowed with understanding.

(Surah Âl-e-Imran, 3:7)

The Qur'an divides all verses comprising Qur'anic text, into two kinds. Some verses are those which are outright in the form of orders. These are definite in meaning. While the others are those which make it obligatory for the reader or the listener to act upon them according to

what is narrated in them. The former are *muhkamât* and the later are *mutashabihât* (ambiguous /the allegorical).

The *muhkamât* have the status of *Umm-ul-Kitâb* (the Foundation of all Books). These are the criterion in every matter. Whatever conclusion is drawn from the *mtashabihât* shall have to be verified from *muhkamât*. Otherwise there will be no proof for the validity of that conclusion. It further implies that such interpretation of a *mutashabih verse* which do not agree with the *muhkamât* is not correct. Those who are perverse at heart, do not accept the orders of Allah Almighty. They try to determine the meanings of the *mutashabihât* according to what suits their desires, and what suits their agenda. Allah compares this offence with '*fitna*' (creating trouble, evilmongering) and in the Qur'an Allah declares '*fitna*' worse than making murder". () So offence on the part of those who seek to arrive the meanings of *mutashabihât* arbitrarily is worse than making murder.

Since the revelation of the Book is from Allah, it is essential to believe that the whole of it from Allah. Those who are blessed with deep knowledge from Allah say that they have faith in it because all is from Allah. ()

The Book has guidance, cure, mercy, wisdom and good counsel. () Those who do not accept Allah's good counsel, in order to insert their own suggestion, conjecture, philosophizing, desires and agenda in the Qur'an, they pursue arbitrary interpretation of the *mutashabihât*. These are the ones who promote factionalism and sectarianism in Muslim community. Those who do not follow Allah's Advice, as per Word of Allah, they are not wise. ()

Verse 23 of Surah az-Zumer (39) says: "Allah has descended 'the Best of all Narrations Book' consistent with itself, and yet repeating its teachings in various ways..." (Surah Az-Zumer, 39:23) It is necessary for 'the Best of all Narrations Book' that it is self-consistent. A self-consistent message is always free of contradiction and incoherence. The teachings have been repeated in a way that it adds to the consistency and efficacy of the teachings. If there is a claim at one place, another place will corroborate it as evidence. The verses of an '*Ahsan-al-Hadîth Book*' support each other; they cannot be contrary or incoherent.

If the *mutashabihât* are interpreted founding on the *muhkamât*, at least two places from within the Qur'an support this contention, exerting one's best efforts, finality is not claimed

for one's interpretation and it is admitted that 'none except Allah knows there real meaning, such Tafseer will prove the Qur'an 'Best of all Narrations Book'.

2. Thought-contradiction, the root-cause of religious-factionalism, is the outcome of denial of truth (*takzeeb il-Ḥaqq*).

The Qur'an says: "Rather they have denied the truth when it has come to them. They suffer contradiction in their thought." (Surah Qâf, 50: 5) One who elevates his own thinking at par with Allah's revealed truth, he definitely prefers his own liking and denies the truth. Such a person suffers confusion and contradiction in his thought. Allah's Word holds the status of 'authority', and Allah says: "What remains there after *the truth*, save error (*adḥal*)!" (Surah Yunus, 10: 32) What derives from this is that "coherence with *the truth* is the natural form of 'thought'. 'Confusion and thought-contradiction' is un-natural form of thought." Thought-contradiction evolves from denial of truth. Let us see some instances of thought-contradiction arising from denial of truth.

- (i) To be 'Al-Ḥaqq' is the Title and Status of Allah's revealed Qur'an. Allah Almighty is not 'Al-Ḥaqq' Himself, He is 'The Descender of Al-Ḥaqq'. Allah is the One whose Word is 'Al-Ḥaqq'.

Allah says: "وَالَّذِي أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ الْحَقُّ". "And whatever has been revealed towards you from your Lord, it is 'Al-Ḥaqq'". (Surah ar-R'ad, 13:1) *Al-Ḥaqq* (the truth) and the Descender of *Al-Ḥaqq* cannot both be identical. Centuries have passed when the contradiction to call 'Al-Ḥaqq' equally to God and the 'Word of God' entered in Muslim thought. Some thological and mystical schools of Muslim thought or religious factions promoted it because of their factional interests. This falsehood, contradiction and confusion tarnished many other ideas in Muslim thought.

Let us another instance of thought-contradiction.

- (ii) It is commonly said and understood that Human beings have been sent as Vicegerent of Allah (*khalifa- tu-Allah*) in the earth'. This is absolutely incorrect. What the Qur'an says is that: "Man has been sent as vicegerent (*khalifa*) in the earth". (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 30; for further references see Surah Yunus 10:14; Surah Sâd 38:26) This thought contradiction as stained many other ideas in Muslim thought.

Allah Almighty, being Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient, transcends any need for having anyone in any area of the univers as His vicegerent, successor, officiating or second-in-command. *Khalafat*

refers to the freedom of choice granted to man with the mandate to exercise in accordance with Divine guidance in three areas: i) To use the provisions and resources placed on earth in line with Allah's revealed *truth*. "Allah has appointed man as *khalifa* on earth to see how they behave. (cf. Q, 10:14) ii) to judge between the people with truth and let not personal desires influence the judgement; (Aş-Şâd, 38:26) iii) not to allow enactment for free fulfillment of desires against Allah's sent Guidance at individual, collective, national and international level. (cf. Q, Surah al-Baqara:30-33)

Thus to evolve that knowledge of using things which nullifies any chance of conflict of desires and mischief and bloodshed is the purpose of all research.'

"All Glory befits Allah Who has descended the Book on His servant and has not left any flaw in it." (al-Kahf, 18:01) In view of this verse of the Qur'an and many others already stated, the root cause of all differences, dissensions, and sectarianism among Muslims cannot be located in anything except neglecting the Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an which Book Allah verifies as free of any flaw, error, crookedness, contradiction and deficiency.

(3) The Qur'an and the Ḥadīth Relationship

"Allah has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of truth." (Surah al-Fateh, 48:28) To believe that a saying, action, advice or response of the Prophet (pbuh) can ever be anything other than the elaboration of verses, or presenting a practical model of Allah's descended Guidance and religion of truth, or the implementation of Allah's injunctions, or unfolding of the *hikma* (vision or wisdom) of which he (pbuh) has been sent as the teacher, is absolutely against Allah's Word. No *hadith* can ascribe any addition, deletion or modification in Allah's revealed Word to the Prophet (pbuh). *Ḥadīth*, if rightly ascribed, is must to be coherent with Allah's revealed Scripture. Ḥadīth consists of reports relating sayings, action and implementation of Allah's revelations by the Prophet (pbuh). The compilers of the books of Ḥadīth are supposed to have accomplished this work with great acumen. We also do not doubt their piety, and sincerity. There is a great difference between an intellectually accomplished man-made work, and a work revealed and compiled under Divine guidance. The Qur'an is Allah's revealed Message delivered as Divine Speech compiled under Divine guidance. The text of the Qur'an does not consist of traditions (*riwayât*) ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh); it

consists of that collection of revealed Surahs and arrangement of Verses which was attested by the Prophet (pbuh) in around 23 years of his life, then attested by the witnessed-successors (*shahideen*)² of the Prophet (pbuh), and will keep on attested by the witnessed-successors of the prior *shahideen*. On the authority of the Prophet (pbuh) and on the authority of the witnessed-successors we believe the Text of the Qur'an to be 'Word of Allah', to be free of tampering and forgery, final and universal source of Divine law (*sharia*), to be in the protection of Allah and its compilation and Qir'at to be in accordance with Allah's guidance. ()

Let us have a view of the relationship of the Qur'an and ḥadīth in the shape of a table.

The Holy Qur'an is 'Word of Allah'	Ḥadīth is not called 'Word of Allah' even if it is a <i>ḥadīth-i-quḍsi</i> .
Text of the Qur'an is Revelation. Order of compilation of the Qur'an is as revealed by Allah as its Text.	Text of Ḥadīth is not Revelation. Order of compilation of Ḥadīth is not revealed. It is work of human intelligence.
The text of the Holy Qur'an, collection of surahs, and arrangement of verses is attested by the Prophet (pbuh) then attested by the witnessed-successors (<i>shahideen</i>) of the Prophet (pbuh) and then by their witnessed-successors.	This is not true about compilations of Ḥadīth.
The Qur'an is absolutely free of any flaw, tampering, contradiction, crookedness, and error.	This is not true about compilations of <i>ḥadīth</i> . A <i>ḥadīth</i> can be fake.
The Qur'an is Qaul (قول) i.e., i) teaching ii) precept, principle,	Ḥadīth is 'amllaction (عمل); In some cases it furnishes elaboration of some verses. In case of injunctions, it

furnishes implementation;

In certain cases it covers
eschatological matters;

In certain other cases it
consists of Guidance

The Qur'an is *al-Kitâb* (The Book); Compilations of *ḥadīth* are not
al-Kitâb.

There is no disagreement as to the
text of the Qur'an. It is fixed, final
and ultimate. Text of *ḥadīth* is not fixed,
final and ultimate.

The Qur'an is declared by Allah as
Ḥadīth Aṣḍaqq and as '*Aḥsan al-
Ḥadīth Kitâb*' which means that
"the Qur'an is Most Authentic
Book of Most Authentic *Ḥadīth*." No compilation of *Ḥadīth* is
declared by Allah as *Most
Authentic*. Coherence with the
Qur'an is the criterion for
declaring a *ḥadīth* authentic.

Allah categorises the verses of the
Qur'an into '*Muḥkamât*' and
'*Mutashabihât*'.

Allah declares the '*Muḥkamât*' to be
'*Umm-ul-Kitâb*' i.e., and legislates
that the interpretation of the
'*Mutashabihât*' must conform to
the former ones, otherwise their
interpretation will not be correct.

Those who will not keep this
injunction in view, the Qur'an
testify them as 'corrupt to the core
of heart' and 'the mischief-
mongers'.

There is no such Divine
categorization in *ḥadīth*.

This Divine rule is equally
applicable to the elucidation
of *ḥadīth*. The interpretation
of a *ḥadīth* must conform to
the '*Muḥkamât*' of the Qur'an.

The same will apply to those
who will make arbitrary
interpretation of *ḥadīth*

The *Muḥkamât* verses, put together, as declared by Allah in the Qur'an are '*Umm-ul-Kitâb*' (Foundation of the Book). The *verses* which comprise to make '*Umm-ul-Kitâb*' cannot be incoherent and inconsistent with each other.

The *verses*' comprising '*Umm-ul-Kitâb*' cannot abrogate or cancel each other. They cohere with each other. The statement of *injunction* in a verse may get detailed, qualified and fully explained when read in conjunction with such other verse. (Ref.)

The Qur'an alone is the ultimate source of Sharia; and the *Muḥkamât* are the foundation of the Book. So in reality it is the *Muḥkamât* which are the foundation of Sharia (Divine Law).

"No two ultimates can ever exist *at par* with each other in the same status."

The Qur'an is Divine Law and ultimate Source of *Sharia* and *ḥadīth* is its implementation.

To draw anything from *mutashabihât* without founding their interpretation on *Muḥkamât* is to go astray from Allah's revealed guidance.

To draw anything from *ḥadīth* without founding its interpretation on *Muḥkamât* is to go astray from Allah's revealed guidance.

The status of the Qur'an is that it is Allah's revealed *the truth* (*al-ḥaqq*). It is in the form of *Qawl* (teaching, precept, principle etc.).

Ḥadīth may consist of elaboration of a verse relating belief, or relating eschatological matters or relating implementation of Allah's injunction or some other matter similar to these.

Muḥkamât of the Qur'an consist of Divine laws (*Aḥkām*) about certain matters of life. A *muḥkam* verse may have implications for the individual, the society, the

Status of a *ḥadīth* correctly stating the action taken by the Prophet (pbuh) pertaining a *muḥkam* verse is that of

nation or the mankind as a whole. Injunction (*hukam*) stated in it is ultimate and universal. *implementation* of *hukam* (*tanfīz-e-hukam*).

The verses of the Qur'an do not abrogate each other. No verse of the Qur'an is ever abrogated or annulled (*mansookh*). The real position is that in the case of some *muhkamât*, the statement of a verse acquires its detailed explanation at some other place, in some other *muhkam* verse as the Qur'an says: () Because of shortsightedness people began to think that the verse revealed later, has abrogated the injunction stated in the verse revealed earlier on the same matter.

Since no *implementation* on a Qur'anic *hukam*, better than the one executed by the Prophet (pbuh) in that situation, can be thought of. So the *implementation* reported in a *hadith* in a particular situation will be ultimate (*hatmi*). However it will not be universal (*dâimi*).

The Qur'an is Allah's revealed *hukam* in Arabic language and source of Divine Law.

Implementation of *hukam* (*Hadith*) can never be a source of Divine law itself.

As Divine Law is universal (*dâimi*).

Since the situations change with the passage of time, place, quantity and capacity, the way of *implementation* of *hukam* stated in a *hadith* cannot be universal (*dâimi*).

The Divine Law (*Sharia*) is

ultimate (*ḥatm*) and universal (*dâim*). *Hadîth* is *PRECEDENT* of the *implementation* of a Divine law set by the Prophet (pbuh). The way of execution of a Divine Law in a particular situation, must keep with the requirements of time, place, quantity and capacity.

Nothing said, done or implemented by the Prophet (pbuh) was ever over and above the Qur'anic revelation.

No addition, deletion or modification which was not warranted by the Qur'an or which was over and above the Qur'an, can be ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh).

The Qur'an was revealed on the Prophet (pbuh). The Prophet (pbuh) was given the knowledge of the Book. He was given *Hikmah*. He was given the knowledge of granting *purification* (*taẓkiyah*). And he was given such special knowledge which no one else may know. Yet nothing given to the Prophet (pbuh) was superadded to the Qur'an as *Sharia*. Every kind of knowledge given to the Prophet (pbuh) was rooted in the Qur'an as Allah says: **The Qur'an contains knowledge of everything, big or small.** () The Prophet (pbuh) had been given no personal knowledge parallel to the Qur'an. ()

As many as exegeses, I have the honour to see, I am yet to see one, except Tafseer-e-Fâzli, which has followed the Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of its verses, which has observed the Divine

categorization of its verses into two basic categories: *muḥkamât* and *mutashabihât*, and has kept in view Qur'anic direction as to the interpretation of *mutashabihât*. I am yet to see any exegesis which has kept *Ḥadīth* and *tradition* subservient to '*Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth Kitâb*' like the *mutashabihât*. Rather opposite is the case. Almost all the exegetes and the translators of the Qur'an, I have the occasion to see, have made the *ḥadīth* override '*Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth Kitâb*'; they have made *ḥadīth* the authority (*Qāzī*) over the *Ḥadīth Aṣḍaqq*; they have made the Qur'an accommodate itself to the *ḥadīth*; they have made the Word of God subservient to the manmade compilations of *ḥadīth*. Analogously speaking, is it not like making the *mutashabihât* authority (*Qāzī*) over the *muḥkamât*; is it not like making the *mutashabihât* override *muḥkamât*; is it not like making the *muḥkamât* subservient to *mutashabihât*? How it was possible that disagreement, dissension, contradictions, sectrarian and factionalism based on differences in religion would not arise and flourish? This is not the case with any specific Muslim faction. It is true concerning almost all Muslim factions.

To believe that *Ḥadīth* can abrogate any verse of the Qur'an, is to deny the status of the Qur'an as Al-Ḥaqq, (i.e., Standard of Truth) and denial of the universality of the Qur'an; it is to surrender the '*Aḥsan al-Ḥadīth Kitâb*', '*the Ḥadīth-e-Aṣḍaqq*' before *ḥadīth* on the face of Allah's saying that

"The Prophet (pbuh) does not say anything of his own desire. He only says what is revealed to him (pbuh). (Surah an-Najam, 53:3-4)

In this verse the Qur'an verifies that the Prophet (pbuh) does not have any knowledge of his own over and above the Qur'an, and being contrary to it, necessary for the abrogation of some part of the Qur'an. How would you then explain what the Qur'an says:

"So judge between them by what Allah has revealed..." (al-Maida, 5:49) and "Whose judgement can be better than Allah's!" (al-Maida, 5:50)

How would you explain the above contention on the face of Allah's saying: "

And when you do not bring them a fresh revelation, they say: Why did you not make it yourself. Say: I follow only that which is revealed to me by my Lord. This is nothing but Light from your Lord, and Guidance and Mercy for people who believe. (Surah al-A'raf, 7:203)

Who can give a better introduction of His Prophet than Allah when He says:

Say, "I am nothing new among Allah's Messengers. I do not know what will be done with me or with you. I only follow what is revealed to me. And I am but a plain warner."

What derives from this verse is that having a personal knowledge over and above Allah's revealed knowledge on the base of which the Prophet can nullify any part of Allah's revealed Qur'an is absolutely contrary to the status of the Messenger as given in the teachings of the Qur'an. Then what is the status of *ḥadīth*?

Ḥadīth, if it is used in a very restricted sense for the reports of a saying, action or response ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh), it is the explanation, exposition, elucidation and interpretation of a verse or it reports the implementation of Allah's injunction expressed in a verse. But a very important thing which the Muslims have overlooked through out centuries is that

- i) If it consists of any explanation or exposition, it can never lack in coherence with the *muḥkamāt*.
- ii) If it denotes to the execution of an injunction by the Prophet (pbuh), it can never be universal; it is a *precedent* set by the Prophet (pbuh) of the implementation of a particular injunction in a particular situation.
- iii) And that implementation must always relate to the requirements of time, place, number and capacity.
- iv) One time precedent of the implementation of a law, does not become a law itself for all times to come. So Ḥadīth is not source of Divine law (*sharia*).
- v) Ḥadīth can never abrogate Allah's injunction.

The nutshell of above deliberations is that, (i) divine categorial division of the verses of the Qur'an is categorical; (ii) the Qur'an is *qawīd* (teaching), *Ḥadīth* is *ʿamal* (action, implementation), *Fiqh* (jurisprudence) is *ʿilm* (knowledge). And until and unless the *Ḥadīth* is accepted as *precedent* of the implementation of a particular Qur'anic injunction, jurisprudence (*fiqh*) cannot evolve. *Bid'a* (innovation) is that principle which provides Qur'anic foundation to *Ijtihād* but because of the shortsightedness of the Muslims is not being utilized since centuries. This is the Qur'anic principle which warrants for relating manmade knowledge of sciences, philosophic disciplines and time-tested human experiences with the revealed God-given knowledge derived from the Qur'an, within Qur'anic parameters and get rid of the concepts of *ijma'* and *qiyās*. Let us get rid of the traditional arbitrary principles of the interpretation of the Qur'an and turn towards *Tafsīr Qur'an* in accordance with the Qur'anic principles of its interpretation.

4. Belief in Oneness of Allah

Allah Almighty, the Creator of everything, has provided a Standard of Guidance in the shape of His prophets and messengers (pbuh). If Allah please to descend a revelation for a people, it is through that very messenger (pbuh). Without affirming faith in the messenger, submission to Allah is not accepted by Allah; and holds the disobedience of the messenger (pbuh) as disobedience to Him. While affirming faith in Allah, if anyone makes distinction between Allah and His messenger (pbuh), Allah proclaims it 'real disbelief' when He says:

"Verily those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers (pbut) and wish to discriminate between Allah and His messengers [by believing in Allah and not believing in the messengers] and say: We accept some and deny others, and want to create a midway in it. They are in fact the disbelievers, and We have prepared a humiliating torment for them. And those who affirm faith in Allah and His messengers (pbut), and do not differentiate among them [the messengers], unto them He will bestow their rewards..."

To believe in Allah is a claim. Belief in His messenger (pbuh) is accordant action. The claim, not supported by the evidence of practice, does not prove to be true. Those who are sincere in their faith do not discriminate between Allah and His messengers (pbut). Satan claimed that he believed in Allah Almighty but refused to accept the superiority of Adam (pbuh) as ordered by Allah, his refusal was based on making discrimination between Allah and the one appointed by Allah (pbuh). It proved Iblis's claim of faith in Allah, false. It is utmost necessary that Allah's messengers (pbut) and His friends (a.s.) are not considered, what the Qur'an calls '*min doon-i-Allah*' [besides Allah/as opposite to Allah] (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 23, 107). Those whom the Qur'an calls '*min doon-i-Allah*' are never friends of Allah. Those who take '*min doon-i-Allah*' to refer to Allah's friends, on whom Allah has conferred His blessings, and include Allah's prophets, the truthful ones, the certified witnesses (*shuhada*) and the righteous ones' (Q. 4:69) do not do correct rendering (May Allah forgive them.) as Allah says:

"Who so obeys Allah and the messenger, they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has conferred His blessings; these are the prophets [an-nabiyyîn] and the truthful [as-ṣiddiqîn] and the witnessed saints [as-shuhadâ] and the righteous [aṣ-ṣâliḥîn]. And what excellent companions they are!" (Q, 4:69) (Tafseer-e-Fazli 2)

5. The Qur'an is Guidance not only for the individual, but also for the group, the nation and the mankind.

The Qur'an says:

"It is the Reminder for the whole humanity. (Surah al-An'am, 6: 90)

"And verily We have sent you [the Prophet – pbuh] as mercy for the whole mankind." (Surah al-Anbiya', 21: 107)

"Exalted is He Who revealed The Criterion on His servant (pbuh) for he (pbuh) is a warner to the mankind." (Surah al-Furqan, 25: 01)

Allah Almighty is the Lord of the worlds. He has sent His Prophet (pbuh) as 'mercy of the worlds' (*rehma tullil âlamin*). This mercy of Allah is so all-inclusive that it suffices whole mankind. Only they can benefit who listen to the advice of the '*rehma tullil âlamin*' carefully, reflect on it respectfully, and prove their submission true, lovingly. He who does not benefit from this mercy, he himself is striving to keep away from Allah's Mercy, Allah's Mercy is not away from him. The declaration that the Qur'an is a Reminder for the mankind goes to prove that it is the ultimate and universal criterion for the whole humanity and it is destined to be executed as such.

It is very rare in exegetical tradition of the Qur'an that the status of the Qur'an as 'ultimate and universal Criterion and Reminder' and status of the Prophet (pbuh) as 'Mercy for the whole humanity' is kept in view through out in the translation and exegesis. This is why the Muslims lack in social, collective and global consciousness. They are badly split over factional disputes among themselves, they badly lack behind in their role in the affairs of mankind. An injunction of the Qur'an which addresses community, political administration and global world, relating it to themselves they as individuals self-assume powers for its implementation in the social, national or international level. Whereas none has the right to coerce and impose his understanding or beliefs on others on the pretext of '*amr bil-m'aruf wa nahi 'anil-munkar*' (). The rule of non-coercion and non-oppression in matters of *Deen* is must to be kept in mind. The consciousness given by the Qur'an is that one must keep himself with the community (*jama'*), and must keep the community with himself; small group of the community shall keep behind the larger one. The Qur'anic Message demands differently from an individual as it requires from the nation, the international community and the people at large. It is very rare that an exegete realizes that the social, national and international implications of an injunction or a verse are to be worked out distinctively so that an individual or a religious group does not take upon it what is meant for the State and so on. For example the injunction legislating for Jihâd

does not require an individual or a socio-religious group to establish a private army to wage *jihad* (holy war) against a country, or to take law in his hand to wage a holy war against socio-religious evils in the country or the word at large. *Jihād* is ever to be waged against a people on the command of the State and under the leadership of the one appointed by the head of the state. The injunction “to command people for doing good and forbidding people from evil (*amr bil-m’aruf wa nahi ‘anil-munkar*)” does not authorize anyone to take law and the administrative authority in its hand and impose its writ on others.

The concept of equality before the Divine law, equality in human rights, protection of life, property and honour, freedom to fulfill one’s ideals and live according to them so far as it does not harm similar equal freedom of others are not enlightened as a religious duty.

6. Universality of Allah’s Message

As seen above “The Qur’an is the ultimate and universal Reminder for the whole mankind.” (cf. Surah al-A’nam, 6: 90) For further references see Surah al-Qalam 68:52; Surah at-Takwir 27:81) Exegetical approach which limits the relevance of Allah’s Message with respect to its implementation to a specific climate of opinion, (e.g. to the period of the Prophet and the right-guided caliphs) denies universality of Allah’s Message. A great majority of Muslim exegetes and scholars have overlooked this fact. It has meted out great harm to the social consciousness of Muslims and their duty towards the mankind. Interpretation of verses in their alleged revelational context (*shân-i-naẓîl*), the most popular trend in exegesis since centuries, is the most clear instance of denial of the universality of Allah’s Message. But it is the most defective and faulty approach. It mars the finality, universality and ultimacy of the revealed Qur’anic Message by making it subservient to the authority of the *ḥadīth*, delimits it to specific social conditions in the past, and stops the Muslims in one way or the other from applying their own independent mind. Actually this trend is the outcome of taking *ḥadīth* as source of Divine law instead of taking it as *precedent* of the implementation of Divine law in particular conditions.

7. To observe ‘Necessary Stop’ (*waqaf-lazim*) between ‘the Chaste’ (*khair*) and the ‘Unchaste’ (*ghair*), the revealed and the conjectural

To observe ‘necessary stop’ between parts of a verse in which one part of Allah’s Speech refers to ‘truth’ and the other to ‘untruth’ or

where one part of ‘speech’ relates to ‘the believers’ and the other to ‘the disbelievers’ it is compulsory to observe ‘necessary stop’ in recitation. Wisdom inherent in observing ‘necessary stop’ in recitation is to teach the believers not to intermingle the ‘expressio of truth’ and ‘expression of untruth’ apart; not to treat them at par with each other. There is hardly any *tafseer* where it has been acknowledged as principle of the interpretation of the Qur’an and observed as such.

Allah witnesses that the Israelites have tampered with ‘Allah’s Word’ revealed towards them and have distorted its meanings. (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:75; an-Nisa’, 4: 46) On the face of this Qur’anic statement, to quote ‘Israelite traditions’ as *authority* in *tafseer* or as evidence in support of one’s contention is an instance of defiance of the above principle in ‘speech/statement’ (*Qaul*). Observing ‘necessary stop’ in practice (*‘aml*) as a necessary corollary of this rule, is also compulsory. A place where requirement of one’s desire coincides with the requirement of Allah’s Pleasure, it is the way of the God-fearing ones that they stop to keep them apart. ‘Allah’s injunction “to test the faith of women who come to Muslims as emigrants, and not to send them back to the disbelievers if they come up to the standard’ (cf. Surah al-Mumtahina, 60: 10) is the evidence for the rule of observing ‘necessary stop’ in practice.

As another instance take this injunction where observing ‘necessary stop’ in practice has been ordered by Allah when He says: “You who believe, do not take as allies those with whom God is angry...” (Surah al-Mumtahina, 60: 13)

Another instance of keeping ‘Compulsory Stop’ between ‘chaste’ and ‘unchaste’ occurs in verses 22-25 of Surah Yousaf (a.s) when certifying his chastity and righteousness Allah says: that when Ḥazrat Yousaf (a.s.) reached his full bloom, He Granted him *Authority* (*Ḥukam*) and Knowledge (*‘Ilm*). (cf. Surah Yousaf, 12:22) When the wife of the man, who has bought Ḥazrat Yousaf (pbuh) and in whose house Ḥazrat Yousaf was living, gets interested in Ḥazrat Yûsaf (pbuh) and

“tried to lure him, and desired that Ḥazrat Yûsaf does not restrain himself. She closed the doors tight and said: Come on! Here I am for you! He said: I seek refuge in Allah! My Lord has maintained me honourable. Verily they prosper not who do wrong.” (cf. Surah Yousaf, 12:23)

It is here that the Qur’an says:

“And she desired him indeed. [Necessary Stop] And he too would incline towards her, had he not observed the Decisive Argument (*burhân*) of His Lord. This is how We did not let evil and indecency come near him. Verily he is one of our sincere servants (*ibâdi-niil-Mukhlāṣîn*).” (cf. Surah Yousaf, 12:24)

The woman who drove Hazrat Yousaf (pbuh) to privacy, in her attempt to lure him, closed the doors tight, and expresses her evil intention verbally. It attests without any doubt that the woman had a strong unchaste inclination towards Hazrat Yusaf (pbuh). The Qur'an confirms this by saying: "And she desired him indeed."

In response Hazrat Yousaf (pbuh) says: "I seek refuge in Allah! My Lord has maintained me honourable. Verily they prosper not who do wrong." and refuses to accept her evil invitation. It attests that Hazrat Yusaf did not incline towards her and remained chaste.

The Qur'an confirms the chastity of Hazrat Yusaf by saying: "And he too would incline towards her, had he not observed the Decisive Argument (*burhân*) of His Lord."

What was that 'Decisive Argument' (*burhân*) which stopped Hazrat Yusaf to incline towards her?

Even at that time Hazrat Yusaf (pbuh) kept his eye on the 'necessay stop' (*waqaf lâzim*) that when the order of one's master or the mistress was against the Order of one's Absolute Master (i.e., Allah), the order of the former does not remain worthy of obedience. Allah attests that "observing this Decisive Argument (*Burhân*) Hazrat Yusaf remained chaste in his speech and action and did not incline towards her." In the verse in question Allah further attest Hazrat Yûsuf (pbuh) to be one of His sincere servant. The Qur'an verifies that satan cannot lead the 'sincere servant' (*Ibâd-i- Allah Mukhlaṣîn*) astray. () So reconfirms his chastness.

Now it is necessary that a 'compulsary stop' (*waqaf lâzim*) is observed in recitation between following two parts of the verse 12:24 which state: (i) (وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ) That she (the wife of the Egypt minister) verily desired him. (ii) (وَهُمْ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ) That he too has desired her, had he not seen the *Burhân* (Decisive Argument) of his Lord. This second part is a conditional statement. Allah verifies that Hazrat Yusaf (pbuh) fulfilled the condition of observing the Decisive Argument and remained chaste when Allah says: "This is how We did not let evil and indecency come near him. Verily he is one of our sincere servants."

It is very sad that most of the translators of the Qur'an and the exegetes fail to realize the significance of this Qur'anic principle and do not observe 'necessary stop' between a chaste word, action and person and an unchaste word, action and person. Now this flaw is must to

bring about contradictions in their understanding of the Qur'an. There are many other examples which will be quoted at other places.

Israelite traditions concerning the murder of Ḥazrat Zakariya (pbuh) and Ḥazrat Yahya (a.s.) are contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an. The Qur'an absolutely does not attest to the murder of Ḥazrat Zakariya (pbuh) and Ḥazrat Yahya (a.s.) nor is it deriveable anywhere from the Qur'an, yet very renowned exegetes have quoted these traditions in the exegesis with approval. This is an example of sheer disregard for the above mentioned Qur'anic principle of interpretation of the Qur'an.

8. The Qur'an is 'Al-Ḥaqq' and Allah is the Descender of 'Al-Ḥaqq'.

As has been stated earlier the Qur'an is 'Al-Ḥaqq' (the standard of truth/the authority). 'Al-Ḥaqq' is the epithet for Allah's Word descended by Him to His Messengers (pbut). The Qur'an is the last Book revealed to the last of His Messenger (pbuh). The Qur'an is intact as to its text from any kind of tampering and alteration. The Qur'an verifies that the Holy Books revealed earlier to the messengers are not intact as to their text. So at present and till the Day of Judgement the Qur'an alone merits the title of 'Al-Ḥaqq'. Allah is the One who's Word is 'Al-Ḥaqq' as the Qur'an says:

“...And affirm faith in that which has been descended to Muhammad (pbuh)—for it is *the truth (al-ḥaqq)* from their Lord...”
(Surah Muhammad, 47:02. For further reference see Surah Saba, 34:6; "Surah Sâd.38:29)

So Allah is the Descender of 'Al-Ḥaqq'. 'Al-Ḥaqq' and 'the Descender of Al-Ḥaqq' cannot both be one and the same. Any translation or *tafseer* of the Qur'an which uses the title 'Al-Ḥaqq' both for the Qur'an and the Revealer of the Qur'an is must to suffer inconsistencies and contradictions. Nothing except confusion can come out from it. The word 'Al-Ḥaqq' occurs 227 times in the Qur'an in its various derivatives and forms. At 224 places there is no scope of ascribing it to Allah by any means. There are three places where people have confounded it as Comely Name of Allah. As we have seen ascribing 'Al-Ḥaqq' as one of Allah's Names is to contradict the Qur'an at 224 places of its occurrence. Even at these 3 places, taking it to refer to Allah does not make any sense. Details in this regard can be seen in the following articles "Is Al-Ḥaqq one of *al-Asmâ al-Husnâ*" and "The Qur'anic Ontology and Status of *Al-Ḥaqq*". (The Qur'anic Theology,

Philosophy and Spirituality) Yet since early centuries this confusion has entered Islamic thought and given rise to various problems, complexities and inconsistencies in all dimensions of Muslim thought specially theology, philosophy, sufism and exegesis.

Verses misinterpreted to signify '*al-ḥaqq*' as one of al-Asmâ' al-Ḥusnâ

- I. *Mawla humu al-ḥaqq*: Their Master in truth; their Rightful Master; ... *Then are they restored unto Allah, their Rightful Master (Mawla humu'l ḥaqq) 06:62.*³ For further reference see: 10:30.
- II. *Rabbukumu 'l-ḥaqq*: Your Rightful Lord; your Rightful Nourisher, ... Such then is Allah, your Rightful Lord ... cf. 10:32.
- III. *al-wilâyatuhu li'llâhi al-ḥaqq*:
The true Protection is from Allah. He is the True Protector.
In this case the true protection is from Allah.⁴ He is Best for reward, and Best for consequence. cf. 18:44.
- IV. *Mâlik al-ḥaqq*: The True King; the Rightful King.
Then exalted be Allah, the True King! And hasten not (O Muhammad) with the Qur'an ere its revelation hath been perfected unto thee, and say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge. (20:114) Now Allah be exalted, the True King! There is no God save Him, the Lord of the throne of Grace. (23:116)
- V. *Howa 'l- ḥaqq*, He is the Real Lord; He is the True God;
"That is because Allah, He is the Real Lord.⁵ Lo! He quickens the dead, and He is Able to do all things." (22:6) "That is because Allah, He is the True God⁶ and that whereon they call instead of Him, it is the False, and because Allah, He is the High, the Great." (22:62) "That (is so) because Allah, He is the True God,⁷ and that which they invoke beside Him is the False, and because Allah, He is the Sublime, the Great." Cf. (31:30)
- VI. *al-ḥaqq al-Mubîn*: The True Manifest;
"On that day Allah will pay them their just due, and they will know that Allah is the True Manifest." (24:25)⁸

There is no scope for interpreting '*Al-Ḥaqq*' in the above verses even. Because if '*Al-Ḥaqq*' (the Truth) in the above verses is taken to refer to Allah, the verses become vague and meaningless, and become inconsistent with other places of the Qur'an. How could anyone take '*Al-Ḥaqq*' (the Truth) to denote Allah on the face of the verses like

“...And affirm faith in that which has been descended to Muhammad (pbuh)—for it is the truth from their Lord...” (Surah Muhammad, 47:02)

“The Scripture which is free from all doubts has been descended from the Lord of the Worlds. Or they say, he has fabricated it! It is the truth from your Lord, ['Am Yaqūlūna Aftarāhu Bal Huwa Al-Ḥaqqu Min Rabbika] for you to warn a people to whom no warner has come before you, so that they may be guided. (Surah as-Sajda, 30:2-3)

If one starts with the conviction that the Qur'an is free of contradiction, then, on the face of the verses like those mentioned above, he will not take '*Al-Ḥaqq*' to mean Allah at any place. Abrogation, creation vs eternity of the Qur'an, freewill vs predestination, Allah's Will and Allah's Pleasure, and Waḥdat-al-wujūd are some of the problems which entered Muslim thought because of the contradiction arising from taking '*Al-Ḥaqq*' to mean Allah.

9. No Verse of the Qur'an is Abrogated

One more place where Qur'an scholars have not been able to keep their balance in believing the Qur'an to be consistent and free of contradiction relates to the interpretation of the verse 106 of Surah al-Baqarah. This verse states:

“Any verse that We want to be superseded or forgotten, We replace with something better or similar. Do you not know that Allah has Power over everything?” (al-Baqarah, 2:106)

The Qur'an is revealed piecemeal in around 23 years. It is revealed as Speech and as Message. How easy it is to understand that when a verse is revealed, it will be seen in the context of already descended corpus till then; after the completion of Scripture it will be seen in the context of complete revealed and finally edited text. The Qur'an uses the word 'explained in detail' (*fussilat*) when it says:

“Alif-Lâm-Ra. (This is) a Book, the verses of which are full of wisdom. These are then detailed by Him Who is All-Wise All-Aware.” (Surah Hud, 11:01)

A teaching of the Qur'an expressed at one place, becomes fully clear and detailed at some other place/s.

It is also stated regarding the Qur'an:

“We have detailed the verses for those who receive admonition.” (Surah al-An'ām, 6:127)

“Thus do We explain the signs in detail for the people having knowledge.” (Surah al-A'raf, 7:32)

“This Book has been explained in detail with Knowledge.” (Surah al-A'raf, 7:52)

“All things have We explained in detail.” (Surah al-Asra', 17:12)

All verses of the Qur'an (the basic and fundamental—of established meaning, and the allegorical ones both contain wisdom.) The *allegorical* ones are dependant upon the *imparatival* ones for their interpretation. The relation of the *muhkamât* with eachother is placed such that the teaching contained in one verse gets explained in detail and clarity at some other place. The *muhkamât* are consistent and compatible with eachother. None of the *muhkamât* is contrary to any other of the *muhkamât*. None of the *muhkamât* is weak, conjectural, provisional, relative or cancelled and abrogated in any way.

Most of the exegetes and the translators do not understand the difference in considering the Scripture delivered as *Speech (Taqrîr)* and in considering the Scripture delivered as *a piece of writing (Tahrîr)*, take the Qur'an as *a piece of writing*, and do not follow the Qur'anic principles for its interpretation, fall into contradictions. The solution they have found to come out of their contradiction is in the shape of arbitrary division of the *muhkamât* into the *abrogated (mansookh)* and the *abrogater (nâsikh)* ones. But it has made them sink further into the quagmire. It is sheer insensibility to divide the *muhkamât* which Allah calls the *Umm ul-Kitât* (the Foundation of the Book), into the *abrogating (nâsikh)* and *abrogated (mansookh)* ones, and that we are discussing them as such since centuries! To label a Qur'anic verse abrogated, is to hurl doubts on a scripture which Allah has sent as 'the Standard of Truth', as the Criterion to differentiate between truth and untruth, and the source of Divine Law.

The teaching contained in verse 106 of Surah al-Baqarah stated above and teachings contained in verse 101 of surah an-Nahl “When We substitute a verse for another verse,- and Allah best knows what He reveals,— they say, ‘You make it yourself’: but most of them don't have knowledge.” (Q.16:101) both refer to Divine Messages revealed in the past. The Revelations descended in the past were not universal. They were particular to those respective communities. The Qur'anic revelation is universal; it is for all times and for all mankind. Some provisionary injunctions particular to that time and people were substituted by verses in the Qur'an containing universal and ultimate content. This is what has been stated in the verse 16:101 mentioned above. It is sheer nonsense to suppose that any of the *muhkamât* (*i.e.*,

verses basic, fundamental and universal, which the Qur'an declares as *Umm ul-Kitâb*) stands cancelled and abrogated by another of the same kind in the Qur'an. An injunction contained in one of the *muhkamât* gets fully explained in conjunction with some other verse/s and the Qur'an uses the word '*mufassil*' (explained in detail) for it.

The established meaning of Arabic word '*naskh*' in English is to cancel, to revoke, to supersede or to abrogate. It does not mean 'to read in conjunction with'. To apply the term abrogator-abrogated (*nasikh-mansukh*) for the conjunction of such verses to be read with each other is sheer un-Qur'anic, anomalous and confusing.

To accurately determine the referent of verse 106 of Surah al-Baqara, it is necessary to categorise the verse in question as *muhkam* or *mutashabih*. If it belongs to the *mutashabihât*, to apply teachings contained in it to divide some or all of the *muhkamât* into 'abrogating' and the 'abrogated', is absolutely contrary to Allah's injunction contained in verse 7 of surah Âl-e-Imran (which holds that not to interpret *mutashabihât* in coherence with the *muhkamât*, is mischief-mongering). In other words, if it is from the *mutashabihât*, it is inapplicable to *muhkamât*. The other possibility is that the verse in question (al-Baqarah: 106) belongs to the category of *muhkamât*. Is it conceivable that the one of the '*muhkamât verses*' (whom Allah declares 'the Foundation of the Scripture'; which means 'Basic, Fundamental, Definite in Meaning, Precise, and Imperitival') annuls some other similar verse! Is it possible that the *muhkamât* are inconsistent with each other! Absolutely never!

The nutshell of all this discussion is that none of the verses of the Qur'an is *abrogated*, and

- (a) to assert any verse of the Qur'an as *mansukh* (abrogated, cancelled, superseded or annulled) is absolutely against the teachings of the Qur'an;
- (b) to assert that such verses are cancelled and suspended to the extent of teachings contained in them, and are part of the Qur'an to the extent of recitation, is equally false, contrary to *Al-Haqq*, and unjustified;
- (c) to apply the term '*mansukh*' (abrogated) for the verses of the Qur'an is sheer un-Qur'anic use of this term. This term is applicable only to some verses of the scriptures descended to previous communities;
- (d) the '*traditions*' (*riwayat*) narrated in the name of Hazrat Ali (a.s) to support the conception of *nasikh-mansookh* are concoctions to lend sanctity and approval to such fabrications.

Any translation of the Qur'an or exegesis which fails to observe the Qur'anic principle "No verse of the Qur'an is abrogated." is a must to be fallacious and is must to give rise to contradictions and inconsistencies.

10. Unity among Mankind—To enlighten Qur'anic Teaching that "Whatever benefits mankind abides on earth."

'Islam' means peace. Peace and security of the mankind is the ultimate goal of all teachings of the Qur'an. Family is the smallest unit of the society. Totality of these units as a whole comprises humanity. To ensure peace for mankind, it is necessary that the family, the smallest social unit, the building block of the global community, is saved from fear (at present) and grief (about future). What this Qur'anic teaching prescribes is that all legislation for the county, the nation and the international communities, all treaties in war and peace, and rules and regulation of interaction between individuals, societies, communities and countries in state of turmoil or tranquility be directed towards this end. In Surah ar-R'ad giving illustration of 'the truth' (*Al-Haqq*) and of 'falsehood' (*al-batil*) Allah Almighty says: "Whatever proves beneficial for mankind stays on earth." (وَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِيهَا) الأرض "wa 'ammā mā yanfa'u an-nāsa fayamkuthu fī al-'arḍi") (Surah ar-R'ad, 13:17)

"As He (Allah) sends down water from the sky, the streamlets begin to flow, each according to its capacity. The water current carries on its surface growing layer of foam. And what they smelt in the fire, to make ornaments and other things, there also arise scum like it. Thus does Allah describe the similitude of the truth and the falsehood. As for the foam it vanishes as it dries up, while that which proves useful for mankind abides on earth. This is how Allah sets forth parables. (ar-R'ad, 13:17)

That alone endures which is beneficial for mankind. What is to the benefit of mankind does not necessarily relate to the desires of the mankind. There can be no substitute to the peace and security which the observance of the limits prescribed by Allah can accord. Allah states illustrations to make people distinguish 'truth' from 'untruth' and realize that benefit of mankind always relate with truth, and to induce them to do their best for the welfare of mankind.

Untill and unless a translator or an exegete does not make it clear that each and every teaching of the Qur'an ensures peace and security for the whole mankind, he will not do justice to his work.

11. The Principle of ‘Not to Step ahead of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh)

Allah commands the believers “Not to step ahead of the Messenger” when He says:

“O believers, do not step ahead of Allah and His Messenger. And fear Allah. Verily Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.” (al-Hujrât, 49:01)

Stepping ahead of Allah and His Messenger in any matter is contrary to Allah’s Command contained in this verse. This principle equally applies to the translation and *tafseer* of the Qur’an too. Allah’s step transcends all limit and form. To move ahead of the Messenger is to step ahead of Allah. Some instances where the translators of the Qur’an and the exegetes inadvertently and unintentionally could not realize the applicability of this principle are as follows:

Some verses of the Qur’an consist of ‘*separate letters*’ called ‘*muqattiât*’ and some just begin with them. None other than the Messenger (pbuh) had the authority and the capacity to give the explanation of these letters. The Prophet (pbuh) remained silent over them. In view of Allah’s command contained in verse mentioned above, any attempt to give interpretation of *muqattiât* will be tantamount to surpassing the Messenger (pbuh) and it would be unjust and against righteousness to do so. Even if one fills pages on their explanation, one will have to acknowledge that all this is nothing more than guesswork, conjecture and speculation; and that the real meaning of these *letters* are known to Allah and His Messenger alone. Yet the translators and exegetes, mostly, could not realize that to remain silent at these places will prove them better in knowledge. The conjecture and guesswork cannot take the place of truth; instead it entangles the seekers of truth in the understanding of Allah’s Message.

The command to support and honour Allah’s Messenger as expressed in surah al-Fateh, 48:08 is one more place to be mentioned. Allah’s Command for the believers to demonstrate regard for Allah’s Messenger and express respect for him (pbuh) is equally applicable to the translators and exegetes of the Qur’an. But most of them have not been able to realize this fact in their work. (May Allah forgive them.) Some instances of this grievous error in exegesis are as follows:

- (i) In Surah ‘*Abasa*, for the purpose of reforming some sincere follower of the Prophet (pbuh) on the art of preaching (and to give guidance to the believers in general) referring him in third person singular in order not to disclose his identity, Allah Almighty says:

“He frowned and turned away;
when the blind man came to him—
 for all you know, he might have grown in spirit,
 or taken note of something useful to him.
 For the self-satisfied one,
 You go out of your way—
 though you are not to be blamed for his lack of spiritual growth—
 but from the one who has come to you full of eagerness;
 and awe,
 you allow yourself to be distracted.
 No indeed! This [Qur’an] is a lesson,
 from which those who wish to be taught should learn,
 [written] on honoured, exalted, pure pages, by the hands of
 noble and virtuous scribes.” (Surah ‘Abasa, 80:1-14) (Haleem)

Shortsighted people placed a specific name there. Is it not surpassing ahead of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh)? Did they know better than Allah, who the referent in this verse was?

The height of senselessness is that the name they placed as referent of third person singular in the above verse was of the most reverent personality of the worlds, the most beloved servant of Allah *i.e.*, the Messenger (pbuh), who has been sent as role model of servitude for the whole humanity. How nonsensical is it indeed! How nonsensical is it that the exegetes are repeating that hateful story since centuries. The story ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh) absolutely does not cohere with the dignity of the Prophet (pbuh). *The Sattar ul-‘Ayyub* (Allah, Who hides the shortcomings of His servants) likes that we hate evil, but does not like that we hate evil-doers. In the above verses, the Almighty, keeping the name of a beloved follower of the Prophet (pbuh) hidden, granted knowledge of the art of preaching to the believers. But the shortsighted people (inadvertently and unintentionally) placed the name there, and that too of the most beloved servant of Allah (pbuh). (May Allah forgive them!) But think over the senselessness of the person who fabricated this story and narrated this guesswork as *tradition* and also of those who included such foolishness in their compilations and of those who kept on mentioning it in their exegeses.

(ii) It is said relating the captives of the war of Badar that Ḥazrat Umer had suggested that they be beheaded. It is said that the

decision taken by the Prophet (pbuh) that they be freed on the condition that (i) they pay ransom; (ii) those who know how to read and write, teach Muslim boys, 10 each as ransom; (iii) those who could neither pay ransom nor teach the Muslim boys to read and write, be freed by way of kindness, was not liked by Allah and Allah expressed His severe displeasure on this decision in verse 67 of Surah al-Anfâl. (آيَام حَبِيبٍ ﷺ, 504).

Is the concoction of a story which clearly contradicts with all those verses of the Qur'an which state the dignity, grandure, ultimate nearness and high stature of the Prophet (pbuh) before Allah or to enter it in the compilations of Hadîth and to quote it in books on the *sirah* of the Prophet (pbuh) and to state it in the context of explaining verse 69 of surah al-Anfâl in the exegesis, not amount to expressing sheer disrespect for the Prophet (pbuh) and clearly contrary to the command of Allah expressed in verse 09 of Surah al-Hujrât?

Let us examine the purpose of verse 69:08 under-discussion. It states:

مَا كَانَ لِنَبِيٍّ أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُ أَسْرَىٰ حَتَّىٰ يُثْخِنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تُرِيدُونَ عَرَصَ الدُّنْيَا وَاللَّهُ يُرِيدُ الْآخِرَةَ
وَاللَّهُ غَزِيرٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝

"It does not fit to the dignity of the Prophet to take prisoners of war before he has conquered the battlefield. You [people] desire the transient goods of this world, but Allah desires for you the Hereafter— And Allah is Almighty and the Wise — and had it not been preordained by Allah, a severe punishment would have come upon you for what [i.e., the ransom] you have taken." (Surah al-Anfâl, 8:67-68)

Let us analyse the content of this verse:

- (i) Can this Qur'anic comment "It does not fit to the dignity of the Prophet to take prisoners of war before he has conquered the battlefield." or the comment "You desired the transient goods of this world." be lawfully ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh)? No. Not at all.
- (ii) None could have the knowledge of Allah's Pleasure equal to or better than the Holy Prophet (pbuh) of what should have been done to shed the blood and crush the enemy before taking them as captives. None could know it better than the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and none could perform his duty better than the Prophet (pbuh).
- (iii) In the battle of Badar, when the enemy had started retreating, the believers should focuss on crushing their power before they turned towards collecting the booty and making them captives as they had already been commanded in verse 4 of Surah Muhammad (Q. 47:4).
- (iv) But it appears from verses 67-68 of Surah al-Anfâl that a group of the companions (r.a) fall short of acting upon this command. Some other companions (r.a) too disliked their behavior.

- (v) When the enemy had started retreating, the Prophet (pbuh) never issued any command restraining *mujahideen* from fighting and directing them towards making them captives or accumulating the booty.
- (vi) When the battle was over, and many of the enemy's personnel had been made captives and the booty had been accumulated, with a view to imparting knowledge to his followers the Prophet (pbuh) asked for their suggestion about treatment with the captives. They should have replied that as followers they seek knowledge of Allah's Pleasure from him (pbuh), and they will respectfully bow before the decision he (pbuh) would take. But the companions around him, offered their own suggestions. An over all impression of these suggestions was that a prominent number of them had a desire for the worldly goods. Allah liked that they should have preferred reward in the Hereafter and had kept their desire silent. This would have proved their humility before Allah's Knowledge and their bowing down before the Prophet (pbuh) as upholder of the knowledge of Allah's Pleasure.
- (vii) "Allah has ordained that He will not inflict any torment in the presence of the Holy Prophet (pbuh) nor would torment be inflicted on those who beg forgiveness from Him." (Surah al-Anfâl, 8:33) Had it not been pre-ordained, they who preferred worldly goods over the reward of the Hereafter would have been severely punished! So because of the presence of the Prophet (pbuh) in them, they were saved of grave punishment.

It is clear that Allah's displeasure in this verse is not directed towards the Prophet (pbuh). Rather it is directed towards those of the companions who showed inclination towards accumulating worldly goods.

Hazrat Umer (r.a.) belonged to that group of the companions (r.a.) who had disliked the behavior of the group (r.a.) mentioned above. The story ascribed to Hazrat Umer (r.a.) simply shows that he (r.a.) suggested that the captives should all be beheaded so that those who in expectation of huge bounty had preferred to make them captives instead of shedding their blood were disappointed. The Prophet (pbuh) is blessed by Allah with the dignity of being the Teacher of the Book and of Wisdom. None other could hold knowledge of what will please Allah in the case of captives, better than the Prophet (pbuh). Surely Allah did not want to set the rule till the Day of Judgement in case of captives that they should indifferently be killed. It is stated in Surah Muhammad that

“When you meet the disbelievers in battle, strike them in the neck, and once they are defeated, bind any captives firmly—later you can release them by grace or by ransom—until the toils of war have ended.” (Surah Muhammad, 47:04)

Releasing on the condition of ransom, or on the condition of teaching Muslim children to read and write or freeing mere on grace, the Prophet (pbuh) bestowed that elegant knowledge to mankind regarding treatment with the captives which will be saluted for ever.

The story which says that Allah expressed His displeasure on giving good treatment to the captives by the Prophet (pbuh) and releasing them on very humanitarian conditions only shows the inner condition of the hypocrites who concocted it; it shows the senselessness of the compilers of *Ḥadīth* who adding it in their books, and immaturity and weakness of their standards for accepting a tradition as *ḥadīth*, and silliness of the writers of *ṣirah*, exegetes and researchers who are narrating such fabrications since centuries without disapproval and falsification. (May Allah forgive them.) Are they not obliged to observe Allah’s Command for showing respect and regard for the Prophet (pbuh) as expressed in Surah al-Fateh. How can a translation or exegesis of the Qur’an fulfill its purpose if it accepts such traditions which contradict with any of Allah’s Command given in the Qur’an.

12. The Command to keep one’s voice below the Voice of truth

O believers! do not raise your voices above the voice of Prophet (pbuh) and be not loud in your expression before the Prophet as you are loud in speaking to one another. Lest your deeds become vain without your perceiving it.

Verily those who lower their voices in the presence of Messenger of Allah, they are the people whose hearts have been approved for piety. There is forgiveness and a great reward for them. (Surah al-Hujrât, 49:2-3)

The voice of Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) is the voice of truth as it delivers truth to the believers. The believers are obliged to listen it with attention and with the mind to obey. To keep one’s voice low before the voice of truth, is to show reverence, and raising the voice above, demonstrates irreverence for the Messenger and going ahead of the prescribed limits of respect for the truth. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) is The Teacher. He grants knowledge of the Book and Wisdom; he grants purification. He has granted that knowledge which was not present before given by him. Whenever a believer talked to the Prophet (pbuh), he talked with the intention to get confirmation or correction of his knowledge. It is utmost necessary for a translator, an

exegete, a *mohaddith*, a writer of *Sirah* or a research scholar to keep in view that no human being, or a jinni or an angel was ever a teacher to the Prophet (pbuh). None other than Allah has the status of a Teacher for the Prophet (pbuh). Disrespect effects the situation adversely. The actions of the disrespectful are rendered fruitless.

Let us ponder over the following:

i) To render the knowledge of science and philosophy secular and assert that we are not religiously obliged to follow the Prophet (pbuh) in these areas of research, ii) to divide the person of the Prophet (pbuh) into various facets and assert his being Allah's messenger one of them, and iii) to give preference to man-made knowledge over revelation and to make revealed knowledge subservient to the former, and suggest that in case of conflict between the philosophico-scientific study of nature and the revelation, the philosophico-scientific study of nature will override the revelation, is it not a sheer violation of Allah's command "to keep one's voice low before the voice of truth" (as the voice of the Prophet is the voice of truth)? With such presuppositions, can an exegete ever reach the intent of Allah's Message!

13. The Exegesis is not subservient to the Lexicon and Grammar of the Arabic language.

Usually it is said:

"The Qur'an is revealed in Arabic. Arabic is known for its rhetoric and eloquence, for well-defined syntax and grammar, for beauty of expression and insights, and for various other qualities of a developed language. For the understanding of the verses of the Qur'an, besides expertise in syntax and grammar, knowing the context of its revelation (*asbāb-i-nazūl*), the knowledge of the abrogating--abrogated verses, knowledge of Ḥadīth and 'sciences to Ḥadīth' is utmost necessary. These are the parameters without which the meaning and import, the style and coherence of the Qur'an cannot be understood."

Or

"The proficiency at least in following fifteen sciences necessary for one to qualify for writing exegesis: lexicon, syntax, grammar, derivation, idiom, expression, art of reciting, knowledge of beliefs, abrogating--abrogated, reasons of

descention of a verse, principles of jurisprudence, traditions and sciences of tradition——last but not laeast is the special blessing of Allah.”¹⁰

Can anyone name any Qur’an scholar of any times in the history of Muslim thought and civilization who or his followers have not claimed his sublime mastery over all these and many more sciences along with Allah’s special blessing over him? Concerning whom among the *mu’tazilites*, *‘asharites*, theologians, philosophers, Sufis of the early and medieval Hijra centuries, or the Ahl Ḥadīth, Devbandi, Brelvi, relating to Maulana Mududi, Allama Ghamdi, or to Dr. Tahir ul-Qadri, or relating Tanzeem Islami, Chakrralvi, Agha Khani, Waḥdat-al-wujudi, waḥdat-ash-Shahudi of the modern and the contemporary scholar can anyone point out that any of them lacked mastery over all the obove mentioned sciences. Even the false claimant of prophed-hood and his false descendants are not an exception to it.

The point to understand is that all these skills, proficiencies and sciences asserted to be necessary for setting on an exegetical work are all temporal, conjectural, provisional and manmade. Untill and unless the Qur’an scholars do not get out of considering mastery over manmade sciences to be standard for the interpretation of Allah’s revealed Word, and do not turn towards Allah’s revealed Word itself for the ‘principles of its interpretation, they cannot get out of sectarianism. Untill and unless the Clear Arabic of the Qur’anic Text itself (Surah ash-Shu’ra, 26: 193-195) is being made the standard of syntax, grammer, idiom, eloquence and rehotric alongwith taking the Qur’an as Allah’s Speech and Address (instead of taking it as a piece of writing), the real coherence cannot be discovered.

14. The Qur’an is delivered as Speech or Address, and not as a Piece of Writing.

The Qur’an is a Book, The Best of All Narrations Book, ‘The Most Authentic Book of Hadīth’ revealed as Speech and Address (*taqreer* or *khatāb*) in a period extending over about 23 years, compiled under Allah’s guidance by the Prophet himself. The text delivered as Speech, even though compiled as book, demands principles of interpretation other than required for the interpretation of a text delivered or composed as a piece of writing. Most of the exegetical works in the history of Muslim civilization have failed to recognize this difference. In a speech, the speaker addressing in ‘second person singular’ can address to each and everone of his addressees even though they spread over a period of centuries ahead. The Holy Qur’an is revealed to the

Prophet (pbuh) but it is not descended for him. He (pbuh) has been sent with ‘guidance’ and with ‘the religion of truth’. (Surah Tauba, 9:33; Surah al-Fath, 48:28; Surah, as-Saff, 61:09) Whatever verse was ever descended upon the Prophet (pbuh), the teaching and guidance therein only verified what already was present in the life model of the Prophet (pbuh). It never occurred that the Prophet (pbuh) had to mend his ways after the descending of a revelation. The revelation of the Scripture always verified the *Qaul* (the precept), ‘*amal* (practice), ‘*ilm* (knowledge) and *ikhlâs* (good intention) of the Prophet (pbuh). The exegetes, the *Sirah*-writers and the Qur’an and Ḥadīth scholars, while not recognizing this difference, have applied the same rules as applicable to the interpretation of a piece composed as writing, to a text which is essentially Allah’s Speech and Address compiled as a Book. So they have failed at many places, unintentionally, to observe the Qur’anic command to show respect and honour for the Prophet (pbuh). (May Allah forgive them all.) But whenever anyone fails to observe any of the principles of the interpretation of the Qur’an prescribed by the Qur’an itself, he is bound to fall in contradictions and inconsistencies and the translation or the exegesis is bound to be flawed and faulty.

Two instances of the defiance of this Qur’anic principle are hereby presented for illustration. It is said in the Qur’an:

“The Truth is from your Lord. So [you] do not be one of those who doubt.” (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:147)

In this verse Allah addresses in ‘second person singular’ to each and everyone of the People of the Book who doubts about its being the Truth from the Lord. There are exegetes who, not discriminating ‘Speech’ from ‘piece of writing’ consider that the address in this verse is directed towards Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh). There are others who add to it that ‘however the anger and admonition portrayed in it is directed at the People of the Book.’ As is clear from the context, both these categories of exegetes, not differentiating ‘the speech’ from ‘the writing’, are taking the Qur’an as a ‘Writing’, other wise how can they say that the address is directed towards Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) regarding whom the Qur’an verifies “that he (pbuh) has been sent with guidance and the religion of truth.” as mentioned above.

Second instance is from Surah az-Zuhâ. The translation given below is taken from “Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilâli and Dr.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious the Most Merciful'

1. By the forenoon (after sunrise).
2. By the night when it darkens and stand still.
3. Your Lord (O Muhammad) has neither forsaken you nor hates you.
4. And indeed the Hereafter is better for you than the present (life of this world).
5. And verily, your Lord will give you (all good) so that you shall be well-pleased.
6. Did He not find you (O Muhammad) an orphan and gave you a refuge?
7. And He found you unaware (of the Qur'an, its laws and Prophethood) and guided you?
8. And He found you poor and made you rich (self-sufficient with self-contentment)
9. Therefore treat not the orphan with oppression.
10. And repulse not the begger.
11. And proclaim the grace of your Lord (i.e. the Prphethood and all Graces).

To show respect and honour for the Prophet (pbuh) is obligatory for the believers. () Whole life of the Prophet (pbuh) is the excellent model, the ideal par excellence for the believers to follow as stated by Allah in Surah al-Aḥzâb 33 at verse 21 when He says:

"The Messenger of Allah is 'an excellent model to follow' for those of you who put your hope in Allah and the Last Day and remember Him often." (Surah al-Aḥzâb, 33:21)

The Qur'an verifies that the Messenger (pbuh) was sent with Guidance and the Religion of Truth. (Surah al-Fateh, 48:28) The Qur'an equates the submission to the Prophet (pbuh) as submission to Allah. () The Qur'an asks the Prophet (pbuh) to proclaim for the believers: "If you aspire for Allah's love, follow me, Allah will include you among those whom He loves." ()

Keeping the above in mind let us ponder for a while, could the Prophet (pbuh) ever treat the orphan with oppression? Could he ever rebuke the begger? How senseless it is to attribute the address in these verses to the holy person (the model par excellence) of the Prophet (pbuh)!

The same is true regarding other verses of the *surah*. Bearing witness to the day when it brightens and of the night when it spreads

all over and sheds peace, Allah Almighty states that, He has not abandoned the mankind. Being the Beneficent and the Merciful, He assures man of a good future.

Of course the Prophet (pbuh) was brought over as an orphan by Allah's Will. Was he (pbuh) the only orphan in the world! Being Allah's Messenger and role model and having brought up as orphan himself, was he (pbuh) not aware of the hardships an orphan has to go through.

The Prophet (pbuh) is sent as the Teacher of the Book and of the Wisdom. () Allah addresses the believers through His Messenger (pbuh). Repeating of the lesson by the teacher is to provide convenience to the followers in learning.

Let us take another instance. Stay at 'Arafat during Hajj is compulsory. Allah almighty says:

"... then on your return from 'Arafat, remember Allah at the Mash'ar-il-Harâm. And remember Him the way He has guided you. And verily, before this you were of those who were astray." (Surah al-Baqarah, 2:198)

Does the assertion "before this you were of those who were astray" include the Prophet (pbuh) too? Not at all. The believers are being addressed and given guidance through the Prophet (pbuh) who has been "sent with guidance and the religion of truth". (Surah Tauba, 9:33; as-Saff, 61:9) There are many such places where Allah addresses the believers in 'second person singular' in His revealed Speech. If the dignity and status of the Prophet (pbuh) is kept in mind, all those places which do not cohere with the high status of the Prophet (pbuh) as the Messenger of Allah sent with guidance and the religion of truth for the guidance of mankind, (Surah Tauba, 9:33; al-Fateh, 48:28) sent as role-model par excellence (Surah al-Ahzab, 33:21), sent as "Mercy for the whole mankind" (Surah al-Anbiya, 21:107), sent as the giver of glad-tidings and as warner for the whole mankind (Surah al-Ahzab, 33:45; al-Fateh, 48:8); about whom Hazrat Isâ (pbuh) said to his people "O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of Allah unto you ... and give you the glad-tiding of a Messenger to come after me, whose name shall be Ahmad (pbuh)." (Surah as-Saff, 61:6), regarding whom Allah took covenant from the prophets that they will believe in the Prophet (pbuh) when he will come to them, and will render all help to him (pbuh) (Âl-e-Imran, 3:81) and the one in whose favour Allah has ordered the believers to show respect, regard and honour (Surah al-Fateh, 48:9), concerning whom the believers are commanded to keep their voices low (), whose hand Allah identified as His Hand (), stepping ahead of whom Allah asserts as stepping

ahead of Him (), on whose heart Allah revealed His Own Holy Word (). Concerning whom Allah says that “he does not say anything of his desire; he (pbuh) says only what is revealed on him” ()

How senseless it is to think that Allah’s Speech in ‘second person singular’ as in “This truth is from your Lord. So you be not of those who doubt!” (al-Baqara, 2:147) or “Did He not find you an orphan and gave you a refuge?” or “did He not find you unaware (of the Qur’an, its laws and Prophethood) and guided you?” or “He found you poor and made you rich (self-sufficient with self-contentment)” or do not treat the orphan with oppression; and repulse not the beggar.” is addressed to the Prophet (pbuh) instead of the believers; (Surah az-Zuhâ, 93:1-11) or “He frowned and turned away, when the blind man came to him— for all you know, he might have grown in spirit, or taken note of something useful to him. For the self-satisfied one; you go out of your way— though you are not to be blamed for his lack of spiritual growth—but from the one who has come to you full of eagerness and awe; you allow yourself to be distracted.” (Surah ‘Abasa, 80: 1-10)

15. To state anything from the level of knowledge is commanded.

It is stated by Allah in the Qur’an:

O, You who believe! why do you say that which you do not act upon? It is most hateful to Allah that you say that which you do not act upon. (Surah as-Saff, 61:2-3)

Qaul (speech, information), ‘*aml* (acting upon), ‘*ilm* (knowledge) and *ikhlas* (sincerity) are four levels of a single reality. To give advice, commend something, forbid anything, hold a belief, make a claim or approve a principle, precept or teaching is to talk on the level of *speech*. It is most hateful near Allah that one says something but does not act upon it himself. This is not merely a principle of speech addressed to the individual alone. This principle equally applies to giving an interpretation of the Qur’an too. This is a Qur’anic principle for the interpretation of the Qur’an.

The state that comes after acting upon an information, advice, guidance, order, principle, precept or teaching is called knowledge (*‘ilm*). One who is true to his word, there is no contradiction in his speech and action. To give interpretation of a verse with *knowledge* is to share the outcome of one’s own experience of acting upon that injunction or teaching. Such interpretation leaves little scope for doubt and distrust. This is the way of *Shahideen*, that they speak from the level of knowledge even if they are giving interpretation of the Qur’an. Hazrat Fazal Shah’s ‘Narration’ (*Bayân*) published by his worthy successor Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Fazli as *Tafseer-e-Fazli*, is an instance

of observing this Qur'anic principle. Those who do not acknowledge this Qur'anic guidance as principle of interpretation of the Qur'an, they consider speculation, conjecturing, theorising and opinionating as knowledge. Certitude and knowledge based on Qur'anic authority have no meaning for them. To follow someone with such a dubious understanding of the Qur'an is not without danger.

There are four levels of believing corresponding to the four levels of *qaul*, *'aml*, *'ilm* and *ikhblâs* expressed above. *Sharia* (Divine law) is *qaul*. Allah Almighty commands to act upon *sharia* following in the footsteps of a person who is already turning towards Allah in repentance and obedience.¹¹ This is *Tariqat* (the Way). *Tariqat* (i.e., acting upon *sharia* following in the footsteps of one's *shahid*) corresponds to the level of *'aml* in already mentioned hierarchy. *Haqiqat* (reality) corresponds to the level of *'ilm* (knowledge). All knowledge is post-experience. One who keeps upright and steadfast in following one who he admits as *shahid* or guide, he is blessed and graced with *ma'rifah* (*gnosis*, the real knowledge). *Ma'rifah* corresponds to *ikhblâs* (purity of heart). This is the basic qualification for giving an exegesis. Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.), the narrator of *Tafseer* published as *Tafseer-e-Fâzli* (7 vols. 1982-1997) says:

“Commentary (exegesis) of the Holy Qur'an is that lucid description, given in pure words by the beloved servants of Allah Almighty which carries the certificate of success for the believers.”
(*Tafseer-e-Fazli* 1, xiv)

16. Respect for Difference of Understanding

Allah Almighty says in the Qur'an:

“And there is some who dispute about Allah without knowledge, and guidance and a Book giving light.” (Surah al-Hajj, 22:8; Surah Luqman, 31:20)

The state arrived at after acting upon Allah's guidance, is knowledge.

Guidance is the outcome of following in the footsteps of the guide (pbuh).

The Book giving light, possesses the status of '*Al-Haqq*' (The Authority; The Standard of Truth).

Evidence relating hearing will be considered authority or knowledge if the reporter is truthful. The narration of it will bear the status of authority if it relates to him to whom it is being ascribed. If it

is something ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh), despite the truthfulness of the reporter it will never be incoherent with the *Muhkamât*.

Evidence related seeing will be narrated by him who truthfully narrates his observation. Such observation will always support truth. If it is something ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh), despite the truthfulness of the reporter it will never be incoherent with the *Muhkamât*.

Evidence relating a Book will be true if the Book referred to is free of doubt and contradiction. The Qur'an alone has this status at present and till the Last day. If the evidence consists of *Motashabihât*, its interpretation is must to be based on *Muhkamât*.

No disputant about Allah has ever presented proof of his truthfulness with knowledge, with guidance and with enlightening Book, nor will they ever be able to do so. The disputants about Allah, lack in knowledge, guidance and authority. While saying anything we must see that proof of our truthfulness, and verification of our stance from *authority* exists.

He who harbours enmity with truth, disputes about Allah, and says baseless things. By creating doubts and misgivings, he keeps on leading people astray from Allah's path.

As per Qur'anic diction, the Qur'an is *Qaul* (standard of truth as teaching, principle and precept etc.). Anything said about Allah, His attributes, His Goodly Names, His Dignity and His revealed Guidance will be based on knowledge if it is certified by the Qur'an or it is coherent with the Qur'an. (TF5, Cf.)

If anything relates to action, it will comprise knowledge if one talks about it after acting upon it in the footsteps of a *muneeb* (one who turns towards Allah). (Surah Luqman, cf. 31:15) One who sets upon writing an exegesis without following his Shahid in the present (i.e., *mann 'anāba 'ilayya*), says nothing except his own whims and speculations. He will talk nothing about Allah with knowledge and with guidance.

The Qur'an is a Book giving light. The light given by the Quran is that a verse of the Qur'an should be identified first as *muhkam* or *mutashabih*. Then whatever is said about Allah, must cohere with the *muhkamât* (verses which are fundamental, basic and definite in meaning), otherwise it will be devoid of proof, whimsical and arbitrary. Further, it should be observed that whatever conclusion one has reached, must be supported by two other places in the Qur'an as derived from Allah's Message whose reference is given below:

"Allah has descended the Most Beautiful Statement. A scripture whose parts resemble each other, oft-repeated..." (Surah az-Zumer, 39:23)

No statement in any circumstances can be imagined better than the one declared by Allah as “the Most Beautiful Statement”. It consists of oft-repeated parts. All parts of the Scripture are identical in colour and style. There is no flaw in its narration, no doubt as to its composition and no contradiction as to its meaning. When a statement is repeated, it enhances the light of guidance. If at one place it presents a claim, at other place it presents evidence. This is how a statement occurring at one place, gets detailed at some other place.

Because the Book consists of similar and oft-repeated verses, it can be safely drawn as a principle is, that the conclusion reached at as interpretation of such verse, must be supported by two references from the Qur’an: the verse under discussion presents a claim, the other one its evidence, and one more to support the derivation. Following this rule derived from the Qur’an will close all the doors for arbitrary interpretation.

17. Not to Interpret any Verse Out of Context

To quote or interpret a verse out of context, complete or in part, amounts to altering the meanings of the Qur’an. It is not without an illicit purpose. The purpose is to insert one’s own suggestion in the Qur’an, the purpose is to mold the Qur’an in accordance to one’s desires, and the purpose is to get validation for one’s own likes or dislikes. This is forgery in the meanings of the Qur’an, and hateful.

As an illustration we will present verse 3 of Surah al-Hadid 57 which is presented by the theologians and Sufis belonging to the *Wahdat al-Wujud School*. This verse says:

“هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٣﴾” He is the First and the Last; the Evident and the Hidden; He has knowledge of all things.”
(Surah al-Hadid, 57:3)

This is one of the verses which the theologians, sufis, philosophers and exegetes of *wahdat al-wujud* school present in support of their position. They present interpretation of this verse out-of-context like this:

Nothing is before Him. He is the First (*al-Annal*). Everything that has a beginning also has an end. He is after everything. Nothing is after Him; He is the Last (*al-Akhir*). Therefore He is Absolute Existence (*Wujud-e-Mutliq*).

All existence is appearance taken by His essence. He is the Evident (*az-Zâhir*). He was Hidden (*al-Bâtin*) before every appearance, He is Hidden in

everything, He will be Hidden (*al-Bâtin*) after everything. He is Evident as appearance of determinations, He is Hidden as essence of determinations.

Now how is it out of context? There are seven verses before and after this verse which say:

1. Whatever there is in the heavens and the earth, Glorifies His Majesty.
2. The Kingdom of the heavens and of the earth belongs to Him alone, Who gives life, Who gives death, and Who is All-Powerful over everything.
3. So He is the First, the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden. And He is the Knower of everything.
4. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and established He on the throne. He knows everything that enters into the earth and knows whatever comes out of it; and knows whatever descends from the heavens and whatever ascends to them. He is with you, wherever you are. And He sees your actions.
5. Kingdom of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him. And all affairs turn towards Him.
6. He merges the night into the day, and the day into the night; and knows what is hidden in the chests.

Reciting all this about His Glory, Majesty and Grandure in the above six verses Allah invites the people to affirm faith in Allah and His Messenger (pbuh), and commands the believers to spend in His way of which He has given in their control. Then He gives them the glad-tiding that he who affirms faith and spends in the way of Allah will be blessed with a great rewarded.

Can anything from verse 3 above be derived like the one as derived by the *wahdat al-wujud school* taking it out-of-context? (Never. Not at all.)

The verse 3 above belongs to the *mutashabihât* and must be interpreted in line with the *muhkâmât*. Keeping it in the context, its elaboration as per Qur'anic perspective and in accordance with principles of interpretation should be like this:

The Qur'an uses epithets '*Wahid*' (The One) and '*Ahad*' (Beyond all Determinations) for Allah. In common parlance they both are translated as 'The One'. According to the lexicon of Qur'anic Message '*Wahdat*' refers to 'The Oneness and Unity' while '*Abdiyyat*' refers to 'the state before coming into being of determinations'. The state before creation of the world is '*Abdiyyat*'. No determinations ever existed at '*Abdiyyat*'. There is utter darkness at '*Abdiyyat*'. Allah was there even then. He is 'The First' (*al-Awwal*). Reality of things means 'the existence of determinations'. Allah is absolutely Free of having desires, flaws, faults, deficiencies, or whatever. There is no aspiration in Him to make His Dignity manifest in any way or to relish His Own Grandures. No

Divine Intention to create the world nor of not to create the world ever exists Him. This is the state which the Qur'an refers to as *Samdiyat*. Allah is *as-Samad*. In this state of absolute and ultimate Self-Sufficiency and Purity from need, desire, defect, deficiency or aspiration, Allah Wills to create the universe and to make His Dignity Manifest. 'Wabdiyyat' (State of Oneness) begins with the coming into being of determinations. Every determination/thing has an end as it has a beginning. Allah is there after the end of every determination (*al-Âkhir*). None is more manifest than He is Manifest (*az-Zâhir*) with His Signs in the creation. () None is hidden more than He is Hidden (*al-Bâtin*) as the Giver of purpose in the essence of everything. () He knows everything about anything since its creation till its end, and is All-Powerful to do what He Wills.

To present whole or part of a verse out of context in support of sectarian beliefs is frequently used method and device of the promoters of sectarianism. Almost all sects to some extent make use of this method in support of their beliefs. To mould truth according to one's desires is transgression (*fisq*) and Allah leads astray none except one who is a transgressor (*fasiq*).

18. Freedom of Will for Man

Shari'at, Tariqat, Haqiqat and Ma'rifat

Let us examine some important terms, used in religious context, in the light of Qur'anic principles of the Interpretation of the Qur'an. Some aspects of these terms have been explained above. Some others are being explained here.

Some scholars consider *Sharia* (Divine law) as comprising the total of *Deen* (Islam). They consider *Tariqa* (The way) as a parallel arbitrarily devised *Deen*. These scholars consider *tariqat* as a system of belief and action superadded to the reality of *Deen*. They consider it having no roots in the Qur'an or the *Sunnah*. They argue that some Muslim scholars having used these terms in a specific sense, have given the philosophers and sufies opportunity to formulate a new system of religious thought parallel to *ad-Deen* Islam.

Qur'anic Point of View

We do not, in principle, disagree with the above mentioned scholars. We too have reached the similar conclusions in our books *The*

Qur'anic Theology, Philosophy and Spirituality (published by the University of the Punjab Lahore: Pakistan in 2016) and Urdu Book *Muslim Fiker ki Qur'ani Jihât* (published by the PU Press Lahore: Pakistan in 2018).¹² The nutshell of what we have argued for in these books is that

The root-cause of these problems lie in (a) replacing Qur'anic terms by mismatched un-Qur'anic philosophical terms, (b) using the Arabic lexicon in place of Qur'anic lexicon, (c) accepting un-Qur'anic principles instead of Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an, (d) making *Hadîth* source of *Sharia* at par with the ultimate, universal and revealed Qur'anic Message, (e) declaring compilations of *Hadîth* as 'the six most authentic books' and making these compilations authority over the Scripture whom Allah calls 'The Most Authentic Book of *Hadîth*' (*Ahsan-al-Hadîth Kitâb*), which He also calls 'The Most Authentic *Hadîth*' (*Hadîth-i-Asdaq*), and (f) elevating mystical assertions based on their unveiling, and visions over and above the Qur'an as source and authority for deriving and accepting beliefs contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an; and in (g) formulation pseudo questions on Qur'an and Science (& philosophy) relationship; and especially (h) in accepting un-Qur'anic bipartite ontology from Greeks and Christians instead of tripartite Qur'anic Ontology, and (i) accepting the un-Qur'anic cosmology based on the ultimacy of laws of nature as compared to the Qur'anic cosmology of a Divinely Administered universe.

We salute Hazrat Fazal Shah (d. 1398/1978) for the guidance he has given that **"To insert terms in *ad-Deen* inconsistent with the Qur'anic teachings is infidelity."** The Qur'an says: **"And they divided into sects out of rivalry after the knowledge had come to them."** (Surah, as-Shurâ, 42:14) The Prophet (pbuh) is sent as 'trustworthy advisor' (*Nasih-un-Ameen*). When the 'trustworthy advisor' is not loved, the next step is to adjust and interpret his teachings according to one's own likes. It is transgression and divides the believers into religious sects. The Holy Qur'an is the fundamental document of his (pbuh) teachings. None ascribed to him (pbuh) can ever be contrary to its teachings. Giving respite is Allah's Dignity, otherwise Allah does not take time in cutting the roots. Religious scholars, researchers and exegetes who are entrapped in this malaise of compressing the truth according to their likes, suffer grave doubts. When one takes a wrong direction, is confronted with problems and is not ready to realize his fault, then he finds solution like splitting *the muḥkamât*, (the 'basic, fundamental, definite in meaning, precise, imperitival' and *Umm-ul-Kitâb* verses) of Allah's revealed Most Authentic Book, the Best of All Narrations Book, Allah's ultimate and universal Speech, Address, Message and Guidance into *nasikh & mansookh* and fabricates *traditions (riwayât)* to grant sanctity to such

concoction, or in arbitrary interpretation of the *mutashabihât*, or in making ‘Allah’s Word in Clear Arabic’ subservient to lexicon and grammar of the pre-Islamic Arabic literature, or making the self-authenticated manmade compilations of *ḥadith* authority or judge (Qazi,) over the Qur’an, Allah’s descended *al-Haqq*, the Standard of Truth, the Criterion, the Authority and the Book intact in Allah’s Protection.

(May Allah forgive the oversight of all those who became victim of any of such fault unintentionally and inadvertently! We beseech forgiveness from Allah for our ownself too.)

Another solution found by such scholars is to transform or translate Revelation into Science and Philosophy.

The Qur’an says: “Don’t intermix falsehood with Truth, or conceal the truth while you know it.” (Surah al-Baqara, 2:42, Âl-e-Imran, 3:71) The problem of the transgressor, the unfaithful and treacherous is not that he is in doubt about the truth, his problem is that his desires and likes do not allow him to remain faithful to truth. To intermix untruth (*batil*) with truth (*Haqq*) to suppress the truth knowingly is a clear revolt against the truth (*Al-Haqq*). This is done by inserting, accepting or allowing terms or presuppositions contrary to Qur’anic teachings. There is too many who follow them unconsciously and unintentionally. Allah does not say that “to intermix untruth with truth while you do not know it is not wrong.” What is false is false and is bound to reproduce consequences accordingly.

Stating about *traiqat* in the Qur’an, Allah says:

“But those who go wrong will be fuel for Hellfire.” If they had remained steadfast on the right way (*tariqa*), We would surely have bestowed on them water (rain) in abundance. (Surah al-Jinn, 72:16)

Wahdat al-Wujud and *Wahdat ash-Shahud* are two doctrines presented on the basis of mystic experience or what they call ‘unveiling and direct-witnessing’ (*kashaf o shahud*) on the relationship of Allah and ‘what is other than Allah’ (*mâ-siwâ*). There is hardly any Muslim theological, philosophical or Sufi school which has remained unaffected by this classification. Especially the *wahdat al-wujud school* (وحدت الوجود) has very seriously affected various dimensions of Muslim thought and civilization. Hazrat Muhayyuddin Ibn al-‘Arabi (1165 – 1240) is held to be the founder of *wahdat al-wujud* school (oneness of all

existence school). His followers call him the Grand Master (*ash-Shaikh al-Akbar*).

Hazrat ash-Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi (1564 - 1624) is held to be the founder of *wahdat ash-shabud* school (وحدت الشهود) (oneness of all manifestation school). His followers call him 'The Reviver of *Deen* of the Second Miliniam' (*Hazrat Mujaddid Alif-Sani*). We agree with those scholars who consider that both these doctrines do not present a correct formulation of the doctrine of Oneness or Unity of Allah as per Qur'anic teachings. We too have presented our understanding of the Qur'anic concept of *Tauhid* as '*Wahdat ash-Shahideen*' (وحدت الشاهدين).

Some scholars think that *Qadiriya*, *Naqshbandiya* and *Subarwordiya* Sufi Orders essentially belong to *wahdat al-wujud* school. (Ayyubi 2019) We do not claim to know much about the last two Orders. But being related to the *Qadiriya* order since 1985 (for more than thirty years), can claim with authority that *Qadiriya* (at least to whom Hazrat Fazal Shah belonged too) do not identify them with *wahdat al-wujud school*. The Sufi Order which started from Hazrat ash-Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani (r.a.) (470-561/1078-1166) is known as *Zahidi Qadri*. A new development in this Order took place with Hazrat Sultan Bâhoo (1039-1102 /1630-1691). The sub-Order that started from him (r.a.) is known as *Sarweri Qadiri*. As stated by Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.), Hazrat Sultan Bâhoo (r.a.) absolutely never was a *wahdat al-wujudi*. But his successors are divided as to his adherence. Some include him in the *wahdat al-wujud school* and interpret his poetry accordingly, and some others consider him opposite to *wahdat al-wujud* and interpret his *kalam* as such. There are several other Sufi Orders whose predecessors were not *wahdat al-wujudi* but the descendants turned to be so. A further new development in *Qadiriya* Order took place from Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.). Hazrat Fazal Shah (d.1978) himself was a Qadiri but was the initiator of Qadiri Fâzli sub-Order. His successors identify them as Qadiri Fâzli or Fâzli Qadiri. Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.) lived around a hundred years. In the last years of his life he (r.a.) started giving a commentary/narration (*Bayân*) on the Qur'an which completed before his death. Two of his worthy followers, Janab Ghulam Rehman (known as Secretary Sahib) and Janab Muhammad Ashraf Fazli (known as Dr. Sahib), were appointed to take notes. In his Will, he authorized Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Fâzli (d.1359-1438/1940-2016), one of his successors, to publish it. This narration/commentary of Hazrat Fazal Shah was published, as written by Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Fazli (r.a.), in seven volumes as *Tafseer-e-Fâzli* during 1982-1998. Six of its volumes have been published after

translation in English. The last one is in process. In the history of Qur'anic exegesis, according to our knowledge this is the only complete *Tafseer of the Qur'an in Qur'anic Perspective* (*Tafseer-i-Qur'an bil-Qur'an*). Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.) absolutely was not a *wahdat al-wujud*. In his commentary on verse 15 of Surah az-Zukhruf 43, Hazrat Fazal Shah and Muhammad Ashraf Fazli (r.a.) hold the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* absolutely un-Qur'anic. (Tafseer Fazli 6, 251) So the allegation that Qadiriya Order undifferentiatedly upholds the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* is incorrect and baseless.

Wahdat al-Wujud and Wahdat ash-Shahud and Wahdat ash-ShahiDeen

The idea that Allah Almighty is 'Absolute Existence' and everything else His manifestation, in the history of Muslim thought is known as *wahdat al-wujud*. In English it is termed as 'the doctrine of the oneness of all existence'. It is also termed as 'the doctrine of the oneness of all being'. Some prefer it to call 'the doctrine of the unity of all existence/being'. '*Wahdat al-wujud*' is based on two presuppositions: (i) To call Allah '*Al-Haqq*', using this epithet as a Special Name for Allah to call Him *the Truth, the Reality, the Ultimate Truth, the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute Existence or the Existence*, and in comparison to it call the universe as '*relative existence*' (*wujud-e-I'tabari* or *wujud-e-aẓāfi*) is one of these presuppositions. (cf.)

We have discussed above in detail that this presupposition conflicts with many more verses of the Qur'an and is absolutely contrary to the import of verse 2 of surah Muhammad 47 which says:

“*Wa Al-Ladhina 'Amanu Wa 'Amilu As-Ṣalibati Wa 'Amanu Bima Nuzzila 'Ala Muhammadin Wa Humma Al-Haqqu Min Rabbihim* (وَأَمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ) *Kaffara 'Anbum Sayyi'atibim Wa 'Aṣlahu Bālahum...*”

'He will overlook the bad deeds of those who have faith, do good deeds, **and believe in what has been sent as revelation to Muhammad—that is “the truth (al-haqq) from their Lord”**—and He will put them into a good state.' (Q, 47:02).

Being contrary to the Qur'an, it is against truth to use the epithet '*Al-Haqq*' for Allah. And all the implications drawn from this identification are contrary to truth accordingly.¹³

Some present '*wahdat al-wujud*' as the following:

That Allah is 'Absolute Existence' and everything conceived by common people as other than Allah, is temporal, transient and

ephemeral determinations taken by the 'Absolute Existence'. So everything which has a beginning has an end too. Apparently everything is real, but in essence it is 'the temporal manifestation of the Absolute Existence'. Reaching its end, it again goes to its origin.

Let us examine this view.

'*Wujud*' is an Arabic word from the root '*wao-jîm-daal*'. If Allah were '*wujud-e-mutliq*' in His Essence, what difficulty there was to express it in the Arabic Qur'an. But stating His own Dignified Self, Allah has used not a single word derivable from this root. Can anyone other, know the Person of Allah more than He? Is it not concoction to ascribe anything to Allah with reference to His essence, attributes, and goodly Names or whatever basing on one's own unveiling and direct-witnessing, which is contrary to the Qur'anic teachings?

The second presupposition in the foundation of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* is that Allah is both *transcendent* from as well as *immanent* in the universe. It is also known as the relationship of *tanẓîh* (transcendence) and *tashbîh* (immanence). It means that the universe is identical with God as His manifestation, but God is transcendent (*mâ-wara*) from it too.

As is clear, this second presupposition is based on their first presupposition. The first presupposition identifies Allah with '*Al-Haqq*' and then draws from it as implication that Allah is *The Truth*, *The Reality*, *The Absolute Existence* etc. Their first presupposition does not reconcile with the Qur'an. As we have seen above, it is absolutely contrary to the concept of Allah as enunciated in the Qur'an. Then how can the second presupposition be true?

William C. Chittick (b.1943) says:

"Ibn Arabi is not a philosopher, but a sage, a visionary and *wahdat al-wujud* is one of the many dimensions of his overall vision of reality which Ibn Arabi wants to convey to his reader. He further observes: "one of Ibn Arabi's themes is that reason or intellect ('aql) is inadequate as a source of knowledge of God, the self, and the world."¹⁴ (*Wahdat al-Wujud In Islamic Thought*)

Chittick is one of the experts on the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*. It is evident from the above observation that ash-Shaikh Muhayyuddin Ibn 'Arabi's vision based on his unveiling and direct-witnessing (*kashaf-o-shahud*) is the only 'standard of truth' for him. The same is true of the *Wahdat al-Wujud School* as a whole. (S. H. Nasr 1996)

The Qur'an certifies that "Nothing is like Him. He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer" (Surah, ash-Shurâ, 42:11) "Nothing is like Him" means that Allah

Almighty is supremely singularly Unique, and absolutely transcendent of all analogies, and beyond all determinations.

Taking one's unveiling and direct-witnessing, tasting (*dhawq*) and gnostic vision to such heights that one begins expressing views on the Oneness of Allah comparable to nothing but Allah's revealed truth is absolutely unjustified. Hazrat as-Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi too, on the basis of his vision founded on unveiling, direct-witnessing and mystic experience asserts that *wahdat al-wujud* is just a station but not the destination as proclaimed by *wahdat al-wujudi* school. So *wahdat al-wujud's* concept of God, as he argues, is neither the final description of the Qur'anic concept of God nor reconcilable with its teachings. Giving his own concept of God Hazrat Ahmad Sirhindi asserts that Allah is God; we are His servants. He is the Creator; we and whatever there is in the universe are His creation. The creation neither participates in His Divinity as manifestation (*ẓahoor*) nor as adumbration (*tajalli*). Creation, no doubt, is reality but the Creator is absolutely above having any resemblance with the creatures. Ash-Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's view, in the history of Muslim thought, is known as *wahdat ash-shahud* (the doctrine of the transcendental unity of all manifestation). Hazrat Fazal Shah says that there is a station in religious experience which is interpreted as *wahdat al-wujud*. One cannot take it as reality until one overlooks Allah's revealed truth. As concept of God, *wahdat al-wujud* is absolutely contrary to Allah's revealed truth (i.e., the Qur'an). (Tafseer Fazli 6, 251) Allah is neither 'absolute existence' nor is He immanent in the universe as soul in the body, or like fire in the red-hot iron or in any other way whatsoever. The whole universe is so replete with Allah's Signs that if all the oceans turn into ink and the trees into pen, stating His signs of Dignity, Honour, Grangure, Knowledge, Power, Wisdom and whatever will not end even seven more oceans are brought for using as ink. () Allah encompasses everything in His Knowledge as well as Power. All consequences are under His control and flow from His Will. There is no place where He is not present. Yet to consider anything or anyone as His component or share His Divinity as His manifestation or adumbration is absolutely against *the truth* revealed by Allah as the Qur'an. Man's idea, conception, perception, postulation, speculation, theorizing, hypothesizing, conjecturing, positing, feeling, imagination, impression, ecstasy, unveiling, direct-witnessing and any kind of mystical experience can never encompass Allah's Person or His Goodly Names.

He does not please to talk about Himself in the terminology of ‘attributes’. To talk about Him in the terminology of ‘Being and His Attributes’ is inappropriate and un-Qur’anic and creates problems. His attributes are real but not real in their own right or superadded to His being as is conceived in Aristotelian metaphysics and logic. The only appropriate way to talk about Him is by way of His Comely Names.

Wahdat al-wujud scholars use analogies like ocean and wave, and ink and letters to explain His relationship with the universe. This has no justification from the Qur’an. Wave, in essence, does not differ from the ocean. In principle it is already part of it, and after it returns to its origin, it again becomes the ocean. All letters, writings, books and libraries which edit all sciences, in principle are differentiation of ink. This analogy implies asserting everything as component of God, and therefore contrary to Allah’s revealed *truth* as stated in verse 15 of Surah az-Zukhruf 43.

Usually it is considered that ‘pantheism’ and *wahdat al-wujud*, and ‘panantheism’ and *wahdat ash-shahud* are one and the same. Both these assertions are incorrect. ‘Pantheism’ and ‘panantheism’ are philosophical schools of thought, whereas *wahdat al-wujud* and *wahdat ash-shahud* are schools related to Sufism. ‘Pantheism’ upholds the relation of identity between god and the universe. God is the universe and the universe is god. The philosophy of Baruch Spinoza (1632 – 1677), a 17th century rationalist philosopher, is an example of pantheism. Panantheism identifies two aspects in God: God is *immanent* in the universe as well as *transcendent* to it. The universe is the manifestation of God and holds the relation of identity with it; on the other hand God is *transcendent* to the universe too. So God does not hold the relation of identity with the universe. The *wahdat al-wujud*, presented by Hazrat Ibn al-‘Arabi, resembles *panantheism*.

If Hazrat Ibn al-‘Arabi has presented his *wahdat al-wujud* on the basis of his mystic vision, unveiling and direct-witnessing, Hazrat Ahmad Sirhindi too did not present his *wahdat ash-shahud* on the basis of Qur’anic authority. He too, presented it on the basis of his mystic experience. So we do not consider his view too, as appropriate and justified.

If one talks on the authority of the Qur’an, *wahdat ash-shahideen* (doctrine of the oneness of *shahideen*) is the correct view in accordance with the Qur’an. *Wahdat ash-shahideen* asserts oneness and unity of ‘all *shahideen*, on the oneness of their objective. Common objective of all *shahideen*, of all times, is to bring people from darkness of disbelief towards light of faith, and to purify them, and then to confer on them

verification of their purification (*taẓkiya*), and then to grant them the knowledge of the Scripture and of the *wisdom* (*hikmah*). ()

According to the doctrine of *wahdat ash-shahideen* Allah is the absolute Originator of everything. Everything originated by Him, either belongs to the category of His *creation* (*khalq*) or to the category of His *command* ('*amr*). *Khalq* is created and refined; the '*amr* is blown or infused into, or sent down to, or issued or revealed to. '*Amr* in Allah's Knowledge gets determined prior to the coming into being of *khalq*. When *khalq* is perfected to the extent to be able to accept a specific '*amr*, it is blown into or installed as such in it.

According to the doctrine of *wahdat ash-shahideen*, the Qur'anic ontology consists of three basic categories: Allah, the absolute Originator of everything, *the creation*, and *the command*. Greek and Christian un-Qur'anic ontology consists of two basic categories: eternal (*qadeem*) and contingent (*hādīth*). God and 'the celestial world' are eternal and 'the world of corruption and generation is contingent. Traditional Muslim theology, philosophy, sufism, *wahdat al-wujud* and *wahdat ash-shahud*, exegesis of the Qur'an, interpretation of *Hadīth*, *jurisprudence* and other Muslim sciences following Greeks and Christians accepted their bipartite ontology instead of working out the Qur'anic tripartite ontology. Acceptance of this un-Qur'anic ontology is one of the root-causes of many perennial problems of Muslim thought and civilization.

We do not like to initiate a new school in Muslim thought. However, maintaining the view that the Qur'an must be interpreted in accordance with the Qur'anic principles, taking '*shahid*' as basic Qur'anic term for Islamic spirituality and *ṭariqat shahideen* (the way of the certified witnesses) as the Qur'anic title for Sufism, upholding the Qur'an as *Al-Haqq* (*authority, the truth*) and Allah as the Descender of *Al-Haqq*, distinguishing tripartite Qur'anic ontology from bipartite un-Qur'anic ontology, taking the Qur'an as source of Divine law and Qur'anic teachings as ultimate and universal as compared to *ḥadīth* which is elaboration of belief and reports of the implementation of Qur'an teachings ascribed to the Prophet (pbuh), and upholding that the way of implementation of ultimate and universal Qur'anic injunctions cannot be ultimate and universal itself: it is bound to change with time, place, quantity and capacity. Thus taking *Hadīth*, not as source of *sharia* but as the *precedent* (*naẓeer*) of acting upon Allah's revealed ultimate and universal Qur'anic teachings, denying that any

verse of the ultimate and universal teachings of the Qur'an can ever be abrogated, it seems appropriate to distinguish this point of view as *wahdat-e-shahideen*.

Standpoint of Qadiriya Order

Let us see how Hazrat Fazal Shah Qadiri (r.a.) in his commentary published as *Tafseer-e-Fâzli*, presents the standpoint of *Qadiriya triqat-e-shahideen* and how does it elaborate the concepts of *sharia*, *ṭariqa*, *ḥaqiqah* and *ma'rifa* (gnosis).

According to Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.) *sharia*, *ṭariqa* or *ḥaqiqah* denote to different levels of believing.

Sharia is *qaul*. It consists of the information, precept, principles, message, guidance or injunctions as revealed by Allah. The Qur'an is the source of *sharia*. *Sharia* does not belong to the category of *khalq* (creation). It is Allah's '*amr*' (command) which is necessary to be followed. In its essence *sharia* is like a royal-road. Allah states in the Qur'an:

"We have assigned a law [*sharia*] and a path [*minhâj*] to each of you. If God had so willed, He would have made you one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you..." (Surah al-Ma'ida, 5:48)

Further says:

"Now We have set you [O believers!] on a clear path [*sharia*] of Our command [*amr*], so follow it. Do not follow the desires of those who lack [true] knowledge." (Surah al-Jathiyah, 45:18)

Those who lack knowledge, they follow their desires and invite others for the same. He, who follows his desires, goes away from real knowledge.

The believers of truth have been advised to follow *sharia* which has been commanded for them by Allah Almighty. Allah's Speech in 'second person singular' does not necessarily address the Prophet (pbuh). Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) among mankind is the best possessor of '*the true knowledge*'. Not to observe in a translation or exegesis of the Qur'an that the address in the verse above and in the verses like thereof, can never be directed towards the Prophet (pbuh), is absolutely improper, against Allah's command to show reverence to Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh). There absolutely was no possibility that Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) would ever follow the people who lack knowledge and invite others to follow their desires.

The Qur'an is source of *sharia* and *sharia* refers to Divine law. Path (*minhâj*) assigned by Allah to the believers refers to the footprints of the Messenger (pbuh) and his certified followers *i.e.*, *sunnah* of the *shahideen*. Those who lack in knowledge of truth, advise others to

follow their desires. The advice of the ignorant is always *without authority*. He who acts upon *sharia* as he likes, follows his own desires and acts upon the advice of those who lack in knowledge. His action does not prove that he believes in Allah's *amar* (command). Even if he achieves a high status in the performance of religious rituals, he can never reach the spirit of *Deen*.

Tariqat

The essence of *ṭariqat* (the way) is submission. Acting upon *sharia* following in the footsteps of *shahid*, is *ṭariqat*. Almighty Allah decrees to follow in the footsteps of the one who already turns towards Allah in repentance and obedience (*mann 'anaba 'ilayya*). (Surah Luqman, cf. 31:15) *Tariqat* is a set standard. Allah says:

“Had they [who have heard Our call] been firm on *the path (ṭariqat)*, We certainly have showered on them blessings in abundance.” (Surah al-Jinn, 72:16)

The act of ‘following in the footsteps’ (*ittiba'*) can be performed with respect to one person only. One cannot follow in the footsteps of more than one persons, even if they both be pious and certified ones (*shahid*). He who claims to follow in the footstep of more than one persons, follows himself alone. He who has not been able to find anyone whom he could accept and follow as *shahid*, he does not qualify to be *shahid*. A group of Jinni heard recitation of the Qur'an, and affirmed faith. They confessed that their silly leader had been telling them baseless stories. They further confess that “Some among us are righteous (*ṣâliḥ*) while the others the contrary to it [*unrighteous*]. We tread divergent paths (*ṭarâiq*—the plural of '*ṭariqa*').” (Surah al-Jinn, 72:11) “And some among us are Muslims and of us some are disbelievers. And whosoever have embraced Islam, such have sought the right path.” (Surah al-Jinn, 72:14) “Had they [who disbelieve, have responded to Our call] been firm on *the path (ṭariqat)*, We certainly have showered on them blessings in abundance.” (Surah al-Jinn, 72:16)

He who follows in the footsteps of the one who is righteous, is righteous, he who follows none but him is unrighteous. The *ṭariqat* of the righteous and the unrighteous differ from each other. They are on divergent paths even if they believe in one and the same *sharia*. (cf. Surah Luqman, 31:15; Surah al-Jinn, 72: 1-18)

One, whose heart is neglectful of Allah's remembrance, he follows his desires, and does not respect limits prescribed by Allah, submission to him is forbidden as Allah says: “And never obey him whose heart We have made heedless of Our Remembrance (i.e., the Qur'an), he who follows his

desires, and exceeds all limits in his affairs." (Surah al-Kahaf, 18:28) By way of implication, submission (*ita'at*) to him is right, whose heart is in Allah's remembrance, who pursues Allah's pleasure, and observes Allah's proscribed limits.

Ḥaqiqat

The level of *ḥaqiqat* relates to knowledge. Knowledge is always post experience. The state experienced or knowledge attained after acting upon *sharia* following in the footsteps of *shahid* is *ḥaqiqat* (reality, knowledge).

***Ma'rifa* (Gnosis)**

Ma'rifa is a blessing. He who remains firm in the footsteps of His *shahid* at *shariat*, *ṭariqat* and *ḥaqiqat*, he is blessed with *ma'rifat*. He is included among *mukhlāṣeen* (the sincere ones), those whom satan cannot lead astray. (Q, 15:40; 38:83)

Ma'rifat is that destination which the Qur'an calls *irfan-e-Ḥaqq*. (Surah al-Ma'ida, 5:83) He who is blessed with *ma'rifa* is blessed with togetherness with the *shahideen*. It is said in the Qur'an that the righteous believers pray: O Allah! We affirm faith in what You have revealed, and submit to the Messenger. Please include us among the *shahideen*. (Surah Āl-Imran, 3:53)

Allah gives illustrations and narrates analogies to make people understand. This is indirect way of suggesting something and very effective indeed. *Shahideen* too make use of this method. But it is necessary that the illustration or analogy given by a scholar must cohere with the *muḥkamāt* of the Qur'an. If an example or analogy is contrary to the teachings of the Scripture, it is illegitimate and misleading. In order to make the nature and relationship of *shariat*, *ṭariqat*, *ḥaqiqat* and *ma'rifat* easily understandable, Ḥazrat Fazl Shah narrates the following analogy:

"*Shariat* has the likeness of milk. *Ṭariqat* (practice) has the likeness of curd. *Ḥaqiqat* [knowledge] is akin to butter. And *Ma'rifat* (gnosis) is like butter-oil. If there is no milk, nothing can be made, nor can anyone make." (Tafseer-e-Fazli 1, viii)

He also illustrates this relationship in this way:

"Following in the footsteps (*qadam*) of *shahid* is the source of real knowledge. *Sharia* is taking step (*qadam*), *ṭariqa* is following in the footsteps (*naqsh-e-qadam*), *ḥaqiqa* (knowledge) is perennial and universal (*qadeem*). *Sharia* is the beginning of the journey (*ibtida'-e-qadam*), *ma'rifa* is the destination (*intihâ-e-qadam*). (Taseer-e-Fazli 7, 228)

An un-Qur'anic Illustration of *Shariat*, *Ṭariqat* and *Ḥaqiqat*

Some scholars present an analogy of a circle to explain the nature of *shariat*, *ṭariqat* and *ḥaqiqat*. In this analogy

The circumference represents *sharia*. According to this view *sharia* is for all believers and all believers are on the circumference. All possible radii represent '*ṭrooq*' (plural of '*ṭariqa*'). According to this view *ṭariqa* or *ṭariqat* is that radius which connects each and every point of the circumference to the center. This center of the circle in this analogy represents *ḥaqiqat*. *Ḥaqiqat* is God and the destination of the whole spiritual journey. (In this analogy '*Ḥaqiqat*' depicts God instead of a level of believing called '*knowledge*'). The journey from *sharia* to *ḥaqiqa* i.e., (to the center of the circle) is *ṭariqat*. *Ḥaqiqat* (God) is the origin of both *sharia* and *ṭariqa*. (S. H. Nasr, 128) This analogy also calls *Ḥaqiqat* as *Truth*. Thus Seyyed Hossein Nasr, in this analogy, asserts the identification of God with the *Center*, *Ḥaqiqat* and *Truth*. (S. H. Nasr, 15, 16, 17, 19, 137 etc.)

As is evident from what has been stated above that each and every component of the 'analogy of a circle' is contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an. There is no way to justify this analogy except by arbitrary interpretation of the Qur'an.

The Qur'an does not use the epithet '*Reality*' or '*Truth*' for Allah. We have seen that not a single derivative of the *ḥa-qâf-qâf* root occurs in the Qur'an for Allah. The Qur'an does not use the analogy of a point (*nugta*) for Allah either. The analogy under discussion also does not place the concept of *ma'rifa* anywhere. It means there is no place for *ma'rifa* in this analogy. When you assert *ḥaqiqa* as Allah, what scope remains for anything like *ma'rifa*? When you call Allah *Ḥaqiqat* (i.e., *Reality*) then the universe (*mâ-siwâ Allah*) will either be asserted 'unreal and appearance' or will be considered 'relatively real' as manifestation of Allah. But it cannot be asserted real-in-itself as creation. This baseless, unfounded, and un-Qur'anic analogy is formulated to provide support to *wahdat al-wujud*'s concept of *Tauhid*. The concept of *sharia*, *ṭariqa*, and *ḥaqiqa* as presented by this analogy is without authority and contrary to Allah's revealed truth.

As per this analogy Allah has created *sharia* and *ṭariqa* as separate entities. (S. H. Nasr 1966) This view too lacks verification from the Qur'an. But it proves the elegation that *wahdat al-wujud* considers *ṭariqa* as a *Deen* (religion) parallel to *sharia*. How beautifully Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.) elaborates this relationship and with authority of the Qur'an when he says: "*Shariat* is *qaul*; *ṭariqat* is '*amal*'; *ḥaqiqat* is knowledge; and *ma'rifa* is blessing." How beautifully Hazrat Fazal Shah (r.a.) relates this with the Qur'an, Hadith and Fiqah when he says: The Qur'an is *qawl*, *ḥadith* is '*amal*, *fiqh* (jurisprudence) is '*ilm*. Can anyone justify the comment that

“they have made *ṭariqat* as a *Deen* parallel to *shariat*” or “that *Qadiriya* is a *wahdat al-wujudi* Order”?

The Qur’an uses the analogy of ‘straight path’ (*sirât-e-mustaqîm*) for *sharia* and *ṭariqa*. ‘Straight path’ (*sirât-e-mustaqîm*) is the shortest distance between two points. Allah has taught the believers to pray for guiding them on the ‘straight path’. “The path of those who have been blessed.” (Surah al-Fatiha) As per these verses ‘straight path’ comprises the footprints of those who have been blessed by Allah.

In Surah Yâseen Allah Almighty witnesses that Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is on the ‘straight path’. (Surah Yâseen, 36:3-4) In turn, about whom Allah’s Messenger (pbuh) witnesses that he is on his (pbuh) footsteps, there remains no doubt about his (r.a.) being on the ‘straight path’. This witnessed follower, too, attains the authority to witness his followers further. This is the chain of certified witnesses (*shahideen*) which will continue till the Last Day. Following in the footsteps of a *shahid* at present, is the sure, shortest and safest way to reach *ma’rifâ*—the destination.

The Qur’an nowhere uses the analogy of ‘circle’ to explain the relationship of *shariat* and *ṭariqat*. Qadiri *shahideen* do not like to be called *sufi*. They call themselves *shahid* or ‘*Ahl-e-Haqq*’. Nothing claimed by Ḥazrat Fazal Shah about *Qadiri Ṭariqat* is contrary to Allah’s revealed truth.

Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiya

There is a concept of *Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiya* introduced in Muslim thought by *wahdat al-wujudi* mystics and scholars under their impress. According to Shaikh Ahmed Sirhindi, Shaikh Ibn al-‘Arabi and his followers assert that

“God as the Absolute is indeterminate in nature. He simply exist without any existent qualities...At the level of God as Mind, His absolute nature becomes determinate and attributes emerge. Within the Divine Mind two levels may be distinguished: At the prior level the attributes are a unity and only implicitly multiple [*ijmāl*]. At the posterior level they become explicitly multiple [*tafsīl*] and distinct. The first level of the Divine Mind containing all the attributes implicitly in its unity is the Essence of Muhammad, while the totality of the distinct attributes at the second level constitutes the Essences of all the contingent beings. These essences exist only in the Divine Mind, [but] not externally... As the content of the Divine Mind they are a part of the realm of the Necessary Existence [*wajib al-wujud*], although, of course, they do not exist.

The multiplicity of the many which appears to have real existence in the world is a reflection of the Divine attributes in the Divine Mind. As reflections or modes they do exist, but only as reflections or modes. But

what do they exist in? Now since there is nothing externally existent except God's Being, that Being must be the locus of the existence of these reflections. Thus the totality of the world is nothing but the Divine Mind reflected in the mirror of God's Being."

(Selected Letters of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindī, 33-34)

Sources of *Wahdat al-Wujud* in Greek and Christian Philosophy

Disciple of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle, great Greek philosopher Plato (428 – 348 BC), while philosophising over coming into being of the universe, reached the conclusion that the material world as it seems to us is not the real world, but only a shadow of the real world; and that a creator god, a primordial matter, space & time, a non-spacio non-temporal world of ideas, a world-soul having dual nature and some other such eternal entities were necessary for the explanation of the universe. Regarding world of ideas he thought it should comprise timeless, unchangeable, non-existent but real, incorporeal but intelligible absolutely perfect archetypes or patterns corresponding to all worldly things, relations, qualites, quantity, structure, state, feeling, impression etc.

Thus the Platonic 'theory of ideas' (also known as 'theory of forms') maintain that two distinct levels of reality exist: the visible world of becoming that we inhabit, and the intelligible 'world of ideas or forms' that stands above the visible world and gives it being. Theory of ideas argues that the material world as it seems to us is not the real world, but only a shadow of the real world which is 'the world of ideas'.

The theory of ideas is the core of Plato's philosophy. He explains everything with reference to this theory. One thing which Plato somehow left unexplained was the nature of relationship between 'ideas' comprising Plato's 'world of ideas' and Plato's philosophical god.' The interpreters of Platonic Philosophy got divided into two groups on this issue. Interpretations offered by these groups are known as 'intradeical interpretation of Platonic ideas' and 'extradeical interpretation of Platonic ideas'. The former theory argues that 'the ideas of Plato's World of Ideas' actually are the eternal ideas of god's Mind. They are eternally in God's Mind as uncreated ideas. While creating the universe, God first created these eternal ideas in an intelligible form, apart from Him, and then created this intelligible world in physical form.¹⁵ 'Extradeical interpretation' sees 'the World of Ideas' eternally lying apart and outside God's Mind as parallel and uncreated reality.

“The intradeical interpretation of Plato’s ideas has too much impressed religious people belonging all religious traditions. It has also exerted an immense influence on various dimensions of Muslim thought especially theology, philosophy and sufism as traced in detail in our articles “H. A. Wolfson And A. H. Kamali On The Origin Of The Problem of Divine Attributes in Muslim Kalam” and “Ibn Sina, Al-Gazali and Ibn Taymiyyah on the Origination of the World” and “The Qur’an: Creation or Command!”¹⁶ There is perhaps no area where Muslim thought has remained unaffected by Plato, and then his disciple Aristotle. Above mentioned articles present a detailed study of these aspects. Here it is enough to say that ‘*wahdat al-wujud*’ represents a typical blend of ‘intradeical interpretation of Platonic ideas’ with mystic experience based on unveiling and direct-witnessing claimed by Muslim Sufis belonging to this school. This is how the Plato’s concept of ‘eternal ideas’ as archetypes of knowledge lying in his philosophical god’s mind (translated in Arabic diction as ‘*âyan-e-thabitah*’) became foundation of Muslim ‘*wahdat al-wujud*’ discourse. The doctrine known as ‘*Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*’ is one of the products of this blend of philosophy and ‘*wahdat al-wujud*’ sufism.

As explained at some other place, Philo (20 BCE – c. 50 CE), a Jewish scholar, was the first to attempt a reconstruction of Jewish religious thought in terms of Platonic philosophy. The origin of Philo’s philosophy is tracable to the intradeical interpretation of Platonic Ideas. According to Philo’s reconstruction of this theory, while creating the universe, on His own good will, “God first, out of the Ideas which had been in His Thought from eternity, constructed an ‘*intelligible world*’, and this *intelligible world* He placed in the *Logos*, which had likewise existed from eternity in God’s mind. Then in the likeness of this *intelligible world* of ideas, He created this “*visible world*” of ours.”¹⁷ This is here Philo introduces *logos* as an entity which has dual-nature. While in God’s mind it is *intradeical* and with God from all eternity, having created apart from Him in intelligible form and then in visible form it is *extradeical* and created entity. Impressed by Philo, the Christians too followed him. They replaced *logos* of Philo by Christ in the philosophical reconstruction of Christian theology. So Christ also appears as an entity having dual nature. In Aristotle’s philosophy the Christians found a principle which stated that ‘everything gives birth to its own kind’. (Wolfson 1961, 42-43) This provided them philosophical basis to call Christ, the son-God. There had also entered a concept of Holy Spirit in Christianity. Though at early stage it was not clear whether the Christ and the Holy Spirit are one and the same entity or they are separate from each other. However, Christianity finally came to

decide that Holy Spirit was another entity eternal with God. Whatever the Christians claim about the origin of Trinity in their Scripture, according to our research the origin of the doctrine of Trinity is ultimately traceable to interadeical interpretation of Plato's 'theory of ideas' through Philo.

Whether Muslim *wahdat al-wujudi* sufis, theologians or philosophers admit it or not, this interadeical interpretation of Plato's 'theory of the world of ideas' has great influence on their various doctrines especially on the doctrine titled 'the doctrine of *Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*'. Even people like Shah Wali Ullah Dehlvi and Dr. Israr Ahmed, as will be evident, are not exception to it. Is it not true that through creation apart from God in *intelligible form* at the first stage, and in *visible form* in the second stage, the *eternal, uncreated, incorporeal ideas* of the '*Mind of God*' placed in a dual-natured entity called *logos* by Philo (conceived as *Christ* by Christianity), makes everything essentially the manifestation of God? Christian theologians by theological arguments and mystics in their mystic experience claimed verification of their above mentioned doctrine.

When Muslims came to know of these views through translations of Greek and Christian philosophical treatises or through discussions with scholars of these traditions, they, too, got highly impressed by their theo-philosophical speculations. (Kamali 1963) '*Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*', to our mind, is one of the doctrines which came into being under this influence and is ultimately traceable to *interadeical* interpretation of Plato's 'theory of the world of ideas' through Philo. Muslims replaced Philo's *logos* and Christ of Christian theology by the honourable name of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) conceiving '*Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*' as that dual-natured reality, making it essentially eternal and divine and the *locus of a'yan-e-thabita* as world-soul (*rooh-e-kâinât*) created in *intelligible form* at the first stage and in *visible form* at the next stage. Muslim *wahdat al-wujudi* sufi affirmed the reality of *a'yan-e-thabita* and *a'lim-e-imthâl* (Platonic ideas and world of ideas) and other entities corresponding other concepts of Plato's philosophy, in what they claimed a special type of inner experience, a higher source of knowledge, unveiling and direct-witnessing (*kashaf-o-shahood*).

Muslim philosophers al-Farabi and Avicenna, conceiving Allah as the Absolute Intellect, replaced the doctrine of '*Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*' by their 'doctrine of intellects'. They coined the term *a'ql-e-awwal* (the First Intellect) for what the mystics had called '*Ḥaqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*'

and argued that the first determination which took place from Allah (The Absolute Intellect) must be '*an intellect*' in nature. In their philosophy, this First Intellect, is the source of all other determinations and becoming. They further argued that this coming into being of determinations was from all eternity. So Allah and the First Intellect (*Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*) both are co-eternal with each other, but Allah being the logical cause, is logically prior and the First Intellect logically dependent on God, is logically posterior but temporally they are simultaneous.

Aristotle, the most renowned disciple of Plato, had argued that the concept of God is the concept of an absolutely perfect Being. He had further argued that Volition (*iradah*) was contrary to the absolute perfection of God. Accepting this argument, Plotinus (204-270 AD), an interpreter of Platonic philosophy, a mystic-philosopher by temperament, propounded the doctrine of emanation, in place of the religious doctrine of creation at Will from God, as an explanation of the coming into being of everything from God through the First Intellect. Muslim philosopher's doctrine of the intellects as a philosophical explanation of the coming into being of the universe from God by way of emanation was under the impress of Plato, Aristotle, Philo, Plotinus and Christian theo-philosophical thought. However, in order to make it coherent with Ptolemaic model of the universe (scientific model of their times) they promulgated a concept of graded-emanation. (Fâzli 2016) Aristotle, disciple of Plato, and a most renowned independent Greek philosopher after Plato, had renounced Plato's theory of ideas on his maturity of thought, saying that "Plato is dear to me but the truth is dearer." but the Muslim Philosophers and especially the *wahdat al-wujud* mystics had been talking in terms of '*a'yan-e-thabita*' till the near past.

A philosophical theory is presented as a solution to some philosophical problem. The philosophical problem against which the '*doctrine of wahdat al-wujud*' has been presented is known as the problem of the relationship of 'temporality with eternity' (*rabt al-hâdith bil-qadeem*) '*Al-qadeem*' (the eternal) here refers to Allah, and *al-hâdith* refers to 'what is other than Allah'. It has been discovered by modern philosophers that intellectual problems that looked very genuine and had engaged the intellectuals for centuries were actually not genuine. They were pseudo problems. They were formulated in incorrect terms. The presuppositions on which they are based are inappropriate.

The problem of '*rabt al-hâdith bi al-qadeem*', in Muslim thought is one of such problems.¹⁸ Apparently it looks very genuine, which it

never is. The worth of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, which has been offered as a solution to this pseudo problem can be determined from the fact that both the problem and the solution are constituted in such terms and based on such presuppositions which are absolutely inappropriate for this discourse. How the terms are inappropriate and incorrect? Scholars working in the field of religion must keep in mind that the terms are never neutral. Metaphysical ideas ride on the back of terms and travel in history. If they are contrary to the metaphysics of the discourse in which they are being used, they are bound to lead to false formulation of the problems and to false conclusions. Let us analyse the problem under discussion in this perspective.

The Qur'an nowhere uses the epithet '*al-Qadeem*' (قدیم, eternal) to refer to Allah. '*Al-qadeem*' (the eternal) is a word of 'Arabic origin. Had Allah been eternal, what difficulty was there to include it in His Goodly Names or state somewhere in the Qur'an that He was '*Al-qadeem*' (the eternal). *Azāl* (ازل, eternal with respect to beginning) and *abad* (ابد, everlasting), *Dāim* (دائم, for ever) are Arabic words of similar meaning used in the Qur'an. But Allah nowhere uses these words for His Own Person. He is High above that these epithets are ascribed to Him.¹⁹ '*Qadeem*' (eternal) is a philosophical term which the Christians accepted from Greeks as divine attribute. (کشف اصطلاحات فلسفہ (اردو-انگریزی), 239)

Swinburne in his book *The coherence of theism* admits that it is included in original Christian teachings as divine attribute. (Swinburne 1977, 217) From Christianity, this concept entered into Muslim thought.²⁰ Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite, without applying their mind for a while, accepted it in their discourse like many other terms and introduced it as attribute of Qur'anic God. The term *Qadeem* as an attribute of God and also as the attribute of the 'Word of God' is prevalent in the writings of traditional as well as modern and contemporary Muslim religious scholars, exegetes, philosophers and Sufis and common Muslims.

As has been explained above Greek ontology is based on two principles: 'Eternity' (*qidam*) and 'contingency' (*haduth*). "Everything which has beginning in time is *hādith*. Whereas '*qadīm*' is equivalent in meaning to the term 'eternal' and '*qidm*' denotes 'eternity'. A being whose beginning and end with reference to time is inconceivable is *Qadīm*.²¹ In Christian theology the concept of '*qidam*' (eternity) has been considered in two senses: i) Everlastingness—infinity of time with reference to past and future; ii) Timelessness—transcendence

from time *i.e.*, past present and future.²² An *everlasting* being will be a temporal being though without beginning and end. **Transcendence from time has its own implications.**²³ *Qadīm* occurs thrice in the Qur'an but nowhere has it occurred as Good Name of Allah."

Philosophers accept reason as source of knowledge in their search of truth and what conclusions they reach by logical reasoning, they hold it as real following Aristotlian principle "What is rational, is real". Sufis accept 'intuition' as a source of knowledge higher than reason, and embark upon their journey in search of truth. What conclusions they reach through their intuitive experience or (what they call) unveiling and direct-witnessing, they assert it as truth and reality. But intuitive experience neither can come to the level of knowledge nor can become communicable until it is expressed and rationally interpreted.

One way for the rational interpretation of intuitive experience is to borrow terms from Plato, Aristotle and other philosophers. In the shape of Philo, Plotinus and Christian mystics' religious philosophy, precedents of this way of interpretation were already present. The other way is to borrow terms from Qur'anic diction and interpret one's intuitive experience in the perspective of Qur'anic teachings.

As said earlier, terms are never neutral; it is impossible that one borrows terms from philosophy, and interprete his intuitive experience in Qur'anic perspective. This is what has occurred to Muslim *wahdat al-wujudi* sufis, theologians and philosophers. Taking the terms '*Qadeem*' for Allah, *wahdat al-wujud* for their doctrine, first intellect or '*ta'ayyin-e-awwal*' for what they thought or witnessed as first emanation from Allah, six descensions (*tanaẓẓalat-e-sitta*), seven stages (*mratab-e-saba'*), *Ḥaẓrat-e-khamsa*, *a'yân-e-thabita* etc. from philosophers, they tried to read them in the Qur'an by arbitrary explanations.

Ash-Shaikh Muhayyuddin Ibn al-'Arabi, the founder of the *wahdat al-wujud* school makes the doctrine of 'six descensions' (*tanaẓẓalât-e-sitta*) basis for interpreting his mystic experience concerning '**manifestation of the eteral in contingent (*ẓaboor al-bâdith bil-qadeem*)**' and 'on the relation of the contingent with the eternal (*rabat al-bâdith bil-qadeem*). This doctrine is known as *wahdat al-wujud*. In mystics the word 'descension' (*tanaẓẓal*) is used to mean 'manifestation' (*ẓaboor*). Some other sufis have presented the same ideas as '*maratab-e-saba'*' (seven stages or levels) or '*ḥaẓrât-e-khamsa*' (five decensions).

Abu al-Hassan al-Alvi presents a very good summary of Hazrat Ibn al-‘Arabi and of Dr. Israr Ahmed’s views on wahdat al-wujud in his Urdu article “Nazriya-e-Wahdat al-Wujud and Dr. Israr Ahmed”. The points discussed here have been taken from this article. This article, available on Mohaddith Form Online, is placed on 26.4.2012 and accessed in the first quarter of 2019.

As per Abu al-Hassan Alvi’s article, according to Ibn Arabi the first descension that took place from the Absolute Being is *‘Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiya’* and this descension took place in His Attribute of Knowledge.”

The second descension takes place from *‘Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiya’* to *‘a’yân-e-thabita’*. The third descension that takes place is from *‘a’yân-e-thabita’* to *‘the spirit’ (ruh)*; and the fourth one from *‘the spirit’ (ruh)* to *mithâl (incorporeality)*; the fifth from *mithâl* to *physicality (jisam/body)*; and the sixth descension took place from *Jisam* to *Insân* (human being).

According to Ibn al-‘Arabi, when Allah Almighty on His Good Will decides to bring about creation, he makes an *ijmâli* idea (i.e., implicit/abstract) of it. This *implicit idea* in *wahdat al-wujudi* school is known as *‘Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiya’*. Among *wahdat al-wujudi* sufi schoars, this idea of *‘Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiya’* is also articulated as *‘martaba-e-wahdat’* or *‘manjud-e-ijmâlî’* or *‘haqiqat al-haqâiq’* or ‘first intellect’ or *‘âlim-e-siffat’* (the world of attributes), or ‘the first manifestation’ or ‘the world of covert realities (*‘âlim-e-ramuz*), and *‘umm al-faiẓ’* etc. As per Shaikh Ibn al-‘Arabi, after this implicit idea (*ijmâli tasawwur*) Allah Almighty made an explicit idea (*tafsîli tasawwur*) of what was to be creature. Shaikh Ibn al-‘Arabi articulates this stage as *‘ayân-e-thabita’*. In sufi literature’ this is also stated as *‘martaba-e-Wahidiyat’* (stage of Oneness), *qâbliyat-e-zahoor* (potencial manifestation), *wajud-e-Fâiẓ* and *ẓill-im-mamdood*. *‘Ayân-e-thâbita’* as visualized by Hazrat Ibn al-‘Arabi, are the images of all creatures which lay in Allah’s attribute of Knowledge.

These three stages i.e., *Dhât-e-Ilâhiya* (Being of God), *‘Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiya’* (*tasawwar-e-ijmâlî*), and *‘Ayân-e-thâbita’* (*tasawwar-e-tafsîlî*), in Ibn al-‘Arabi’s *wahdat al-wujud* are called *maratab-e-Ilâhiya* (levels of manifestation of Godhood) because either it is Allah’s implicit Knowledge (*Ijmâli Ilm*) in case of first descension, or it is Allah’s explicit Knowledge (*Tafsîli Ilm*) in case of second descension, is Allah’s Attribute, and Allah’s Attributes are identical with His Being. So all

these three levels are the stages related to His own Being (*maratab-e-Ilahiya*).

A very important view of Shaikh Ibn al-Arabi is that '*a'yân-e-thâbita*' have not even smelled the existence of external things. What does this mean? Because '*A'yân-e-thâbita*' are eternal images and ideas in Allah's Knowledge, of absolute perfections of all things whatsoever to be created by Allah, so they can never exist as individual things. The things which come into being as existents in the world at third, fourth, fifth and sixth stage of descensions from Allah as *rûh*, *mithâl*, *jism*, and finally as *insân* are only shadows and reflections of these '*a'yân-e-thâbita*'. It means that the external existents at third to sixth stage are only relatively-real or half realities. The third, fourth and fifth descensions in Ibn al-Arabi's thought are known as '*maratab-e-koniya*' or '*maratab-e-imkâniya*' (possible existents) because they have no existence in the external world. As Abu al-Hassan 'Alvi in his article mentioned above puts it, according to Shaikh Ibn al-'Arabi the universe and whatever therein is, are actually reflections of the ideas of Allah's Knowledge. It has no real existence. In reality nothing besides the Being of Allah exists. This is what sufis call *wahdat al-wujud* (al-Alvi 2012).

Abu al-Hassan Alvi writes that in Shaikh Ibn al-'Arabi, the descensions (*tanzâlât*) has occurred in Allah's Attribute of Knowledge. Shaikh Ibn al-'Arabi believes in the identity of Divine Attributes with Allah's Being. As the Attribute of Knowledge is no different than His Being, so descension actually has taken place in the Being of Allah Himself in the form of determinations in His Knowledge. It means that in Shaikh Ibn al-'Arabi's system of thought, Allah's attribute of Knowledge is the basis of coming into being of the universe. (al-Alvi 2012)

Let us examine this view in the light of Allah's revealed *truth* i.e., the Qur'an.

Nowhere in the Qur'an Allah Almighty uses the word '*sifal*' (*attributes*) to talk about Himself. Rather the Qur'an advises the believers to call on Allah by His Goodly Names (*al-Asmâ' al-Husnâ*) and leave those who blaspheme against His Comely Names:

"And the Most beautiful Names belong to Allah; so invoke Him by them, and keep away from those who blaspheme His Names. They will be requited for what they used to do." (Surah al-A'raf, 7:180)

The Personal Name of the Creator of all, the true Master, and the Sustainer of the worlds is Allah. All other Excellent Names are His attributive Names. His *al-Asmâ' al-Husnâ* are either mentioned in the

Holy Qurān or deriveable from it in line with the *muhkamāt*. To invoke any of His Names for the satisfaction of base desires or to fulfill an evil purpose, or to accomplish an evil design, or to make arbitrary addition or deletion in His Names are various ways to blaspheme His Names. It is strictly forbidden and Allah ordains to leave those who blaspheme against His Comely Names.

All the above discourse relating Ibn al-‘Arabi defies this Command. It talks about Allah in terms of His Attributes. One of the basic assumption of the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, as stated above (to call Allah as ‘Al-Ḥaqq’) is also blasphemous. Holding Allah eternal, His attributes too become eternal. And Holding His attributes eternal, **all the six descensions from His Attribute of Knowledge become eternal.** And according to the bipartite un-Qur’anic ontology on which this doctrine is falsely based, all celestial entities (*maratab-e-Ilahiya*) not only become eternal (*qadeem*) but also part of the Being of Allah. How strange it is that all this is presented in the name of intuitive experience, unveiling and direct-witnessing as a higher source of knowledge. It is presented from those who claim of being *gnostics* (*ārifeen*). If one compares the details of the doctrines of ‘the manifestation of the *eternal* in contingent’ or ‘manifestation of the contingent from the eternal’ (*zaboor al-hādīth bil-qadeem*)’ and ‘the relation of the contingent with the eternal’ (*rabat al-hādīth bil-qadeem*), the sub-doctrines of *wahdat al-wujud*, there is hardly any essential difference in Greek philosophers’ views and of Ibn al-‘Arabi school.

Those who prefer their own liking to truth ‘assert His servants to be part of Him.’ The Qur’an confirms them as manifest ingrate.’ (Surah az-Zukhruf, 43:15) To assert Allah’s creation part of Him, may it be as shadows and reflections, is absolutely contrary to truth. Allah is the Creator of everything. The creation cannot be part of Allah. Allah is Almighty.

On the problem of ‘the relation of the contingent (*al-hādīth*) with the eternal (*al-qadeem*)’ Dr. Israr Ahmed holds as against Shaikh Ibn al-‘Arabi, that the descensions took place in Allah’s attribute of Speech (*Kalām*). According to him when Allah, Wills (intends) to bring about creation, and utter the word “KUN”(Be!), the first time, no creation ensues from it. Rather the command ‘*Kun*’ transforms into an indeterminable, a kind of absolute light (*Noor*) as if it was the first determination ensuing from Allah’s attribute of *Kalām* from which come out other *descensions* (*tanaẓẓalât*). In other words, though Dr. Israr Ahmed admits ‘what is other than Allah’ (*mâ-swâ*) as real yet argues

that “because it is the Command ‘*Kun*’ which has transformed into *mâ-swâ*’ through *descensions*, therefore the real origin of *mâ-swâ*’ lies in the Being of Allah. In other words, he ultimately asserts the Being of Allah as the origin and nature of ‘what is other than Allah’ (*i.e.*, *mâ-swâ*). So what is *wahdat al-wajud* other than this?

Abu al-Hassan Alvi deems the ensuing of descensions from Allah’s attribute of *Kalâm* (Speech) in Dr. Israr Ahmed as compared to from the attribute of Knowledge (*‘ilm*) in Shaikh Ibn al-‘Arabi, as the essential difference between the two versions of *wahdat al-wujud*. We see no essential difference between the two because both of them hold one or the other Divine Attribute as the origin of ensuing of *descensions*. The same criticism as hurled on Ibn al-‘Arabi above equally applies to Dr. Israr Ahmed. Dr. Israr Ahmed does not stop for a while to ponder that where from the Muslim sufis and philosophers have accepted the term ‘*qadeem*’ (eternal) for Allah, what are the various senses in which it is used, and that can it be applied to Allah remaining true to the Qur’an! He also does not stop to think over the Greek un-Qur’anic bipartite ontology as compared to tripartite Qur’anic ontology and their respective implications. So he fails to perceive that origin of the problems of ‘*rabat al-bâdith bil-qadeem*’ and of *zabooh al-bâdith bil-qadeem* are formulated on un-Qur’anic concept of God, so they are pseudo problems, and so is the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* which is offered as a solution to these problems.



Let us see the concept of ‘*Haqiqat-e-Muhammadiyah*’ in the light of the teachings of the Qur’an.

The Qur’an says: Allah has not created the heavens and the earth and all in between them just as a play. Rather Allah has created them with truth. (Surah ad-Dukhan, 44:38-39)

The wise people who remember Allah standing, sitting and lying down on their sides, when they reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth, they could not help acknowledging “O Lord! You have not created anything in vain.” (Âl-e-Imran, 3:191) Creation of the heavens, the creation of the earth, the creation of all that is in between them is such a big job that it cannot be done with any less than Divine Knowledge. Creation of anything without a purpose is a logical impossibility for it is contrary to the Dignity of Allah that He creates anything for play.

Allah is absolutely free of desire, need, deficiency, flaw, weakness etc. He is neither eternal nor temporal. He is neither timeless nor everlasting. *Qidm*, *abdiyat*, *azliyat* *dhvâm* all are related to created beings. None of these concepts is worthy of Allah’s Being. He is beyond all

determinations of space, time, understanding, intuitive experience or whatever. Nothing whatsoever can encompass Him. He is singularly and supremely Unique. There was no Will to create the universe or not to create it. Creation of the universe had not added to His Dignity and Honour, which He would lack without it. Both these possibilities were absolutely equal for Him. In His absolute freedom of Will, He willed to create it; so He created it. He has created everything by His Will and then by His Command (*amar*). Whatever has originated from the absolute Originator, is either His creation (*khalq*) or His command (*amar*). Even *amar* does not follow from Him because of any inner compulsion *i.e.*, without His Knowledge and Will. No descensions (*tanazzalat*) could ever ensue from Him without His Will and Command. His Goodly Names (and not the Attributes) are the cause, reason or the channel of emergence of things from Him. So nothing in any way participate in His divinity or is part of Him. To conceive Him as '*Wujud-e-Mutliq*' (Absolute Existence), is *baseless* and *without authority* from the Qur'an. Nothing has come into being from Him because of any inner compulsion like in emanation. He has created everything with Knowledge and on His Will and Command. He alone sustains everything. His Knowledge encompasses everything, His Power encompasses everything. All consequences flow from His Will. Volition is a Dignity for Him. To be Immutable is against His Dignity. He has sent His Messengers from among the human beings, and has revealed His Scriptures. His Scriptures are the standard of truth. He is not *Al-Haqq Himself*. What he has descended as Scripture is *Al-Haqq* (the truth) and He is the Descender of *the truth*. The system of the world is *dâr al-'amal* (to see how do we behave) and there is *dâr al-Jazâ* (the Day of Requittal) too. When He Wills a thing to be, the command is issued; it determines the title (*unwân*) of its coming into being. *KUN* (Be!) is a command which determines the title (*caption*). It does not mean that things will necessarily come into being instantly. Factors begin to accumulate as per Allah's knowledge and wisdom. He has not created anything for His own sake. He absolutely needs nothing for His own sake. Allah has created the servants (the mankind), for Himself, and everything of the world for His servants. It means that it is the servants which are the reason of creation and coming into being of the universe. Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is Allah's servant ('*abd*') of the highest cader ('*abdihî*', '*bdubhu*') in the mankind as well as in the whole creature. The prophets, the messengers (pbut), '*shuhadâ'*' (plural of '*shahid*') and righteous are all *in togetherness* (*ma'iyat*) with Him and

reason of the creation of the universe. But neither Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) nor anyone else among the messengers or angels is eternal or participate in His Divinity. There is no concept of a dual-natured being in Islam like Philo's *logos*, Christians' Christ and holy Ghost, Ibn al-'Arabi's '*Ḥaqiqat Muhammadiya*', and Evicenna's First Intellect which is Allah's creation or command on the one hand and share in His Divinity on the other hand.

The *ḥaqiqat* (reality or nature) of Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is that he is a human being and highest in cader and status among the whole creation, and nearest to Allah than anyone else. He (pbuh) as human being and servant of Allah ('*ʿAbadihi*') is also *noor* (light). Being the best and highest in creation, he (pbuh) is the role model and ideal for the whole humanity. The reality (*ḥaqiqat*) of the ideal is *light*. In darkness, one loses his orientation. Presence of light, enlightens in man the consciousness of 'what he is at present' and 'what he has to be' *i.e.*, what is the ideal, what is the destiny. This is true of all prophets, messengers, the *shahideen* and the righteous men and women all. (Peace be upon them all.) They are all *noor* (light).

Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is the distributor of Allah's Mercy for the whole mankind. If Allah, who is supremely Unique and absolutely Singular, and Free of any want, need, deficiency or weekness, can honour His servant Muhammad (pbuh) with the the authority to distribute His Mercy among mankind, why can't Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) bless any of his beloved followers the honour to 'distribute Allah's mercy' to his fellow human beings. All the prophets and the messengers (pbut) were the distributors of Allah's blessings to their people. Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) has been given this status for the whole mankind. The blessings are given by Allah for distribution, they are being distributed at present, and will keep on till the Last Day. 'Immanence' (*halool*, *siryanīyat*) and union-with-God (*ittebād*), promulgated by *wahdat al-wujud* school on man-God relationship, are un-Qur'anic concepts based upon un-Qur'anic interpretation of their mystic experience. (S. H. Nasr 1966) It is contrary to Qur'anic teachings and inconsistent with the *muhkamāt* of the Qur'an. The Qur'an gives the concept of *m'aiyyat* (togetherness) with Allah. Being the best and the highest as servant of Allah, Ḥazrat Muhammad (pbuh) is in perfect togetherness with Allah. All the prophets, messengers, *shuhadā* (witnessed followers of the prophets and the messengers)' and the righteous servants (Peace be upon them all.) are in Allah's *m'aiyyat* (togetherness) but not in union-with-Allah, and none can ever be in union-with-Allah. Only a *wahdat al-wujudi* can promulgate such un-

Qur'anic concept like *logos*, *nouse christ*, and *holy ghost*, and *the first intellect* etc. following Philo, trinitarian Christians, and Muslim philosophers like al-Farabi and Evicena. The concepts of *shariat*, *ṭariqat*, *ḥaqiqat* and *m'arifat*, *wahdat al-wujud*, *Ḥaqiqat Muhammadiya*, and *tanaẓẓalât-e-sitta* etc. as reconstructed in this article illustrate the way to elaborate various concepts in Qur'anic perspective in accordance with the Qur'anic principles for the interpretation of the Qur'an.

¹ "And thus have We descended it as Judgement of Authority in Arabic..." (Surah ar-R'ad 13:37)

² Companions cum successors of the Prophet (pbuh) who were witnessed as the dwellers of Paradise by Him (pbuh); and then the successors whom these successors witnessed.

³ Pickthall in *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an: Text and Explanatory Translation* has translated *Mawla humu l-ḥaqq* as 'their Lord, the Just,' which does not seem to be right translation to the present writer. Al-Hâj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar has translated it as 'their Master in truth' which seems better and correct. Al-Hâj Hafiz Ghulam Sarwar, *Translation of the Holy Qur'an* (reprint) (Pakistan: National Book Foundation, 1973), 77. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem translates as the following:...*Then they will all be returned to God, their true Lord*. M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, *The Qur'an, A new translation*, Oxford University Press: Oxford World's Classics, 2004.

⁴ Pickthall translates it in following words: *In this case protection is only from Allah, the True*. He is Best for reward and best for consequence, which does not seem fitting in the context of the example Allah has given in the preceding verses.

⁵ Pickthall translates it in this way: *That is because Allah, He is the truth, and because He quickens the dead, and because He is Able to do all things*. (22:6), *That is because Allah, He is the True, and that whereon they call instead of Him, it is the False, and because Allah, He is the High, the Great*. (22:62) *That (is so) because Allah, He is the True, and that which they invoke beside Him is the False, and because Allah, He is the Sublime, the Great*. (31:30). At one place he calls Allah,

‘the truth’ and at other place he calls Him ‘the True’. ‘Truth’ is the property of a proposition whereas it is a person who can be true! At times Pickthall identifies Allah with His Word at other time he treats Him as Person!

⁶ Pickthall translates it *That is because Allah, He is the True* ... but it does not seem to be right rendering in the context.

⁷ Pickthall does not use the word ‘God’ in his translation. We have used it.

⁸ Pickthall translates it in this way: ‘*On that day Allah will pay them their just due, and they will know that Allah, He is the Manifest Truth.* (24:25)

9

10

¹¹ Allah commands in Surah Luqam: “... follow the path of him who turns towards Me in repentance and obedience...” Surah Luqman,31:15)

¹² Both books are available at CreateSpace (Amazon) for the international reader. For the readers in Pakistan, Urdu book is available at Multiline Books Regal Chawk Lahore and Zia-ul-Qur’an Publications Data Ganj Bakhsh Road Lahore. English book is available in the libraries of the Punjab University departments and HEC recognized libraries.

13

¹⁴ According to William C. Chittick the first clear and detailed formulation of *wahdat al-wujūd* is usually ascribed to al-Shaykh al-Akbar, Muhyi al-Dīn Ibn al-Arabi (560/1165–638/1240). The term *wahdat al wujūd* itself is not found in any texts before the works of Ibn al-Arabi’s school. Ibn al-Arabi himself never employs the term *wahdat al-wujūd* in his enormous corpus of writings however he frequently discusses *wujūd* and often makes explicit statements that justify that he supported the idea of *wahdat al-wujūd* in the literal sense of the term., William C. Chittick, “Wahdat al-Wujud In Islamic Thought” *The Bulletin*, Jan.- Mar. 1999, p. 8. Also, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “The Qur’an and Hadīth as source and inspiration of Islamic Philosophy”, *Histoery of Islamic Philosophy* part-1, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (edts.), (London: Routledge) 1996, 29.

¹⁵ Ibid., Religious Philosophy: A Group of Essays, The Belknap Press of Harvard University, p.42.

¹⁶ See our book Fâzli, Abdul Hafeez. *The Qur’anic Theology, Philosophy and Spirituality*, 2016, Lahore: PU Press, Pakistan. Also see Urdu book: Fâzli, Abdul Hafeez, *Muslim Fiker ki Qur’ani Jihât*, 2018, Lahore: PU Press, Pakistan.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Religious Philosophy p.31.

¹⁸ Problem of the relationship of Divine Essence and Attributes, and of the Createdness vs. Eternity of the Qur'an are two more instances of such problems.

¹⁹ The terms *Ḥâdith* (contingent) and *Qadîm* (eternal) in the above discussion also need to be examined. Everything which has beginning in time is *ḥâdith*. Whereas '*qadîm*' is equivalent in meaning to the term 'eternal' and '*qidm*' denotes 'eternity'. A being whose beginning and end with reference to time is inconceivable is *Qadîm*.¹⁹ In Christian theology the concept of '*qidam*' (eternity) has been considered in two senses: i) Everlastingness—infinity of time with reference to past and future; ii) Timelessness—transcendence from time *i.e.*, past present and future.¹⁹ An everlasting being will be a temporal being though without beginning and end. Transcendence from time has its own implications. Eternity (*Qidam*) is a term which the Christians accepted from Greeks and included into the Divine Attributes from where it entered in Muslim thought.¹⁹ The *Mu'tazilites* and the *Asha'rites* accepted these terms, like many others, from Greeks through Christians and introduced the word '*qidam*' as attribute of Qur'anic God. *Qadîm* occurs thrice in the Qur'an but nowhere has it occurred as Good Name or to mention Allah's Attribute. (For detail see the article "The Qur'an: Creation or Command!")

²⁰ Richard Swinburne, *The Coherence of Theism*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, pp.217.

4. Number of Verses of the Qur'an (Index and Argument)

²¹ Dr. Qazi Abdul Qadir, *Kashhaf-e Iştilahât-e falsfa* (Urdu-English), Karachi University: *shu'ba talif o tarjama*, 1994, p.239

²² Nelson Pike, *God and Timelessness*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, p. ix-x.