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# THE HOLY QUR'AN; LIGHT OF GUIDANCE

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# HOLY QUR'AN EXHIBITION

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Editorial

## *In The Name of God The Compassionate The Merciful*

Dear Readers,

*"Overcome your problems with the help of the Holy Qur'an."  
Imam Ali (AS)*

We all believe in the Oneness of God, in His Messengers(AS) and in the Holy Qur'an revealed to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for the guidance and salvation of human beings. Through the Holy Qur'an and of course the teachings of the Infallible (AS), we can learn every lesson of life needed for our prosperity and salvation both in this world and in the Hereafter - the lasting life. Obviously, if in today's world we observe Muslims in different parts of the world faced with the oppressions of the hegemonic powers, injustice and corruption in various forms, it is chiefly because the Holy Qur'an has not been used and acted upon in the proper manner. The Qur'anic lifestyle is indeed what we need to learn and follow in order to overcome all problems and gain the spiritual elevation desired by our Beneficial Creator. Now, on the eve of the Holy month of Ramadhan, we would like to invite your esteemed attention to certain articles on Qur'anic teachings in this issue of Mahjubah and pray to Allah to revive our hearts with the light of the Holy Qur'an in this blessed month, as spring revives the nature, as Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has said: "For everything there is a spring and the spring of the Holy Qur'an is the holy month of Ramadhan." Imam Khomeini (ra), the leader and founder of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, would refer to this month as the holy month of 'Divine Banquet', saying: "In this month you are invited to Allah's Banquet by Him. So, try to make the best of it." And dear readers, in this year of the solar Hijri calendar, the anniversary of the demise of Imam Khomeini (ra) falls in the holy month of Ramadhan. While honouring the memory of that great man of God – who stood up against the world tyranny, and oppression and fought for the truth, justice and the religion of Allah to the last moment of his blessed life, we beseech Allah, to guide us to follow in his footsteps and unite under the banner of Islam as taught by the Holy Qur'an and emphasized by the Infallible (AS).

*M. Salimi*

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AND FATIMAH AL-ZAHRA(SA)**



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# TAUGHT BY THE HOLY QUR'AN AND FATIMAH AL-ZAHRA(SA)

Ruhollah Samadi

Undoubtedly chastity and accordingly modest proper covering (Hijab) is both necessary for the well-being and security of the society and also for the protection of the honour and human dignity of the society's members in particular the women. In fact, chastity in Islam is regarded as a moral virtue related to worship of God and guaranteeing human happiness. In the Holy Qur'an, the believing girls and women are advised: *"O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters, and believers' wives as well, to draw their cloaks close around themselves. That is more appropriate so they may be recognized and not molested. God is Forgiving, Merciful."* Al-Ahzab: 59

The expressions 'Efaf and Effat' are very meaningful and are according to Islamic theologians, the opposite of waywardness, selfishness and immodesty. 'Afif' is applied to the one who possesses 'Efaf', namely chastity, piety and self-restraint in the face of passions and carnal desires. Let's cite this verse of the Holy Qur'an for more clarification, *"Take care of the poor who, being totally absorbed in working for God's cause, cannot manage to travel [freely] around the earth seeking the livelihood. An ignorant person might assume they are rich because of their modesty; yet you will recognize them from their features, they do not make insistent demands on people. Yet God is Aware of any money you may so spend."* Al-Baqarah: 273

Also in chapter 24 of the Holy Qur'an we read about Qur'anic teachings on chastity: *"Yet let those who do not find [any way to] marry, hold off until God enriches them out of His bounty. Should those whom your right hands control desire their freedom, then draw up such a writ for them if you recognize anything worthwhile in them. Give them some of God's Wealth which He has given you. Do not force your girls [whom you control] into prostitution so that you may seek the display of worldly life, if they want to preserve their chastity. Anyone who forces them to do other-wise) [will find] God is Forgiving, Merciful, even after forcing them to."* Al-Nur: 33

In Nahjul Balaghah (Hikmah 60) we read a Hadith from Imam Ali (AS) about 'Efaf' which says: "Efaf beautifies destitution." As we see 'Efaf' meaning self-restraint, self-control and piety has been applied in Islamic teachings to denote self-restraint and dignified, honourable behaviour both in the face of sexual urges and also when one is under other pressures such as hunger and poverty. The significance of 'Efaf' can be understood just through a study of the conditions and fate of various peoples and societies; the societies blessed with 'Efaf' have prospered and those entangled in passions have suffered decadence and lots of miseries. Now let's talk about the greatest symbol of 'Efaf', chastity, dignity and piety - the endeared



daughter of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) – Her Holiness Fatimah (SA). Islamic history is witness to the fact that she was the perfect symbol of a truly faithful lady, an exalted Muslim woman, that she stood at the peak of Godliness and possessed all moral virtues to the fullest extent, that she was free from even the least bit of selfishness and that she lived for God in every respect, to the last moment of her blessed life.

About her piety and obeying Divine Commands, writing even hundreds of books will not be enough, and so here we content ourselves with citing just a few narrations: “Her Holiness Fatimah(SA) was tremendously careful about the Islamic decrees on chastity and Hijab (as with other Islamic decrees) and would avoid the non-Mahram

with praise-worthy care.” It has been narrated that one day a blind man entered the room where both the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and his beloved daughter were sitting. Upon his entrance, Her Holiness got up and left the room, and in reply to those who said that the man was blind so there was no reason for her leaving the room, Her Holiness said: “True, he does not see me, but I see him....” Hearing this reply, the Holy Prophet(PBUH) expressed his approval and admiration of his exalted daughter and said: “I bear witness that you are part of me.”

Also, it has been narrated

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that one day the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam, asked the opinions of the audience at the mosque about women's happiness through this question: "What is best for women?" The people present at the mosque gave some answers yet a very knowledgeable devout companion of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Salman preferred to ask that question from Her Holiness Fatimah (SA) whom he knew to be at the peak of knowledge and wisdom and so he went to the house of Her Holiness and asked her to reply to that. In reply Her Holiness said: "The best thing for women is not to see non-Mahram men and also not to be seen by non-Mahram men." Then Salman returned to the mosque and uttered that very wise reply given him by Her Holiness Fatimah (SA). The Holy Prophet (PBUH) asked Salman, whom he had received that reply from and was told by him that the reply was given by Her Holiness Fatimah (SA). Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "May her father's life be for her. Truly Fatimah is part of me."

These narrations clearly point to the highness of the moral level and devotion of Her Holiness Fatimah (SA) to Islamic teachings. Of course there is no denying that Islam allows women's useful, and/or necessary presence in society, for social, economic, cultural and political activities

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"Her Holiness Fatimah(SA) was tremendously careful about the Islamic decrees on chastity and Hijab (as with other Islamic decrees) and would avoid the non-Mahram with praiseworthy care."

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but as per these life-giving narrations, it is better for a woman to avoid contact with non-Mahram males as far as possible and moreover, when she has to appear in public, she should be properly covered and also not wearing attractive clothings, perfumes and the like. These Divine teachings are no doubt for the health, security, happiness of women as well as the society.

Another praiseworthy aspect of the exalted position of Her Holiness has been her devotion to her husband, housekeeping and raising pious children. In fact, being a good wife for a woman has been mentioned by Her Holiness as being reward-worthy equal to struggle in the way of Allah. It is indeed worthwhile to mention that in a hadith Prophet Muhammad(PBUH) while interpreting verse 12 of

chapter 66 (about the chastity of Maryam binte 'Umrān said: "Truly Fatimah (SA) too guarded her chastity and so Allah guarded her household and offsprings against the Fire."

Accordingly, Imam Ali(AS), the esteemed husband of that most exalted lady of all times has stated: "The greatest '*Ibadah* (worship of God) is *Efaf*." '*Efaf*' according to this Hadith is self-restraint both in the face of sexual desires and in the face of desire for food and the like..., as Imam al-Baqir(AS) has said: "To Allah no '*Ibadah*' is more rewarding than *Efaf* (self-restraint, self-control) in the face of the urges of belly and of sex." and also "When Allah desires good for a servant, He will help him overcome sexual passions and passions for food, achieving *Efaf* in the face of such passions."

Likewise, in a Hadith, Imam al-Sadiq(AS) has described his true followers thus: "...They guard themselves against illegitimate sexual desires, gluttony and struggle hard in the way of serving and obeying Allah and they hope for Allah's Compassion and fear His Wrath and so they invariably move in the path of the truth. If you see someone with these qualities, know that he is one of my followers."

As for chastity and self-control in situations related to sexual desires, let's mention a Hadith from the Infallible

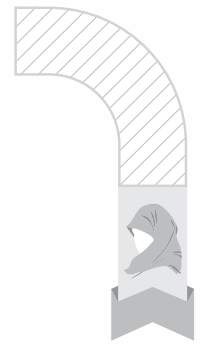




(AS): "The one who desires chastity for his own family, should behave chaste towards the others." This Hadith clearly teaches us that truly chaste people will enjoy the blessing of a family protected against unchaste conduct by the others, among other blessings and needless to say, women's carelessness about Hijab will be a severe blow to the society's morality, causing lots of harms, such as the break-up of families and corruption.

Accordingly, the so-called freedom of relations between men and women so prevalent in today's Western societies, as well as immoral films and corrupting reading material should be regarded as ruinous to humane life, human soul and human societies and should thus be fought against.

To conclude, it should be said that Allah has, in His Mercy and Compassion, presented the best role models for us to follow for our happiness and salvation, Her Holiness Fatimah al-Zahra (SA) - the most excellent of them - she perfectly acted upon the teachings of Allah. She prayed to Allah most sincerely and also acted most chaste throughout her blessed life, and advised all to follow the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.





# MODEL WOMEN

## IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

Jafar Joubari

Mahjubah  
Magazine

As inferred from the Holy Qur'an, pious women can be models both for women and men, the most outstanding model women being of course Her Holiness Fatimah (SA), Her Holiness Khadija (SA), Her Holiness Maryam/ Mary (SA), Asiyah, the daughters of Prophet Sho'aib (AS), and the mother of Her Holiness

Maryam (SA). In this short article, we will talk about Her Holiness Asiyah, the daughters of Prophet Sho'aib (AS) and Her Holiness Maryam's mother; since talking about the virtues of Her Holiness Fatimah (SA) and her esteemed mother requires much greater space and many more pages.



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FAMILY WOMAN  
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F. A. QUESTION  
FINAL WORD

### ASIYAH – WIFE OF PHARAOH(FIR'AUN), SYMBOL OF PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE

*"God has (also) made up a parable for those who believe, concerning Pharaoh's wife when she said: 'My Lord, build a house for me in the Garden alongside You, and save me from Pharaoh and his action. Save me from such wrongdoing folk!'"* The Holy Qur'an; al-Tahrim, 11

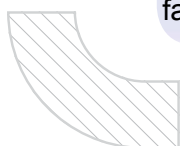
In this verse of the Holy Qur'an, the wife of Pharaoh—the tyrant has been introduced as a believing woman of a very high spiritual level. Certainly her gaining such a lofty position has been due to certain sublime qualities of hers: faith in Allah - the One God, in the Prophethood of Prophet Musa (AS) and perseverance in defending that faith. According to authentic

accounts, Asiyah persisted in her faith greatly, even in the face of the pressures by Pharaoh who threatened her with death by burning in fire if she refused to disbelieve in One God and in His Prophet. And she eventually was put to death at Pharaoh's order for her faith and indeed achieved that house in the Paradise along with God, and was saved from Pharaoh and his action...."

A very significant point to be mentioned here is that Asiyah believed in God and His Messenger, Prophet Musa (AS) while she was living in the luxurious palace of Pharaoh and so none of the luxuries around could prevent her from believing in Allah - The

One and Only God and in His Prophet. From this verse we can conclude that it is possible for one, whether a woman or a man to be born and living in plenty and yet avoid being distracted by the same from true faith and piety.

Also, since Asiyah prayed to God and asked Him for deliverance from the clutches of her disbelieving torturers while she was under severe torture, it becomes clear that a true believer keeps her/his faith in God even under very hard conditions, as Asiyah did. Certainly such resistance is not possible unless one has firm unwavering faith in her/his God.





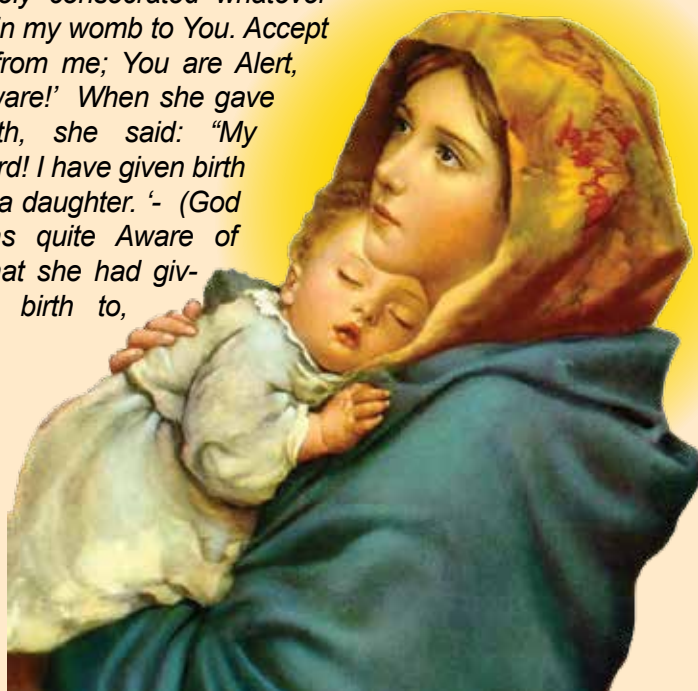


## HANNA - MARYAM'S MOTHER, IDEAL MOTHER

According to Imam al-Sadiq (AS), the name of Her Holiness Maryam (SA)'s mother was Hanna. About Hanna, we can say that she has been referred to as a virtuous woman in two chapters of the Holy Qur'an; in chapter 3 and in chapter 19 (Maryam). The fact that Hanna has been such a great woman is a proof of the greatness of the daughter she gave birth to – Maryam (SA). So, Hanna should be regarded as a model woman and a symbol of piety by the believers. In the Holy Qur'an (3: 35-36), we read about her sincere prayer to Allah - the prayer which was heard by Allah most graciously: *"Thus a woman [from the House] of 'Imran said: 'My Lord! I have freely consecrated whatever is in my womb to You. Accept it from me; You are Alert, Aware!' When she gave birth, she said: 'My Lord! I have given birth to a daughter. '- (God was quite Aware of what she had given birth to,*

*for a male is not like a female) – "I have named her Mary, and ask You to protect her and her offspring from Satan the Outcast.'"* Al-i 'Imran, 35-36

These verses obviously show the impression and role played by parents in raising and educating daughters and sons. It can rightly be claimed that being born to such a woman of chastity and piety has been a cause of Maryam (SA)'s attaining such a high level. And as we read about Prophet Sulaiman (AS)'s prayer in the Holy Qur'an: *"So he smiled, laughing at its statement, and said: 'My Lord, arrange things for me so I shall act grateful for Your favour which You have bestowed upon me and my*



parents, and so I may act so honorably that You will approve of it. Admit me through Your mercy among Your honourable servants." Al-Naml, 19

Also we read about Prophet Zachariah's prayer to Allah in the Holy Qur'an: "With that Zachariah appealed to his Lord; he said: 'My Lord, grant me goodly offspring from Your presence, for You are the Hearer of Appeals.'" Al-i 'Imran, 38

These verses obviously prove that the faith and virtues

of parents can have immense effects upon their children. Here, it is worthwhile to mention a hadith narrated from Imam Ali (AS) about prayer of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to Allah for blessing the marriage of his exalted daughter, Her Holiness Fatimah (SA) with Imam Ali (AS). Imam Ali (AS) said: "Allah's Messenger (PBUH) came to me and addressed me thus, 'O Ali! Get up, in the Name of Allah! May Allah's blessings be upon you! Get up and ask

Allah for His blessings. Indeed there is no power but His, so rely on Him. 'And then Allah's Messenger (PBUH) took me to Fatimah (SA), told us to sit down, and then prayed for us so: 'O Allah! These two are the best loved of your servants to me. So, I beseech You to honour them, bless their offsprings and place guards from Yourself for them. I beseech You to protect them and their offsprings against the cursed Satan'.

## PROPHET SHO'AIB (AS)'S DAUGHTERS, SYMBOLS OF CHASTITY AND PIOUS



As we know, Islam attaches great significance to chastity and modesty. Imam al-Baqir (AS) has been quoted: "Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said that Allah loves the patient and chaste people." Prophet Sho'aib (AS)'s daughters have been mentioned as ladies of modesty and chastity in the Holy Qur'an (Chapter 28) and this shows their position to Allah. Let's focus on these Divine words to understand the significance of behaving chastely (verses 23-

28 of Chapter 28). These verses talk about, among other things, both the manly and chaste behaviour of Prophet Musa (AS) and the modesty, bashfulness and chastity of the daughters of Prophet Sho'aib (AS). Also, from verse 26 of that chapter it can be inferred that a woman of faith, integrity and wisdom can play significant beneficial roles, as was the case with those two esteemed ladies. From the words addressed to Prophet Sho'aib (AS) by his daughter

(28: 26) (strong, trustworthy), we can learn that anybody who is to be trusted with a work should possess these two qualities, as elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an (Chapter 12: 55) we read that Prophet Yusuf (AS) mentions his being knowledgeable and trustworthy (as qualities required by an overseer). "He said: 'place me over the storehouses in the land. I will be a careful overseer.'" The Holy Qur'an; al- Yusuf, 55

All these divine words lead us to conclude, among other things, that Islam desires piety, chastity and honourable life for both men and women, that Islam does not prohibit women's social activities in so far as they behave chastely and avoid unnecessary, immoral contact with men, and of course that the Holy Qur'an, being Allah's Words, urges us to follow in the footsteps of the great Model men and women whose words and virtues are indeed illuminating lights of guidance.



# EDUCATION IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

By Muhammad Ihsani



The Holy Qur'an is the Divine Book of guidance, revealed to educate human beings. Thus, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam to whom the Holy Qur'an was revealed, has been chiefly tasked with education and guidance of human beings.

Indeed, the language of the Holy Qur'an is that of illumi-

nation, education and leading towards salvation and the Holy Qur'an aims at human perfection and spiritual elevation. Let's now narrate a Hadith from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) - the receiver and the great teacher of the Holy Qur'an about this last and most perfect Book of Divine guidance - the Holy Qur'an:

"The Holy Qur'an has both an appearance (*Zahir*) and an inward (*Batin*). It's appearance is wisdom and it's inward is knowledge. It's appearance is splendid and it's inward is profound."

The arguments presented in the Holy Qur'an are totally based upon wisdom and understandable facts. As an example, here, we can cite verse 22 of chapter 21 (*Anbiya'*) of the Holy Qur'an in which the unity of the Creator has been argued in a quite clear, rational way: *"If there were other gods in either [Heaven and Earth] besides God [Alone], they would both dissolve in chaos. Glory be to God, Lord of the Throne, beyond what they describe!"* Al-Anbiya, 22.

As we see, this verse of the Holy Qur'an (as all other verses) invites the audience to use their minds and their faculty of reason to understand that certainly there is just one Creator - Allah - the One and Only God, since had there been other gods, disruption and ruin would result in the world of creation.

To make facts quite clear and easy to realize for human beings, the Holy Qur'an has also used comparison and metaphor in a number of cases. As

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an instance, we can cite verse 5 of chapter 62 of the Holy Qur'an in which those who do not act upon the knowledge (they have been granted by Allah) are compared to a donkey who is carrying scriptures.

And the beautiful language of the Holy Qur'an is of course equipped with the power of influencing sentiments and emotions greatly. According to numerous accounts, many

to Divine guidance have sentiments sound enough to be influenced by Allah's words. According to the above account, the late Allamah Tabataba'i would even cry in a loud voice when talking about Qur'anic verses regarding repentance and Allah's Mercy. Stories and setting parables are other aspects to the Qur'anic language found repeatedly in this perfect Book of enlightening.

*what folk who reject Our signs are like; tell such stories so they may think things over."*

As we see, Allah tells His Messenger (PBUH) to tell the people certain stories so they may be reminded, and awakened. As for setting parables, we read in the Holy Qur'an, for example verse 27 of chapter 39 (al-Zumar)

*"We have made up every sort of parable for mankind in*



distinguished theologians including Allamah Tabataba'i (ra) the author of Al-Mizan Qur'anic commentary, would shed tears when reading and commenting on those verses of the Holy Qur'an which deal with Allah's mercy, and/or with Allah's wrath and/or repentance. Obviously, such men of knowledge and indeed every other human being whose heart is pure and open

Allah the Omnipotent has addressed his last Messenger – Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in chapter al-A'raf verse 176, thus: *"If We had so wished, We might have raised him up by means of them, but he clung to the earth and followed his own whim. He might be compared to a dog: no matter how you drive him off, he just pants away. Or if you leave him alone, he still pants on. That is*

*this Qur'an so that they may be reminded by...."*

Likewise the Holy Qur'an presents best modes of arguments for proving the truth in the face of falsehood as, for instance, in the story of Prophet Ibrahim/Abraham (AS) and his arguing with pagans, *"So then as he saw the moon rising, he said: "Will this be my lord?; and when it set, he said: "If my Lord did not guide me,*



*I would be a member of the lost folk.” The Holy Qur’an; al-An’am, 77.*

No doubt, this way of argument is an example of the best way of arguing which the Holy Qur’an orders; *“Invite [people] to your Lord’s way with discretion and kindly instruction, and discuss [things] with them in the politest manner. Your Lord is quite Aware as to who has strayed from His path, just as He is quite Aware of those who have consented to be guided.”* Al-Nahl, 125

We can infer from the above-mentioned Qur’anic directions that one of the Qur’anic ways of discussion is doing so through using what the opponents believe for overcoming and/or convincing them.

And of course in all cases, the language of the Holy Qur’an is directed towards the goal of teaching and presenting Divine rules and concepts. In verse 31 of chapter 2 of the Holy Qur’an, we read that Adam(AS) was taught the names of everything: *“He taught Adam all the names of everything; then presented them to the angels, and said: ‘Tell me the names of these if you are so truthful.’ ”* Al-Baqarah, 31.

The fact that the derivatives of the word ‘Ilm (knowledge) has been used in the Holy Qur’an many times can be regarded as a proof of the claim that the most significant aspect of the language of the Holy Qur’an is to educate, teach and give knowledge.

And as inferred from verse 2 of chapter 62(Jum’ah), the most outstanding duty of the holy Prophet(PBUH) of Islam has been to recite Allah’s Ayat to the people, to purify them and to teach them the Book and Wisdom, and of course, people too, are duty-bound to listen, learn and act upon what they are told as per Allah’s command, *“He is the One Who has despatched a mes-*

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No doubt, one of the loftiest feelings of human beings is their sense of religion and God-seeking nature. The Holy Qur’an targets this very honourable feeling and aims at dominating it wholly.

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*senger from the Unlettered [people] among themselves, to recite His verses to them and purify them and teach them the Book and wisdom, even though previously they were in obvious error;....”* The Holy Qur’an; al- Jumuah, 2.

Therefore, the Holy Qur’an aims at making human beings think and act in humane ways, i.e., in ways shown them by

their Creator - Allah - the One and Only God.

Now, let’s briefly survey certain views of the great Muslim theologian and philosopher martyr Mutahhari regarding the Holy Qur’an: In the first volume of his book ‘Introduction to the Holy Qur’an’, martyr Mutahhari has dealt with a subject themed “knowing the language of the Holy Qur’an”. According to martyr Mutahhari, in reality the Holy Qur’an speaks through various languages (through various methods of conveying the facts), because the Holy Qur’an addresses human being who has various dimensions to his or her being and so, to educate human beings, him/her special characteristics have been taken into regard by the Holy Qur’an.

Martyr Mutahhari has held that in certain cases, the Holy Qur’an addresses human intellect and talks with the language of reason and rational argument to them. This is the case with many Qur’anic verses in which human beings have been called upon to think, meditate and use their sense of reason. This group of verses of the Holy Qur’an targets the growth of human intellect and thought. The Qur’anic verses in which human beings have been called to think about the creation of the earth and the sky can be interpreted in this very context: *“In the creation of Heaven and Earth, and the alternation between night and daylight, there are signs for prudent persons....”*

The Holy Qur'an; Al-i 'Imran, 190

Also, the Holy Qur'an calling the human beings to think about the wise words and soundness of the Holy Qur'an can be regarded as a cause of the growth of human intellect, paving the ground for faith and attachment of to Islam. *"Have they not meditated on the Reading? If it had come from some other source than God, they would have found a great deal of contradiction in it."* The Holy Qur'an; Al-Nisa, 82

And in fact, it is through using their mind and sense of reason that one can best understand the fact that there is no contradiction in the Holy Qur'an, that this Divine Book is totally sound and true and has been revealed by Allah - the One and Only God.

Martyr Mutahhari has also held that in certain cases, the Holy Qur'an addresses human heart, aiming to transform it to the best condition and in fact, besides the language of reasoning, the Holy Qur'an has another language which is the language of heart or emotions. By the 'heart' here, we mean a very profound feeling existing in human heart, connecting human heart with the Absolute Being - The Creator, and the language of the heart is the same as the language of human nature (*Fitrah*). No doubt, one of the loftiest feelings of human beings is their sense of religion and God-seeking nature. The Holy Qur'an targets this very honourable feeling and aims at dominating it

wholly. Certainly, if one's heart is dominated by Allah's Word, not only his/her mind, but also his/her whole being will come under the influence of Divine light and Divine guidance.

So, according to Martyr Mutahhari, regarding the language employed by the Holy Qur'an, the discussion cannot be limited to just one language. Rather, the language of the Holy Qur'an should be dealt with as possessed of a combination of various ways of communication suited to the talents of the addressees - human beings, so all of them, with any level of intelligence, will be benefited by this perfect Divine Book.

Likewise, according to Martyr Mutahhari, the Holy Qur'an should be read and studied, with the aim of learning and receiving education and re-

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Careful study of the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'an brings every fair-minded individual to the conclusion that the language of the Holy Qur'an is the language of guiding and educating mankind.

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ligious obligations demand making the efforts for learning the life-giving teachings of the Holy Qur'an. In fact, the first verses revealed to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam were those in which His Holiness - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is ordered by Allah to read and also in which the word '*Qalam*' (the pen) which symbolizes literacy, and writing has been used. (96: 1-5) As a matter of fact, the Holy Qur'an has dealt with education through various ways sometimes through pointing to the value of knowledge and wisdom, as in the following verses, *"Take care of the poor who, being totally absorbed in working for God's cause, cannot manage to travel [freely] around the earth seeking their livelihood. An ignorant person might assume they are rich because of their modesty; yet you will recognize them from their features: they do not make insistent demands on people. Yet God is Aware of any money you may so spend."* Al-Baqarah, 273

And sometimes through the expression of the superior position of the possessors of knowledge, as: *"You who believe, whenever someone tells you to make room at (any) sessions, then make room; God will make room for you [elsewhere]. When it is said: "Move on ahead!", then move on up. God will raise those of you who believe, in rank, as well as the ones who are given knowledge. God is Informed about anything you do."* The Holy Qur'an; Al-Mujadilah, 11



To guide the people has been greatly emphasized and aimed at by the Holy Qur'an. In fact there is no verse in the Holy Qur'an which has not aimed at guiding human beings towards the straight path – the path of salvation. All Qur'anic verses dealing with religious decrees, human origin, the Resurrection, family, society and the stories and fate of certain preceding peoples contain guiding aspects and point to various dimensions to human salvation. Hence, we observe that the Holy Qur'an has been referred to as "Hudan Lennas" (Guidance for mankind) by Allah, *"The month of Ramadhan is when the Qur'an was sent down as guidance for mankind and with explanations for guidance, and as a Standard. Let any of you who is at home during the month, fast in it; while anyone who is ill or on a journey should [set an equal] number of other days. God wants things to be easy for you and does not want any hardship for you, so complete the number and magnify God because He has guided you, so that you may act grateful."* The Holy Qur'an; Al-Baqarah, 185.

There is no denying of the fact that the Holy Qur'an plays the chief role in Islamic education and this reality is testified by all Muslim sects. Careful

study of the verses and chapters of the Holy Qur'an brings every fair-minded individual to the conclusion that the language of the Holy Qur'an is the language of guiding and educating mankind. That is why the Holy Qur'an attaches great significance to learning, as well as to purification of one's soul, piety, worship, prayer and supplication to Allah. So, Islamic education consists of the teaching and clarification of Qur'anic decrees and precepts and presentation of proper approaches for the fulfillment of Islamic values in the framework of Qur'anic teachings. In verse 24 of chapter 14 of the Holy Qur'an, we read very thought-provoking points regarding the Holy Qur'an: *"Do you not consider how God makes*

*up a parable? A good word may be compared to a good tree whose root is firm and whose branches soar up into the sky."* Ibrahim, 24.

And we can infer from the above verse that, based on the teachings presented in the Holy Qur'an as the root of the blessed tree of knowledge and guidance, we can and should make great researches and studies for the promotion of Islamic knowledge.

### **"Excerpts from Education in the Language of the Holy Qur'an"**



# STORIES IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

Batool Moulaee

Qur'anic stories are profound and meaningful, containing sublime goals. Indeed Allah - the Gracious has, in the Holy Qur'an presented many moral and social teachings and decrees through stories and parables. A point particularly emphasized in the Holy Qur'an by Allah is the fact that the Holy Qur'an is a Divinely-Revealed Book. Thus, we can say that one of the goals behind narrating stories in the Holy Qur'an has been to prove that the Holy Qur'an is the Book of Allah, revealed by Him to Prophet Muhammad(PBUH), for Proph-

et Muhammad(PBUH) was illiterate and also had no contact with Jewish and Christian scholars and yet presented exact and current accounts of the preceding Divine Prophet(AS), including Prophet Ibrahim/ Abraham(AS) Prophet Musa/ Moses(AS), Prophet Isa/Jesus(AS) and Prophet Yusuf/Joseph(AS). Another sacred goal behind the Holy Qur'an's narrating stories has been to prove that Divine religions share the same principles. A careful study of the stories narrated in the Holy Qur'an tells us that all Qur'anic stories originate from the same root and that they share the same Divine

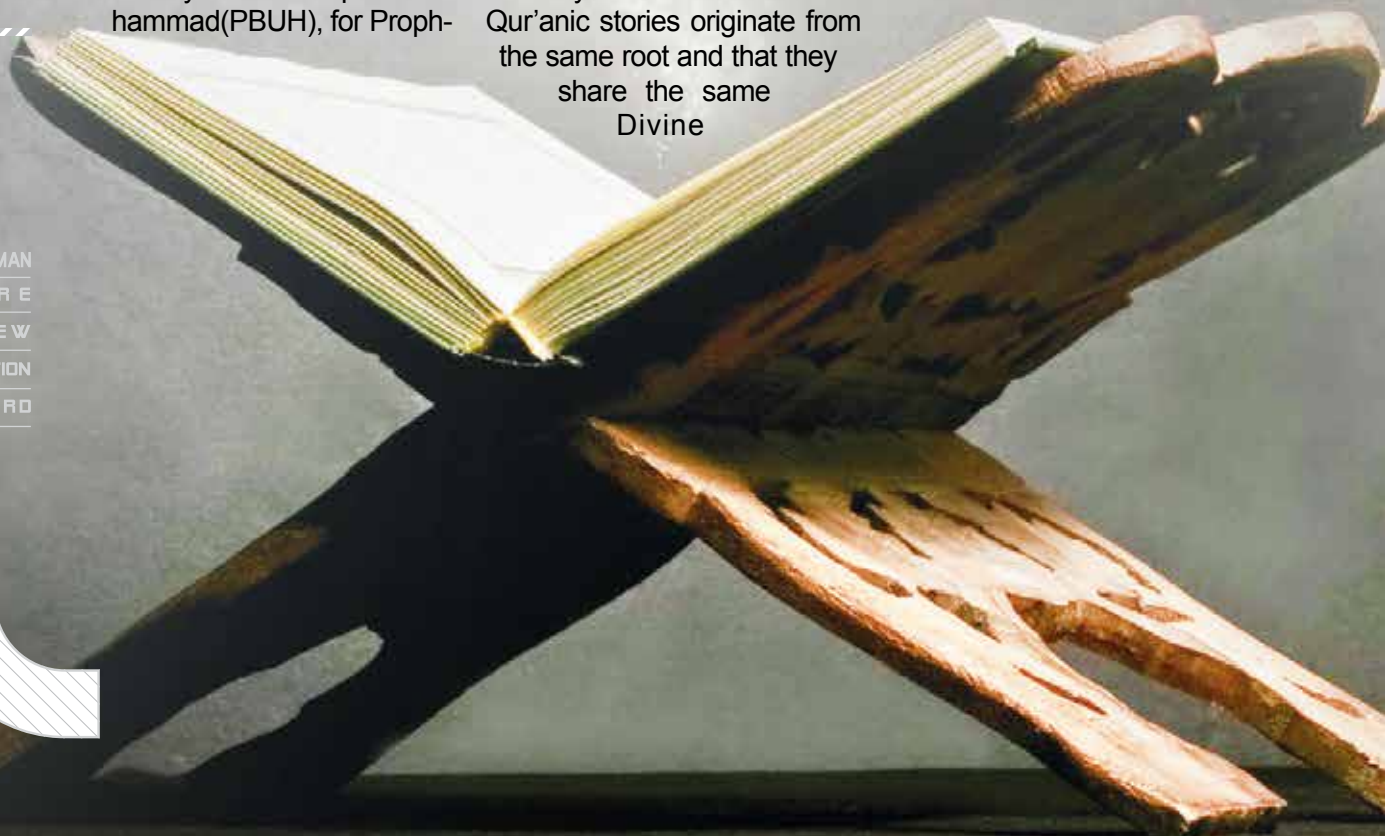
messages; all Divine religions aim at leading human beings out of the darkness of ignorance into light and salvation and to fulfill this shared goal, they all follow the same clear principle, namely to promise rewards for doing good and punishment for evil-doing. And as we see, all Divine Prophets (AS) have pursued the goals of inviting mankind towards attention to their origin, Resurrection, the eternal life in the Hereafter, following Allah's Messengers (AS) and other like supreme objectives.

Thus we can say that by narrating stories and parables, the Holy Qur'an, means, among other facts to stress that all Divine religions have Divinely-revealed messages and that to study and ponder upon the Qur'anic stories about the fate of past peoples can be very instructive, *"They said: 'Our father, what's wrong with you that you do not trust us with Joseph? We are quite sincere*

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about him.” Al- Yusuf, 11

And that Allah has offered clear accounts so we may take lessons from them, since Allah’s Sunna (laws, rules) are invariable and constant and so, if we observe that through disobeying Allah’s Commands, certain peoples in the past have perished, we should try not to do the same, since as per the Holy Qur’an, the same fate will be ours, too, if we disobey Allah. There are also certain verses of the Holy Qur’an which convey peace of mind for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers, since sometimes the pressures inflicted by opponents were really annoying. One of those peace-giving verses is the following: *“There was no answer from his folk except they said: ‘Kill him or burn him up! Yet God saved him from the fire; in that are signs for folk who believe.”* Al-Ankabut, 24

Thus, we can conclude that all the stories presented in the Holy Qur’an are true and real accounts of the significant events in the world and all contain significant lessons of life and worship. In fact, in the Holy Qur’an, Allah has taken into account all dimensions to human soul and not just one or two. And unlike man-made stories, the Qur’anic stories are not for amusement, but for guiding, teaching and correcting and for the purpose of presenting moral principles in the most comprehensive manner, so human beings can find salvation. And in this regard the role of Islamic scholars and



A careful study of the stories narrated in the Holy Qur’an tells us that all Qur’anic stories originate from the same root and that they share the same Divine messages; all Divine religions aim at leading human beings out of the darkness of ignorance into light and salvation and to fulfill this shared goal, they all follow the same clear principle, namely to promise rewards for doing good and punishment for evil-doing.



Qur’anic commentators can be considered of vital significance, since through clear interpretations they can help people in particular the youth understand the Divine messages conveyed through Qur’anic stories much better. No doubt, Qur’anic stories being the words of Allah are at the highest level of wisdom, beauty and attraction. They are in fact miracles containing lessons for every aspect of human life. Far from being imaginary, the stories of the Holy Qur’an present realities, as well as perfect models for human beings to follow. As admitted by every person of sound mind, the sentences and expressions used in the Holy Qur’an are beyond the abilities of human beings, and so they are the words of Allah -

The Almighty Creator Himself. The text of the Holy Qur’an contains religious teachings, moral principles, words of wisdom, religious laws and stories and also mentions a number of Divine Messengers (AS) including Prophet Nuh (AS) and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). According to some researchers there are up to 116 stories in the Holy Qur’an.

In the Holy Qur’an, there are some long stories, including the stories of Prophet Yusuf(AS) and Prophet Musa(AS) and also less lengthy ones including the stories about Prophet Nuh(AS) , Prophet Dawood(AS) , and also short stories such as the stories about Prophet Salih(AS) and Prophet Zachariah(AS) . It is also to be mentioned that while reading and/or listening to man-made stories repeatedly become boring, reading and listening to Qur’anic stories and parables become more interesting and refreshing with repetition and this should be regarded as another proof for the fact that the Holy Qur’an is a miracle, a Divine miracle, never losing its attraction, freshness and life-giving light. And of course, no instruction and guideline needed by human beings of all times and in all places have been ignored by the Holy Qur’an. As a matter of fact, in the Holy Qur’an, eloquence, beauty, wisdom, perfection, elevation and salvation are presented in a miraculously comprehensive manner.

# ILLUMINATING LIGHT

Mahjubah  
Magazine

On the occasion of "26th International Holy Qur'an Exhibition", certain measures have been taken by authorities regarding the promotion of Qur'anic knowledge. In this connection Professor Abdul-Hadi Feghhizadeh, the deputy of the "Qur'an and Etrat" of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance said: "The slogan of the 26th International Holy Qur'an Exhibition is "The Holy Qur'an, the Illuminating Light of Guidance" or in Persian language "*Qur'an Chel Cheraghe Hedayat*".

The great task of holding the Qur'anic exhibition started 26 years ago and has led into great achievements and

indicates the determination of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, to promote Islam. We hope the impressions of the slogan will be visible in all the sections of the exhibition." Pointing out that the slogan is significant from various viewpoints and also quite suits the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, he added, "Among our goals in connection with this Qur'an exhibition is to promote Qur'anic beliefs in the society, to spread Qur'anic culture and the teachings of the Household of the Holy Prophet(PBUH) of Islam (Etrat), giving proper direction to the production of religious

works on Qur'an and Etrat and also propounding the message of the Islamic Republic of Iran in today's world.....

Included among our religious activities are the programs for the Holy month of Ramadhan and weeks of Qur'an and Etrat all over the Islamic Iran...."

Regarding the main policies of the related efforts, Professor Feghhizadeh stated; "Following the guidelines and directions presented by the esteemed leader - His Eminence Ayatollah Khamenei, the propagation of the Islamic way of life, emphasis on the necessity of the existence of Qur'anic morality in the family environment, to extract the ac-

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# OF GUIDANCE

tive participation of the activists and elite in the field of 'Qur'an and Etrat', particular attention to the cyberspace, focus on the arts for the clarification and conveyance of Qur'anic teachings, special efforts towards using the economy and culture for the realization of the goal of resistance economy and popular religious activities have been decided as the main objectives in the policy-making process. He referred to the 26th Qur'an exhibition as a nationwide, all-embracing event in the Islamic Republic of Iran and added: "This exhibition has the active presence of people from all related groups, organizations and organs and

serves as a brilliant opportunity for the promotion of Qur'anic activities and the religious culture in the society."

He emphasized that this year the international section of the exhibition is receiving particular, enhanced attention and also mentioned that an information site for the exhibition, with the address "iqfa.ir" is launched and other new measures including the formation of a club related to the exhibition for receiving comments, proposals and criticism and also sections for religious discourses including those on Bi'that, Ghadir, 'Ashura, Raza' Culture, the Promised, the media and cyberspace are

taken as parts of the activities of the 26th Qur'an exhibition."

Professor Feghizadeh added that the exhibition is held in the Holy month of Ramadhan and said "By Allah's Grace, on the 4th night of the Holy month of Ramadhan (May 20) the exhibition has been inaugurated and the closing date of the exhibition will fall on the 20th night of the Holy month of Ramadhan (June 5). He also stated that, four special publications are issued in Arabic, English, Turkish and Urdu for the first time and also expert sessions are held especially for the benefit of university students and the reflection of the scholarly activities at the exhibition.

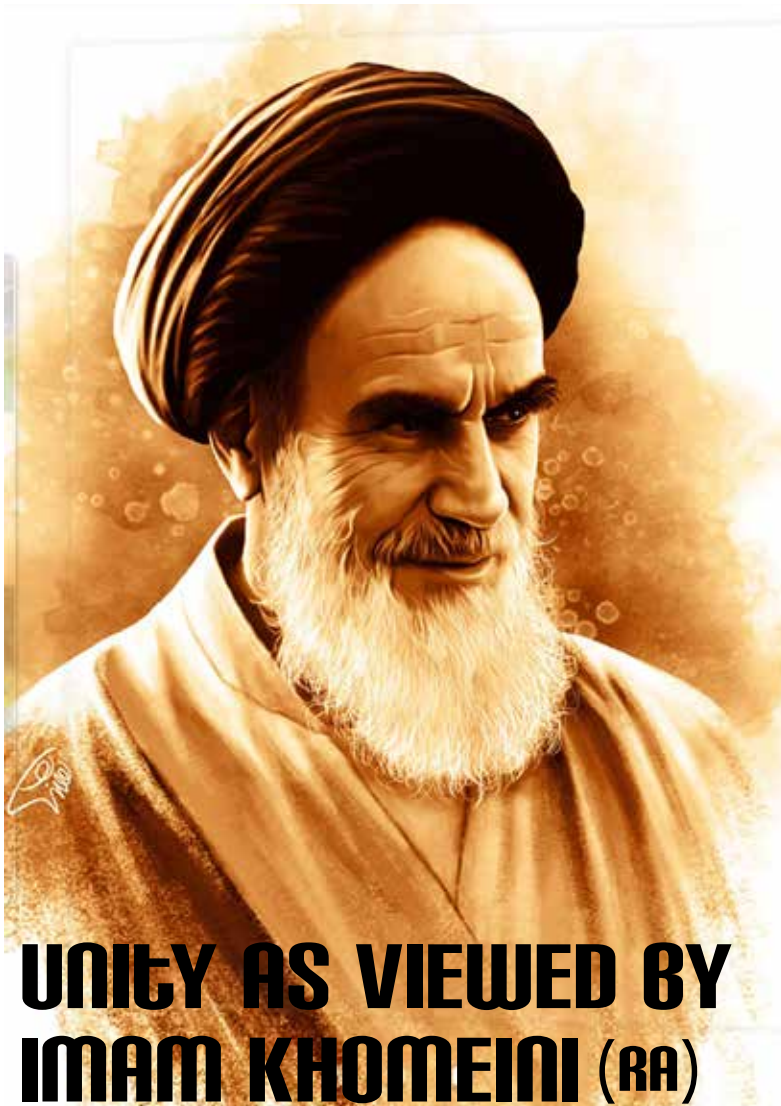
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According to Imam Khomeini (ra), unity (*Wahdah*) is a blessing for which we should be grateful. His Holiness would repeatedly call upon the people to be thankful to Allah for the blessing of unity through such statements: "This very our sitting and talking together brotherly and with trust towards each other is a blessing (*N'imah*) given us by Allah and we should preserve this bless-

ing." "Brothers (in-faith) should be united with good-will and brotherly feelings and thanks to Allah (here), they already are so. This is the greatest blessing and we should protect this blessing. As long as we protect and preserve this Divine blessing, we will be safe and guarded against all Satans."

In fact, the expression 'blessing' (*N'imah*) applied to the subject of the unity of Muslims

is a Qur'anic interpretation inferred by Imam Khomeini (ra) from verse 103 of chapter 3 of the Holy Qur'an: "*Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not separate. Remember God's favour towards you when you were enemies; He united your hearts so you became brothers because of His favour. You were on the brink of a fiery pit, and He saved you from it! Thus God explains His signs to you, so that you may be guided.*" Al-i 'Imran, 103

Also, according to Imam Khomeini (ra), a nation's becoming united and achieving unity of word is an extraordinary phenomenon and His Holiness would regard the unity of the hearts of the people from all walks of life to be just a Divine miracle: "This unity of word has been the work of Allah. I believe it is not possible for any other than Allah to unite the hearts and words of a whole nation with a population of millions in such an astounding way - that we observe a very young child says what an old man says and men, women, young people, old people all express the same slogans and follow the same path. Nothing but Divine will, can be behind this unity and I became hopeful about the victory of this movement from the very beginning, because of sensing such a reality."

Some readers might comment that 'well, everything is in the hand of Allah and so is the unity of the people and thus the unity of the Iranian nation



in their Revolution was not an extraordinary phenomenon.' In reply, it should be said that true, everything is in Allah's powerful hand, but what Imam Khomeini (ra) particularly meant by these words is that such unity of the people was due to Allah's special will and favour, as was the case with the miracles worked by Allah's Messengers (AS); they worked miracles by Allah's special will and that unity of the people in Iran also happened by Allah's special will. In an expression, Imam Khomeini (ra) remarked thus: "This unity of word we today observe in all classes of Iranian nation is a miracle. No human being can create such a unity. It was a miracle and a Divine will. It was Divine inspiration not a human work." No doubt, these expressions made by Imam Khomeini (ra) regarding the miracle of the unity of the Iranian people are no exaggerations and are rather quite in conformity with the Holy Qur'an. *"He has united their hearts: even though you spent everything on earth, you could never unite their hearts; but God has united them. He is Powerful, Wise."* The Holy Qur'an; al-Anfal, 63.

Likewise, Imam Khomeini (ra) regarded the unity of the Muslims as a religious obligation, and not just a desirable trend and so His Holiness as a religious authority has clarified the duty of the followers of the Islamic faith with Islamic expressions *Wajib*(obligatory) and *Taklif* (responsibility): " It is *Wajib*(obligatory - incum-

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bent) upon all Muslims to be united.” , “ According to the command of Islam, Muslims should be one united hand.” , “There should be unity among all. This is a Divinely- ordained, religious responsibility for us and for the whole nation.”

As we know, to defend Islam and the lands of Muslims is *Wajib* upon all Muslims and since without unity, the Muslims cannot defend Islam. Imam Khomeini (ra) regarded the unity of the Muslims to be as a necessary condition for the other *Wajib*, namely defense of Islam and the Muslims. This expression by Imam Khomeini (ra) is also very instructive: “To defend Islam and Islamic Republic is *Wajib* upon all of us and the fulfillment of this very significant religious duty depends upon unity.” and “According to commands of Islam, Muslims should be as one united hand in order to be able to cut off the hands of the

aliens and colonialists from interference in their countries.” In the above statement, Imam Khomeini (ra) clearly declares the unity of Muslims as a required condition for cutting off the hands of the aliens from their lands. These wise words are obviously quite in conformity with Qur'anic teachings, as for example we read in verse 140 of Chapter 4 of the Holy Qur'an : *"In the Book, He has revealed to you that whenever you hear God's signs disbelieved in and ridiculed, you should not sit with them until they change to some other topic. You would be just like them then! God will gather all the hypocrites and disbelievers into Hell;"*

From this verse of the Holy Qur'an, we can easily infer that to submit to foreign domination is haram (forbidden) for Muslims and to cut off their hands from any interference in the affairs of the Muslim nations is obligatory for the Muslims and so unity is also obligatory for the Muslims, since unless united, Muslims would not succeed in fulfilling their duty of standing up against and cutting off foreign domination and interference. Hence, Imam Khomeini (ra) the leader of the Islamic Revolution always insisted that Muslims should avoid dispersion and should turn to unity among themselves.

As a matter of fact, Imam Khomeini (ra) believed that the society can attain security and progress just through faith in God and unity among the people and His Holiness would

invariably attach great significance to the factor of unity in the realization of Islamic goals, so much so that according to him, even commitment to Islam, if devoid of unity would be useless: "The basis of the progress of you dear nation is commitment to Islam and unity of the word. Without unity in the affairs, commitment to Islam will be of no benefit to you. And without commitment to Islam, unity will do harm instead of good."

Thus, in the viewpoint of Imam Khomeini (ra), simultaneous existence of the two factors of faith in Allah and unity are essential for the prosperity of the society and these two factors, when combined will form the basis of all faithful and significant victories and social developments, and that neither of the two can have any substitute. This point has been repeatedly expressed by Imam Khomeini (ra) on various occasions and in various phrases, His Holiness would indeed mention unity sometimes as connected to Islam, sometimes to *Iman* (true faith) and sometimes to the Islamic phrases '*Allahu Akbar*' 'Allah is the Greatest': "The secret behind your victory is firm, unwavering faith and next the unity of the word. Do preserve these two.", "We will be victorious if we guard our unity and our being Islamic.", "Try not to lose the benefit of Allah's help, since 'Allah's hand is with *Jama'ah* (united community)'. If *Jama'ah* are united and have Islamic ideas and ideals, they

will have the helping hand of Allah with them.", "Our victory was due to unity of word and reliance on Islam. The slogan of '*Allahu Akbar*' made us victorious. And now too all our weapon is that very '*Allahu Akbar*'. Also, it was the unity of the word that led us to victory and now too our weapon is that very unity of word."

It is to be noted here that these wise viewpoints are



"Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not separate. Remember God's favour towards you when you were enemies; He united your hearts so you became brothers because of His favour. You were on the brink of a fiery pit, and He saved you from it! Thus God explains His signs to you, so that you may be guided." Al-i 'Imran, 103



based upon the Qur'anic teachings including the verse of the Holy Qur'an in which Allah has commanded all to "*Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not separate.....*" Al-i 'Imran, 103

In this verse, Allah's word as the axis and the Muslim Ummah's unity have been pointed out together. In this regard, let's read another instructive state-

ment of Imam Khomeini (ra): "The secret behind your victory was your unity and your united struggle for Islam, namely your acting upon that verse of the Holy Qur'an.

*"Cling firmly together by means of God's rope, and do not separate. Remember God's favour towards you when you were enemies; He united your hearts so you became brothers because of His favour. You were on the brink of a fiery pit, and He saved you from it! Thus God explains His signs to you, so that you may be guided."* Al-i 'Imran, 103

This verse commands us to turn to Allah unitedly and avoid division; to be united and conscious of Allah. Accordingly, Imam Khomeini (ra) believed that the Muslims society's unity should be promoted to the level of brotherhood. The expression 'brotherhood' is in fact a Qur'anic expression, as in the Holy Qur'an, Allah - the Almighty has regarded the faithful as brothers: "*Believers merely form a brotherhood, so reconcile your brethren and heed God so that you may find mercy.*" Al-Hujurat, 10

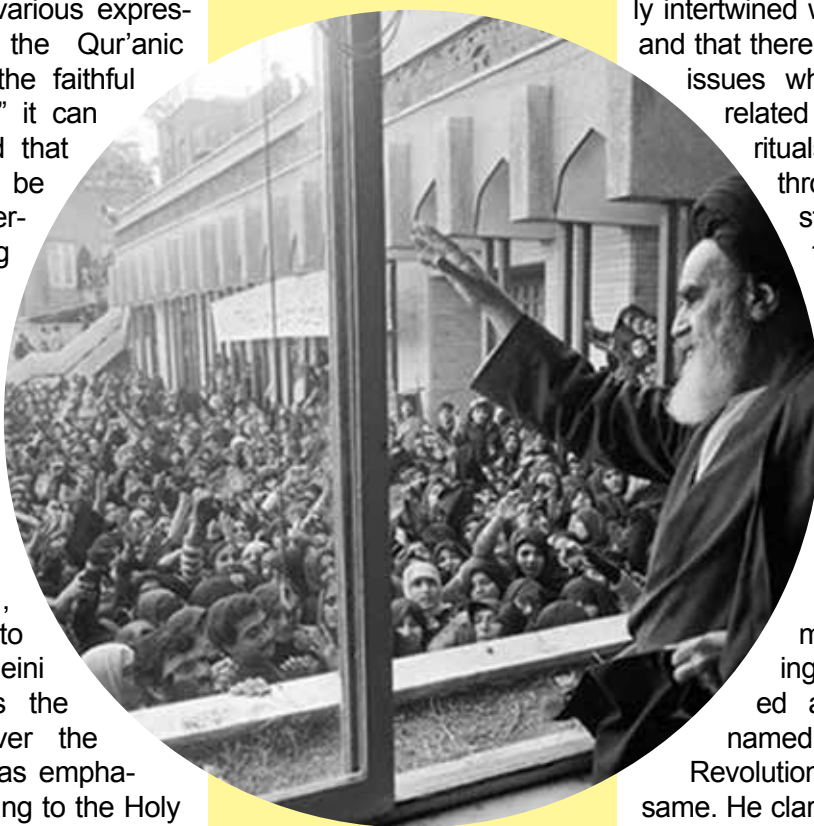
In numerous speeches and addresses, Imam Khomeini (ra) pointed to this verse of the Holy Qur'an, basing his illuminating arguments and admonitions upon that verse and presenting numerous teachings and guidelines relating to very significant aspects of the contents of the Divine verse. All such teachings indicate the deep insight and vast Islamic knowledge of Imam



Khomeini (ra): 1- Evidently Imam Khomeini (ra) first and foremost believed that the above-mentioned verse of the Holy Qur'an is meant for *Mu'aminoon* (the believers - the faithful) to regard each other as brothers and to fulfil their duties towards each other with this very outlook. He has stated: "Islam has emphasized *Okhovat* (brotherhood among believers), in various expressions. From the Qur'anic verse, "Truly the faithful are brothers..." it can be understood that there should be perfect brotherhood among the faithful and all their affairs should be regarded and fulfilled within the framework of that brotherhood." This brotherhood, according to Imam Khomeini (ra) embraces the faithful all over the world as he has emphasized: "According to the Holy Qur'an's decree, the faithful all over the world are brothers and brothers are equals and should share each other's grief and joys. In Islam, it is this very brotherhood from which all good and blessings originate. In fact Islam and the Holy Qur'an have concluded the contract of brotherhood among us. According to the Holy Qur'an, *Mu'aminoon*

whether Arab, Persian, Turk or of other ethnicities everywhere are each other's brothers. This is the decree of the Holy Qur'an. If all the faithful in all Muslim countries act upon this very Qur'anic command and regard each other as brothers as Allah has wished them to, they will no longer suffer any defeat."

Due to the misleading prop-



aganda, before the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, some educated people believed in the separation of religion from politics and wrongly thought that Islam has no political rules. Accordingly they would consider the religion to be a collection of moral principles to be interpreted just within the framework of the peo-

ple's individual relationship to God. Yet Imam Khomeini (ra) and his like-minded religious authorities thought differently; they believed Islam to be a political religion and unlike those who argued that there is nothing as politics in Islam, Imam Khomeini (ra) and other truly knowledgeable men of God argued that in Islam, political matters are thoroughly intertwined with moral ones and that there might be many issues which seem just related to morality or rituals, but which through careful study, turn out to have political goals behind. In reality, through his knowledge and insight, Imam Khomeini (ra) drew many political rules from religious, moral teachings and presented a phenomenon named 'the Islamic Revolution' through the same. He clarified his outlook for the people most admirably, thus giving rise to a great political-social development on the world level and in the mentality of the world peoples.

It would be no exaggeration to say that we can hardly find a man of religious knowledge as successful as Imam Khomeini (ra) in negating the misleading idea of the separation of religion from politics and proving

on the world level the truth that there should be no separation between religion and politics in Islam. Included among his lofty works in this regard has been his introducing the Hajj rituals (which were previously mostly regarded as just related to acts of ritual worship) into the realm of politics and declaring the chief goals behind Hajj to be political. As a matter of fact, Imam Khomeini (ra)'s belief in the inseparability of religion from politics was to such an extent that His Holiness in an unusual measure, wrote his last-will entitled "religious-political Will" addressed to and for the benefit of not only the present generation but also to and for the generations to come and in fact to the whole world of humanity.

In this connection let's read and ponder upon more words of guidance presented by Imam Khomeini (ra): "Islam's moral decrees are also political. That is every Qur'anic decree on the brotherhood of the believers is at once a moral decree, a social decree and a political decree. That is a moral decree which contains social decrees as well as political aspects. The political aspects of that decree can clearly be observed in the fact that when the Iranian nation united and observed Islamic brotherhood among themselves they succeeded in repelling the world domineering powers, because those powers and their agents found themselves incapable of resistance against the united ranks of brothers. Imam



Khomeini (ra) likewise, basing his argument on the Qur'anic decree regarding brotherhood among believers, regarded brotherhood to be a required condition of *Iman* (true faith). The faithful are brothers as taught by this verse of the Holy Qur'an (49: 10), and it can be inferred from this verse that if two people do not act upon their brotherhood-in-faith and do not treat each other as brothers, they are not truly faithful. A truly faithful person should desire good for his brothers, those who are dishonest and/or malevolent towards their brothers are not properly guided and their hearts have not received the good effects of faith. Elsewhere in his remarks, Imam

Khomeini (ra) pointed out certain connections between the Qur'anic verse regarding the believers and brotherhood (49: 10) and another verse of the Holy Qur'an: "..... *Like brothers they will face one another on couches.*" Al-Hijr, 47

And he stated that this verse is about the inmates of paradise and that considering the two verses, we can conclude that those who in this world do not act upon the Qur'anic decree (49: 10) regarding brotherhood, may be deprived of that blessing in the hereafter: "*Believers merely form a brotherhood, so reconcile your brethren and heed God so that you may find mercy.*" Also, warning all against disputes and hostil-





ities among themselves, Imam Khomeini (ra) stressed: "One of the punishments inflicted upon the inmates of hell is their hostile treatment towards each other in hell, whereas one of the blessings enjoyed by the inmates of paradise is their enjoying each other's brotherly love and companionship there."

According to Imam Khomeini (ra) in the Hereafter, we will receive the reward or punishment for what we do in this world and in fact our actions will be returned to us there. In this regard too, His Holiness has based his views upon Divinely-revealed words, including the following verses; al-Zalzalah, 7-8: "... and whoever has

*done an atom's weight of good will see it; while whoever has done an atom's weight of evil will see it.*" and advised all to avoid harsh, unfair treatment towards each other and behave like brothers in order to become deserving of heavenly rewards. Also, referring to another verse of the Holy Qur'an (8: 46) in connection with the issue of unity, Imam Khomeini (ra) stressed that according to this Divine command, Muslims are not allowed to dispute among themselves, because dispute will cause weakness and degradation among them. *"Obey God and His messenger and do not argue with one another, so that you will falter and lose your courage. Show patience; God stands beside the patient."* The Holy Qur'an; al-Anfal, 46.

In an address, Imam Khomeini (ra) pointing out the same matter, expressed regret that the instructions and teachings giving by the Holy Qur'an have not been taken into consideration and acted upon adequately: "The Holy Qur'an has been disregarded, the decrees of the Holy Qur'an have been disregarded, because Muslims though performing rituals like obligatory prayers, they pay no attention to most of Islam's political decrees.... If they act upon these verses of the Holy Qur'an which advise them to unitedly hold on to Allah's words and avoid division among themselves and other progressive political decrees of Islam including the decree on avoiding disputes (8:46), they

(the world Muslims) will gain prosperity and progress the world over." Imam Khomeini (ra), being a true believer in the Holy Qur'an, would repeatedly urge all to heed and put the Qur'anic decrees into effect in every aspect of their lives in order to achieve prosperity and salvation.

In another speech, Imam Khomeini (ra) has expressed his displeasure at the various kinds of disputes including political ones among Muslims and stressed that as clearly stated by the Holy Qur'an, such disputes and dispersions lead to the Muslims' getting weak, degraded and unable to defend themselves against their enemies. Read these words of Imam Khomeini (ra) to get better informed about the issue of the unity of Muslims: "The Holy Qur'an has warned us that disputing among ourselves will result in our weakness and inability, (in our becoming *Fashal*, to use the Qur'anic word). Already you can observe the negative effects of such weakness in Arab countries. Really, can there be a worse weakness than the weakness suffered by those vast Muslim countries, having much political and military power, and yet being weak in the face of Israel which is an enemy who has attacked Islam and the Muslim lands? Israel is increasing its aggressive assaults every day and is also not contented with occupying just one country. The worst weakness is a government's or a nation's inability to do what it should do - to protect itself against aggressors.

# FAMILY AND VALUES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Abbas Ali Rostami Nasab & Zahra Shabestari Nejad Ravary



Education is certainly the most significant factor behind the formation of human character and her/his identity. Proper education should no doubt be regarded as the education based upon Divine values and imparted through knowledgeable, committed instructors the first of whom being parents, since education starts in the family environment, as we observe that the role of the family in education have been pointed out in the Holy Qur'an. And obviously, through benefiting from the Holy Qur'an, families can as the most fundamental units of education and training, take the most effective steps towards presenting Islamic education to the offsprings.

Undoubtedly, education and training are among the most significant and most valuable responsibilities of human be-

ing, since the most exalted and revered human beings, namely Divine Messengers(AS) and their righteous successors have been appointed by Allah to educate and guide human beings and have sought human happiness and salvation in this very realm; Education, of course includes many aspects, all of which are immensely significant in their own rights, yet it can be claimed that values and imparting values constitute the most considerable aspect of education, because values are the base of the contents of the education programs and also are directly connected to the most basic unit and centre of education, namely the family. Thus, getting adequate knowledge of values is to be regarded as the first step towards education and no doubt Allah's Book is the best and most au-

thentic source for our reference and knowledge in this regard.

*"You who believe, obey God and obey the Messenger and those from among you who hold command. If you should quarrel over anything, refer it to God and the Messenger if you believe in God and the Last Day; that will be better, and finer in the long run."* Al- Nisa: 59

The life-giving messages conveyed through the above verse are to be considered as Divine values in themselves and also as being the bases of many other Divine values. These teachings should certainly form the basis of education in families and should be imparted by parents to their children for their guidance. This Islamic education is just the opposite of the misleading ideas and concepts spread by the world arrogant powers and their Zionist-led media throughout the world. They know Islamic education protects family environments and so prevents their evil plots from being implemented and so they try hard to spread corruption in societies, because they have realized that corruption ruins families through taking the sacred values away from them and so they have aimed at misleading the world people through



obscene films and books and propagation of false values, consumerism, materialism, individualism, and so on, to lead human beings and of course families and the youth astray and to make them submissive to colonialism and follow a slavish way of life. Here, let's turn to certain guidelines presented by the Infallible (AS): According to Imam Ali (AS), both the family and the associates can impress the youth. From this Divine teachings, it can be inferred that parents should guard their young ones in the face of the companionship of the corrupt, astray friends. Also, according to our Divinely-guided teachers, education starts even before the child is conceived by her/his mother, as we read in a Hadith: "Educate your children two years before their birth." This Hadith reveals the significance of the spiritual, moral condition of the would-be parents, teaching us that to be good parents, we need to educate and purify ourselves even before getting married. A pregnant and also a nursing woman's emotional and spiritual peace and welfare have also been emphasized in Islam; both in the Holy Qur'an as well as in the teachings of the Infallible (AS). No doubt, if Divine decrees and teachings are followed and acted upon by both men and women, not only their marital life will become a happy life for them, but also they will be blessed with healthy, in-

telligent and upright children as the fruits of their lives.

*"A good land brings forth its plants with its Lord's permission, while whatever is sterile will produce only grudgingly. Thus We spell out signs for folk who act grateful."* Al-'Araf, 58

According to Qur'anic commentators, the expression '*Wal Baladel Tayyib*' (a good pure land) in the above verse can also be taken to mean a 'good virtuous family'. Likewise, according to Allamah Tabataba'i the well-known theologian and commentator of the Holy Qur'an, this expression also points to the fact that good virtuous deeds originate from good roots and in the same vein, evil deeds have their roots in evil origins.

So, we can conclude that properly guided parents can hope for pious promising children who in turn will contribute towards the well-being and prosperity of the society in numerous ways. And accordingly, impious, ill-mannered parents

should expect undesirable offsprings. In the Holy Qur'an we are advised to protect ourselves and our families.

*"You who believe, shield yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel will be men and stones: over it there (lurk) fierce, stern angels who do not disobey God in anything He commands them (to do). They do whatever they are ordered to."* Al-Tahrim: 6

From this verse of the Holy Qur'an we can learn that Allah wants us to do our best to lead our families towards piety and a virtuous life and that we have certain responsibilities regarding our family members too. According to





Qur'anic commentators keeping the family environment pure and away from impure conducts and sins is an injunction conveyed by the above-mentioned verse of the Holy Qur'an. No doubt, to fulfill this duty, careful plannings should be made from the very start; before choosing a spouse and should be continued throughout the phases of life. In other words, the rights of one's family members cannot be regarded as confined to the fulfilment of their material needs and rather they have the right upon us to be provided with a spiritual guidance and proper religious education as well.

The Islamic decrees on bidding the good and forbidding the evil (*Amre bil-Ma'ruf wa Nahy Anil Munkar*) are obviously to be applied in this case, besides others. The story of the birth of a highly-revered Divine Messenger – Prophet Isa/ Jesus Christ (AS) to Her Holiness Maryam/Mary (SA) told in the Holy Qur'an most beautifully can be considered as a proof for the significance of piety and chastity of parents in

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Both men and women should first and foremost be careful about their own thoughts, manners, and conducts as we are advised in the Holy Qur'an.

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relation to the spiritual health, integrity and Godliness of the children. As pointed out by the Holy Qur'an, the parents of Her Holiness Maryam (SA) were known among their people as pious and chaste and honorable persons and also Her Holiness Maryam (SA) was very pious, chaste and devoted to worship of God.

Also, in the supplication for paying homage to the Master of Martyrs - Imam Hussein (AS) we say addressing the Imam (AS): "I bear witness that you have been *Noor* (Divine Light)

in the upright loins and pure wombs," ..... These words are also used when addressing all the Ahlul-Bait (AS) in supplications for paying homage to them and indicate our belief in the uprightness, purity and chastity of the ancestors and ancestresses of Ahlul-Bait (AS) the purified family of Allah's last Messenger - Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Thus, according to Islamic teachings, besides education, heredity plays significant roles in the formation of traits and characteristics; in the case of the Ahlul-Bait (AS) the righteousness of their fathers and chastity of their mothers being reflected most brilliantly in those exalted personalities. So, both men and women should first and foremost be careful about their own thoughts, manners, and conducts as we are advised in the Holy Qur'an.

*"You who believe, your souls are in your own care. No one who goes astray will harm you, provided you are guided. Toward God will you all return together, and He will notify you about whatever you have been*



doing.” Al-M’aidah: 105

and also: “Are you ordering people to be virtuous while forgetting it yourselves, even as you recite the Book? Will you not use your reason?”

Al-Baqarah:44

These verses of the Holy Qur’an command us to be very careful about self-purification and to start the implementation of Divine decrees from ourselves; avoiding greed, jealousy, selfishness, and all other evil traits in order to become worthy of Allah’s Mercy and unending blessings: “Her Lord accepted her in a handsome manner and caused her to grow like a lovely plant and told Zachariah to take care of her. Every time Zachariah entered the shrine to (see) her, he found she had already been supplied with food. He said: ‘Mary, how can this be meant for you?’ She said: ‘It comes from God, for God provides for anyone He wishes without any reckoning.’ “ Al-i Imran, 37

These Divine words point among other things to the factors behind the upbringing, training and education of Her Holiness Maryam (SA) who became the mother of an exalted Divine Messenger. These factors obviously included her mother’s chastity, purity of heart and intention and devotion to God. Besides, the parents should ask Allah for His help in this regard, as we see Allah’s Prophets (AS) have done so.

“My Lord, make me keep up prayer, and have my offsprings [do so too]. “Our Lord, accept

my appeal!” Ibrahim: 40

“O Lord, leave us peacefully committed to You, and make our offspring into a nation which is at peace with You. Show us our ceremonies and turn towards us, You are so Relenting, the Merciful.” Al- Baqarah: 128

Accordingly, we observe that Imam al-Sajjad (AS) – the fourth infallible Imam has prayed to Allah for having pious offsprings: “O Allah! I beseech You to grant me the blessing of Your protection of my offsprings and I beseech You to make them benevolent, pious, virtuous, knowledgeable and truth seeking servants of Your,” Al-Sahife Sajjadiyeh

No doubt, pure belief in Allah is needed by every man and woman in order to be regarded as a worthy spouse, as we are commanded in the Holy Qur’an regarding the prohibition of marriage with the *Mushrik* men and *Mushrik* women.

“Do not marry women who associate [others with God] until they believe. A believing maid is better than an associ-

ating woman, no matter how attractive she may seem to you. Do not let [your daughters] marry men who associate [others with God] until the latter believe; a believing slave is better than an associator, no matter how attractive he may seem to you. Those people invite (one) to the Fire while God invites (us) to the Garden and to forgiveness through His permission. He explains His signs to mankind in order that they may bear them in mind.” Al-Baqarah: 221

“Bad women are for bad men, and bad men are for bad women; while good women are for good men and good men are for good women. The latter are absolved from anything they may say; they will have forgiveness and generous provision.” Al-Nur: 26

In this connection, it is also worth mentioning that the Infallible (AS) have also advised their followers to choose spouses from among chaste, good-tempered people, because children will inherit the



same. Also there is a Hadith saying that children are basically the products of their mothers.

Hence the significance of having a virtuous spouse becomes apparent and of equal significance is the behaviour of parents in the family environment, since children markedly tend to imitate their parents. In the Holy Qur'an, those who are faithful and have children who follow them in faith are promised Divine rewards thus.

*"We shall unite those who believe and whose offspring have followed them in faith with their offspring. We will not deprive them of any action of theirs in any way; each man is a pledge for whatever he has earned."* Al-Tur: 21

The seventh Infallible Imam, Imam al-Kazim(AS), has also been quoted: "Good conduct by parents can have very good impressions on their children."

Likewise, Imam al-Sajjad (AS) has addressed parents thus: "One of your children's rights upon you is that you should know that they are from you and their goodness and/or badness will be related to you, and that it is your duty to guide them towards worship of and obedience to Allah. And so endeavor to educate them properly, keeping in mind the fact that you will be rewarded for the good actions they do and that if you mislead or mistreat them, you will be punished by Allah for that." A very outstanding example in this regard is that of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and his son - Prophet Ism'ail



(AS). According to the Holy Qur'an, Prophet Ibrahim (AS) was himself a true Believer in the One God and a truth-seeking man of faith.

*"Abraham formed a community that was devoted to God since he was righteous and was no associator; grateful for His favours, He chose and guided him to a Straight Road."* Al-Nahl: 120, 121

Educated by such a faithful, virtuous father, Prophet Ism'ail(AS) exhibited the best example of devotion to God and became a great aide for his father in his efforts to serve God.

*"Thus Abraham along with Ism'ail laid the foundations for the House; 'Our Lord, accept this from us! Indeed You are the Alert, the Aware!'"* Al-Baqarah: 127

Prophet Ism'ail(AS) followed

in the footsteps of his revered father - Prophet Ibrahim(AS) and called all, including his own offsprings to the worship of Allah and obedience to Him.

*"He used to order his people to pray and [pay] the welfare tax; he was approved by his Lord."* Maryam: 55

Regarding commentaries on the above verse, it has been held that according to the Holy Qur'an, to preach the religion, one should start from her/his own family and that is why the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam started the propagation of his Divine mission from his own near relatives and as we know his esteemed wife, Her Holiness Khadija(SA) was the first woman and his cousin, His Holiness Imam Ali(AS) was the first man (very young then) to believe in his Divine Mission.

And of course, all Divine





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Likewise, Imam al-Sajjad (AS) has addressed parents thus: “One of your children’s rights upon you is that you should know that they are from you and their goodness and/or badness will be related to you, and that it is your duty to guide them towards worship of and obedience to Allah.

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Messengers (AS) have themselves set the best examples of piety and Godliness, though the disbelievers would stubbornly reject them. It should also be noted that according to the Holy Qur’an there were some who claimed that they

were following in the footsteps of their forefathers and so saw no reason to believe in the religion of God and in God’s Messengers(AS):

*“Whenever they are told: ‘Come to what God has sent down, and to [hear] the Messenger, they say: ‘We are satisfied with what we found our forefathers doing.’ even though their forefathers did not know anything and were not guided!’”* Al-Ma’idah: 104

*“Whenever they are told: ‘Follow whatever God has sent down,’ they say: ‘Rather we follow what we found our forefathers doing.’ Even though Satan has been inviting them to the torment of the Blaze?”* Luqman: 21

So, besides being careful about our own piety, we have to care for and endeavour towards the piety of our family members, first and then of course the other people, as in the Holy Qur’an we read that Allah has commanded His Messenger to order his family to perform *Salaat*.

*“Order your household to pray and to discipline themselves by means of it. We do not ask you for any provision; yet We will provide for you, and the outcome rests on doing your duty.”* Ta-Ha: 132

*“My dear son, keep up prayer, command what is proper and forbid dishonour. Endure patiently whatever may afflict you; for that shows determination in [handling] matters.”* Luqman: 17

To follow Islam – Allah’s way has been the advice constant-

ly given by all Divine Messengers to the last moments of their lives, as we read in the Holy Qur’an that Prophet Ibrahim(AS) and Prophet Y’aqub(AS) addressed their offsprings, thus: “

*“Abraham commissioned his sons with it [as a legacy], and [so did] Jacob: ‘My sons, God has selected your religion for you. Do not die unless you are Muslims.’”* Al-Baqarah: 132

And about the Infallible Imams (AS) we also read similar preaching. As a very noteworthy example here, we can cite the words addressed by the Commander of the believers - Imam Ali (AS) to his sons when His Holiness was in bed, (as a result of the fatal blow of the sword of a hypocrite) and going through the last hours of his blessed life: “I advise you to fear Allah, to avoid love of this world, to speak the truth and to work for Allah. I advise you, all my offsprings and family and also all those who get informed of this last will of mine to fear Allah, to be careful and orderly in your life and regarding your duties and to be at peace and to make peace among yourselves.” *Nahjul-Balaghah*

The significance of being mindful of our duties towards our Omnipresent Creator - Allah, including performance of *Salaat* and paying *Zakaat* and also the necessity of avoiding attachment to worldly attractions can best be learnt from these Divine words of guidance. May Allah guide all of us to His Path.

# QUR'ANIC DISCUSSION AMONG FOLLOWERS OF VARIOUS ISLAMIC SECTS

Dr. Sayyed Abdul-Qader Husseini

Dialogues and discussions are no doubt effective ways of getting informed about various thoughts, beliefs and viewpoints and finding the correct reasonable ones among them. Also, according to the Islamic Commands on unity and solidarity among Muslims, properly-guided dialogues and discussions should take place among them for bringing them closer together. The aim followed by all in this regard needs to be finding facts and if this aim is followed, we can hope for Allah's help and guidance, as the Holy Qur'an says: "...who listen to the Statement and follow the best in it. Those are the ones whom God has guided; those are prudent persons." Al-Zumar, 18

To fulfil the Qur'anic objective of creating and strengthening unity among world Muslims and defending their rights, the role of knowledgeable Muslim thinkers and their united effort is of the utmost significance, since they can present truly effective and useful ways as opposed to the reactionary Western models. Through such positive communication, we should strive towards presenting comprehensive plans and programs for making our societies truly

religious-Qur'anic ones, as propounded and desired by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) of Islam. In this direction, it is necessary to push secularism as well as pseudo-religious thoughts towards isolation on one hand and strive towards fighting against the poverty faced by some Muslim countries due to capitalistic trends (imposed upon them), replacing the same with creativity, and progress in every respect, while guarding the Islamic principles on the other.

And only then we will be able to see the fruits of unity, understanding and cooperation; justice, the rule of Divine law and the realization of the Qur'anic view of the model Ummah - the united Qur'anic Ummah. Regarding the significance of dialogue and communication out of pure, humane motives, let's read this Hadith from Imam Ali (AS): "Let various thoughts face each other so the correct one will be brought out from among them." Certainly, dialogues and discussions should be based upon motives of seeking the truth and presenting the truth and should not include any other motives, such as overcoming the other party for pride. In the

Holy Qur'an, we read: "Say: 'People of the Book, [let us] rally to a common formula to be binding on both us and you, that we shall worship only God [Alone] and associate nothing else with Him, nor shall any of us take on others as lords instead of God.' If they should turn away, then say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.'" Al-i 'Imran, 64

Another signif-





icant manner to be observed by Muslims while talking together and discussing is to avoid any derogatory, ambiguous expressions and also to avoid anger and harsh manner of speaking as Imam Ali (AS) has stressed that severe anger prevents one from conveying in a logical way what he means to say and hinders understanding. Obviously, Muslims with the spirit of accepting the truth will gain much through discussions. In this connection, let's read parts of the words addressed by Imam Ali (AS) – during his Caliphate - to the people: "Never imagine that hearing the truth is hard for me,

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Certainly, dialogues and discussions should be based upon motives of seeking the truth and presenting the truth and should not include any other motives, such as overcoming the other party for pride.

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because the one for whom hearing the truth is hard, acting upon the truth and the administration of justice will be harder for him.....”

Accordingly, Islam approves of applying wise - manners in inviting the people to the way of Allah, *“Invite [people] to your Lord's way with discretion and kindly instruction, and discuss [things] with them in the politest manner. Your Lord is quite Aware as to who has strayed from His path, just as He is quite Aware of those who have consented to be guided.”* The Holy Qur'an; al-Nahl, 125

These Divine guidelines

surely urge one to heed totally monotheistic viewpoints, to abide by pure religious values and to focus on the beliefs shared by all Muslims in their discussions. The fact that we Muslims all believe in the Holy Qur'an, pray in the same direction and feel duty-bound to obey Prophet Muhammad(P-BUH) and the Ahlul-Bait (AS), to follow their manners and to observe Islamic brotherhood among ourselves undoubtedly lead to great success in truth-seeking talks: *“The ones who came after them say: ‘Our lord, forgive us and our brethren who have preceded us in faith, and do not place any rancor in our hearts concerning those who believe. Our Lord, You are Compassionate, Merciful!’*” The Holy Qur'an; al-Hashr, 10

The Hajj rituals believed in and attended by the world Muslims should certainly be regarded as a great occasion for promoting Islamic unity and brotherhood, and for removing differences. This is indeed a great duty and should be fulfilled by Muslims.

Also, according to the Holy Qur'an, we believe that human beings have been granted honour by Allah and likewise Allah desires them to live honourable lives and do honourable deeds, and that human beings need guidance, otherwise they will be losers as we read in chapter 103 of the Holy Qur'an, *“By ‘Asr, everyman [is indeed] at a loss except for those who believe, perform honourable deeds, encourage*



*Truth, and recommend patience."*

In all these sublime efforts, the principle of *Taqwa* (piety, guarding against evil, being careful about one's duties to Allah and about Allah's commands and prohibitions) should be constantly kept in mind and acted upon, so the desirable fruits of unity, brotherhood and Islamic proximity will be attained and more significantly, so Allah's Pleasure be achieved. Certainly, sincerity of intention is a must for the achievement of these lofty ideals. According to the Holy Qur'an, *Taqwa* is commanded, desired and honoured by Allah and so greatly rewarding, as we read in chapter 20 verse 132, chapter 49 verse 13, and chapter 29 verse 69.

To observe Islamic manners and politeness while meeting and talking to the people has also been taught in the Holy Qur'an: "Whenever those who believe in Our signs come to you, Say: 'Peace be upon you! Your Lord has prescribed mercy for Himself so He will be Forgiving, Merciful to any of you who commits evil out of ignorance, then repents later on and reforms.'" Al-An'am, 54

And in the same vein, we are advised by the Holy Qur'an against making fun of the others, against insulting, finding fault with or slandering the others, as we read in chapter 49 verse 11, chapter 104 verse 1 and chapter 68 verse 11.

Certainly arrogance is below the dignity of a Muslim, since it is a vice and according to the

Holy Qur'an arrogance has been the cause of the fall of *Iblis* (chapter 16, verse 29). Also, according to the Holy Qur'an, slander is a grave sin (45: 7).

So, we as Muslims should always remember and act upon the Qur'anic injunctions, including the following: "Invite [people] to your Lord's way with discretion and kindly instruction, and discuss [things] with them in the politest manner. Your Lord is quite Aware as to who has strayed from His path, just as He is quite Aware of those who have consented to be guided." The Holy Qur'an; al-Nahl, 125

Justice and benevolence have also been emphasized in the Holy Qur'an, "God commands justice, kindness and giving [their due] to near relatives, while He forbids sexual misconduct, debauchery and insolence. He so instructs you (all) so that you may draw attention to it." al-Nahl, 90

And in chapter 42 verse 15 we read, "Therefore appeal

*[to them] and keep straight on just as you have been ordered to; do not follow their whims, and say [instead]: 'I believe in whatever God has sent down [in the form of] a Book, and have been commanded to deal justly with you (all). God is our Lord as well as your Lord. We have our actions while you have your actions; no quarrel exists between us and you. God will bring us (all) together; towards Him lies the goal!'"*

For being a good speaker and being a good listener, reading these verses of the Holy Qur'an will surely be very beneficial 2: 83, 39: 18, 42: 38. And in chapter 33 verse 23 of the Holy Qur'an we read about those who stand by their word: "Some believers are men who are sincere in what they pledge to God, while others have already fulfilled their duty, and still others are waiting [their chance]; they have not changed in the least...." obviously Islam does not approve of aggressive behavior, (2: 190 and 299, 50: 2 and 87, 7: 55) and urges the believers to fight against aggressors and repel their evil, yet in the case of the undesirable words of the ignorant people, Muslims are advised by the Holy Qur'an to be tolerant: ".... and the Mercy- giving's servants walk modestly on Earth and peacefully say: 'How do you do!' whenever ignorant men address them;..." al-Furqan, 63

And while Islam desires peaceful-coexistence among Muslims and also with the

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Certainly arrogance is below the dignity of a Muslim, since it is a vice and according to the Holy Qur'an arrogance has been the cause of the fall of *Iblis*

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non-Muslims, Islam also prohibits Muslims from befriending the enemies of Islam; (4: 139, 3: 28 and 188, 5: 57 and 80 and 81, 9: 23, 58: 14 and 22, 60: 1 and 9 and 13).

To be forgiving towards each other is no doubt of the utmost significance in Islam, as we are taught by the Holy Qur'an: *"Since they broke their covenant, We have cursed them and planted a hard shell over their hearts. They lift words out of their context and have forgotten a portion of what they should have memorized. Except for a few of them, you will always catch some of them committing some act of treachery. Yet pardon them and overlook it; God loves those who act kindly."* Al-M'aidah, 13

And as we know, Islam is for all human beings, of whatever race, colour, or nation, and as per Allah's Command, human beings should avoid racial, ethnic prejudices, and discriminations since the whole humanity is of the same ori-

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To be forgiving towards each other is no doubt of the utmost significance in Islam

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gin; *"We created man from an extract of clay; ...."* The Holy Qur'an; al-Mu'minun, 12

*"Among His signs are the creation of Heaven and Earth, as well as the diversity in your tongues and colors. In that are signs for those who know."* al-Rum, 22

*"O mankind, We have created you from a male and female, and set you up as nations and tribes so you may recognize [and cooperate with] one another. The noblest among you*

*with God is that one of you who best performs his duty; God is All-Aware, All-Knowing."* The Holy Qur'an; al-Hujurat, 13

Needless to say, human history has witnessed numerous cases of prejudices against peoples of other colors, races and ethnic groups, whereas Allah has through His Messengers(AS) declared that to Him all human beings are equal and superiority to Him lies just in the degree of their piety. It has been narrated that during his last Hajj (*Hajjatul-Wid'ah*) Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "O people! Truly you have been created by the same God, you are the offsprings of the same parents and there is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor is there any superiority for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for a black over a white, nor for a white over a black unless due to *Taqwa*(piety)." And then His Holiness has stated: "Truly Allah does not regard your family-tree, nor your bodies,





nor your possessions, and rather He regards your hearts.... and to Allah the dearest of you is the most pious one."

To convey, understand and practice Islam, learning the Arabic language is obviously significant, especially since the Holy Qur'an is in Arabic and also Islamic ritual prayers are in the Arabic language. Thus any effort in this regard is indeed not only necessary, but greatly rewarding since the Muslim Ummah, is according to the Holy Qur'an (9:110) the best Ummah, bidding the good and forbidding the evil and believing in Allah: *"Keep up prayer and pay the welfare tax; you will find any good you have sent on ahead for your own souls' sake is already [stored up] with God. God is Observant of whatever you do."* Al-Baqarah, 110

To conclude, the Islamic Ummah is duty-bound to follow Islamic teachings and convey the same to the others through the proper manners propounded in the Holy Qur'an and by Allah's Messengers (AS) and the Infallible Imams (AS). This duty has today gained greater significance, since Muslims the world over are faced with various problems, attacks and dividing plots and so their unity is needed much more than ever before. Today Muslim thinkers should unite under the banner of Islam, remove disputes and present the best model of brotherhood and Islamic cooperation to the world.

We all need to guard our Islamic culture; Islamic identity and Islamic lands against the aggressors and no doubt Islamic dialogue, gatherings and brotherly communications are needed by us most in fulfilling this responsibility.



# PROMOTION OF QUR'ANIC ACTIVITIES BY THE QUR'AN AND ETRAT DEPARTMENT

In view of the significance of the promotion of Qur'anic activities, the authorities of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance have made efforts towards the better fulfillment of that sacred goal. In this connection the following programs have been presented:

1- Particular attention to the subject of "Qur'an and Etrat" as a major mission for the department, covering:

- To sponsor and collaborate in organizing short-term courses on the teachings of Ahlul-Bait (AS) in a number of provinces,
- To plan for each province of the country, to particularly focus on the teachings of the Infallible (AS) and religious leaders in cooperation with other Tabliqi, research and scientific institutions. The Khorasan province will work particularly on the teachings of Imam Reza(AS), Zanjan on Her Holiness Zeinab(SA) and the ceremonies called the glory of patience, Hormozgan on the teachings of Imam al-Sajjad(AS) and the city of Qum on teachings of Her Holiness M'asumeh (SA).

2- Launching sites (cyberspace) for Qur'anic teachings and the teachings of Etrat:

- Production of electronic Qur'anic programmes (for use on cell-phones),
- Production of electronic games for children and youngsters,
- Production of short Qur'anic clips.

3- Formation and revival of expert workshops and committees

on various fields for the elevation of expert knowledge:

- Setting up committees for qualitative development, attended by experts in Qur'anic and Etrat knowledge,
- Revival of workshops for reviewing translation of the Holy Qur'an.

4- Strengthening the two new fields of work through Qur'anic and Etrat activities:

- An advisor for the international relations,
- An advisor for electronic activities and teachings.

5- Expansion of cooperation with IRIB and specialized departments in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance:

- Radio of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting,
- TV Networks
- The Cinema Organization,
- Digital Media Center,
- Cultural Department,
- Artistic Department.

6- Expansion of mutual cooperation with public institutions active in the field of Qur'an and Etrat:

- Visiting the institutions,
- Making reports on the related activities,
- Paving the ground for cooperation among institutions in certain activities of the department, including the International Qur'an Exhibition in Tehran and in other cities, and the Ramadan feast and so on.

7- Expansion of studies and researches on Tabligh and spread-

ing knowledge of the Holy Qur'an and Etrat through:

- Holding specialized sessions on theoretical and applied themes and presenting cultures on special themes such as Qur'anic literature, methods of spreading Qur'anic knowledge, presentation of Qur'anic stories through arts, spreading Qur'anic knowledge through cinema, presenting methods for teaching Qur'anic lifestyle and methods for making Qur'anic films.

8- Attracting public participation for the promotion of the Qur'anic and Etrat activities through public corporation plans; such as the nation-wide plan called 'Ofiq' means horizon, to present copies of the Holy Qur'an for the promotion of the Qur'anic culture.

9- Supporting the formation and expansion of Qur'anic and religious institutions for children and youngsters.

10- Qualitative promotion of the International Qur'an Exhibition and creating grounds for the co-operation of public organizations and Qur'anic centers there:

- Strengthening the international section,
- Inviting Qur'anic authorities, teachers and artists to participate in the activities related to the exhibition and presenting new works,
- Making use of provincial capabilities for the promotion of the exhibition.

Dear youth! I have the hope that you- now or in the future- can change this mentality corrupted by duplicity, a mentality whose highest skill is hiding long-term goals and adorning malevolent objectives.

The military invasions of the Islamic world in recent years- with countless victims- are another example of the contradictory logic of the West. The assaulted countries, in addition to the human damage caused, have lost their economic and industrial infrastructure, their movement towards growth and development has been stopped or delayed and in some cases, has been thrown back decades. Despite all this, they are rudely being asked not to see themselves as oppressed. How can a country be turned into ruins, have its cities and towns covered in dust and then be told that it should please not view itself as oppressed? Instead of enticements to not understand and to not mention disasters, would not an honest apology be better? The pain that the Islamic world has suffered in these years from the hypocrisy and duplicity of the invaders is not less than the pain from the material damage.

Dear youth! I have the hope that you- now or in the future- can change this mentality corrupted by duplicity, a mentality whose highest skill is hiding long-term goals and adorning malevolent objectives. In my opinion, the first step in creating security and peace is reforming this violence-breeding mentality. As long as double-standards dominate western policies, as long as terrorism- in the view of its powerful supporters- is divided into “good” and “bad” types, and as long as governmental interests are given precedence over human values and ethics, the roots of violence should not be searched for in other places.

Sayyid Ali Khamenei

