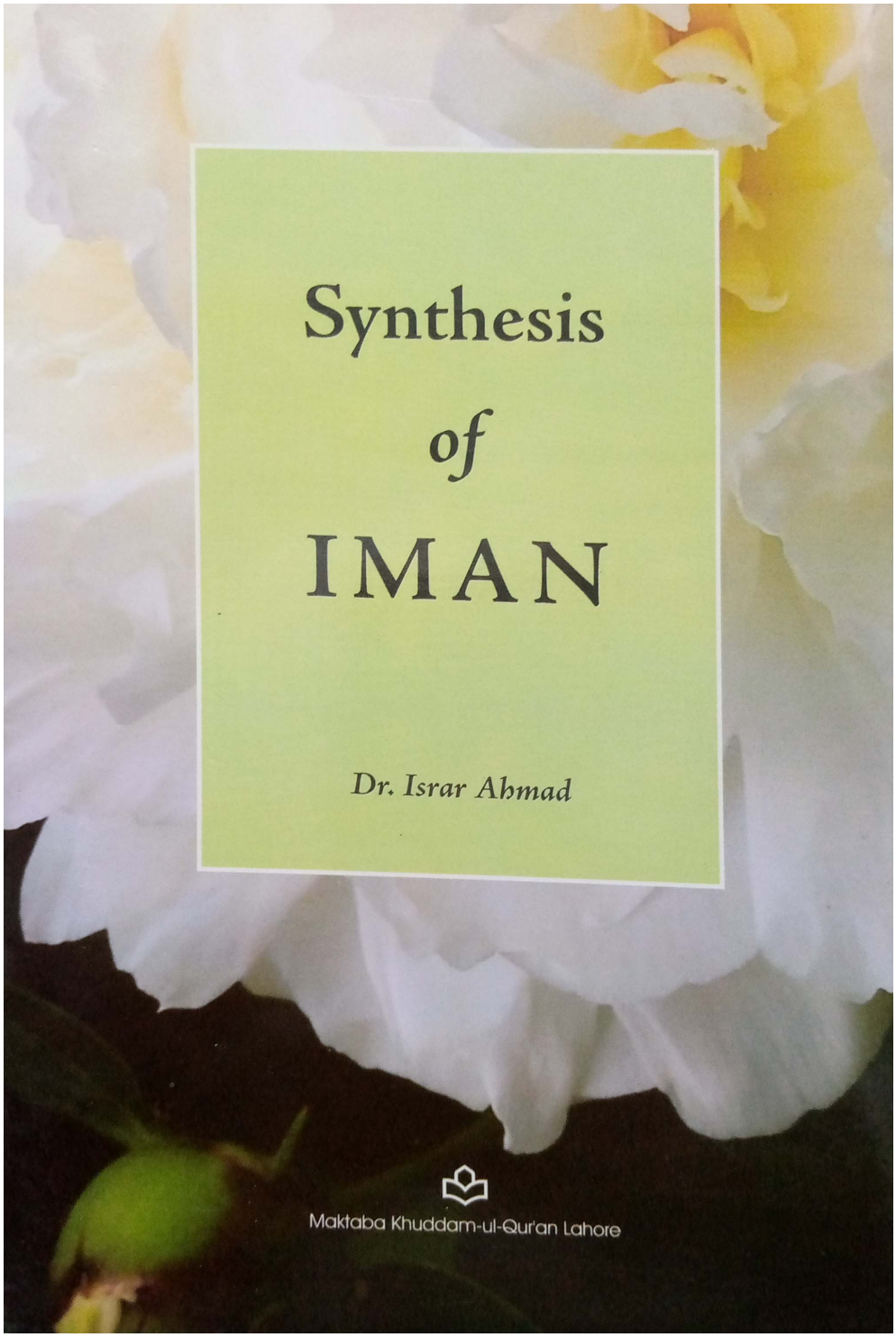

Synthesis of Iman

ڈاکٹر اسرار احمد

Synthesis of *Iman*

(Discourse on Al-e-`Imran, 3:190-195)

DR **ISRAR AHMAD**

English Translation by

Adnan Rehman

Lahore

Markazi Anjuman Khuddam ul Qur'an

2024

English Name: Synthesis of *Iman*

Urdu Name: عقل، فطرت اور ایمان

1st Edition: September 2007 2,200 copies

2nd Edition: September 2024 1,100 copies

Published by

Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur’an, Lahore

36-K Model Town, Lahore-54700

Phones: 5869501-03, Fax: 5834000

Email**: anjuman@tanzeem.org**

WebPages: www.tanzeem.org

Printed in Pakistan by Shirkat Printing Press, Lahore.

© Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul- Quran Lahore & Deen-e-Haq Trust

We welcome any person or publisher to seek our written permission to reproduce and print the scholarly work of Dr. Israr Ahmad (m). The interested parties are required to follow certain conditions and restrictions before publishing to ascertain the quality of the book(s) and sanctity of the relevant material. It would be appreciated if a few copies of the reproduced material are provided to us for record. We, however do reserve the right to take legal action for any unauthorized publication, malicious or otherwise alterations, misquotes, out of context quotes and references and misuse deemed damaging to his and our reputation.

Price Rs: 180/-

Continue to Next Page

اِنَّ فِیۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ وَ اخۡتِلَافِ الَّیۡلِ وَ النَّهَارِ لَاٰیٰتٍ لِّاُولِی الۡاَلۡبَابِ ﴿۱۹۰﴾الَّذِیۡنَ یَذۡکُرُوۡنَ اللّٰهَ قِیٰمًا وَّ قُعُوۡدًا وَّ عَلٰی جُنُوۡبِهِمۡ وَ یَتَفَکَّرُوۡنَ فِیۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ ۚ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقۡتَ هٰذَا بَاطِلًا ۚ سُبۡحٰنَکَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿۱۹۱﴾رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّکَ مَنۡ تُدۡخِلِ النَّارَ فَقَدۡ اَخۡزَیۡتَهٗ ؕ وَ مَا لِلظّٰلِمِیۡنَ مِنۡ اَنۡصَارٍ ﴿۱۹۲﴾رَبَّنَاۤ اِنَّنَا سَمِعۡنَا مُنَادِیًا یُّنَادِیۡ لِلۡاِیۡمَانِ اَنۡ اٰمِنُوۡا بِرَبِّکُمۡ فَاٰمَنَّا ۟ رَبَّنَا فَاغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوۡبَنَا وَ کَفِّرۡ عَنَّا سَیِّاٰتِنَا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الۡاَبۡرَارِ ﴿۱۹۳﴾رَبَّنَا وَ اٰتِنَا مَا وَعَدۡتَّنَا عَلٰی رُسُلِکَ وَ لَا تُخۡزِنَا یَوۡمَ الۡقِیٰمَةِ ؕ اِنَّکَ لَا تُخۡلِفُ الۡمِیۡعَادَ ﴿۱۹۴﴾فَاسۡتَجَابَ لَهُمۡ رَبُّهُمۡ اَنِّیۡ لَاۤ اُضِیۡعُ

عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ اَوۡ اُنثٰى ۚ بَعۡضُكُم مِّنۡۢ بَعۡضٍ ۚ فَالَّذِيۡنَ هَاجَرُوۡا وَ اُخۡرِجُوۡا مِنۡ دِيَارِهِمۡ وَ اُوۡذُوۡا فِىۡ سَبِيۡلِىۡ وَ قٰتَلُوۡا وَ قُتِلُوۡا لَاُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنۡهُمۡ سَيِّاٰتِهِمۡ وَ لَاُدۡخِلَنَّهُمۡ جَنّٰتٍ تَجۡرِىۡ مِنۡ تَحۡتِهَا الۡاَنۡهٰرُ ۚ ثَوَابًا مِّنۡ عِنۡدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عِنۡدَهٗ حُسۡنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿۱۹۵﴾ (آل عمران)

4

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful.

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding –

Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth, [saying], "Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

Our Lord, indeed whoever You admit to the Fire - You have disgraced him, and for the wrongdoers there are no helpers.

Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)] calling to faith, [saying], 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die among the righteous.

Our Lord, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in [Your] promise."

And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another. So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed - I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward."

[Al-e-Imran 3:190-195]

5

Continue to Next Page

6

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيمForeword Among the most prominent factors leading to the continuing decline of the Muslim *ummah* is the shift of emphasis among the Muslims from metaphysical pursuits to material concerns. The modern Muslim intellectuals – spellbound by the material progress and dazzling exterior

of the western civilization and dismayed by the inability, indeed the sheer refusal, of the *`ulama* to counter the western philosophical onslaught – sought to uplift the Muslims from their woeful predicament and prescribed the medicine of modernization. The process of modernization is rooted in scientism – the belief that the Ultimate Reality can only be arrived at via the scientific method of investigation. The scientific method is limited to the sensorial, material realm and denies, or at least is skeptical of, the spiritual, metaphysical dimension of life. The belief in scientism and practical negation of a supra-physical realm is part and parcel of all modern western thought and pursuits. This syndrome inevitably affected the thought-pattern of modern Muslim thinkers who looked towards the West for inspiration. Come the present age, the syndrome of modernization, coupled with the ubiquitous presence of everything western in Muslim countries, has unconsciously and subliminally invaded the minds of the masses as well. This has resulted in either a form of disbelief, skepticism or an irrational, blind belief in the metaphysical truths asserted by Islam.

The rise and decline of the Muslim *ummah* is tied to its relation with and adherence to the injunctions of Qur'an and *Sunnah*. The focus of the Muslims' intellectual pursuits must once again shift towards these two fountains of true knowledge. For this, it is essential that the Muslim masses, and their intelligentsia in particular, must acquire a conscious conviction regarding these metaphysical truths. This is because the foundation of Islam rests upon the belief in certain transcendental, unseen, intangible truths. Hence, unless and until the Muslims, especially their intelligentsia, undergo the prescribed shift of emphasis from the material to the metaphysical, the dream of redeeming the woes of Muslim *Ummah* cannot be realized.

The present treatise discusses the synthesis of faith within the Qur'anic paradigm and the Qur'anic mode of reasoning for recognizing the existence of God and the role of the human intellect in this pursuit. The treatise is a translation of an Urdu booklet titled *`Aql, Fitrat Aur Iman,* which is based on the sixth lecture of a series of lectures entitled *Muntakhab Nisab,* delivered by Dr. Israr Ahmed. We hope that the treatise paves the way in stimulating the hearts and minds of the modern Muslims towards the Book of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and aids in turning their attention to the real remedy of our malady – the acquisition of conscious faith as outlined in the Qur'anic discourse.

Adnan Rehman

English Department

Qur'an Academy Lahore

Contents

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS. 11

The Augustness and Excellence of the Passage. 11

The Theme of the Passage: Synthesis of Faith. 12

Some Basic Points Regarding Faith. 13

The Stages of Intellectual Maturity. 14

PIECEMEAL ANALYSIS OF THE PASSAGE. 15

Who are the Ulul Albab ?. 15

Meaning of “ayah”. 17

The Qur'anic Mode of Argument 18

Outcome of Contemplation: Gnosis of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) 19

Mutual Relation and Correlation between Remembrance and Contemplation 21

A Necessary Consequence of Intellectual Insight and Premordial Human Nature: Recompense of Deeds 22

SELF-CONSCIOUS FAITH AND ITS REQUIREMENTS. 23

Condition of the Faith of True Believers. 255

Spiritual Equality of Men and Women. 27

A Glimpse of Siddiqeen’s Character. 28b

Continue to Next Page

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The Augustness and Excellence of the Passage

The passage of present discussion spans *ayah*s (verses) 190-195 of *surah* (chapter) Al-e-`Imran. This passage is of particular significance for it outlines the Qur'anic mode of reasoning as it relates to the synthesis of *iman* (faith). The excellence of this passage is indicated by the fact that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) had an especial fondness for these *ayah*s. It would suffice to quote two *hadith*s (sayings of the Prophet) to convey the excellence of this passage:

"Abdullah bin `Umar once inquired of Aisha (رضی اللہ عنہا):'O Mother of the Faithful! Tell me something about the Prophet (ﷺ) which was most dear to you.' She replied, 'Everything about the Prophet (ﷺ) was endearing and charming. However, as you have enquired, I will convey to you an incident. One night the Prophet (ﷺ) came to me (to spend the night and after a while), he asked me, 'O Aishah! Permit me to worship my Lord tonight.' I replied, 'O Messenger of Allah! I fancy your company but that which is beloved to you is even more beloved to me. You have my permission.' The Prophet (ﷺ) then stood in prayer and began to weep to the point that his beard became drenched with tears. Then he made a long prostration and during this time he kept weeping so much so that the place of prostration became drenched with tears. Then he lied down (after prayer) but his weeping continued until it was dawn. At this time Bilal (رضی اللہ عنہ) came to inform him (ﷺ) of the morning prayer and upon seeing the Prophet's condition, tried to cajole him: 'O Prophet (ﷺ) for what reason do you weep? Even if you have committed a mistake then Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) has already

forgiven all your mistakes.' To this the Prophet (ﷺ) replied, 'O Bilal! Why would I not weep when my Lord has revealed tonight these ayahs upon me.' After this the Prophet (ﷺ) recited: 'Behold! in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day there are indeed Signs for men of understanding… '"

[Quoted in Al-Tafseer al-Kabeer]

In another *hadith* Ali (رضی اللہ عنہ) relates:

It was a routine of the Prophet (ﷺ) that whenever he (ﷺ) woke up for night prayers he (ﷺ) would recite these (same) verses.

[Quoted in Al-Tafseer al-Kabeer]

These two narrations indicate that the Prophet (ﷺ) had a strong penchant for the *ayah*s under discussion.

The Theme of the Passage: Synthesis of Faith

The theme of this passage is the synthesis of *iman*; that is, how does *iman* come into being? What is the mutual relation among the three main articles of *iman* –Allah (SWT), the Hereafter and the Prophets? What is the Qur'anic mode of argument regarding *iman*? What is the Qur'anic approach towards the confirmation of the life Hereafter? What are the practical manifestations of *iman* once it takes root in a believer? These are all important questions that lie at the heart of the Qur'anic discourse, for *iman* is the very foundation of Islam. Therefore, before proceeding on with the piecemeal analysis of the concerned passage, let us discuss a few basic points pertaining to the subject of *iman*.

Some Basic Points Regarding Faith

Faith is essentially to believe in certain metaphysical, unseen realities. It lends itself to two levels: verbal

attestation and heartfelt conviction. The first level of faith – legal faith or iman al-fiqhi – is simply the verbal affirmation in the unity of God, the messengership of Muhammad (ﷺ), the Hereafter, the Hellfire, the Paradise, the Resurrection, the Day of Judgment, the Prophets, the Angels, the Divine Books, the Revelation, etcetera. Anyone who simply professes to believe in these realities is considered a Muslim. The vast majority of Muslims today have inherited this type of faith from their parents or the surrounding environment.

The second level of faith – true faith or *iman al-haqeeqi* – deals with the heartfelt conviction. This is the level of faith at which the believer consciously asserts and affirms his belief, beyond any shadow of doubt, in the aforementioned metaphysical realities. It is this type of faith which is actually required of a

believer for it becomes the basis on which he will be judged in the Hereafter. Thus, it is this true faith which is the subject of the passage under discussion.

A point to be noted here is that inherited faith, though of an unconscious nature, will also incur a type of conviction in a person through the constant observance of Islamic practices and rituals. For just as man's inner being has an effect on his outer personality, so his conduct and actions affect his inner being. However, this type of conviction, devoid of an intellectual dimension as it is, is not the subject of this passage. This passage deals with the faith which is laboriously and consciously attained through reflection and contemplation. In these *ayah*s, people of such faith are termed *ulul albaab* – people of intellect, deep discernment and contemplation.

The Stages of Intellectual Maturity

The process of contemplation and reflection leads the *ulul albaab* through various stages of intellectual maturity. The first of these stages is the gnosis of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) acquired through constant examination and thoughtful observation of natural phenomena present in the external universe. The second stage of this intellectual journey is that of establishing a close relationship with Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and continued reflection upon the signs present in the universe. This confers upon the *ulul albaab* an awareness of the reality of an afterlife. Hence, the gnosis of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and recompense of deeds, in consequence of which an awareness of an afterlife, are arrived at via their own personal analysis, observation, reasoning and contemplation. The third stage of this evolutionary thought process is that of a passionate response to the call of a messenger sent by Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ); for the call of a messenger is nothing more than the reassertion of truths already reverberating in their hearts.

The last *ayah* (195) of this passage portrays the personality traits of the *ulul albaab*: such people are not cowardly or weak; they stand up for the Truths that they have come to believe in and put everything at stake for upholding these Truths. They are always ready to spend their wealth, part with their families and, in the final analysis, lay down their lives for the truths they have come to believe in.

PIECEMEAL ANALYSIS

OF THE PASSAGEWho are the Ulul Albaab?

The passage we are trying to explain deals with the subject matter of *iman* in reference to a particular type of human individuals *viz,* the *ulul albaab*. Naturally, the question arises as to what is meant by *ulul albaab*? In Arabic, *albaab* is the plural of *lubb* which means "core", "essence", and "innermost". This means that the real essence of something is called its *lubb*. The *lubb* of the human being is consciousness, intellect, and intelligence. For this reason the philosophers have defined man as an "intelligent and rational being" *(Haiwan-e-aqil)*, pointing to the fact that the essence of man is his intellect and reasoning capacity. *Ulul albaab*, therefore, are the people of deep reflection and contemplation who follow their intellect and not their vain desires or the carnal promptings of their baser self.

A golden rule of Qur'anic comprehension is that one part of the Qur'an is supported or explained by other parts. Inspecting the Qur'an, we find a similar discourse in *ayah* 164 of *surah Al-Baqarah:*

اِنَّ فِیۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ وَ اخۡتِلَافِ الَّیۡلِ وَ النَّهَارِ وَ الۡفُلۡکِ الَّتِیۡ تَجۡرِیۡ فِی الۡبَحۡرِ بِمَا یَنۡفَعُ النَّاسَ وَ مَاۤ اَنۡزَلَ اللّٰهُ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مِنۡ مَّآءٍ فَاَحۡیَا بِهِ الۡاَرۡضَ بَعۡدَ مَوۡتِهَا وَ بَثَّ فِیۡهَا مِنۡ کُلِّ دَآبَّةٍ ۪ وَّ تَصۡرِیۡفِ الرِّیٰحِ وَ السَّحَابِ الۡمُسَخَّرِ بَیۡنَ السَّمَآءِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ لَاٰیٰتٍ لِّقَوۡمٍ یَّعۡقِلُوۡنَ ﴿۱۶۴﴾ (البقرة)

"Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of the night and the day, and the [great] ships which sail through the sea with

that which benefits people, and what Allah has sent down from the heavens of rain, giving life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and dispersing therein every [kind of] moving creature, and [His] directing of the winds and the clouds controlled between the heaven and earth are signs for a people who use reason." [*Al-Baqarah* 2:164]

Note that the above *ayah* ends with the term "*qaumun ya`qiloon*" (the people of intelligence), whereas the passage of *surah* Al-e-`Imran under discussion used the term *ulul albaab*. Consequently, *qaumun ya`qiloon* and *ulul albab* are one and the same; that is, they are the people of intellect, deep thought and reasoning whose vision of reality has not been beclouded by prejudices and pursuit of purely carnal desires.

One should keep in mind that the vast majority of mankind does not comprise of people who utilize their intellect and reasoning faculty. It would not be too far fetched to term such people as "two legged animals". They follow their society's conventional trends and simply mimic the behavior of those around them. They swim in the direction of the social current and tide of their time and only change their direction as the current changes. They never question as to who they are, where have they come from or where they are going?

Contrary to such a character, there always exists, in each society, a minority group who is never satisfied with the practices and beliefs prevalent in their society. They demand rational arguments and logical proofs for the validity of all beliefs and practices. They want to discover for themselves the realities of life via their own intellect and reasoning. This group comprises a society's intelligentsia (the intellectual elite or the brain trust). These

are the people whom the Qur'an calls *qaumun ya`qiloon* or *ulul albaab*. When these people study the universal, natural phenomena, they find them laden with the signs of the Creator-Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) – His Creativity, Wisdom and Power. Hence, the universal, natural phenomena lead them to the gnosis of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ).

Meaning of "ayah"

Both quoted passages (of *Al-Baqarah* and *Al-e-`Imran*) use the word "*ayaat"*. What exactly is meant by this term? *Ayaat* is plural of *ayah* which literally means: "sign", "signpost", and "memento." An *ayah* then is something that reminds you of something else. For example, a handkerchief of an old friend, whom you have forgotten, may serve as a memento to remind you of him. This implies that the memory of the friend had always been in your subconscious mind; the memento simply helped to activate it and bring it to the plain of your consciousness. In this way, the objective of an *ayah* is thus identified – to remind one of a forgotten truth or reality. From the Qur'anic perspective, the two universes – the outer universe of nature and the inner universe of the self – are replete with the signs (*ayaat*) that serve as mementos and reminders of the Creator (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ). Qur'an distinctly points to this reality:

سَنُرِيۡهِمۡ اٰيٰتِنَا فِى الۡاٰفَاقِ وَ فِىۡۤ اَنۡفُسِهِمۡ حَتّٰى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمۡ اَنَّهُ الۡحَقُّ‌ؕ (حٰم السجدہ:۵۳)

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." [*Ha-Meem As-Sajdah* 41:53]

The creativity in the universe should remind the thoughtful person of the Creator who created the universe. The artistry of the universe should point to the Artist who painted the universe. The unity of laws and regulations working in all constituents of the universe, both at microcosmic and macrocosmic levels, should indicate the Ultimate Unity responsible for the presence of such laws. The presence of moral law within should direct one's attention towards the moral being who embedded these laws deep

within the human psyche. In this manner, everything in the universe is an *ayah* (sign) of the Creator's existence (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ).

The Qur'anic Mode of Argument

The Qur'an does not employ the method of logical reasoning or rational arguments to prove the existence of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ). All the rational arguments put forth to prove the existence of God have been rejected by philosophers. This is because logical arguments making a case for the existence of God are negated by other, equally sound, logical arguments. Contrary to this approach, the Qur'an asserts that the cognition of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) is inherently present in the inner denizen of human psyche. Henceforth, when a reflective observer, a person of sound intellect whose human nature has not been perverted, studies the universal phenomena realizes that the grand design of the universe is too coherent, too integrated, too organized and too purposeful to be the work of blind, material and accidental forces. Instead, there is an intelligent, creative, artistic, and Powerful Being who brought the universe into existence with a definite purpose in mind. Such inquiries into the universe activate, in a person, the inherent,

dormant cognition of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ), which leaps from the depths of his sub-conscious mind and illumines the plain of his consciousness. The arousal of such an idea dawns upon the person the forgotten truth that the powerful and creative force working behind the universe could be none other than Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) Himself. This is the chain of arguments that the Qur'an employs to establish the existence of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) on an intellectual plain. As is clear, the Qur'an does not base its argument for Divine existence on strictly demonstrative logical reasoning. Rather it is based on self-evident truths appreciated by thoughtful minds and primordial human nature.

Outcome of Contemplation: Gnosis of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ)

A vital issue in the field of theology is: how do we come to know God? What are the means via which we can gain recognition of and knowledge about God? The Islamic view on this issue is that there is only one way to gain knowledge about Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and that is via pondering over His attributes. This raises another question: how do we come to realize the attributes of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ)? The passage of *surah Al-e-`Imran* under discussion points to the answer.

The investigation of the universal phenomena reveals a few basic attributes of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and reflection upon these attributes leads one on the path of knowledge about Him(پ). The investigator of universal phenomena first of all realizes that the Creator of the universe is an All-Powerful Being who has control and power over everything. His Power is Absolute and there is nothing

which falls outside His Jurisdiction. Secondly, the Creator must also be All-Knowing for the one who designed and created the universe must have complete and total knowledge of all that occurs throughout the expanse of the universe; that is, His Knowledge must be Absolute. The Qur'an points to this reality in the following words:

اَلَا یَعۡلَمُ مَنۡ خَلَقَ ؕ وَ ہُوَ اللَّطِیۡفُ الۡخَبِیۡرُ ﴿٪ ۱۴﴾ (المُلک)

"Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Aware?" [*Al-Mulk* 67:14]

Thirdly, even a cursory glance upon the universe unfolds Allah's (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) attribute of Wisdom. For all that has been created seems to have a definite purpose behind it. Hence, the Creator of this universe must be an All-Wise Creator whose Wisdom is manifested in all the workings of the universe.

Once the *ulul albaab* grasp Allah's (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) basic attributes, these become the basis of further contemplation into the finer mysteries of the universe. Charged with the conscious cognition of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ), they now constantly remember their Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and continuously praise Him at all times and continue the quest to quench their thirst for further comprehension:

الَّذِیۡنَ یَذۡکُرُوۡنَ اللّٰہَ قِیٰمًا وَّ قُعُوۡدًا وَّ عَلٰی جُنُوۡبِہِمۡ وَ یَتَفَکَّرُوۡنَ فِیۡ خَلۡقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الۡاَرۡضِ ۚ (آل عمران: ۱۹۱)

"Who remember Allah while standing or sitting or [lying] on their sides and give thought to the creation of the heavens and the earth,"[*Al-e-Imran* 3:191]

Mutual Relation and Correlation between Remembrance and Contemplation

The passage quoted above mentions remembrance and contemplation in close proximity. It is necessary to understand the relationship between these two processes. The term, in Arabic, for the remembrance of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) is *zikr* and the term for contemplation is *fikr*. It is apparent from the *ayah* that these

two processes should be carried on hand in hand, in parallel. The functioning relationship of the two processes is similar to the two wheels of an automobile; to move forward, both wheels must move forward together and with the same velocity. It is a sad and unfortunate fact of our history that these two processes have been separated, and consequently, estranged from each other. The separation and estrangement resulted in the unfortunate fact that each process took on a distinct identity, far apart from the prescribed practices of the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions (رضی اللہ عنہم): one group concerns itself only with *zikr* and pays no heed to the dimension of *fikr*. While the group involved in *fikr* is bereft of *zikr*. This is why the envisioned results have not been achieved. In reality, the correlation between the two is that *zikr* provides the impetus and the motivation for *fikr*.

Note that *zikr* should not be taken in its conventional, limited understanding as the verbal chanting of some prescribed words. Rather, it should be taken in its widest sense. *Zikr* embodies verbal remembrance and silent contemplation of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ), His Omnipresence, His Omnipotence, and so forth. The true implication of *zikr* is to keep the remembrance of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) alive in one's heart

in all places and at all times, whether through contemplation, verbal chanting or any other act which reminds one of his Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ).

A Necessary Consequence of Intellectual Insight and Primordial Human Nature: Recompense of Deeds

The convergence of parallel processes of *zikr* and *fikr* results in the awareness of an afterlife, mentioned next in the passage in the following words:

رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هٰذَا بَاطِلًا ۚ سُبْحٰنَکَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾ (آل عمران)

"Our Lord, You did not create this aimlessly; exalted are You [above such a thing]; then protect us from the punishment of the Fire." [*Al-e-Imran* 3:191]

A thoughtful reader will notice that there is a lapse in the logical chain of arguments from *zikr* and *fikr* to the seeking of refuge from Hellfire. For how do the *zikr* of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and the contemplation over the universe yield the conception of an afterlife and Hellfire? The argument goes as follows: the contemplation over the universe reveals the truth that everything in the universe, macroscopic and microscopic, has a purpose. Therefore the question naturally arises: how is it possible that the universe

as whole and its most fantastic, superb and highest evolved life-form – the human being – may have been created in vain, without a purpose. And if the human being has a purpose in this life then his deeds must be accounted for. For according to a Persian proverb – "planting of wheat should yield wheat and barley that of barley" – the plantation of good deeds should be harvested as reward and the plantation of evil deeds should be harvested as punishment. The Qur'an points to these arguments in its own mode of expression:

وَ لَا تَسۡتَوِی الۡحَسَنَۃُ وَ لَا السَّیِّئَۃُ ؕ(حٰم السجدة: ۳۴)

"And not equal are the good deed and the bad." [*Ha-Meem As-Sajdah* 41:34]

اَفَنَجۡعَلُ الۡمُسۡلِمِیۡنَ کَالۡمُجۡرِمِیۡنَ ﴿۳۵﴾مَا لَکُمۡ ٭ کَیۡفَ تَحۡکُمُوۡنَ ﴿۳۶﴾(القلم: ۳۵-۳۶)

"Then will We treat the Muslims like the criminals? What is [the matter] with you? How do you judge?"[*Al-Qalam* 68:35-36]

Reality on ground is, however, quite to the contrary. For common observation shows that the evildoers live a grand life and are often saluted and honored in the world, whereas the righteous and pious are often scorned and looked down upon with contempt. The result of this observation points to the fact that there should then be another life where good should be rewarded as such and evil should be punished as such. For if good *is* good and evil *is* evil and these values are objective and absolute, and whereas their result is not being produced in this world then this proves that this world is incomplete in relation to ethical conduct and its desired outcome. This necessitates the existence of another world where full justice will be meted out to everyone in accordance with his or her deeds.

SELF-CONSCIOUS FAITH AND ITS REQUIREMENTS

According to *Shaikh al-Hind*, Mahmood Hassan (m), *ayah*s 190-192 of *surah* Al-e-`Imran are concerned with "*iman-e-`aqli*" (intellectual faith) – the process of attaining faith in Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and an awareness of the Hereafter via the intellectual reasoning as outlined in the previous section. The subject of next three *ayah*s (193-195) is labeled as "*iman-e-sam`ee*" (audition based faith) by *Shaikh al-Hind*. That is, when the *ulul albaab*, having successfully traversed

the process of *iman-e-`aqli*, hear the call of a prophet, they instantly answer his call. This is so because the call of the prophet is based on truths and realities that *ulul albaab* have already grasped intuitively by their intellects. Hence, the call of the prophet seems to them as nothing more than the echoes of truths reverberating in their own hearts. Upon accepting the call of a prophet, their emotions and feelings are spontaneously articulated in the form of a supplication:

رَبَّنَآ اِنَّنَا سَمِعۡنَا مُنَادِيًا يُّنَادِىۡ لِلۡاِيۡمَانِ اَنۡ اٰمِنُوۡا بِرَبِّكُمۡ فَاٰمَنَّا ۟ رَبَّنَا فَاغۡفِرۡ لَنَا ذُنُوۡبَنَا وَ كَفِّرۡ عَنَّا سَيِّاٰتِنَا وَ تَوَفَّنَا مَعَ الۡاَبۡرَارِ ﴿۱۹۳﴾رَبَّنَا وَ اٰتِنَا مَا وَعَدۡتَّنَا عَلٰى رُسُلِكَ وَ لَا تُخۡزِنَا يَوۡمَ الۡقِيٰمَةِ ؕ اِنَّكَ لَا تُخۡلِفُ الۡمِيۡعَادَ ﴿۱۹۴﴾(آل عمران: ۱۹۳-۱۹۴)

“Our Lord, indeed we have heard a caller [i.e., Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ)] calling to faith, [saying], 'Believe in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, so forgive us our sins and remove from us our misdeeds and cause us to die among the righteous. Our Lord, and grant us what You promised us through Your messengers and do not disgrace us on the Day of Resurrection. Indeed, You do not fail in [Your] promise." [*Al-e-Imran* 3:193-194]

We should pause at this juncture to reflect upon the significance of *du’a* (supplication) in Islam. According to two sayings of the Prophet (ﷺ): *du’a* is the essence of *`ibadah* (worship); and *du’a* is itself (a form of) *`ibadah*. This is due to the fact that *du’a* is the link between the Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and His slaves by which the slaves communicate to their Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ), call upon Him and converse with Him (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ). In addition, *du’a* is a manifestation of faith for it proves that the believer recognizes the Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) as All-Hearing and All-Seeing, that He (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) alone can answer his call for He (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) is All-Powerful and has Absolute Authority over all matters.

Condition of the Faith of True Believers

Within the Qur'anic discourse, the people whose faith in Islam is the result of intellectual and audition based faiths are termed *siddiqeen* (singular *siddeeq*). The major characteristic of *siddiqeen*, which distinguishes them from other believers, is that they leap forward to accept a prophet’s call without a moment’s hesitation. They are likened to the believer who, after performing *wudu`* (ritual purity), impatiently waits for the prayer-call and the moment the call is sounded scurries to the *masjid*. Among the *siddiqeen*, the personality of Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) is prominent about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: whosoever I invited to Islam took some time to accept it except Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ), who did not hesitate even for a moment. It is for this reason that Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) is called “*al-Siddeeq al-akbar*” (The Greatest *Siddeeq i.e. testifier*).

We must ponder why this was so? It was because Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) had no difficulty in accepting the Prophet’s (ﷺ) call for the call was nothing more than a reverberation of Abu Bakr’s (رضی اللہ عنہ) own thoughts and beliefs that he had come to accept having traversed the process of *iman-e-`aqli*. Abu Bakr

(رضی اللہ عنہ) was not the lone case however. In that land of vulgar paganism and polytheism, a land sunk deep in the darkness of ignorance and backwardness, there were individuals whose hearts were illumined with the light of *tauheed* (Unity of God) and whose inner nature was pure and pristine. Among them, as stated above, was Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) who had never associated gods with Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ); just as the Prophet (ﷺ), Abu Bakr (رضی اللہ عنہ) was also a follower of *tauheed* from day one. Same was the case with Uthman bin `Affan (رضی اللہ عنہ) and Sa`eed bin Zaid (رضی اللہ عنہ), both of whom were

among the ten companions given the glad-tidings of Paradise in their lifetime.

In this very land lived the father of Sa`eed bin Zaid (رضی اللہ عنہ), named Zaid bin ‘Amr bin Nufail – who died before the revelation descended upon Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) – about whom it is known that he used to supplicate while clinging to the drapes of Ka’bah: “My Lord! I want to worship You alone. I proclaim my disassociation with all these false-gods that the people of Makkah worship. I want to worship none except You, but do not know how!” In this very land once roamed a man by the name of Waraqah bin Naufil who renounced paganism and sought to discover the True Reality of life. His search took him to Syria where he learned the Hebrew language and converted to Christianity. At the time when the first revelation descended upon the Prophet (ﷺ), his wife Khadijah (رضی اللہ عنہا) took the Prophet (ﷺ) to Waraqah. Waraqah confirmed that the man who appeared to the Prophet (ﷺ) was the same angel who had descended upon Musa (علیہ السلام) and Isa (علیہ السلام). He further informed the Prophet (ﷺ) that he wished to live to see the day when the people of Makkah would force him (ﷺ) out of the city so that he can help him (ﷺ). However, he died soon thereafter. In summation, the *siddiqeen* are characterized by sound intellect and pristine pure nature; people whose *iman* is the result of both *iman-e-a`qli* and *iman-e-sam`ee*. The Qur’an mentions them in another place:

وَ اِذَا سَمِعُوْا مَاۤ اُنْزِلَ اِلَى الرَّسُوْلِ تَرٰۤى اَعْیُنَهُمْ تَفِیْضُ مِنَ الدَّمْعِ مِمَّا عَرَفُوْا مِنَ الْحَقِّ ۚ یَقُوْلُوْنَ رَبَّنَاۤ اٰمَنَّا فَاكْتُبْنَا مَعَ الشّٰهِدِیْنَ ﴿۸۳﴾
(المائدۃ:۸۳)

“And when they hear what has been revealed to the Messenger, you see their eyes overflowing with

tears because of what they have recognized of the truth. They say, "Our Lord, we have believed, so register us among the witnesses.” [*Al-Maidah* 5:83]

The especial regard for the *siddiqeen* by Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) is evident from the fact that their supplication (*ayah*s 192-194) mentioned above is promptly responded to by their Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ):

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ اَنِّیْ لَاۤ اُضِیْعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنْكُمْ مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ اَوْ اُنْثٰى ۚ بَعْضُكُمْ مِّنْۢ بَعْضٍ ۚ(آل عمران:۱۹۵)

“And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another.” [*Al-e-Imran* 3:195]

Spiritual Equality of Men and Women

Ayah quoted above states the view of Islam in relation to the equality of men and women. The *ayah* refers to the fact that men and women enjoy an equal status in the domains of spirituality, morality and seeking of religious stature. The apparent differences in disposition and bodily makeup of the two genders is only for sociological reasons. Whereas, in reality, when it comes to virtuous deeds, charitable works, and working for the cause of Islam, there is absolutely no difference in the status of two genders. The field is wide open for both genders to outdo each other in these arenas. No efforts of anyone shall be lost, whether male or female. This is evident from the fact that due to their spirituality, morality and purity, many great and exalted women – for example, Maryam (رضی اللہ عنہا), Khadijah (رضی اللہ عنہا), `Aisha (رضی اللہ عنہا) and Fatimah (رضی اللہ عنہا) – will outdo, surpass and be elevated much higher above the ranks of a great number of men in the Hereafter.

A Glimpse of Siddiqeen’s Character

The remaining *ayah*s of the passage portray the personality traits of the *siddiqeen*:

فَالَّذِيْنَ هَاجَرُوْا وَ اُخْرِجُوْا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَ اُوْذُوْا فِيْ سَبِيْلِيْ وَ قٰتَلُوْا وَ قُتِلُوْا لَاُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَ لَاُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنّٰتٍ تَجْرِيْ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْاَنْهٰرُ ثَوَابًا مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللّٰهِ ؕ وَ اللّٰهُ عِنْدَهٗ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ ﴿۱۹۵﴾(آل عمران:۱۹۵)

“ So those who emigrated or were evicted from their homes or were harmed in My cause or fought or were killed - I will surely remove from them their misdeeds, and I will surely admit them to gardens beneath which rivers flow as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward."[*Al-e-Imran* 3:195]

The above *ayah* mentions *hijrah* which is usually understood in a limited sense of migration. However, it may be taken here in its widest sense. The literal meaning of *hijrah* is: “to part”, “to leave”, and “to abandon”. This abandoning admits of various stages and levels during the course of a person’s life. The Prophet (ﷺ) was questioned: “*Which hijrah is the greatest?*” To this he (ﷺ) replied, “*That you abandon all that is disliked by your Lord*”[1]. This defines the first stage of *hijrah:,* that of abandoning all *haram*

(unlawful) practices. The final stage is the one mentioned in the passage under discussion: to leave one's homeland where it becomes impossible to adhere to one's religion and migrate elsewhere for the sake of Islam. Hence, *siddiqeen* are people who give up all actions disliked by their Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ); they even part from their families if they insist on disobeying Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and, in the

---

[1] *An-Nasai,* related by `Abdullah bin `Umar.

final analysis, if it is so required, they leave their homelands and migrate to another place to uphold their faith and to act on Islamic injunctions in their totality.

The next portion of the *ayah* refers to those who were "driven out." One may object to this assertion and instead say that the Makkans did not ask the Muslims to leave Makkah. In fact they wanted to keep them there. However, the fact of matter was that the persecution meted out to the Muslims had become so severe that it became impossible for them to stay in Makkah. Hence, the Muslims were forced to leave their houses in Makkah and migrate elsewhere to freely practice their faith in peace and security.

The severity and extent of the persecution dished out to Muslims is mentioned in the next portion as "*suffered harm in My cause*". The physical torture of Bilal (رضی اللہ عنہ) and Khabbaab (رضی اللہ عنہ) and the murders of Sumiyyah (رضی اللہ عنہا) and Yasir (رضی اللہ عنہ) are only few examples of oppression and tyranny suffered by the Muslims at the hands of the pagan Makkans. One may ask: what was the crime of these individuals? It was nothing more than that they renounced the pagan ideology and practices of their godless society and proclaimed their belief in the Unity of God (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) and divine messenger-ship of Muhammad (ﷺ).

Thus far the conditions mentioned were those of Makkan life. Now the *ayah* mentions the struggle experienced in the life of Madinah as: "*killed and were killed*." In Makkah, the Muslims were commanded to refrain from retaliation, however, this restriction was lifted in Madinah and they took to the battle field. In this endeavor they fought, killed, and were killed themselves. The martyrdom on the battle

field for the sake of Truth, justice and peace is the highest good, the epitome of virtuous conduct in Islam. Hence, the *siddiqeen* are not just the people of spiritual pursuits alone; rather, they fully partake of the struggles and hardships of life, without seeking escape to jungles and mountains. They are so dynamic and full of religious conviction that they do not hesitate to move forward in the battlefield and lay down their lives for the cause of their faith. For this service and loyalty, they are promised by their

Lord (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ): "*Surely I will blot out from them their iniquities*"; that is, all mistakes and sins (major and minor) committed by them will be washed away in return for their struggle for Islam and hardships suffered in this cause. More than this, they will be admitted "*into gardens with rivers flowing beneath; a special reward from Allah*".

The mention of "*special reward from Allah*" is of particular importance. These rewards shall be bestowed upon them from special treasures of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) possessed only by Him. The final words of the passage, "*with Him is the best of rewards*", should be heeded. Our whole life is defined by struggles and hardships. We struggle, toil and labor for the sake of our children, our careers, for other worldly benefits, but none of these objects of fancy provide us any certainty of due payback. Often all such worldly efforts fail and in the end we are left with nothing but sorrow and loss. However, every deed, every investment and every moment spent for the sake of Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ), for His cause, for His *deen* is saved and earns blissful eternal life for the rewards of such endeavors are everlasting. Consequently, only Allah (سبحانہ وتعالیٰ) has the Power and the Authority to fully recompense all our deeds in due proportion.

***

List of English Books

By Dr. Israr Ahmad

Published by

Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an Lahore

- The Obligations Muslims owe to the Qur'an
- The Way to Salvation: in the Light of *Sura Al-Asr*
- Rise and Decline of the Muslim *Ummah*
- The Qur'an and World Peace

- Islamic Renaissance- The Real Task Ahead
- Calling People Unto *Allah*
- The Tragedy of Karbala
- Muhammad (ﷺ) The Objective of His Appointment
- Lessons from History
- Three-point Action Agenda for the Muslin *Ummah*
- *Bai'yah* - The Basis for Organization of a Revivalist Party in Islam
- Khilafa in Pakistan: - What, Why and How?
- Obligations to God
- Religious Obligations of Muslim Women
- The Call of Tanzeem-e-Islami
- The Genesis of Tanzeem-e-Islami
- The Process of Creation
- *Jihad*, in the Way of Allah