

The Qur'an

Arabic with a Translation in Easy American English

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Dedicated with love
To the memory of
My parents and grandparents
and
Shaikh Mohammed Nazim al Haqqani al Qibrisi



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Preface

BismillahirRahmanir Rahim

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

At the break of dawn, around the globe, more than 1.7 billion men and women, representing one in four of all human beings on this planet, are called to prayer. Among them are Americans and Indians, Russians and Nigerians, Indonesians and Chinese, Africans and Europeans, young and old, men and women. Those who respond recite a few passages from a common Book, glorifying the Name of God, celebrating His munificence and reaffirming the brotherhood of man. The opening recitation is the same whether you pray in Casablanca or Hong Kong, New York or Delhi. The Book that contains the recitations is the Qur'an.

The Qur'an is not an ordinary Book. It is a luminescent Lamp that radiates Light. It is Guidance. It is self-sustained eloquence where the Word is bigger than itself. It is the Voice from the Heavens, the Word of God.

It is with the utmost humility that I have attempted a translation of the Qur'an. It is an honor that Divine Mercy bestows upon a select few and those who do make this attempt dive into an infinite ocean of spiritual bliss that transforms them, overwhelms them and leaves them thoroughly exhausted yet completely satiated.

The Qur'an just cannot be translated. Its variegated meaning, elliptical passages, subtlety and grandeur do not lend themselves to a translation into another language. The Awliyah (sages) have said that every Word of the Qur'an has forty thousand meanings. Each word is like a diamond that shines in different colors under different wavelengths. You see in it what you can perceive and what you feel is limited only by the capacity of your heart to absorb it. As stated by the Qur'an:

Say: "If the ocean were ink
For (writing) the Words of my Rabb (Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher),
Then, the ocean will be exhausted before the Words of my Rabb are completed,
Even if We bring another ocean to help it." (18:109)

As to what one understands of the Divine Word is ultimately a reflection of the Grace of God upon one's heart. In addition, each language is culture bound. English, a modern language with a rich scientific and technical vocabulary, is different from the classical languages like Sanskrit, Arabic, Hebrew, Latin and Greek. Even these classical languages reflect their own historical, linguistic and cultural roots. Those who wish to study the Qur'an and feel its Divine vibrations must therefore hear, read and understand it in the Arabic language.

That said, Muslim scholars have through the ages, considered it an honor to attempt a translation of the Qur'an. There are many excellent translations in English that have appeared over the last century. Those of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Mohammed Asad, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Marmaduke Pkthall and others are read by millions. A recent literal translation into Urdu by MolviNazarAhmed is also noteworthy. Noble as each effort is, each translation reflects the understanding of its author and suffers from the human and cultural limitations of each scholar.

The current translation was done over a period of three years between 2007 and 2010 although some of this work dates back to 1972. It is distinguished by the following characteristics:

- ♦ It is done in easy to understand American English
- ♦ It stays true to the literal meaning of the Arabic words
- ♦ It attempts to bring out the universal, loving appeal of the Quran.

I have used some of the Arabic vocabulary of the Qur'an as is. For instance, Allah is used throughout the translation instead of the English word God. While God can be written as god, the plural of which is gods, the word Allah has retained its pristine purity referring to the One God and cannot be manipulated into singular and plural. The message of the Qur'an is strictly monotheistic. Rabb is another word that defies translation. It means Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher. The word Ummah is so often mistranslated as nation. There is no connotation of nationality in the Qur'an. The message of the Qur'an transcends nationality, color, origin, time or locale. Ummah must be translated most appropriately as a community that has reached a certain stage of spiritual development. For instance, Christians, Jews, and Muslims may each be categorized as an Ummah although I am keenly aware that each one is now divided into multiple sects. The Prophet Abraham is referred to in the Qur'an as an Ummah of one.

How to read the Qur'an and listen to it.

The prerequisite to reading the Qur'an is a sound heart (qalb e saleem). A pot must be empty before milk can be poured into it. Similarly, a heart must approach the Divine Word like a mendicant before it can receive wisdom from it. Every person, whether he is a sophisticated urbanite from San Francisco or a bushman from New Guinea, can partake of the blessings of the Qur'an. However, a person with an unblemished heart can reach heights of spiritual ecstasy that those with a constricted heart can barely imagine. I once visited an exhibition of ancient manuscripts of the Qur'an at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. In one of the displayed manuscripts, the scribe was so overwhelmed by a single word as he was writing it that he filled the entire page with it.

The Qur'an is not like an ordinary book. It is not like a book of history with a sequence of events from the beginning to the end. It is a collection of Symbols and the language is oracular. Each Word of the Quran is like a bolt of lightning that manifests the vista around it and all the vistas are organically integrated in a grand scheme that defies the imagination. Each collection of words is a Symbol and is called an Ayah (also pronounced as Ayat, meaning, a Symbol or Verse). Each verse stands on its own but it is also set in a wider context of the verses preceding it or following it, and the social and historical times in which it was revealed. It is important, therefore, to know the context of a verse. All of the Ayahs (Symbols) are woven together like a diamond studded canvas vaulting the heavens from horizon to horizon. Hence every word, every verse and every chapter must also be viewed in the context of the universal message of the Qur'an that is addressed to all humankind.

Most Muslim children start with the memorization of a few short Surahs (chapters). Just about every Muslim child knows Surah al Fateha (The opener of hearts -Chapter 1) and Surah al Ikhlas (Sincerity and Purity of Faith- Chapter 112) by heart. Some memorize the

entire Qur'an and become Hafizun (those who have memorized the Qur'an) and Qura' (those who recite the Qur'an). There are millions of people in countries as diverse as Morocco and Malaysia, the United States and Turkey, India and Indonesia, Russia and China who know the Qur'an by heart. Thus the Word of God is engraved in the hearts of the people of faith and is passed on from generation to generation.

Even those not familiar with the faith of Islam can enjoy a good recitation of the Qur'an from a well known classical Qari (reciter) such as Abdel Basit of Egypt. The recitation of the Qur'an is both an art and a science. The vibrations of the Word resonate with the soul, and for those who understand it, bring tears of joy from their hearts.

The Essential Message of the Qur'an

The faith to which the Qur'an invites is simple and straightforward:

“La ilahail Allah; Muhammed Rasool Allah”

(There is none worthy of worship except God; Muhammed is the Messenger of God).

The first part is both a negation and an affirmation. It can also be translated as: “There is no reality but the Reality”. It negates the divinity of any created matter. The affirmation takes the heart to the Reality that transcends that creation. Muhammed (peace be upon him) is affirmed as the Messenger through whom that Reality was reasserted.

This is not a new message. It is the pristine message of all Prophets. The Qur'an affirms this again and again and emphasizes the continuity of the Divine Word. The names of many of the Messengers – Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammed (peace be upon them) – are explicitly stated in the Qur'an. The names of countless others are alluded to but are not spelled out. In this manner, the Qur'an upholds the Unity of all universal religions.

This pristine Faith is natural and inborn. The Qur'an asserts that all humankind, in its spiritual state, stood before the Creator and He asked them: “Arastu bi Rabbikum” (Am I not your Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher?). They answered in unison “Bala’”. A translation of Bala' is “Indeed, thou art” but it can also be translated as “Indeed, we accept the affliction or burden or trust”. Thus was established a bond, a covenant, a contract between the Creator and humankind. This covenant, and the knowledge thereof, was a trust that humankind accepted, audaciously. It was a trust that none of the other creation had the temerity or the capacity to accept. In the words of Rumi, that grand master of rhyme and spirituality of the thirteen century, humankind did so “because it was drunk with the love of God” This sublime idea is expressed in the Qur'an:

I offered the Trust to the heavens and the mountains and the earth.

They declined it, being afraid thereof.

But humankind accepted it.

Indeed (humankind) knew not what it was undertaking and was foolish. (33:72-73)

With this covenant, humankind dwelt for eons in the Spiritual Gardens, in the presence of Divine Grace. But there is a weaker side to humankind which listens to the whisperings of Shaitan (Satan). Man has a free will. He chooses. He acts. Sometimes his choice and his actions do lead him away from Divine Grace. Thus it was that mankind disobeyed the Divine Command and was hurled into the test of life, caught in a perpetual struggle between right and wrong, justice and injustice, truth and falsehood.

The Qur'an asserts that humankind was created in the most noble of molds. Man was infused with the Spirit. With the Spirit come life, knowledge and power. The highest knowledge is the awareness of the Divine Names. Man was taught the Divine Names. This knowledge distinguishes humankind from all other creation. Hence he is referred to as the khalifa(trustee) of God on earth.

But the weakness of man pulls him down from the noble and lofty station that God bestowed on him. The Qur'an expresses it thus:

Behold! We create the human in the most noble of molds

Then do We reduce him to the lowest of the low (95:4-5)

Man, through his own weakness, becomes susceptible to his dark side, and abases himself so low that instead of being the Trustee of God, ruling all that is between the heavens and the earth, he becomes the slave of what is created and falls to be the lowest of the low.

Despite the enormity of human folly, the Mercy of God does not abandon him. Divine Grace far outweighs Divine wrath. God is always close to His supplicants:

And behold! We created the human,
And We know what whisperings there are in his soul,
And We are closer to him than his jugular vein. (50:16)

Divine Mercy intervenes again and again through the stage of history to remind humankind about its covenant with the Divine. God sends Messengers to remind humankind of their noble origin and their noble destiny and to warn them of the pain and punishment that accrue from cutting oneself off from Divine Grace. The last of the Messengers was Muhammed (peace be upon him).

God is He, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Loving, the Eternal, the Sublime

Allah is known by His Most Beautiful Names (Asma ul Husna). The knowledge of these Names is bestowed upon men and women with the Spirit that God breathes into every human being at birth. The Qur'an describes 99 Names of God. In the Arabic language, each Name is a noun, an adjective and adverb. It is at once a description and an attribute. The great Awliyah (sages loved by Allah) have said that Allah has an infinite number of Names, some are known, some not known. The Sufi Shaykhs say that Allah has 3000 Names. (The number 3000 has no special meaning, except as a method of teaching wisdom). They say that 2000 Names were revealed before the time of Moses, 900 Names were revealed before the time of Jesus, 99 Names are in the Qur'an and the Greatest Name (al Ism ul A'zam) is not known to anyone. It is known only to Himself and is hidden from all creation. The essence of faith in God is to be found in Surah al Ikhlas (Chapter 112, the Chapter on Purity or Sincerity of Faith):

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Say: He is Allah, the One;
Allah is Sufficient unto Himself
He does not beget, nor is He begotten;
And there is none like unto Him.(112:1-4)

Allah is He,
 Other than Whom there is none worthy of worship—
 The Sovereign,
 The Holy,
 The Source of Peace,
 The Giver of Faith,
 The Guardian of Truth,
 The Mighty,
 The Irresistible,
 The Owner of Greatness!
 Glorified be Allah,
 Transcendent is He over what they ascribe to Him!
 Allah is He,
 The Creator,
 The Originator,
 The Creator of Form and Color,
 His are the Most Beautiful Names;
 All that is in the heavens and the earth extols Him,
 And He is the Mighty, the Wise! (59:23-24)

For those not familiar with the Qur'an, I have documented the 99 Names as revealed in the Qur'an at the end of this introduction. One set of meanings is provided and the reader will note that each Name has an infinite number of meanings.

The Ascent of Faith towards the Divine

Several terms are used in the Qur'an to describe men and women of faith. These terms include Muslim, Momin, A'rif, Mohsin, Muhibbin, Muttaqi, Faqir and Fana. A certain clarification of terminology may help the reader.

Who is a Muslim?

A Muslim is one who has surrendered his own will to the Will of God. He has conquered his own ego and made it subservient to the service of the Divine. He follows the commandments of God, which include

- ◆ Faith in God, His Books, His Messengers, His Angels and the Day of Judgment
- ◆ Prayer
- ◆ Charity
- ◆ Fasting
- ◆ Performance of the pilgrimage to Mecca (to assert the brotherhood of all men and women) for those who are capable and who can afford it.

But piety does not stop here. Indeed, prayer, charity and fasting are just the beginning of piety. The Qur'an asserts: "Above every knower there is one who knows more". Thus the Qur'an offers the existential possibility of an endless ascent of man towards the presence of God. A well known scholar of the tenth century, al Tarmidhi, in his treatise on the heart and its spiritual stations, Bayan al Farq ma bayn al Sadr wa al Qalb, wa al Fuad, summarizes this ascent in seven stages.

- ♦ **A Muslim** is one who has faith and follows the commandments of God. This is the station of most men and women who do not advance to the next stage.
- ♦ **A Momin** not only has faith but has certainty of faith. This is the stage when the meaning of the Qur'an begins to dawn on the heart
- ♦ **A Mohsin** is one who has not only certainty of faith but is engaged in righteous action. He is the doer of Ehsan (beautiful deeds). About Ehsan, the Qur'an says this:

What is the recompense for Ehsan (good deeds) except Ehsan (goodness) itself? (55:60)

- ♦ **An A'rif** is a Mohsin who has attained the station of gnosis (gyan in Sanskrit). He not only has the knowledge of the Qur'an but comprehends its inner meanings and can witness the presence of God around him.
- ♦ The next station is that of **the Muhibbeen**. This is the station of love. At this station, a person has passed the station of gnosis and perceives the Love of God in all creation and reflects this love in his own actions.
- ♦ The next higher station is that of a **Faqir**. At this station, the lover of God realizes that all he has is a gift from God and that he/she is in utter need of God's Grace for his sustenance.
- ♦ The sixth station is that of **Fana** (annihilation). At this station, the seeker has completely overcome the transparency of all creation, including that of his own ego, and sees only the presence of God in all creation. The Qur'an expresses this state in these words:

Upon all that exists, there shall be annihilation

The Being of your Rabb, the Lord of majesty and bounty, shall endure (55:25-26)

- ♦ The last station is that of **Baqa**, namely awakening after annihilation. At this station, the heart of the seeker is blessed with the presence of God and it has become a reflector of Divine Grace. Such a heart, in turn, reflects that Grace to all those around him/her. Indeed it imparts that Grace to everything around him/her.

This is not the end of the quest but the beginning. The last station then becomes a first station in a spiral of endless ascent towards heaven. The station of the Prophets is the highest station, close to the throne of God. It is this quest that is ultimate goal of all sages through the ages. It is expressed in a beautiful allegory by Al Attar, a great scholar of the thirteenth century, in his book Mantiq al Tayr (The Conference of the Birds).

The Brotherhood (and sisterhood) of Humankind

Central to the teachings of the Qur'an is not just the Unity of God but also the brotherhood and sisterhood of humankind:

O humankind! Be aware of your Rabb

Who created you from a single soul

And created from it its mate

And from the two of them spread out countless men and women.

Be aware of Him in whose Name you ask (your mutual rights and responsibilities)

And (be aware of) the wombs (reminding you of your common origin).

Lo! Allah is watchful over you! (4:1)

Men and women have a common origin and seek their mutual rights and responsibilities through God. Womanhood, as the source of life, is accorded the highest honor.

Women are Honored

There is a great deal of misunderstanding about the position of women in Islam. Much of the responsibility for this misunderstanding is upon the Muslims themselves in as much as they have mixed up their cultures with the pristine teachings of their Faith.

The Qur'an affirms that men and women are equal partners in the quest for Divine pleasure:

“They (women) are your (spiritual) garments, and you (O men) are their (spiritual) garments.”

The honor of women is attested to by a hadith (saying) of the Prophet. Once, a Bedouin asked the Prophet what he should do to earn the pleasure of God. “Serve your mother”, replied the Prophet. “Then what should I do?”, asked the Bedouin a second time. “Serve your mother”, repeated the Prophet. The Bedouin continued, “Then what should I do?”. “Serve your mother”, replied the Prophet a third time. The Bedouin persisted and asked a fourth time, “Then what should I do?”. Only then did the Prophet say: “Serve your father”.

Man as Trustee

The Qur'an presents man as the Divine trustee, responsible for his own actions, with authority to manage the resources of the earth in accordance with Divine commands. Man is not an antagonist to nature as he is construed by modern man who exploits the earth with unbridled greed. In the Qur'an, nature, and all it has to offer, is a Divine trust that must be used only to know, serve and worship God. Protection of the environment is not just a legal obligation mandated by human authority but is a responsibility decreed by God. The resources of the earth, the environment, the air and the water, the plants, the animals and the minerals are gifts so that man may use them with balance, proportion and justice to create Divine patterns on God's earth.

Faith is Supported by Observation and Reason

It is not the body that contains the spirit; it is the spirit that surrounds the body many times over. The Qur'an appeals time and again to observe the phenomenon of nature and the grand movements of history to draw lessons from them and reinforce one's faith.

Faith in the absence of reason is blind. Faith supported by observation and reason is on a solid footing and elevates humankind towards the Truth. The edifice of knowledge in the Quran is supported by three pillars: sciences of the soul (ilm al Ishara), sciences of nature and sciences of man (ilm al Ibara) which include mathematics, logic, physics, chemistry, biology, history and sociology. There are Signs from Allah manifest in nature and in history. The Qur'an declares:

We shall show them Our Signs on the horizon (in nature and in history)
And within their own souls,

Until it is clear to them that it is indeed the Truth. (41:53)

The Qur'an as a Reminder

Humankind has a pristine covenant with God to know, serve and worship Him. Serving God means serving His creation. But man is forgetful. With time he becomes enamored of the life of this world and becomes heedless. He needs to be reminded time and again that life is a Divine gift for a fleeting moment, and that man must ultimately meet God and reconcile his deeds before Divine justice on the Day of Judgment. This is the essential Message of the Qur'an. Indeed, it is the essential message of all revealed books.

Nay! The (deceptive) impressions of the life of this world (have distracted you)
While the hereafter—that is better and it is everlasting,
This is indeed what is in the earliest Scriptures,
The Scriptures of Abraham and Moses. (87:16-19)

A Complete Way of Life

The primary message of the Qur'an is Unity of God and the Brotherhood of mankind. The goal of religion is a transformation of the Self so that it is liberated from itself and becomes God-focused. Towards this end, the Qur'an provides a complete code of ethics governing the relationship of the individual to the family, the society, and humanity at large. The governing paradigm for these relationships is justice. God is just. He commands justice to his votaries. God is also Merciful. He commands humankind to relate to each other with justice modulated by compassion, forgiveness, brotherhood, sisterhood, kindness, mutual support and love.

A Brief History

The Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammed (peace be upon him) approximately 1400 years ago between 610 CE and 632 CE in the land of Hejaz which includes the cities of Mecca and Medina. Arabia, at the time, was in the backwaters of history. Internecine quarrels were common. Girl babies were buried alive. Exploitation of man by fellow man was rampant. Man had forgotten his Divine regency and had fallen to be the lowest of the low.

Into this decadent social matrix was injected Prophet Muhammed. He would often retreat to a cave outside the city of Mecca for long nights to ponder on the condition of man. When he was forty years old, came the first revelation through the angel Gabriel:

Read! In the Name of you Sustainer, Who created,
Created the human from a fertilized ovum.
Read! By your Rabb, the most bountiful,
Who taught by the Pen,
Taught humankind what it knew not.
No! The human does indeed transgress,
When he looks upon himself as autonomous.
Indeed, towards your Sustainer is your return. (96:1-8)

The Message was pure and simple: Believe in One God, the Creator, Sustainer and Cherisher of all existence, and in the Brotherhood of man. This simple, pristine message was a direct financial and doctrinal threat to the power elite in Mecca who had built it into a financial and religious center for the caravans that traded between Yemen and

Damascus. The opposition took many forms. First , the Meccans disregarded the Message laughing it off as “tales of the ancients”. But as the Message spread, the opposition intensified. They called him a madman, then a poet and then offered him the kingship of Mecca and marriage to the most beautiful maiden of his choice. When even that failed, they plotted to kill him. The Prophet and his Companions escaped and migrated to Medina. It was the year 622 CE which marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar, the Al Hijra (AH).

From Medina, Prophet Muhammed sent out the Message of universal brotherhood to the tribes of Mecca and to the rulers of the Persian and Roman empires, the superpowers of the day. Not satisfied with the expulsion of the Prophet, the Meccans initiated hostilities, waging war on the nascent community of faith in Medina. In this struggle, the Meccans ultimately were vanquished and Arabia was unified under the single moral leadership of the Prophet.

In the succeeding centuries, traders, scholars and Sufi shaykhs took the Message of Islam to the far corners of the earth. For instance, Islam was introduced into India in the seventh century through the trading posts of Kerala in Southern India. The first mosque in South Asia is located at Kodungalolur located about 37 kilometers from Thrissur. It was built during the lifetime of the Prophet, in the year 628 CE, or the 7th year of al Hijra. In its architecture, it resembles a South Indian temple. Arguably, it is the second oldest mosque in the world,

Today, the faith of Islam is practiced in every corner of the globe. There are more than 1.7 billion Muslims in the world today, representing one quarter of the human race. Every seventh person in India is a Muslim.

The Qur'an should be read by every person not the least because the faith of Islam has a global impact on the culture, languages, history, ethics and politics of the world.

The Qur'an in its own words

Every word of the Qur'an is a fresh ray of light. Reading the Qur'an in its original Arabic is like satiating oneself from an infinite ocean of sweet water. Here we produce a few excerpts on specific subjects:

Faith backed up by righteous action is the basis of civilization

By (the Sign that is the passage of) Time,
Verily, humankind is indeed at a loss,
Except such as those who have certainty of faith,
And perform righteous deeds,
And enjoin upon one another Justice (and Truth),
And enjoin upon one another patience (and perseverance). (103:1-3)

Faith is reinforced by a rational and scientific approach to the study of nature

Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth,
In the contrast between night and day,
In the ships that sail the oceans (with merchandise) for the benefit of humankind;
And, in the rain that Allah brings down from the heavens,
And with it, gives life to a dead earth,

And the fauna of all kinds that it spreads,
And the winds that blow,
And the clouds that float, captured (by the winds)
Between the heavens and the earth,
There are Signs for a people who (observe, measure, and) reason. (2: 164)

Righteousness is not in rituals

Righteousness is not that you turn (your faces) towards the East or the West;
Righteousness is to believe in Allah and the Last Day,
The Angels and the Book and the Prophets,
And to spend your wealth for the love of Allah,
On your relatives and the orphans,
The wayfarer and the indigent,
And (to free) the slaves,
And to establish prayer and give charity,
To fulfill your contracts that you have entered into,
To be patient in adversity and trials and times of conflict.
Such are the people who are true,
And such are the ones who are conscious of the Divine. (2:177)

Charity is the foundation of piety

Those who give in charity by night and by day,
In secret and in the open,
For them is a reward from their Rabb;
There shall be no fear on them and they shall not grieve. (2:274)

Serve your parents and your neighbors

And serve your parents with excellent conduct,
And (serve) the near ones and the orphans and the needy,
And (serve) the neighbors who are close and the neighbors who are strangers,
And (serve) the people who associate with you,
And the wayfarer,
And those who are under your protection (prisoners of war).
Indeed, Allah does not love the boastful braggart. (4:36)

Friendship is Encouraged with Other Communities

Verily, Allah does not forbid you
From making friends,
Except with those who fought you in (matters of) Faith,
And expelled you from your homes,
And helped in your expulsion; (60:8)

Life has Sanctity

One who has saved one life is as if he has saved the life of all humankind
One who has taken one life is as if he has taken the life of all humankind

Uphold Justice

O you who have certainty of faith!
Be upholders of justice as witnesses before Allah
Even if it be against your own Selves
Or your parents
Or those near to you
Whether it be rich or poor,
For Allah wills goodness for both.
And follow not your desires, if you are just.
And if you hold back your tongue or excuse yourself,
then (know that) Allah is indeed aware of what you do. (4:135)

Avoid Corruption

And do not squander your wealth
Among yourselves, in false pretenses,
Or to influence judges (those in authority),
So that you criminally devour a portion of other people's wealth,
And you know it. (2:188)

The reader is invited to discover for himself/herself the beautiful vistas offered by the Qur'an.

I seek the forgiveness of the Almighty for my errors. And may He bless you, the reader,
with the Light of the Qur'an.

Prof. Dr. Nazeer Ahmed
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Concord, CA,
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December 1, 2010



About the Translator

NASA scientist, scholar, inventor, historian, legislator holds a PhD from Cornell University, USA, Ae E from the California Institute of Technology, MS also from California Institute of Technology, MBA from Rider University and a BE from the University of Mysore, India.

Nazeer Ahmed was born into a pious farming family in the state of Mysore, India, in 1939. His maternal grandfather Mohammed Uthman was the Imam of the masjid in Tyamagondalu, Bangalore District and a well-known Mufasssire Qur'an. His paternal grandfather Mohammed Ghouse was the Mutawalli of Mecca Masjid, Tumkur and a respected community leader. His father Abdul Azeem was a scholar of Arabic, Urdu and Farsi and the author of a book on Tibbe Nabawi.

Nazeer Ahmed received his early education in pre-partition Government Urdu schools. Among his early influencers was Molvi Abdul Quddus Qudsi who taught him Arabic, Qur'an recitation, Tajweed and Ta'weel and Urdu language. Ustad Abdul Qayyum, a veteran of the Second World War who had fought in the China-Burma-India theater taught history, and Ustad Abdul Qader taught mathematics.

Nazeer Ahmed secured the first rank in the State of Mysore among more than fifty thousand students in the public examination of 1952. He maintained his rank status throughout his career, studied classical texts, science and technology and in 1961 won a Tata fellowship to study rocket science at the renowned California Institute of Technology, USA.

In his scientific career, Dr Ahmed made contributions to the NASA lunar land rover, solid propellant rockets, fiber optics and space based infrared sensors. He was a chief engineer on the NASA Hubble Telescope during the years 1979-82. He holds 12 US patents and has published scores of scientific papers, including some presented before the US National Academy of Sciences. He served as an adjunct professor at the University of New Mexico and Chapman University. In 1978, he was an elected member of the Karnataka State Legislative Assembly. He served on the Karnataka State Knowledge Commission from 2013-19, whose mandate it was to transform that State into a knowledge-based society. He was the president of the World Organization for Resource Development and Education in Washington, DC in 2012. With his own resources, he built a number of schools, colleges, masjids and Eidgahs and has helped thousands of poor children under his Rank Nazeer Saab Charities. He wrote an Encyclopedia of Islamic History (www.historyofislam.com) coverage the history of Islam from the passing away of Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him) till the First World War. The two-volume series has been translated into Urdu, Farsi and Malayalam. His other works include a treatise on What Makes Us Human?

In the year 2000, he met and studied under the celebrated Shaikh Mohammed Nazim al Haqqani al Qibrisi of Cyprus and Turkiye of the distinguished Naqshbandi Order and travelled with him extensively through Turkey, Uzbekistan and South Africa. This translation of the Qur'an was inspired by the spiritual teachings of the illustrious Shaikh. It took seven years to complete, between 2003 and 2010 and was released by the Shahi Imam of Jamia Masjid, Bangalore, India in 2011.

The Qur'an is the Word of God revealed to Prophet Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him) in the Arabic language. It is a confirmation and summation of all the earlier revelations to Prophets through eons of history. It is a truism that the Qur'an cannot be translated. Every word, every hurf (letter), holds secret meanings that overwhelm you. Your body shudders as the jalal and jamal (majesty and beauty) infused in the Words descend on your heart. Nonetheless, scholars throughout the ages have made an attempt to transmit the divine message to non-Arabic speaking people.

Dr. Nazeer Ahmed brings to this effort a unique combination of scholarship in Classical Arabic, Urdu, English, History, Mathematics, Space Sciences and Public Affairs. The translation is distinguished as it

- i. stays true to the textual Arabic,
is presented in easy-to-understand modern American English,
- ii. captures the universal, spiritual and scientific nuances of the sublime text.

This work is presented to the reader with utmost humility and sincerity. It has been read by over 3 million readers worldwide, scholars and students alike, on the website historyofislam.com.

May God Almighty bless the reader and may He forgive us if there are any errors in this mighty task.