

The Study and Understanding the Holy Quran: Importance and Requirements

Najibul Haq

The article discusses in detail the main purpose of the revelation of the Holy Quran and with reference to several verses stresses the point that this is the Greatest Book of guidance for the entire human beings in their all spheres of their lives. So, this fact demands for the sincere study and continuous effort to understand the meaning of the Book. The contributor takes into account those verses (particularly *Surah Sad:38/29; Al-Qamar:54/17*) which invite mankind to ponder over the Quran and try to understand its meaning, as the Quran has been made easy for seeking guidance and getting advice (*tazakkur*). He also brought to the notice of the readers that the clear message was given by the Quran to the believers through the Prophet (SAW) that everyone must uphold the directives of the Quran, as it is the reminder and best advice for the entire mankind (*Al-Zukhruf:43.43-44*). With reference to the famous *Hadith*, the writer also points out that learning and teaching of the Quran is an act of great virtue and value and that those occupied with this act are the best of human beings (*Khairukum man tallama al-Quran wa allamahu*). So, in view of the Quran and *Sunnah* it is always desirable to make oneself busy in this work, as it facilitates the understanding of the Book of guidance. In the same context, the article draws attention to the perils and bad effects of one's negligence and carelessness toward *Huqooq al-Quran* and points out that the right of the Quran included learning and trying to understand its meaning.

At the end, the contributor explains the difficulties in the way of the understanding of the Quran and gives suggestions to overcome them. In this regard, he emphasises that while reading and learning the Quran, reciting of the *tawwuz* and seeking *taufiq* of Allah Almighty is very much required, as directed in the Quran (*Al-Nahl:16/98*). The article is concluded with the earnest appeal to the Muslims of the whole world to turn to the Quran and seek guidance from this greatest source of guidance in their daily life, and to place it at their top priority to try to learn and understand the message of the Quran, which ensures success in this world and in the Life Hereafter.

of an orphan is not permitted to deny her right of *mahr* or use it illegally, even he is not allowed to bring an *yateemah* (who is under his guardianship) under his own *nikah* with the sole purpose of his monetary gain.

At the end, the writer takes into account all those verses which direct the Believers to take care of the rights of orphans and show fair, just and kind treatment towards them, as they are weak, helpless, and immature and, above all, are deprived of the affection of their father or natural guardian.

The article was rendered into Urdu and summarised by janab Muhammad Ismail Islahi.

Tafsir-i Raufi* – Trends of Use of Poetry in *Tafsir

Humayun Abbas Shams

It has always been the endeavour of the scholars to bring the teachings of the Glorious Quran to the notice of the people at large in accordance of the needs and demands of the time through the means of translation, *Tafsir* and other literary devices. Every language of the world has witnessed this process and it will continue till the end of time as it is the eternal message of Allah for the mankind. With a view to ensure effectiveness of the message some time recourse has been taken to poetry as well, as poetry has greater attraction for the people. Fondness of Arabs for the poetry is too well known to need any elaboration. It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that the first attempt to render the Quran into poetry was undertaken in Arabic language by Imam Abu Muhammad bin Ahmad Dirini (d. 694 H.). Muhammad Amin (d. 1109 H.) translated *Surah Yusuf* into Gujarati Urdu. After that *Tafsir-i Muhammadi* and *Tafsir-i Nabawi* were composed in versified form. Though *Tafsir-i Raufi* is in prose but poetic form has been used in it very extensively. It is a complete *Tafsir* and it was published. Its author is Shah Rauf Ahmad Mujaddidi. All the poetic compositions which have been incorporated in it in the course of the complete *Tafsir* are his own composition. He has not used the poetic compositions of others for the purpose. These poetic compositions have been written in old orthography (*imla*) and have been deliberately kept in the book in the same while quoting them in this article so that an idea can be formed about the rules of old orthography. Mostly those parts of the Quran have been versified which relate to *Hamd*, *Naat*, mysticism, condemnation of the love of the world and so on. Largest part of such poetry is to be found in the *Tafsir* of *Surah Yusuf*. The author has given examples from different parts of the *Tafsir* to provide an idea about the nature and value of the verses as well as its effectiveness in communicating the meaning and message of the Holy Book.

The Noble Quran and the Protection of the Rights of Weak and Orphans with special reference to *Surah Al-Nisa*

Walid Muhammad Abdul Aziz Al- Hamd
Urdu Tr,& Abridgement: Muhammad Ismail Islahi

The Holy Quran has defined rights of people of the different sections of society and has demanded the Believers to take care of them sincerely to ensure peace and order in the society. In this reference, the Quran gives main emphasis on the protection of the rights of weaker sections of the society who are more prone to maltreatment and injustice. The article discusses the rights of people of this section particularly that of orphans with reference to the relevant verses of *Surah Al-Nisa*. Explaining the word “*yateem*” literally and technically, the contributor points out that various *Surahs* of the Quran contain the Divine directives about good and just treatment with orphans and giving due regard to their rights, but the *Surah Al-Nisa*, which explains in details the principles and teachings relating to family life in Islam, gives special emphasis on discussing in detail the rights of orphans, as in the very beginning of the *Surah* ten verses (2,4,6-11,36,127) are related to orphans.

With reference to the Quranic verses, the author discusses the rights of the orphans mainly with regards to the wealth and property, inheritance, *nikah* of *yateemah* and good treatment (*Ihsan*) with them. The article gives more focus on discussing their financial rights. In this regard, the discussion is mainly related to the principles of the protection of the wealth of orphans, conditions of its use/ utilization by the *wali* or guardian, investment in trade or other productive means, regulations of handing over their wealth to them after their becoming major (*baligh*). With reference to the verses 6,8 of *Al-Baqarah* and 152 of *Al-Anaam*, the writer pointed out that the wealth of the orphans may be legally invested in the trade, as it would be beneficial for them. While doing business with the capital of an orphan, the guardian, in certain situation, is allowed to deduct traveling and other necessary expenses for the same. Explaining this point, the author has extensively quoted the Traditions (*Ahadiith*), well-known exegeses and *fiqh*-works. With regard to entrusting their wealth or property to them, the contributor states that the Quranic directives about taking utmost care in this reference (including examining their understanding and ability of protection of wealth) are very clear and that the Quranic rules and regulations must be strictly followed while dealing with the orphans.

While discussing the problem of the *nikah* of *yateemah*, the writer quotes mainly the verse/3& 127 of *Surah Al-Nisa* and emphasises that the Quran stands for fair and just dealing in this regard also and that a guardian

the Book and is included in the *Sahih* of Muslim. He believes that Quran is absolutely clear and the only requirement for its understanding is to think and reflect over it. Under the title "*Zawahir-i Quran*" the author holds that every word has its own specific meaning and only that meaning should be taken for the purposes of the understanding the connotation of the Quran unless there is some compelling reason to do otherwise. The author has also mentioned some basic sources for the understanding of the Quran. These include similar *ayat* of the Quran, the traditions of the Prophet (SAW) and his descendants, traditions of the Companions and *Tabi'in*, opinions of exegetes and personal reflection. The writer thinks that the discussion on *Tafsir bil Rai* is good. However, the author has not taken *Nazm* (coherence) in the Quran into consideration, which is a very important tool for understanding the Quran. It is because of this that he has not been able to unravel the meanings at certain places.

21st Century English Translations of the Quran: Translators' Motives and Challenges

Abdur Raheem Kidwai

This article, based on a critical study of 45 English translations of the Quran, seeks to present the main contours of this field of study. The number of these translations has gone up almost exponentially. Upto 2000 there existed only 70; by 2017 we have another 45, i.e. a total of 115 translations. The article evaluates the translators' motives, mindset and performance. Also, it takes cognizance of their dogmatic presuppositions for which they have used to the Quran as a pretext. The sectarian, Qadyani and Orientalist varieties have been identified in order to guide readers. the preponderance of Muslim translators presently and the reasons behind their robust activity have been also examined. Amid this spate, the following ventures stand out: Zaki Hammad's, Tarif Khalidi's and Mustafa Khattab's for their advancing a better understanding of the meaning and message of the Quran. Omars and Jones's and Droge's versions point to the persistence of Qadyani and Orientalists forays respectively. More bewildering is the recurrence of Rashad Khalifa's whimsical 19 numerical code in the translations by Yuxsel and Ijaz Chaudhary. Leila Bakhtiar's and Tahirul Qadri's represent Feminist and Barelwi interpretations whereas Kader Abdolah's borders on blasphemy and apostasy. Thomas Cleary has done well to bring out the common ground between Buddhism and the Quran. Safi Kaskas and David Hungerford have strengthened the cause of Inter Faith dialogue as they have underscored in their Quran translation the identical teachings of the Bible and the Quran. In sum, some significant, welcome developments are noticeable in the field of English translations of the Quran.

being is entitled to ponder over the Quran and draw necessary lessons from it. However, it is generally believed that the human endeavour to reflect over the Quran is restricted to what Quran terms as *Muhkamat* or those verses which are absolutely clear and lucid, because the meaning of the *Mutashabihat* (ambiguous) is known only to Allah. But the author of *Ahsan al-Tafsir* does not subscribe to this opinion and holds out the view that *al Rasikhun fi al-Ilm* (those firmly rooted in knowledge) can also know its meaning. He further elaborates the point that since many of the Quranic commands are very brief and therefore these cannot be properly understood without external help. The writer of the article differs from both of these assertions. In a fairly detailed discussion on these points, he argues that a close analysis of the verse dealing with this problem would clearly suggest that even those who are firmly rooted in knowledge cannot fathom meaning of the *Mutashabihat*. He thinks that the real reason that led the author to this conclusion is the lack of proper understanding of the reasons of the brevity of the Quranic commandments. Then he explains some of the basic reasons for it. He concludes that the *Mutashabihat* are beyond the comprehension of even *al Rasikhun fi al-ilm*. He further says that if by external means author means the verses of similar content (*Nazair*) from the Quran, then it is universally considered as one of the basic tools of understanding the Quran. But if he means that there are some people who are endowed with special knowledge who are supposed to fulfill this task, then it would not be possible to agree with him as the doors of understanding Quran are open to all and everybody can draw necessary lessons from it. The next principle that has come for discussion is "*Bayan-i-Rasul*" (elucidation by the Prophet). The author says that since in the Book there are ambiguous verses (*Mutashabihat*), there is factor of brevity in dealing with the commands and prohibitions (*Awamir wa Nawahi*) and there are layers of meanings of the Quran, it could not be fully and properly understood without the help of the inheritor of the Book (*Waris-i Kitab*). The writer of the article does not agree with this position and thinks that this contradicts the statement of the author himself where he has said that the Quran is absolutely clear and anybody can think over it and draw lessons for himself. This follows by a detailed discussion on the issue. The writer does not agree with the explanations that have been given here and elsewhere by many exegetes regarding the word *Tabiin*. He argues that the Quran is absolutely clear and lucid and does not need the kind of elucidation which is generally believed to be meant by the *Tabiin*. This is followed by a discussion about the *Hadith* that is known as the *Hadith-i-Saqlain*. In this context, various versions of the *Hadith* as transmitted in different collections of *Hadith*, are discussed. He thinks that in this regard the most authentic version of the *Hadith* is the one which speaks only of

Further, it was pointed out in the Editorial that in several verses, the Quran states that Allah loves *muhsinin* (good-doers) (*Al-Baqarah*:2/195; *Aal-i- Imran*:3/134; *Al-Maidah*:5/93). A look at these verses shows that in most of these verses , those believers were mentioned who give benefit to people in different ways or who protect them from troublesome or harmful things/ actions. Besides, the Quran states that Allah commands the Believers to do "*ihsan*" (*Al- Nahl*: 16/ 90) and this is well-known that the *Ihsan* means to perform good works or noble deeds which are, of course, beneficial for doers as well as for others. The writer of the Editorial also stressed the point that the qualities of the virtuous believers defined in the Quran included walking in humility or keeping oneself away from arrogance and pride and coming over anger (*Al-Furqan*: 25/63; *Aal-i- Imran*: 3/134}. It is needless to explain that arrogance, anger and feeling proudly instigate a person for such acts which become quite distressing and harmful for the people.

Lastly, it was emphasised in the Editorial that the Quran exhorts the Believers to utilize their faculties and resources for the benefits of the people and reminds them that they have been blessed with a lot of Divine benedictions availed by them in their daily life. These certainly demand offering gratitude towards Him, and it can not be denied that favouring others or helping them with these divinely gifted resources is , a way of paying gratitude to Allah Almighty, as Quran gives the Divine Command in this verse "Do good (to others), as Allah has been good to you" (*Al-Qasas*:28/77).

Tafsir Ahsan al- Hadith – A Study

Altaf Ahmad Azami

This article seeks to study the principles of *Tafsir* as enunciated by the Shia scholar Allama Talib Jauhari in the introduction of his *Tafsir "Ahsan al-Hadith"*. The discussion is confined to the study of these principles and does not go beyond it. The first principle that the writer of the article has taken for consideration is "The Communicative Aspect of the Quran" (*Iblaghi Haisiyat*). The author holds the view that the Quran is very clear in communicating its meaning and everybody can understand it according to the level of his intellectual capacity. There is absolutely nothing ambiguous that could not be unraveled by the human intellect. A number of verses of the Quran have been cited to prove the point. The writer considers it a very good discussion. The second principle that is taken for consideration is "Role of Reason in Understanding of the Quran" (*Quran Fahmi mein Aql ka Kirdar*). Allah has commanded mankind to think over the Quran and reflect over its meanings. Therefore every human

By the Name of Allah Taala

ABSTRACT

The Quran and Doing Good to Others (Editorial)

Zafarul Islam Islahi

The Editorial seeks to emphasise that Allah Almighty is the Most Merciful and the Most Kind and His chosen faith for mankind (Islam) is *din-i-rahmat*, the last Prophet sent by Him is mercy for the whole universe and the Divine Book revealed on him is a mercy and blessing for entire humanity. So, all these demand that the followers of this *Din* must be beneficial for all. This point has been repeatedly emphasised in the Holy Quran. They have belief in the *Kalimah-i-Tayyibah* which is deeply rooted in the earth and whose branches touch sky and which always gives fruit all the time (*Surah Ibrahim* :14/25). The Quran builds up mind of its followers to mould their life in such a way that their sayings and practices would become beneficial and source of comfort for others. In fact, they are required to make themselves habitual of good conduct and to honestly take care of rights of others. Moreover, the Quran also exhorts them to utilize their faculties for the benefits of common people.

Explaining the above points, the writer stated that there were different ways of giving benefit to others and these included to extend financial assistance to a poor and beggar, to feed a hungry, to give water to a thirsty, to help a weak and sick person and to fulfil the requirements of any needy one. In view of the Quran, those believers are beloved servants of Allah Almighty who provide food to poor, orphans and captives and that it is highest form of virtue (*birr*) to spend one's wealth out of love of Allah, for (needy) relatives, poor and orphans, wayfarers, slaves. (*Al-Baqarah*:2/177; *Aal-i-Imran*:3/29; *Al-Dahr*:76/5-8). It was further stressed in the Editorial that out of different means of helping one, the Quran gives much emphasis on giving benefit to a person by the way of financial assistance, because man has natural love for wealth and this is a great trial for a wealthy or resourceful person to spend his money for others. Significantly enough, the Quran also makes it clear that only those would go successfully through this trial who have belief in the oneness of Allah Almighty (*Tauhid*) and Life Hereafter (*Akhirat*) (*Al-Balad*: 90/11-16: *Al-Maaun*:107/1-3).