

importance of the well-known forms of pen and writing are concerned, they do not need any explanation. They have been always known and recognized everywhere in the civilized world. But it is also a fact that the nature of pen and writing pads has vastly differed from age to age and from region to region and main stages of its evolution could be traced from the early ages to the present computer age. However, it is also a fact of history that the most learned man in the history of humankind, our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who taught the humanity the most important and useful knowledge, was not taught through the formal means of reading and writing. Obviously, there is a more advanced but invisible form of pen that has been made capable by our Lord to leave impressions in our mind which remain stored there to be reproduced whenever required. This goes on happening right from our childhood and it always happens in the conscious state. At the time of death, the angels take away these records and keep them either in *Illiyyun* or *Sijjin* as instructed by Allah. (*Al-Anaam*: 6/61; *Al-Mutaffifin*: 83/7-10, 18-21)

To be beneficial the knowledge must help the man recognize *Ayaat* (proofs and signs) of Allah's *Rububiyat* and *Rahmat*, which He has spread everywhere for the well being of mankind. Recognition of Allah's mercy and *rububiyat* awakens in the man feeling of gratefulness to Allah and leads him to *iman*. True knowledge is the sure means to reach to this goal. Power of expression is another great bounty of Allah on the mankind for acquiring and propagating knowledge. This should also be used for the same purpose as explained above. *Ilm* (knowledge) is the greatest favour of Allah on mankind if it is useful and leads to *iman* and *amal-i salih*. But if it leads to *kibr* and *shirk* and leads the man to believe that it is result of his own efforts as Qarun of the community of Prophet Musa did, and stops being thankful to his Creator for this or he does it for his fame etc., it becomes totally destructive and if one does not correct oneself with repentance, one is destroyed and consigned to hell.

He has provided a detailed account of the literature that has come up in Arabic language on the subject. He laments the fact that Imam Farahi is yet to be properly introduced in the Arab world. He has taken into consideration the entire literature on Imam Farahi that was available to him for this study. It would, however, appear from a close study of the book that a considerable portion of the literature that has been produced in India even in Arabic has not been accessible to him. Vast corpus of Urdu literature that has come up on the subject particularly during recent times has largely remained out of his reach though he says that he has taken the help of some Urdu knowing scholars. He also visited Madrasatul Islah for collecting material and quotes verbal traditions that he came across during his stay there.

Spread over a number of chapters and subsections, it is a comprehensive study covering various aspects of the contribution of Imam Farahi in the field of the Quranic Studies. Salient features of his methodology, his works and the areas where he has broken new ground as well as the opinions where he is alone ect. have been discussed in considerable detail. Dr. Ravi is deeply impressed by the quality and excellence of his work and speaks very highly about it and considers him a great genius. For the purpose of evaluating the worth and distinctions of his works, the author has made a comparative study of the contribution of Imam Farahi with some of the most eminent scholars of the field and has invariably arrived at the conclusion that in most of these studies he far surpasses them. At the end, he has evaluated the contribution of Imam Farahi under twelve headings. He stresses the urgent need of introducing the works of Imam Farahi at a very vast level in the Arab world.

### ***Ilm-i Nafe in the Light of the Quran***

**Waseem Ahmad**

The knowledge that is acquired by man is a bounty of Allah that is bestowed by Him. In this context the first five *ayaat* of *Surah al-Alaq* (the first revelation to the Prophet SAW) are very crucial. They tell that the Merciful Creator taught men through pen, all that which they knew not. All the means that the humankind uses for the acquisition, expansion and propagation of knowledge including its power of expression and the means of reading and writing were also given by Allah. As for as the

to go to the Hindu scripture directly, nevertheless the paper cites some evidence on the subject from the ancient Indian scriptures culled from a variety of source books. In the Hindu Sutra (700-100 BC) as well as in the Buddhist Jatakas (600-400 BC), there are many references to the payment of interest, along with expressions of disdain for the practice. Vasishttha, a prominent lawmaker of the era, drafted a law that banned the high caste Brahmins and Kshatriyas from being usurers or money-lenders. The paper exhorts experts of those scriptures to investigate and verify the Divine instructions about interest contained in those books. All religious communities are exhorted to unite together to eradicate this evil from the society. The point is further buttressed by the ideas of philosophers and intellectuals. Many of the early Western philosophers including Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Seneca who were critics of charging interest on money loaned. Some of the sound-thinking economists have also pointed out the evils of interest. At the end, the paper suggests how businesses can be carried out on the basis of partnership in the absence of interest.

### **Abdul Hamid al-Farahi and His Contribution to the Quranic Sciences and Exegesis - An Introductory Study**

**Abu Saad Azmi**

Abdul Hamid Farahi occupies a very prominent position in the field of Quranic exegesis and Quranic sciences. He wrote many important books in the field of Quranic Studies. He is known as a scholar who introduced the concept of coherence in the Quran and systematically studied and analysed its various aspects. Dr Muhammad Fareed Ravi, author of the present book, is a well known scholar and missionary of Indian origin presently living in Malaysia. He was born in a Hindu family, embraced Islam at an early age and rose to be a scholar of Quranic Studies and a preacher of great merit. The present Arabic book (*Al-Imam Abdul Hamid al-Farahi wa Juhuduhu fi al-Tafsir wa Ulum al-Quran*) is in fact his doctoral thesis that he wrote for his Ph. D. from a university in Jordan. This article is an introductory study of this book into Urdu done by Janab Abu Saad Azmi.

In the Introduction of the book besides explaining the methodology that he has adopted for this study, Dr Ravi has briefly given a life account of Imam Farahi, his teachers and students. He has also dwelt on hurdles that he faced in the task of collecting material needed for his research.

Adam and Eve for 'waswasah' during their stay in the Heavens?; 'huboot' (Descent of Adam from Heavens to this Earth), chronological order of events that took place in the Heavens, etc.

The purpose of this endeavour is to assess and appreciate the painstaking efforts of these eminent commentators in pondering over the Quranic verses for searching the Truth, and to emphasize the human limitations in covering the whole reality underlying the verses on the same subject but spreading all over the Quran as well as making it possible to draw necessary lessons from it for our own guidance.

### **Need to Fight against the Practice of Interest with Reference to the Religious Scriptures**

**Abdul Azim Islahi**

Usury/interest (*riba* in Arabic and *sud* in Urdu) has been very strictly prohibited in the Quran, the last revealed book of Allah. The violators have been warned of declaration of war against them by Allah and His Prophet (SAW). Assuming that other religious books would also be containing harsh warnings in this regard, it could be used to form a platform of various religious communities to unite for abolition of this evil, this paper first refreshes the Qur'anic teachings about prohibition of interest that are contained in *surah al-Baqarah* verses 275-280, *surah Al Imran* 130-131, *surah al-Maidah* 161, and *Surah al-Rum* 39. It also notes Imam Hamiduddin Farahi's assertion that it is evident from the Quran itself that most of the borrowers were rich people. It is, therefore, clear that the prohibition of interest covers all kinds of loans - commercial as well as consumption. It is noteworthy that Old Testament also contains a number of verses regarding prohibition of interest, such as Exodus 22:24, Leviticus 25:36, Leviticus 25:37, Deuteronomy 23:20, Deuteronomy 23:21 (20), Ezekiel 18:17 and Psalm 15:5. As for as the New Testament is concerned, the verses regarding prohibition of interest are not very precise. It is due to the fact that the mission of Jesus Christ was to revive the teachings of Torah, and therefore there was no need to give fresh instructions about it. The prohibition of usury was adopted as a major campaign by the earliest Christian Church. This naturally flowed from Jesus' expulsion of the money-lenders from the Temple. The Catholic Church of the 4th century CE banned the clergy from charging interest, a rule that was later extended to the laity. Though it has not been possible

## Quranic narrative of Adam and Iblīs in the light of Some Urdu Commentaries of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

S. Masood Ahmad

The Quranic narrative of the story of Adam and Iblīs is one of the most fascinating stories of the Quran, not only most beautifully portraying the process of the creation of Adam but also illustrating basic weaknesses and strengths of the human race. It provides basis for the philosophical foundations relating to human nature with its remarkable potential and outstanding moral instincts vis-à-vis satanic inspirations. This pre-historical story of Adam and Iblīs has neither been narrated at one place in its totality nor in a conventionally established literary form, rather it is found in a piece-meal manner spread over seven places in different *Surahs*. Human endeavour aimed at systematically compiling the whole story with all necessary details but free from biblical mythological elements had to wait till the dawn of 20<sup>th</sup> century C. E. However, thanks to conscious and concerted efforts for eliminating '*Israiliāt*' from the Islamic literature carried out during the last century by a number of eminent commentators of the subcontinent has resulted in drastically changing this situation.

To begin with, the author first presents all the Quranic verses relating to this theme along with their Urdu translation to help build an overall Quranic view of this narrative. This follows a comparative analysis of the significant points of the six eminent commentators of Indian subcontinent, namely: Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani, Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Maulana Abul Aala Maududi and Maulana Amin Ahsan Islāhi. Although these commentaries are largely free from '*Israiliāt*', yet some elements of Biblical mythology could still be discerned alongside rationalistic views in some commentaries like '*Bayānul Quran*' of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi '*Maariful Quran*' of Mufti Muhammad Shafi Usmani and Tafseer Shabbir Ahmad Usmani. This article lays particular stress on the mutually/exclusively differing, self contradictory and/or intellectually unsubstantiated views of the above mentioned commentators with regard to such issues like '*Khalīfah*'; '*Ilm-i Asma*'; Adam's early life in Heaven and its status; '*waswasah*' of *Shaitan* in the particular context of Adam's stay in '*Jannah*' or how *Shaitan* approached

of spiritual well being and progress. If desires are let loose to have their sway over the life of man then there would be no difference between man and animal. In fact the man will descend even lower than the animals if he is unable to resist his desires and hankering after the worldliness. But if he succeeds in keeping his desires under control then he can even surpass the angels. It is, however, very difficult to achieve this lofty status unless there is some ennobling purpose in life, some cause to achieve and live for. This noble cause is to seek the pleasure of Allah, which is the ultimate goal. However, this could not be achieved unless a strong relationship is established with the Creator our Lord. The goal should be to develop oneself spiritually to such an extent that one should begin to imagine that as if one is seeing Allah while praying, because if one does not see Him, He surely sees him. All this should be done with maximum possible sincerity. Only sincerity imparts worth, value and quality to religious and spiritual devotions and observations such as *salat*, *zakat* and *sadqah*. This condition could be achieved by constant remembrance of Allah. Remembrance of Allah is the source from which the heart derives its life and sustains it. A heart that is devoid of the remembrance of Allah is dead without any vestige of life. Pious deeds, repentance, trust in Allah, scrupulously avoiding all kinds of sins are the means of creating this condition. Acquisition of wealth and property are not necessarily against spirituality provided it has been acquired through lawful means and is spent in the pursuit of the pleasure of Allah. Similarly, government and authority are also not inimical to the spiritual well being if these are used for the good of humanity and pleasure of Allah. The Quran says: "(Allah will certainly help) those who, were We to bestow authority on them in the land, will establish Prayers, render *Zakat*, enjoin good and forbid evil. The end of all matters rests with Allah." (*Al-Hajj*: 22/41) The goal is self purification and spiritual development and not monastic life for which there is no room in Islam. And therefore raising family is not against the spirituality as most of the Prophets of Allah have had families. It is only in the fitness of things that the *Masjids* are the centres of spiritualism where a very congenial climate for its progress always prevails. In present times unfortunately many rituals centred on the graves of the pious and saintly people have been developed. These have nothing to do with spiritualism.

for years and even now when he has retired from service he is always keen to find ways to help the Idarah. Janab Tasneem Akhtar enriched the library of the Idarah by donating his personal library that he has built with great interest and care over the years. The Idarah was housed for many years at the residence of Prof. Abdul Azim Islahi and now its building stands on a plot of land that has been donated by him. May Allah bless and reward all of them.

## Spirituality in the Light of the Quran

Muhammad Saud Alam Qasimi

Spirituality (*Ruhaniyat*) is an integral part of religion. This article seeks to locate its status in Islam as propounded in the teachings of the Glorious Quran. At the outset, it tries to evaluate various definitions of the spirituality as put forward by Western scholars, philosophers and Sufis. Then it compares it with the Quranic concept of spirituality. The Quran does not approve the proposition that *Ruh* is also material like the body as the Western scholars and philosopher have tended to believe. It clearly states: "They ask you about *Ruh*, say "the *Ruh* descends by the command of Lord, but you have been given only a little knowledge." (*Bani Israyil*: 17/85) Human life, therefore, is contingent upon it and it cannot survive without it. Human beings continue to enjoy life as long as the *Ruh* is there in the body but the moment it departs the body becomes devoid of all traces of life and perishes. The body that is made of clay acquired respect and dignity only when our Lord breathed His spirit (*Ruh*) into it. The *Ruh* does not only keep the body alive but also introduces it to the world of higher and finer realities and the subtle realms of spirituality. It needs to be developed and taken care of. Human endeavour to recognise its value and work for its development and purification is known as spiritualism (*Ruhaniyat*). It begins with awareness about oneself because unless one knows oneself with all its frailties, imperfections and weaknesses, one will not feel the compelling necessity to correct, improve and purify oneself. This awareness will remain meaningless unless it is followed by self-discipline and self control. Spiritual progress is not possible unless worldly desires and lust are kept under complete control. Without it there could not be any possibility

By the Name of Allah Taala

## ABSTRACT

### Editorial

Ishtiyak Ahmad Zilli

This issue of the Majallah *Ulum al-Quran* marks the completion of 31 years of the establishment of Idarah Ulum al-Quran and thirtieth volume of the *Majallah*. We prostrate before Almighty Allah in thankfulness who gave us *taufiq* and strength for this small service to His Book. When all it began in 1985, we could not have even imagined that we will ever be able to come so far. It is only due to the infinite mercy of Allah. There have been serious problems and still are. One of the biggest problems for us is to keep the *Majallah* update. Unfortunately some time we fall behind schedule in its publication due to reasons beyond our control. This is the case with the present issue. While the year 2016 is coming to an end, we are coming out with second issue of the year 2015. The main reason for this recurrent problem is non-availability of standard articles in the field of the specialization of the *Majallah*.. All along our endeavour has been to maintain the standard that was set for it in the very begging and this sometime makes it difficult to abide by the schedule. Help from the scholars working in the area is particularly solicited in this regard..

Public donation were not sought at the time of the establishment of the Idarah nor it is sought now. It was established by the donation of the founder members of the Idarah. But there are people who are particularly interested in the noble cause of the dissemination of the teachings of the Glorious Quran and they had helped the Idarah on their own in many ways. Their voluntary assistance has greatly helped us in the building of the Idarah and carrying out our mission. In this regards names of Dr Khursheed Mallick of Chicago, Janab Muhammad Munir Khan of Muscat and Janab Tasnim Akhtar of Malerkotla need to be particularly mentioned. Dr Khursheed Mallick helped in the building of the present structure where the Idarah is housed now. The expenses of organizing the annual seminar, essay competition, publication of the proceedings of the seminar and the salary of a fellow was borne by Janab Muhammad Muneer Khan