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7. Historical Discourses

In the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate

Abrogation in the Noble Qur'an and its possibility based on the religion and the intellect

STUDENT. Some people believe that there is no *naskh* (abrogation, substitution of one verse for another) in the Noble Qur'an. Therefore they deny the existence of abrogating (*nasikh*) and abrogated (*mansukh*) verses (i.e. verses after and before the substitution of a law). However, we can see that some verses clearly abrogate some other verses, such as the Noble Verse of the Relatives (*ulu al-arham*; 8:75, see below). But why are some people so obsessed with and insistent on denying abrogation? Have they rejected the concept of abrogation because of any problem in it?

'ALLAMAH. It is true that some deny abrogation (*naskh*) in the Qur'an, and apparently what they mean is that there are no abrogating and abrogated verses. But it seems undeniable that some verses are abrogating and abrogated with respect to one another. The case of giving charity for whispering with the Prophet is a very obvious one. It is about an order to the Noble Prophet that 'Henceforth, any companion who wants to whisper something to you should have given something in charity first.' That law was only carried out by Imam 'Ali. The other Companions did not come anywhere close to performing it:[1]

O you who believe, when you whisper to the Messenger, offer something in alms before your whispering. That is better for you and purer. But if you cannot find* [*the wherewithal*]*, Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate. (***58:12***)

Another example is the case of inheritance and revelation of the Verse of the Relatives' (*ulu al-arham*). Early in Islam, the believers used to inherit from one another according to the Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) that the Messenger of Allah had established between his Companions. But when the Verse of the Relatives was revealed, it substituted the previous law. So it was decreed that the individuals should inherit from one another based on family ties and not religious brotherhood.[2]

And those who have believed afterwards and emigrated and struggled with you, they are of you; and those related by blood are prior to one another in the book of Allah; truly Allah is All-Knowing of everything. (***8:75***)

The verse indicates that the inheritors should be family relatives, and thus it replaced the former law. There is another verse that,

Any verse that We abrogate or cause it to be forgotten, We bring a better one or the like of it. Knowest thou not that Allah is truly All-Powerful over everything? (***2:106***)

This verse clearly confirms abrogation, and leaves no room for doubt about it. And perhaps an even more evident verse is,

And when We substitute a verse in place of another verse – and Allah knoweth best what He sendeth down – they say, 'Thou art but a forger.' Nay, but most of them know not * Say: the Holy Spirit hath delivered it from thy Lord in truth, that it may confirm those who believe, and as guidance and good tidings for the submitters [***to Allah***]. (***16:101-2***)

These noble verses clearly maintain that the verses of the Qur'an may abrogate and substitute one another, and are subject to transformation and change. In the first verse, *ayah* (literally 'sign') obviously refers to the verses of the Noble Qur'an (which are also called *ayah*). It says that the enemies claim that this change is from Muhammad, and not from God, and that he has alleged it [to God]. So the next verse responds to them, saying to tell them that these verses, both the abrogated and the abrogating, are descended by Gabriel – the Holy Spirit (*Ruh al-Qudus*) – so as to bring about confidence for the hearts of the believers, and serve as guidance and good tiding for the Muslims [those who submit].

Abrogation means that the period and duration of the abrogated law was limited. That is, the former law was not decreed permanently, but only until the advent of the abrogating (new) law. Not only there is no problem with that, but in fact there must be abrogation in God's laws and canons. It may very well be that certain laws are not enacted permanently; nevertheless they involve temporary merits and benefits. But at the same time it may not be desirable to disclose their impermanence from the beginning. In that case, the law is first prescribed unconditionally, and then it is abrogated after the achievement of the desired benefits and results.

So the idea of abrogation is that the abrogating (*nasikh*) verse indicates that the abrogated (*mansukh*) verse was only applicable for a certain period of time, but not any more. It is not that the second law contradicts the first law, but that it provides more information about it (i.e. its duration). And one cannot expect all the laws to be the same (in terms of permanence). Two laws may apparently seem to contradict one another, but that cannot be a real (*haqiqi*) contradiction. What has happened is that the first law was decreed due to some consideration and expediency (*maslahah*), but was then replaced by another law. As the settings and conditions have changed, thus have the laws.

And the reason why some insist on denying abrogation in the Noble Qur'an is that they think that it involves a contradiction, while there should be no contradiction in the laws. Once one recognises that abrogation means that one verse discloses the period and duration of the other verse – i.e. for how long the first verse was applicable – then there would be no contradiction, and abrogation would totally make sense.

Islam as the abrogator of the other religions

STUDENT. What is the evidence that the Noble Qur'an abrogated the Torah and the Gospel?

'ALLAMAH. There are certain verses in the Noble Qur'an that indicate that the Islam is a new religion, independent of the previous religions:

He hath laid down for you a religion which He enjoined Noah, and that which We have revealed to thee, and what We enjoined Abraham and Moses and Jesus: To establish the religion and divide not therein. Hard for the polytheists is that thou callest them to. Allah attracteth to it [***or Himself***] ***whom He wills, and guideth to it*** [***or Himself***] ***who returneth.*** (***42:13***)

In other words, this verse clearly says that 'what We enjoined Noah, and what We revealed to thee, and what We enjoined Abraham, Moses, and Jesus' – i.e. the religions of Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus and what We [meaning Allah] revealed to the Prophet – 'We laid down and ordained all of these as a religion for thee.' This laying down of a religion, even if it is the same as the former religions, is an abrogation. It dismisses the previous law, and composes and imposes a new law and religion. So one could say that any religion abrogates the previous religions, because it is a new decree.

STUDENT. Why do the Jews deny abrogation?[3]

'ALLAMAH. It is apparently because they are not willing to recognise any divine book or celestial law sent after the Torah, which is a divine book. They claim that the Torah ended everything, and so there is no divine law after the Torah.

In fact the Verse of Abrogation (*naskh*) actually disproves this very idea. No power can constrain and restrict Allah as to not change His law. Abrogation is a custom of His, and He causes forgetfulness, and He is Powerful over everything:

Any verse that We abrogate or cause it to be forgotten, We bring a better or the like of it. Knowest thou not that Allah is truly All-Powerful over everything? * Knowest thou not that truly to Allah alone belongeth the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and you have not any guardian or supporter apart from Allah? (***2:106-7***)

But the Jews maintain that Allah cannot abrogate a decree after its descension. That is, abrogation is not a constituent of God's power or an element of His knowledge, and so God's hands are tied up with

regard to such matters:

And the Jews said, 'Allah's hand is enchained.' Their hands be enchained, accursed they are for what they said. Nay, but His two hands are outspread; He bestoweth as He will.... (***5:64***)

They believe that God decreed the laws during the six days when He first created the heavens and the earth, and that was it and over with, and there is no further change or transformation. And the idea behind this way of thinking is the same as God's hand being enchained and tied down – and Allah is the refuge [from such blasphemy]. Rather, His hands are open.[4] His two hands are open, and He makes any change that He wills in the world of creation. He issues new laws based on new expediencies and circumstances.

The scribes of revelation

STUDENT. How did the scribes of the divine revelation, the Glorious Qur'an, use to record the revealed verses? Was it that whenever the Messenger of Allah received a revelation, he would then send for the scribes (*kuttab*, sing. *katib*) to come and write it down? For example, one of the scribes of revelation was Imam 'Ali. But certainly he was not with the Messenger of Allah at all times. He might have been sent for a battle or on some other mission at the time of revelation.

And what about 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Zayd ibn Thabit? And what is the source of their different recitations (*qira'ah*)?

'ALLAMAH. I have not seen any narration that the Messenger of Allah ever sent for one of the Companions or scribes of revelation to come and write down the revealed verses! It is [only] reported that they used to write the revelations that the Messenger of Allah received.

The scribes were Imam 'Ali, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Zayd ibn Thabit and some others.

Later on, Zayd ibn Thabit was put in charge of the first compilation of the Qur'an, which was done under Abu Bakr's caliphate. He was also involved in the second compilation of the Qur'an that was done by 'Uthman and at his time. It was Zayd ibn Thabit who compiled the Qur'an and put it together.

And the different recitations have been attributed to different narrations (*riwayah*). That is, these recitations are how the reciters have narrated the Qur'an from the Messenger of Allah. And so is the case with the subsequent recitations, like that of 'Asim, which is the prevalent recitation of the Qur'an. 'Asim has reported his recitation through one intermediary from Imam 'Ali. Each of these reciters has recited the Qur'an in a particular manner, and thus they differ from one another in their recitations. For example, the recitation of Ubayy ibn Ka'b is different from that of 'Asim.

The different recitations of the Qur'an are narrated from the Messenger of Allah

'ALLAMAH. In the history of Qur'an, the subject of different recitations is quite an issue and story in itself. Overall, even though the reciters have got their recitations from the Messenger of Allah, these recitations should not be considered as direct narrations from him. It does not seem to have been so.

What may be inferred is that at the time of the Noble Messenger, there were many individuals – about seventy or eighty or more – who were carriers of the Qur'an. They used to recite the Qur'an, learn it and then spread it among the people. And if they had any questions or problems, they would ask the Noble Messenger and he would clarify it for them. That is the overall picture.

Therefore their recitations are not the selfsame recitations of the Messenger of Allah. Neither did they invent these recitations on their own. It was that the Muslims saw the carriers of the Qur'an recite the Qur'an the way they did, and that they have received it from the Noble Messenger. Hence it was deduced that the recitation of this reciter or that companion went back to the Noble Messenger.

According to the historians, the Noble Messenger used to recite the Qur'an in two ways or more. Therefore the discrepancy in recitations is because of the recitations of the Messenger of Allah himself.

Gabriel used to come to the Messenger of Allah once every year, and would recite to him all of the Qur'an that had been revealed thus far. Thereby Gabriel would renew the revelation. Then the Prophet would recite it to the scribes based on Gabriel's most recent recitation, and they would spread it among the people as such. That is how the revelation each year came to be different from the ones before it. Thus, the different recitations are rooted in Gabriel's recitations through the years.

STUDENT. For each year that Gabriel descended and recited the whole Qur'an for the Messenger of Allah, would he then recite the whole Qur'an *only* for Imam 'Ali for one year, *only* for Ubayy the next year, *only* for Zayd ibn Thabit in another year, and so on? That is, was it recited only for one scribe each year? Because otherwise, if the Honourable Messenger of Allah used to recite Gabriel's recitation each year for everyone, then the recitations of the scribes should not have differed from one another. In that case, all of the scribes should have recited the same way each year, and only one's own recitations would differ from year to year. But we see that the recitations of the scribes are different from one another.

'ALLAMAH. No doubt that the recitations that they have narrated are very different and diverse. In the last year of his life, it is reported that the Noble Messenger said, 'My life is over [this year]. And the evidence for it is that Gabriel came to me and recited the Qur'an twice this year, from beginning to the end. This is a sign of my departure.'[5] And clearly reciting it twice means in two ways.

For these discussions, Suyuti's *al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al- Qur'an* (in 2 volumes) is quite a good book. It

clarifies these matters to some extent. Suyuti was truly an adroit scholar. He demonstrates some mastery in quoting and analyzing the narrations and reports, and is very well-versed and quite an authority in these matters. He is a master of narration (*naql*).

STUDENT. But still this problem should be solved, which is: was it that Ubayy ibn Ka'b had his own way of recitation of the whole Qur'an, Zayd ibn Thabit had his own way, and Imam 'Ali had his own way? If so, then that means that the Messenger of Allah recited the Qur'an for [only] one person each year. But if he recited the Qur'an for everyone, then there should also be discrepancy within the recitations of each reciter.

'ALLAMAH. No, it may have been that Ubayy recited the Qur'an one way in some year and another way in the next year and so on – a different recitation every year. Some claim this to have been the cause of the different recitations.

Ubayy's recitations not only differ from those of the other reciters, but his recitations also differ from one another. And so is the case with the others. For example, 'Asim has two disciples, who both report the Qur'an from beginning to the end from him; yet their recitations differ from one another. Both are reporting 'Asim's recitation, but in two different ways. The same is true about Ubayy, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and the others.

'The King of the Day of Judgment' is more inclusive and pertinent than 'The Owner of the Day of Judgment'

STUDENT. Can we liken the different recitations to the different views of the experts of *nahw* (syntax, grammar)? Experts of *nahw* such as Sibawayh, Kisa'i and others use different sets of rules, such that one reads an Arabic poem in one way and the other reads it in another way. Thus they differ in inflectional morphology (*i'rab*). So maybe the differences between the recitations of Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Zayd ibn Thabit and the others are similar to that. They were all Arabs, proficient in the language, and adept in the fields of syntax (*nahw*) and literature. So they recited the way they did based on their mother tongue and the rules that they knew. Therefore the different recitations would be due to their personal judgments and interpretations.

'ALLAMAH. No, that is not the case. It seems that their difference is due to narration; that is, they ascribe their recitations to the Messenger of Allah. For example, verse 1:4 has been recited in two ways: 'The *Malik* (King) of the Day of Judgment,' and 'The *M□lik* (Owner, Master) of the Day of Judgment,' and both are narrated from the Messenger of Allah. If both narrations are *mutawatir* (substantially repeated, and hence credible), it means that the Messenger of Allah used to recite the verse both ways.[6]

The reciters of *Malik* are more than the reciters of *M□lik*. Four out of the seven reciters (*al-qurra' al-sab'ah*) have recited *Malik*, and the rest have recited *M□lik*. And intuitively *Malik* makes more sense, because a 'day' (*yawm*) is not usually attributed to an 'owner' (*m□lik*). Instead, it is more appropriate for

a day to have a ‘king’ (*malik*), as one would say, ‘the king of the day,’ not ‘the owner of the day.’

The late Qadi, may Allah’s mercy be upon him, used to recite the verse with *Malik*. And the commentary (*tafsir*) *al-Kashshaf* mentions why *Malik* is more inclusive and pertinent than *Mlik*.[7]

STUDENT. Who are ‘the seven reciters’ (*al-qurra’ al-sab’ah*)? And what are the ‘repeated’ (*mutawatir*) and ‘uncommon’ (*shadhdhah*) recitations?

‘ALLAMAH. There are seven reciters, known as *al-qurra’ al-sab’ah*, whose recitations are repeatedly narrated (*mutawatir*) from the Messenger of Allah. These recitations are considered credible. One of them is the recitation of ‘Asim, who narrates from the Messenger of God through one intermediary: Imam ‘Ali. And the other six recitations are similarly reported from, say, Ubayy, Ibn Mas’ud, and others. Since there are few intermediaries, the line reaches the Messenger of Allah quite fast.

And the *shadhdhah* (single, uncommon) recitations are those that the masters of recitation formed for themselves using the *mutawatir* ones. There are many *shadhdhah* recitations, three of which are quite famous, and together with the seven *mutawatir* ones, they make up ten well-known (*ma’ruf*) recitations. Other than those three, there are other uncommon recitations, which are mixtures of various recitations, and are called non-famous uncommon recitations (*shadhdhah ghayra ma’rufah*). Some people consider some or all of the three *shadhdhah* recitations to be *mutawatir*. So for them, the number of *mutawatir* recitations is more than seven.[8]

Compilation of the Qur’an by ‘Uthman, and the death of Ibn Mas’ud

‘ALLAMAH. Over four hundred (or seventy) reciters of the Qur’an were killed in the battle of Yamamah, which occurred at the time (caliphate) of Abu Bakr (11-13/632-4). Thus there was this threat that the whole Qur’an may be lost if the other reciters also got killed in future battles (because the Qur’an was not compiled and sorted out yet). So Zayd ibn Thabit was appointed to collect and compose the Qur’an at that time, and thus the Qur’an was first compiled at the time of Abu Bakr.[9]

But by the time of ‘Uthman’s caliphate (23-35/644-56) there had arisen many discrepancies in the recitation of the Book. So Ibn Mas’ud wrote to ‘Uthman, ‘Hurry up and save the Qur’an, for it is about to be lost due to the extent of discrepancies. Its recitation has become confused.’[10] ‘Uthman took the word of Ibn Mas’ud and acted upon it. He ordered that all the Qur’ans – with the various recitations – to be brought to Medina, and gathered in some place. So there was this huge pile of these Qur’ans, which were written on wooden tablets, deer parchments, cattle shoulder bones and paper. They were all gathered together and set on fire.

But Ibn Mas’ud refused to hand over his own Qur’an, even though he was the first one to write to ‘Uthman that ‘The condition of the Qur’an is adverse. Do something for the Qur’an! Do something to

protect this Divine Book from loss!' It was following his message that 'Uthman ordered for all the Qur'ans to be brought from the different cities. So the real call and motivation had started from Ibn Mas'ud.

He was in one of the counties outside Medina at the time of the burning. When he came to Medina and was informed of the matter, he said, 'All my concern was to preserve the Qur'an! But this – the burning of the Qur'an – is even worse and more grievous. I will not hand in my Qur'an and will not let them burn it!' So he did not submit his Qur'an at that time, and neither did he until his death. In fact, it was because of this very matter that he eventually lost his life.

When he came to Medina, he had two or three meetings with 'Uthman, whom he criticised, condemned and rebuked; and that made 'Uthman upset with him. One day 'Uthman was speaking on the pulpit (*minbar*), when Ibn Mas'ud started criticising his actions in front of the public. 'Uthman was enraged, and ordered his guards and minions to drag Ibn Mas'ud out of the mosque on his face. So they dragged him out of the mosque on his face, whereby one of his ribs broke. Thus he became ill as a result of that and finally passed away.

When Ibn Mas'ud was sick, 'Uthman sent him a gift, which he rejected. 'Uthman also sent him money, but he also rejected that. He rejected them all, saying, 'I have no need for it. You abstained from giving when I had a need, and you give now that I have no need?' He also said, 'I will not consent to and will not let you take away and burn my Qur'an.'

Based on the narrations from the Ahl al-Bayt (the Household of the Prophet, peace be upon them), Ibn Mas'ud's Qur'an did not include Chapters 113 and 114 (*mu'awwidhatayn*).[11] That is, Ibn Mas'ud believed that these two chapters were not part of the Qur'an. They were two '*udhahs* (protective charms against evil and calamities) that Gabriel brought down from the heavens in order to protect Hasan and Husayn when they were sick. The two '*udhahs* were meant to be hung on their necks and recited to them so that they may recover. And that is what they did and thus they recovered.

Anyway, 'Uthman maintained that the Qur'ans should be burnt for the good of the Muslims. But Ibn Mas'ud claimed that there was no such good to be sought through such an insult to the Qur'an and by burning the Book of Allah.

And when one thinks about it, it should have been quite easy to deal with this issue. They could have had the Qur'ans buried in some pure land, or kept in a holy place, or thrown in water.

The above are based on the Shi'a narrations. But according to the Sunni narrations, they did not burn the Qur'ans, but they boiled them in a cauldron of water, so that the letters written on the bones, tablets, and papers faded away.[12]

The Qur'an of Imam 'Ali

'ALLAMAH. According to one of the history books, Imam 'Ali did not come out of his house after the Noble Messenger passed away. Thus some of the prominent Companions went to him and inquired, 'Why do you not come out? Why do you not come to the mosque? Why do you not join the congregation of the Muslims?'[13]

'I have vowed to not wear [my] cloak ('*aba*')' he replied, 'unless I have finished the ordering of the Qur'an and prepared its commentary and exegesis! So I am locked in here because of my vow!' His preparation of the Qur'an took six months, whereby he ordered and arranged the chapters based on their chronological descension. That is, he placed Chapter 96 (al-'Alaq; the first chapter that was revealed to the Messenger of Allah) at the beginning, and the last chapter – perhaps Chapter 5 (al-Ma'idah) – at the end. Therefore Chapter 2 (al-Baqarah), which was revealed in Medina for instance, would have been positioned toward the end.[14]

Apart from arranging the chapters and verses in the order they were revealed, a further feature and merit of Imam 'Ali's Qur'an was that it included the circumstances in which the verses and chapters were revealed (*sha'n al-nuzul*). Therefore the chapters and verses that had a specific occasion in which they had descended were distinguished from the chapters that were revealed before them and after them, and were positioned between the two.[15]

That is how Imam 'Ali organised the Qur'an, and he even included some exegetic and hermeneutic points. He prepared and finished the Qur'an in six months, then loaded it on a camel and brought it to the entrance of the mosque. 'This is your Qur'an, which I have compiled and brought!' he told the Companions who were in the mosque.

But they did not say anything! Thus he took the camel back home, and that Qur'an was never seen again.

That is according to the Sunni narrations ('*ammah*). But according to the Shi'a narrations (*khassah*), when Imam 'Ali loaded the Qur'an on the camel and brought it to the mosque and said, 'This is your Qur'an!' they replied, 'We have no need for your Qur'an.' They did not even inquire about it, and the Imam did not insist on it either. He simply redirected the camel and went home saying, 'You will not see this Qur'an ever again, until the Resurrection!'[16]

Why is the name of Imam 'Ali not mentioned in the Qur'an

STUDENT. Why is the name of Imam 'Ali not mentioned in the Qur'an?

'ALLAMAH. Had his name been in the Qur'an, they (the enemies and usurpers of the caliphate) would have changed and erased it. That is his own answer.[17]

The Qur'an has not been distorted

'ALLAMAH. The Qur'an that we have, which was compiled by Zayd ibn Thabit at the time of Abu Bakr, is certainly the complete Qur'an. It does not have a single letter more or less than the original Qur'an. And the claim that the Qur'an has been distorted is invalid.

And the reason for it is that the authenticity of the *ahad* (singly narrated) traditions that talk about the Qur'an's distortion (*tahrif*) hinges on the authenticity of the word of the Imam who has said that narration. And the authenticity of the Imam's word hinges on the authenticity of the word of the Prophet, who has appointed the Imam as his infallible successor. And the authenticity of the Prophet's word hinges on the authenticity of the Qur'an, which has introduced him as an infallible leader, prophet, and guardian (*wali*). Meanwhile, even if a single letter were extra or missing in the Glorious Qur'an, then the whole Qur'an would be discredited. And that would in turn discredit all the narrations.

All Muslims concur on the authenticity of the Glorious Qur'an. On many occasions our Imams drew on the verses of the Qur'an as evidence for their contentions. They have affirmed the Qur'an's authenticity, and there is no doubt or uncertainty on this subject.

When seventy or four hundred reciters of the Qur'an were killed in the battle of Yamamah at the time of Abu Bakr, 'Umar went to Abu Bakr and insisted that the Qur'an should be compiled. 'Currently,' 'Umar maintained, 'the Qur'an is in the chests of its reciters. Should another battle come up and more reciters get killed, the Qur'an would vanish from the earth altogether. So we must gather the reciters and make a *mushaf* ' – that is, put the Qur'an in a volume as a book with covers.

Thus Zayd ibn Thabit was appointed to compile the Qur'an. Twenty-five reciters from the Muhajirin ('Immigrants', the Meccans) and twenty-five reciters from the Ansar ('Supporters', the Madinites) were chosen to accept any verse that was brought in as a verse of the Qur'an and was testified to by two just witnesses.[18] That is how the Qur'an that we see today was compiled and made into a volume, at the time of Abu Bakr. And our Imams have unanimously ordered us to recite the Qur'an as it is and with the arrangement that it has. They recited it as it is and so did their companions.

In compiling the Qur'an, they recorded any verse that was brought in. And if a verse came in two or three times, it was recorded in two or three spots, save for Chapter 1. Chapter 1 (al-Fatihah) was revealed to the Honourable Prophet twice, but was written only once, and all Muslims concur on this. Apparently Chapter 112 (al-Tawhid) was also like that; that it was revealed twice but recorded only once.

At any rate, as already mentioned, the claim that the Qur'an has been distorted is not credible. Such a claim would rely on the authority of the narrations and reports, and that relies on the authority of the word of the Imams and the Prophet, and in turn on the authority of the Qur'an. Therefore the narrations that affirm the distortion of the Qur'an would be nullify the authority of the Qur'an, and thereby they

would invalidate themselves. They are self- refuting, and thus they are unacceptable.

The displacement of the verse 'Today I perfected your religion for you'

'ALLAMAH. Of course the position of some of the verses might have been changed, but that is different from the distortion of the Qur'an (which means dropping a part of it, or adding something extraneous to it).

As it appears – while Allah knows its truth better – I believe that in the whole Qur'an, from beginning to the end, there are two verses that have surely been displaced. For the other verses, it is possible to say that their positions have not been changed, and that could be justified. But it is not justifiable whatsoever for these two cases. The first one is in Chapter 5 (al-Ma'idah), and the second one is in Chapter 33 (al-Ahzab). The first one is:

... Today those who disbelieve have despaired of [***harming***] ***your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me! Today I perfected your religion for you, and completed My bounty upon you, and approved Islam as your religion....*** (***5:3***)

There is much evidence, including the verse itself and the verses before and after it, that leave no doubt that the position of this verse has apparently been altered.

They (the compilers, under the supervision of the usurpers of caliphate) positioned this verse after the description of the unlawful edibles, right between the excepted clause and the exception. They did this, so that the subjects may be mixed up; so that the reader would presume that this day – the day when the infidels lost hope of eradicating and spoiling the religion of the Muslims, the day when the Muslims should fear Allah, the day when the religion of the Muslims became complete and God's bounty was perfected for them, and the day when Allah approved Islam for the Muslims – was the day when things like carrion, blood, pork and their likes were prohibited.

But note that the subject of unlawful edibles has appeared in four places in the Noble Qur'an. And in all of them, the subject is discussed in the same way, style, and tone. And each of these four cases is followed by the exceptions, that those who are desperate and under exigency may use these unlawful items.

It is only in this case (5:3) that there is a separation between the excepted clause (which states the unlawful edibles) and the exception, and there is no clear connection between the middle part of the verse and the rest of the verse. The misplacement that has occurred here becomes very clear when one compares this verse against the other three verses. The four exceptions that have been stated after the unlawful edibles are:

(1) ***…But whoever is desperate, while neither desiring nor transgressing, it is no sin for him. Truly Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate.*** (***2:173***)

(2 & 3) ***… But whoever is desperate, while neither desiring nor transgressing, then truly Thy Lord is All- Forgiving, All-Compassionate.*** (***6:145*** **&** ***16:115***)

(4) ***…But whoever is desperate in starvation, while not inclining to sin, then truly Allah is All-Forgiving, All- Compassionate.*** (***5:3***)

These are the four exceptions, which as we see have the same tone and style. And the complete verses about the unlawful edibles are:

He hath only prohibited for you all carrion, blood, and pork, and that which hath been slaughtered with saying other than Allah's name unto it. But whoever is desperate, while neither desiring nor transgressing, it is no sin for him. Truly Allah is All-Forgiving, All- Compassionate. (***2:173***)

Say: I find not in that which is revealed to me, prohibited to eat for an eater except it be carrion, or running blood, or pork, for it is [***or they are***] ***verily impure, or an ungodly thing slaughtered with saying other than Allah's name unto it. But whoever is desperate, while neither desiring nor transgressing, then truly Thy Lord is All-Forgiving, All- Compassionate.*** (***6:145***)

He hath only prohibited for you all carrion, blood, and pork, and that which hath been slaughtered with saying other than Allah's name unto it. But whoever is desperate, while neither desiring nor transgressing, then truly Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate. (***16:115***)

Prohibited for you are all carrion, blood, and pork, and that which hath been slaughtered with saying other than Allah's name unto it, and the strangled, and the beaten, and the fallen from a height, and the gored, and that eaten by beasts of prey, except for what you decapitate [***before dying***]***, and that which hath been slaughtered on the altars, and to partition by the divining arrows. Those are ungodly. Today those who disbelieve have despaired of*** [***harming***] ***your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me! Today I perfected your religion for you, and completed My bounty upon you, and approved Islam as your religion. But whoever is desperate in starvation, while not inclining to sin, then truly Allah is All-Forgiving, All-Compassionate.*** (***5:3***)

When we consider these verses side by side, we see that in the first three cases, the exception comes immediately after the unlawful edibles. However, in this last verse (5:3), even though the exception is the same as in the other verses – and so it should supposedly come right after the excepted clause – the sentence, 'Today those who disbelieve have despaired of [harming] your religion...' has separated between the excepted clause and the exception.

This sentence is about guardianship (*wilayah*) and has such a grand meaning and a supreme content. It

is very evident that they (the enemies and the usurpers of the caliphate) have placed it here so that the subjects get mixed up, and that the people would not notice its meaning and not follow its message. This verse (sentence) of Guardianship speaks about the completion of the religion and the perfection of God's bounty, with which there is no deficiency in Islam anymore, and with which Allah is pleased with this religion. It has been placed here so that the reader may think that these are about customary matters such as interaction with the infidels, their food being lawful for the Muslim and the food of the Muslims being lawful for them, and so on (see 5:5).

And the second occasion where the position of the verse has obviously been changed is the Verse of Purification (*tathir*) in Chapter 33 (al-Ahzab).

The displacement of the Verse of Purification

***...People of the House, Allah only willeth to remove all impurity from you, and purify you such* [*thorough*] *purification.* (*33:33*)**

'ALLAMAH. This verse is also placed where it has no connection with what is before and after it. The verses before and after it are all about the wives of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his family). But this verse is about the Prophet's Household (Ahl al-Bayt; which is a different group of individuals), and it has been placed in the middle of the other verses so that it may be mistaken and disguised. The verses as a whole are:

***O wives of the Prophet, you are not like any other women if you observe self-restraint; so be not soft in speech, lest it lure he in whose heart is a sickness, but speak commendable words * And stay in your houses, and appear not in the public like the previous era of ignorance, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and obey Allah and His Messenger. People of the House, Allah only willeth to remove all impurity from you, and purify you such* [*thorough*] *purification * And evoke the verses of Allah and the Wisdom that is recited in your houses. Truly Allah is All-Subtle, All-Aware.* (*33:32-4*)**

In the part about the Prophet's wives, there is no mention of Ahl al-Bayt, and nothing is said about them. There is no connection between that part and the Verse of Purification, where Allah addresses Ahl al-Bayt, telling them that He has removed all impurity and ignobility from them, and has purified them.

In fact, the above verses (apart from the Verse of Purification) only consist of two verses that are about the 'Wives of the Prophet' (*nisa' al-nabi*). The first verse is, ***'O wives of the prophet, you are not like any other woman if you observe self-restraint; so be not soft in speech, lest it lure he in whose heart is a sickness, but speak commendable words.'*** (*33:32*)

And the second verse is (should be),

And stay in your houses, and appear not in the public like the previous era of ignorance, and

perform the prayer, and pay the alms, and obey Allah and His Messenger, and evoke the verses of Allah and the Wisdom that is recited in your houses. Truly Allah is All-Subtle, All-Aware.

These verses (verses 32, 34, and the first half of 33) concern the wives of the Prophet, whom are given certain instructions. And all of the pronouns and verb conjugates correspond to them. They are all in second person plural feminine form, like 'you are not' (*lastunna*), 'you self-restrain' (*ittaqaytunna*), 'you be soft' (*takhda'na*), 'you speak' (*qulna*), 'you stay' (*qarna*), 'your houses' (*buyutikunna*), 'you appear in the public' (*tabarrujna*), 'you establish' (*aqimna*), 'you pay' (*atina*), 'you obey' (*ati'na*), and 'you evoke' (*udhkurna*).19 But the address changes in the middle of the second verse by the introduction of an incongruent sentence about the Household of the Prophet. In that part, the pronouns and the verb conjugates correspond to the second person plural masculine form, like 'from you' ('*ankum*) and 'purify you' (*yutahhirakum*). It is just like an incompatible patch; it clearly shows that it has no connection with the verses before and after it. It is evident that this sentence does not belong here.

But it has been brought here so that it may be disguised, and that the minds of the general public may be directed to the wives of the Prophet and associate the honour of purification and removal of impurities with them. As a result of inserting this extra part in the middle, they had to turn the second verse into two verses: one verse ending with ***'purify you such*** [***thorough***] ***purification'*** (***33:33***), and the other ending with ***'All-Subtle, All-Aware'*** (***33:34***). Thus the verses addressing the 'Wives of the Prophet' have turned into three verses.20

The change of qiblah, and the Prophet's qiblah in Mecca

STUDENT. Was Bayt al-Muqaddas ('the Sanctified House', Jerusalem) specifically decreed as *qiblah* (direction of prayer) in the beginning when the Muslims used to pray toward it, or was it chosen as *qiblah* following the other religions?

'ALLAMAH. In Noble Mecca, we know that the Messenger of Allah used to pray in Masjid al-Haram in such a way that he would face both the Ka'bah and Jerusalem. That is, he used to stand in front of the Ka'bah in such an angle that Jerusalem would also be in the same direction. But it was not like that when he migrated to Medina (it was not possible to face Mecca and Jerusalem at the same time). There, the Messenger of Allah and the Muslims used to pray toward Jerusalem, and so the Jews started censuring and taunting them for not having a *qiblah* of their own. The Jews kept rebuking the Muslims for that, until finally the verses of *qiblah* were revealed (2:142-50). And indeed, to pray while facing the Ka'bah is a splendid pillar of Islam.

STUDENT. In terms of established historical evidence, do we have any certain proof for the distortion (*tahrif*) of 'the two Testaments' (*ahdayn*)?

'ALLAMAH. The Noble Qur'an explicitly states that the Jews and the Christians distorted the two Testaments (the Torah and the Gospel).21 However, the Qur'an solidly maintains that not all of the two

Testaments are distorted, but they still include parts that are true. In many cases the Qur'an challenges and argues against the Jews and the Christians based on the very Torah and Gospel that they had at the time.[22] And there is also historical evidence for their distortion, and there are also some accounts mentioned within the Torah and the Gospel that confirm their distortion.

Revelation of the Torah to Prophet Moses

STUDENT. Was the Torah (*Tawrah*) revealed to Prophet Moses (peace be upon our prophet and his family and upon him) during the selfsame forty nights that he had gone to talk to God at His rendezvous? What were the tablets on which the Torah was written made of? And where is Mount Tur?

And how was the Gospel (*Injil*) revealed? Did the Apostles (*hawariyyun*) of Jesus Christ write the Gospels during his time or later on? And were they all pious and righteous or not?

'ALLAMAH. It is true that the Torah consisted of some tablets (*alwah*) that were sent down upon Moses in Mount Tur over a period of forty days; but it is not quite certain whether those were the same forty nights of supplication or not. So Prophet Moses took the tablets and headed back for his people, but he dropped them as he was angry (about his people worshipping the Calf). Therefore some of the tablets were broken. And the tablets were all made of emerald (*zumurrud*), which God had created and originated from sheer non-being (*ex nihilo*). In the (current) Torah there are certain historical accounts, stories, exempla, and episodes that cannot be attributed to a divine book; there are lots of strange and bizarre things. There have been fewer alterations in the Gospel compared to the many in the Torah.

There is no doubt that the Torah was revealed to Prophet Moses in Mount Tur (Mount Sinai), which is in the Sinai Desert in Egypt.[23] If one sails in the Red Sea from Egypt toward Mecca, the Sinai Desert would be on the right. The Torah was revealed entirely in those forty days, and Prophet Moses collected the tablets and took them to his people. But since a lot of them did not obey, God raised Mount Tur and suspended it above their heads:

***And** [**recall**] **when We made a covenant with you, and raised over you the Mount,** [**that**] **'Firmly adhere to that which We have given you, and give ear.' They said, 'We heard and we disobey,' and** [**the adoration of**] **the calf was sunk in their hearts because of their disbelief. Say** [**unto them**]**: Evil is that which your belief orders you, if you are believers.** (**2:93**)*

This suspension of Mount Tur was both a threat and a punishment for them, so that they may prostrate and submit to the truth. Some of them prostrated and accepted the truth that they were told, while others said other things (like asking for an idol, or wanting to see God).

Initially, Prophet Moses' successor was chosen to be his brother, Prophet Aaron. But Aaron passed away in Tayh (in the Sinai Peninsula), and so Elisha (al-Yasa', Yusha' ibn Nun) became Prophet Moses' successor:

And make mention of Ishmael and Elisha* (*al-Yasa'*) *and Dhu al-Kifl. All are among the righteous. (***38:48***)

Revelation of the Gospel to Prophet Jesus

'ALLAMAH. The story of how the Gospel was revealed is more ambiguous than that of the Torah. Was the Gospel revealed as a divine Scripture upon Prophet Jesus? Or is it his teachings? Or was it compiled in another way? It is not quite clear. At any rate, all of the Gospels were written after the ascent of Prophet Jesus (to the heavens). Some one hundred and twenty Gospels were written, four of which were accredited and officially recognised by the Church. They were the Gospels of Luke, John, Mark, and Matthew. The other one hundred and sixteen were rejected, and they are still rejected, meaning that they are not being used.

At some point in history, there appeared the Gospel of Barnabas, which made quite a turmoil. But it was finally rejected and discredited, as it matched the teachings of Islam and Qur'an for the most part, and included tidings about the Prophet Muhammad.[24]

The Apostles of Prophet Jesus, and monasticism

'ALLAMAH. The Apostles were the specific disciples and the chosen companions of Prophet Jesus. God, Exalted is He, instructed them to embrace faith, and thus they became His supporters (*ansar*):

O you who believe, be supporters of Allah, as Jesus son of Mary said to the Apostles, 'Who are my supporters unto Allah?' The Apostles said, 'We are supporters of Allah.'... (***61:14***)

The Apostles have been mentioned more than once in the Qur'an. In addition to the above verse, they are also mentioned in these verses:

And when Jesus sensed disbelief in them, he said, 'Who are my supporters unto Allah?' The Apostles said, 'We are supporters of Allah. We believe in Allah, and thou* [*bear*] *witness that we are submitters * Our Lord, we believe in what Thou hast sent down, and we follow the Messenger; inscribe us therefore with those who bear witness.' (***3:52–3***)

And* [*recall*] *when I inspired the Apostles that 'Believe in Me and in My Messenger,' they said, 'We believe, and* [*bear*] *witness that we are submitters' * [*And recall*] *When the Apostles said, 'O Jesus son of Mary, is thy Lord able to send down upon us a table of meal from heaven?' He said, 'Observe your duty to Allah, if you are believers.' (***5:111–12***)

It is said that all of the Apostles were righteous and virtuous people, except for one of them, who revealed the location of Prophet Jesus when the enemies were searching for him. But just as the enemies were about to capture Prophet Jesus, he ascended to the sky and left the people for good.

There were twelve Apostles, and except the one that turned out corrupt, they all maintained the custom of Prophet Jesus. Following his approach, they all decided to not get married, not establish any housing or dwelling for themselves, and not settle in any city.[25] Instead, they constantly travelled from city to city and from town to town in order to propagate the religion of Prophet Jesus. Thus they adopted monasticism (*ruhbaniyyah*) and solitude, and even though the Exalted Allah had not initially decreed monasticism (for them), He was pleased with it:

Then We kept sending Our messengers after them* [*Noah and Abraham*]*, and We sent following* [*them*] *Jesus son of Mary, and gave him the Gospel. And We placed kindness and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. And a monasticism they initiated – We did not prescribe it for them – only seeking Allah's pleasure, but they observe it not as it deserved to be observed. So We gave those of them who believed their rewards, and a lot of them are evil-doers. (***57:27***)

The Christians did not observe the conditions and requirements of monasticism as they should have been observed, and failed to do justice to it. But at any rate, the Apostles succeeded in spreading the word and establishing a complete proclamation all around the world.

STUDENT. Is it true that the celibacy of Prophet Jesus is a sign of imperfection?

'ALLAMAH. It is not a sign of imperfection, but it is a sign of his spirituality and transcendence, for he did not become involved in this world whatsoever. He did not get married and did not take up any lodging or abode in this world. He had a peculiar state of being.

But the Noble and Honourable Messenger (of Islam) had a comprehensive (*jami'*) character, as he fully took up and digested the various features and aspects of this life. And marriage in particular is a distinct custom of the Messenger of Allah.

And of His signs is that He created for you spouses of yourselves, that you may find repose with them, and He set between you care and mercy. Surely in that are signs for a people who contemplate. (***30:21***)

Prophet Joseph was a mukhlas

STUDENT. Based on some reported narrations, God took away the line of the prophets from Prophet Joseph's progeny as a result of his abandoning a preferred action (*tark al-awla*). (After Joseph had become the king (of Egypt), his father along with his family left Canaan (Kan'an) for Egypt to see him. They entered the palace while he was sitting on the throne, and he did not stand up in respect for his father. Or (according to other narrations) he preceded his father when they wanted to mount a horse.)[26]

But then why did God place the line of prophethood in the descendants of his other brothers, even though they had committed a great crime, which was throwing their brother Joseph into the well and inflicting the pain of his separation upon their old father?

‘ALLAMAH. ‘The good deeds of the pious are evil deeds for the intimates.’27 Given his spiritual rank and divine intimate standing, Joseph’s abandonment of a preferred action (*tark al-awla*) might have been more crucial than the others’ throwing him down the well.

Not to mention that the Qur’an explicitly says that Prophet Joseph was a *mukhlas* (chosen, one who is made sincere by Allah),28 and the chosen never sin. Hence, based on that verse, one could reject all those narrations and count them apocryphal.

Platonism

STUDENT. Some people claim that Plato did not accept the religion of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon our prophet and his family and upon him) saying, ‘This religion is for people with weak intellects. I cannot adopt it for I have already reached the reality.’ Is this true or made-up?

‘ALLAMAH. That is not true, because Plato lived (about) five hundred years before Prophet Jesus. Plato was Aristotle’s teacher, who was the teacher and a chief minister of Alexander of Macedonia, whose era is documented in history (d. 323 BCE).

Plato was the founder of an illuminative school of theosophy (*hikmat al-ishraq*) and was the master of the stoics.29 Divine realities and gnosis were unveiled to him by means of austerity, spiritual combat, and inner purification. And Aristotle founded the Peripatetic school, which does not rely on esoteric (*batini*) means of knowledge whatsoever. He built his philosophy purely on rational demonstration (*burhan*).

Note that the book *Theology of Aristotle* (*Uthulujiya*), which is attributed by some to Aristotle, is in fact by Plotinus, who was a Neoplatonist. This book is concise and to the point, and is based on illuminative theosophy. But its attribution to Aristotle is a mistake.30

And hereby the conversations of this lowest with my teacher and master, Honourable ‘Allamah Tabataba’i, come to an end. Of course these were only my formal conversations that I had recorded in writing. Otherwise I have immensely benefited from meeting with the Honourable ‘Allamah here and there, whether the meetings were recorded or not, and have used his teachings in many of my writings. May Allah reward his superb efforts and resurrect him with Muhammad and his family, the best of people.

1. See Suyuti, al-Durr al-Manthur (Beirut, 197?), 6:185.
2. See ibid., 3:207.
3. [Translator’s note. This is widely agreed upon by Jewish scholars, and is the ninth principle among the thirteen principles attributed to Maimonides (1204). See M. Shapiro (1993) ‘Maimonides’ Thirteen Principles: The Last Word in Jewish Theology?’ The Torah U-Madda Journal, vol. 4, pp. 187-242.]
4. [Translator’s note. As ‘Allamah has mentioned in al-Mizan (under the above verse), in Arabic, yad (hand) alludes to power, and ‘two hands’ is used to indicate maximum power. In many places in the Qur’an we see Allah speaks of His ‘two hands’, meaning utmost power.]

5. See Ibn Babawayh al-Qummi (Shaykh al-Saduq), al-Amali (Qum, 1417/1996): 692; Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari (Istanbul, 1981), 6:101.
6. See Tirmidhi, Sunan al-Tirmidhi (Beirut, 1983), 4:257.
7. Zamakhshari, al-Kashshaf 'an Haqa'iq al-Tanzil wa 'Uyun al- Aqawil (Beirut, 199?), 1:9. [Translator's note. Note that 'Allamah also recited the verse with Malik (King) and so did the author in the later part of his life. See S.M.H. Husayni Tihrani, Nur-i Malakut-i Qur'an (2nd ed., Mashhad, 1421/2000), 4:474.]
8. [Translator's note. For a comprehensive discussion on the different recitations and their credibility see S.M.H. Husayni Tihrani, Nur-i Malakut-i Qur'an, 4:415-65.]
9. See Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, 5:210; Suyuti, al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al- Qur'an (Beirut, 2001), 1:208 and 245-6.
10. [Translator's note. This and the following quotations from Ibn Mas'ud should be taken as paraphrases rather than literal, word-for-word quotations.]
11. [Translator's note. 'The correct inflectional form of the term is mu'awwidhatayn – as a subject [i.e. that which gives refuge] – and the common form of mu'awwadhatayn – as an object – is a mistake.' Baha' al-Din Muhammad ibn Husayn al-'Amili (Shaykh al-Baha'i), Miftah al-Falah (Beirut, 1324/1906): 252.]
12. [Translator's note. All of the above, even the ones mentioned as Shi'a narrations, have been narrated by prominent Sunni authorities: Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh (Beirut, 1965), 3:112; Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah (Cairo, 1959-), 3:40-5; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad (Beirut, 1978), 5:130; Ibn Hajar, Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari (3rd ed., Beirut, 198?), 9:18; Suyuti, al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al- Qur'an, 1:208ff. For Shi'a sources see Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj (Najaf, 1386/1966), 1:222-3; Ya'qubi, Tarikh (Leiden, 1969), 2:196-7.]
13. [Translator's note. The quotations in this story should be taken as paraphrases rather than literal, word-for-word quotations.]
14. See Suyuti, al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an, 1:209 and 248; Ibn al- Nadim, al-Fihrist (Beirut, 1988): 30; Hakim al-Haskani, Shawahid al-Tanzil (Tehran, 1990), 1:36ff.
15. For the order in which the chapters of Qur'an were revealed see Shaykh al-Tabarsi, Majma' al-Bayan (Beirut, 1995), 10:211; exegesis of Chapter 76 (al-Dahr); Suyuti, al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an, 1:57ff.; Ibn al-Nadim, al-Fihrist: 28-30.
16. See Ya'qubi, Tarikh, 2:152ff.; Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, 1:105, 107 and 281; Kulayni, al-Kafi (al-Usul) (Tehran, 1388/1968), 2:633; Kitab of Sulaym ibn Qays, no. 4, part 2.
17. See Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, 1:379
18. See note 226 above.
19. [Translator's note. In Arabic, unlike English, the second person plural feminine verb conjugates and possessive pronouns are distinct from the other persons. All of the mentioned terms are distinct from the pronouns and conjugate forms of second person plural masculine form, which appear in the Verse of Purification.]
20. According to Ayatollah Sayyid Sharaf al-Din 'Amili, the Verse of Purification is a separate sentence (istitradiyyah) that has appeared between the two verses before and after it (al-Kalimah al-Gharra' fi Tafdil al-Zahra', published in one volume with al-Fusul al-Muhimmah fi Ta'lif al-Ummah (5th ed., Najaf, 1964): 213-14). He writes:
Independent or separate (istitradiyyah) sentences that appear within one's speech are common in the words of eloquent speakers. This usage involves the interruption of a series of connected orderly sentences that follow one another. Some examples from the Noble Qur'an are:

'...Indeed this is a guile of you women; surely your guile is great. * Joseph, turn away from this; and thou [woman] ask forgiveness for thy sin....' (12:28-9)

'...Truly when the kings enter a city they disorder it and make its honourable inhabitants disgraced; and that is what they do. * Indeed I will send them a present, and see what the emissaries bring back.' (27:34- 5)

'No! I swear by the positions of the stars. * And that verily is a tremendous oath, [only] if you knew. * It is surely a noble Qur'an.' (56:75-7)

Likewise, the Verse of Purification has appeared as a separate independent statement in the middle of the verses addressing the Prophet's wives. The separate addition here shows that Allah's address to the Prophet's wives – including

His commands, prohibitions, and guidelines – is only mentioned in service of His high regard and attention for the Ahl al-Bayt. That is, when addressing the wives of the Prophet, the separate addition indicates that the Ahl al-Bayt are clear from any blame, censure, and ignominy, and in this they are different from everyone, including the Prophet's wives. Or it may be to prevent the hypocrites from making use of the [shortcomings of] the Prophet's wives to object and argue against the Ahl al-Bayt. This precious point demonstrates the eloquence, perfection, and miracle of the Noble Qur'an, and it hinges on having this separate addition in these verses.

21. See 2:75–6, 159, 174; 3:70–1, 78, 98–9, 187; 4:44, 46, 5:13–15, 41; 19:30–7; 62:5.
22. See 3:65–6, 84, 93, 113–14, 199; 4:66, 68, 77, 82–5; 5:43–7, 60, 66, 68, 72; 6:91; 7:157; 9:111; 48:29; 57:27; 61:6.
23. See 19:52; 28:29, 44–6.
24. [Translator's note. For a detailed discussion on the compilation and history of the Torah and the Gospels, as well as the Gospel of Barnabas see S.M.H. Husayni Tihrani, Nur-i Malakut-i Qur'an, 4:254– 93.]
25. [Translator's note. According to the Gospels, Peter had a mother– in-law whom Jesus met; See Matthew 8:14, Luke 4:38, and Mark 1:30.]
26. [Translator's note. See Fayd al-Kashani, Tafsir al-Safi (Tehran, 1416/1996), 3:47–8. Also note that according to most scholars and exegetes, what is meant by Joseph's mother in the above account (and in 12:100) is his aunt. See Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar, 12:319.]
27. [Translator's note. Apparently this is not an established hadith, though it has also been reported as a prophetic hadith (al-Turayhi, Majma' al-Bahrayn [Qum, 1988], 1:235). Nevertheless it is an accepted doctrine among most Muslim scholars.]
28. 'She verily desired him, and he would have desired her had he not seen the proof of his Lord. Thus it was, that We may turn away from him evil and indecency. Truly he was of Our chosen servants.' (12:24)
29. [Translator's note. Plato was not himself a stoic, as the school of stoicism was founded later on by Zeno (d. 262 BCE). 'Allamah seems to be aware of that, and his point here is apparently about the major influence of Plato's thoughts on this school.]
30. [Translator's note. The book is identified as Porphyry's paraphrase and abridgement of books 4–6 of Plotinus' Enneads; but it became known as the Theology of Aristotle. See F. Klein-Franke, 'Al-Kindi' in History of Islamic Philosophy, ed. S.H. Nasr & O. Leaman (London, 2001): 171.]

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