

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

و صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَ نَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَ آلِهِ الطَّاهِرِينَ وَ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى أَعْدَائِهِمْ أَجْمَعِينَ

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and may the blessings of Allah be upon our Master and Prophet, Muhammad, and his pure progeny, and may the curse of Allah be upon all their enemies.

Although we believe that the Holy Qur'an is the greatest divine gift to mankind and the most precious legacy of the Holy Prophet (S) ¹ to the Muslims, the Muslim *ummah* ² has not shown the requisite interest in using this precious legacy. Notwithstanding the repeated emphasis of the Apostle (S) on the obligation to refer to and act upon the Qur'an as the greater of the two weighty things [*thiqal al-akbar*] and to learn the sciences of the Qur'an from the *Ahl al-Bayt* ³ ('a) ⁴ as the great of the two weighty things [*thiqal al-kabir*], the Muslims neglected his advice of firmly clasping the unifying cord of Allah [*habl Allah*], ⁵ after his (S) demise, and got divided into sects. Consequently, Muslim society lagged behind its original status which is described in the Qur'an in this manner:

وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“You shall have the upper hand, should you be truthful.” ⁶

Nowadays, one must acknowledge the painful reality that on account of drifting away from the reality of the Qur'an and the knowledge of the *Ahl al-Bayt* ('a), Muslim society has incurred irreparable losses.

In spite of drifting away from the reality of the Qur'an and being alienated from this heavenly gem and gift of the All-beneficent, outward heedfulness to it has gained momentum and remarkably increased

among Muslims today.

All Muslims recognize the Qur'an as the sacred heavenly scripture revealed to the blessed Apostle (S) on the Night of Ordainment [*laylat al-qadr*].⁷ Now, printing the Holy Qur'an on high quality paper with golden covers, reading and memorizing it, mastering the sciences pertaining to its outward aspects such as correct pronunciation and recitation [*tajwid*] have found a special place in the culture of Muslims. We occasionally witness annual competitions of recitation and memorization of the Holy Qur'an at the international level, and this itself has become a source of prosperity.

Of course, it must not remain unsaid that the ever-growing attention paid to the Holy Qur'an in other Muslim countries has been to some extent due to His Eminence Imam Khomeini (r)⁸ and the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran because it was after the message of the eminent Imam (r) to the administration of the Two Holy Places [*al-haramayn al-sharifayn*] (Mecca and Medina) conveyed by a council [*shawra*] consisting of representatives from many Muslim countries, that Saudi Arabia undertook the reparation and development of the two holy sites along with the printing and distribution of copies of the Qur'an to the *Hajj* pilgrims from around the world, in order to present itself as the pioneer in propagating Islam and the Qur'an and undermine the attention paid by the Muslims to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Focusing on the outward aspects of the Qur'an and keeping away from its truth has been one of the greatest problems owing to which Muslims have received severe blows. As long as Muslims do not move from the exoteric aspects of the Qur'an towards its esoteric aspects and transform empty rhetoric into practice, the guidance of the Qur'an will not be achieved by them.

This volume is not an attempt to examine the reasons behind the straying of the Muslims from the truth of the Qur'an and the Prophet's progeny [*'itrah*] ('a) after the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S). It rather endeavors to present some dimensions of the truth of the Qur'an from the viewpoint of *Nahj al-Balaghah*⁹ and the Holy Book itself, and to acquaint the readers with the Qur'an and its greatness from the perspective of the Commander of the Faithful ('a).

It also deals with and addresses some misgivings expressed by certain enemies. In the concluding part, these misgivings are also mentioned through the sermons of 'Ali ('a)—the speaking [*natiq*] Qur'an—and the factors and motives for expressing them.

The subjects of this book are actually the transcript of a series of lectures given by His Eminence Ayatullah Misbah Yazdi in Ramadhan 1419–20 AH (December 21, 1998–January 18, 1999 and December 10, 1999–January 8, 2000) in Qum. The subjects touched by Professor Yazdi are not abridged and disarranged but conversational language has been rendered closer to the written word, with an effort to maintain perfect or total accuracy in compiling and editing this book.

In conclusion, we are thankful to the erudite scholars, Hujjat al-Islam Ahmad Muhammadi for transcribing and compiling the topics of this book, and Hujjat al-Islam Muhammad Mahdi Nadiri Qummi

for editing it. We beseech the munificent God for their continued success.

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- [1.](#) The abbreviation, “s”, stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *sallallahu ‘alayhi wa alihi wa sallam* [may God’s blessings and peace be upon him and his progeny], which is mentioned after the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S). [Trans.]
- [2.](#) Ummah: the entire Islamic community which knows no territorial, racial, national or ethnic distinction. [Trans.]
- [3.](#) Ahl al-Bayt: according to authentic hadiths recorded in both Sunni and Shi’ah sources, the term Ahl al-Bayt, and interchangeably ‘Itrah and Al, is a blessed Qur’anic appellation that belongs exclusively to the Prophet, ‘Ali, Fatimah, Hasan, and Husayn (‘a). The members of this Family of five, with the Prophet Muhammad (S) at its head, were the ones alive at the time the Qur’anic verses regarding their virtues were being revealed to the Prophet (S). However, nine other Imams from the descendants of Imam al-Husayn (‘a) are also included in this chosen Family, the final one being Imam al-Mahdi (‘a). For further information, visit: <http://www.al-islam.org/> [1] [Trans.]
- [4.](#) The abbreviation, “a” stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, ‘alayhi’s-salam, ‘alayhim’us-salam, or ‘alayha’s-salam [may peace be upon him/them/her], which is mentioned after the names of the prophets, angels, Imams from the Prophet’s progeny, and saints (‘a). [Trans.]
- [5.](#) Sunni scholars quoted Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (‘a), the sixth Imam from the Family of the Prophet [Ahl al-Bayt] (‘a) as saying: “We are the Cord of Allah about whom Allah has said: ‘Hold fast, all together, to Allah’s cord, and do not be divided [into sects]’ (Surah Al ‘Imran 3: 103).” See Al-Tha’labi, Tafsir al-Kabir, under commentary of verse 3: 103; Ibn Hajar al-Haythami, Al-Sawa’iq al-Muhriqah (Cairo), Ch. 11, section 1, p. 233. [Trans.]
- [6.](#) Surah Al ‘Imran 3:139. In this volume, the translation of Qur’anic passages is adapted from Sayyid ‘Ali Quli Qara’i, The Qur’an with a Phrase-by-Phrase English Translation (London: Islamic College for Advanced Studies Press, 2004). [Trans.]
- [7.](#) Surah al-Qadr 97:1-5. [Trans.]
- [8.](#) The abbreviation, “r” stands for the Arabic invocative phrase, *rahmatullah ‘alayhi, rahmatullah ‘alayha, or rahmatullah ‘alayhim* [may peace be upon him/her/them], which is used after the names of pious people. [Trans.]
- [9.](#) Nahj al-Balaghah (The Peak of Eloquence) is a collection of speeches, sayings and letters of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘a) compiled by Sharif al-Radi Muhammad ibn al-Husayn (d. 406 AH/1016). The contents of the book concern the three essential topics of God, man and the universe, and include comments on scientific, literary, social, ethical, and political issues. With the exception of the words of the Glorious Qur’an and of the Holy Prophet (S), no words of man can equal it in eloquence. So far, more than 101 exegeses have been written on Nahj al-Balaghah, indicating the importance of this treatise to scholars and learned men of research and investigation. For more information, visit: <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons> [2] [Trans.]

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Links

[1] <http://www.al-islam.org/>

[2] <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons>