



Reality of the Film ‘Innocence of Muslims’ and Challenges of the Twenty First Century

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The foundation of Islam is the Qur’an, which is the final book revealed by Allah, and our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ¹, the Chosen One, is the practical interpretation and commentary of the Qur’an. In the first forty years of his life, the holy Prophet ﷺ became the Qur’an by practically demonstrating it; then in the last twenty three years, he recited the Qur’an by verbally proclaiming it. As such, he is the walking talking Qur’an.

Those opposed to Islam often attempt to vilify and bring Islam into disrepute by sometimes making the Qur’an the target of criticism and sometimes the Bearer of the Qur’an, the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The recent past has seen initially the satanic book of Salman Rushdie, then abusive cartoons in Denmark, and then the film ‘Fitna’ in the Netherlands, followed by insults towards the Qur’an in America and now again a blasphemous film in America. However, this is not a new issue; this phenomenon has continued since the past fourteen hundred years and this trend will continue until we, Muslims, progress in modern sciences including economics, media, science, and technology, in a united manner whilst acting upon the teachings of Islam.

The population of the Jews is less than fifteen million and they have only one small state (Israel); however, they are considered a civilised nation by virtue of them having progressed in modern sciences whilst remaining steadfast on their Jewish tradition, and criticising the Holocaust is firmly restricted. The population of Muslims, on the other hand, is more than one and a half billion and the number of their independent countries is more than fifty; however, due to weaknesses in Islamic values and modern sciences, they are regarded as terrorists, and there is complete freedom in criticising Islam.

*It is the decree, since eternity, of the judge of destiny;
Sudden demise is the price for the crime of frailty.*

¹ ﷺ: *salla ‘Llahu ‘alayhi wa sallam*, Allah bless him and grant him peace.

Although this film follows the very same pattern of tactics used over the past fourteen hundred years to dishonour and insult our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; nonetheless, this film has broken all previous records in dishonesty, deception and inaccuracies. Previous critics of Islam have attempted to misinterpret certain texts and sections by distorting and twisting them as well as taking them out of their original context. However, this film producer has gone further by giving air to baseless stories and has attributed such immoral, extreme, uncivilised, and savage traits to our beloved Prophet ﷺ which are a severe violation of human rights and resemble moral terrorism.

The background to the film

Just as the content of this film is worthy of objection, similarly, its background is also objectionable. The title of this film is 'Innocence of Muslims' and clips to the duration of about fourteen minutes from it were uploaded to YouTube in July 2012 with the original title 'Muhammad Movie Trailer'.

The film producer took the false name of 'Sam Bacile', but now he has been identified as Nakoula Basseley Nakoula who is an Egyptian-born Coptic Christian currently residing in California, America. He was imprisoned for bank fraud in the United States and then released in 2011. He has now been re-arrested; not because he produced a blasphemous film and in doing so caused heartbreak to one and a half billion Muslims; rather, because he violated the terms and conditions of his probation. The Judge has refused to release him on bail citing probation violations including lying and deception. It is also reported that the original name of the film was 'Desert Warrior' and the cast and crew who worked on the film have come out against it issuing a statement that they had been grossly misled; they had been tricked, lied to, and deceived by the producer as well as the film having been subject to drastic re-writes of the script as well as dubbing. One actress has even announced pursuing legal action against the producer.

The content of the film

This film is indeed horrible and atrocious. In it, a great Prophet of Allah and the very sacred and most beloved Prophet to the Muslims, the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, has been deliberately insulted.

A corrupt individual is depicted in the film who is powerful and wealthy. Due to his wealth, a father offers him his young daughter in marriage. He has numerous wives, yet he is immoral and has a girlfriend. He enjoys pleasure-seeking company with semi-naked women being in a half-clothed state himself. As a result, his wives are fed up with him and they beat him with slippers. He is a child molester meaning he abuses children. He is homosexual and a bastard meaning his father is unknown. The absurdity is that the film producer has attributed this corrupt character to our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Chosen One. We seek refuge with Allah from such evil.

In the past fourteen hundred years, not even a stern enemy has hurled such self-invented allegations at our beloved Prophet ﷺ. Although these scenarios and behaviours are present today in the Western culture, nonetheless, no civilised individual in the West will tolerate being

attributed with such words. Let alone using such inferior words for an individual as honest, trustworthy, innocent, and unique in the history of humankind as Muhammad ﷺ, the Chosen One. In actual fact, this is a reflection of the shoddy character and despicable thoughts of the film producer himself, which the more it is denounced, it will still be less.



REALISING THE HONOUR OF THE SUBLIME MESSENGER

After Allah, the most honourable and sacred entity within Islam is the personality of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Chosen One, and his respect is mandatory upon every Muslim. Consider the following aspects concerning reverence towards the holy Prophet ﷺ:

The holy Prophet's respect in light of the Qur'an

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَهِيدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا ﴿٨﴾ لَتُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ۚ وَتُعَزِّرُوهُ وَتُوَقِّرُوهُ وَتُسَبِّحُوهُ بُكْرَةً وَأَصِيلًا ﴿٩﴾

“Indeed We have sent you (Muhammad) as a bearer of witness, and as a giver of glad tidings, and as a warner of punishment. So that you all believe in Allah and His Messenger, and you revere him and honour him, and you glorify Allah in the morning and the evening.” (*Qur'an* 48:8-9)²

The holy Prophet's respect in light of prophetic traditions (ahadith)

Abu Sa'id b. ³ al-Mu'alla [*ra*⁴] relates that the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ passed by him when he was praying. The holy Prophet ﷺ called him, so he firstly completed his prayer (*salat*) and then went to him. The holy Prophet ﷺ asked, “What prevented you from coming to me?” He replied, “I was offering the prayer.” The holy Prophet ﷺ said, “Did Allah not say, ‘O you who believe! When Allah and His Messenger call you, then respond immediately; when Allah's Messenger calls you to that in which lies your life’ (*Qur'an* 8:24).”⁵

The Islamic jurist scholars have established from this verse and prophetic tradition (*hadith*) that when a person is offering the prayer and the holy Prophet ﷺ calls for him, it is necessary (*wajib*) for him to leave the prayer and present himself before the holy Prophet ﷺ. His prayer will not be nullified as this is also acting upon the command of Allah.⁶ Furthermore, forwarding salutations of peace (*salam*) to the holy Prophet ﷺ is part of the prayer itself, as each person whilst offering the prayer addressing the holy Prophet ﷺ says, “*Al-salamu 'alayka ayyuha al-nabi wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh* (peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah, and His blessings).”⁷

² *Qur'an*, Surat al-Fath (Chapter 48), Verses 8-9.

³ b: *ibn*, son of.

⁴ *ra*: *radiya 'Llahu anhu/anha*, Allah be pleased with him/her.

⁵ Abu Dawud (d. 275 AH), *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Book of al-Witr (8), Chapter 15, Hadith 1460.

⁶ Al-Alusi (d. 1270 AH), *Ruh al-Ma'ani fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim wa 'l-Sab' al-Mathani*, in the commentary of 8:24.

⁷ Al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH), *al-Khasa'is al-Kubra*, volume 2, page 253.

The holy Prophet's respect through the conduct of the Companions and the People of the Household

1. On the occasion of the Treaty of Hudaibiyyah, when 'Urwah b. Mas'ud returned to Makkah, he said to the Quraysh, "O my people! By God! I have taken delegations to many kings such as Caesar, Khusrao and al-Najashi (Negus). By God! I have not seen any such reverence for any king as the reverence that the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ have for Muhammad ﷺ. By God! Whenever he would spit, some Companion would take it in the palm of his hands and then would rub that saliva on his face and body. And when he would order for something to be done, they would all surpass each other in doing it. And when he would make the ablution, they would all suddenly pounce upon each other to get the remaining water in a manner that it would seem as they would kill each other. And when he would speak, they would all become completely silent. And due to their sheer respect and reverence for him, they would never look at him in a staring manner."⁸
2. 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra], Mother of the Believers, narrates that when Fatimah [ra], daughter of the holy Prophet ﷺ, would come to the holy Prophet ﷺ, the holy Prophet ﷺ would stand up for her, kiss her (head) and seat her in his place. And when the holy Prophet ﷺ would come to Fatimah [ra], she would stand up for him, kiss (his hands) and seat him in her place.⁹
3. Wazi' b. 'Amir [ra] states, "When we reached there, we were told that this is Allah's Messenger ﷺ, so we began to kiss his blessed hands and feet."¹⁰
4. The noble Companions would kiss the hands of the holy Prophet ﷺ and the following generation after the Companions (*tabi'un*), who did not have the opportunity to see the holy Prophet ﷺ, would kiss the hands of the Companions with which they had given allegiance (*bay'ah*) to the holy Prophet ﷺ by placing their hands in the hands of the holy Prophet ﷺ. One day, Thabit [ra] asked Anas [ra], "Did you touch the holy Prophet ﷺ with your hands?" Anas [ra] replied, "Yes." So, Thabit [ra] then kissed the hands of Anas [ra].¹¹
5. Abu Hurayrah [ra] narrates, "Allah's Messenger ﷺ would sit with us in the mosque and talk to us and when he would stand up, we would also stand up and would remain standing until (that time when) we would see that he has entered the house of one of his pure wives."¹²
6. Al-Halabi reports that when the holy Prophet ﷺ would be seated and would take his blessed shoes off, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud [ra] would pick them up and hold them under his arm. And when the holy Prophet ﷺ would stand up, 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud [ra] would assist him in wearing the shoes.¹³

⁸ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Shurut (54), Chapter 15, Hadith 2770.

⁹ Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Book of al-Manaqib (45), Chapter 61, Hadith 4246.

¹⁰ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, page 288.

¹¹ *Ibid*, pages 287-288.

¹² Abu Dawud (d. 275 AH), *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Book of al-Adab (42), Chapter 1, Hadith 4777.

¹³ Al-Halabi (d. 1044 AH), *al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, volume 3, page 455.

The holy Prophet's respect after his passing away

Al-Qadi 'Ayyad writes, "Reverence for the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and respecting him after his passing away is also mandatory just as it was mandatory during his lifetime. Abu Ibrahim said, 'It is incumbent upon every believer that when he mentions the holy Prophet ﷺ or the holy Prophet ﷺ is mentioned before him that he brings about such a respectful state over himself with complete humility and humbleness as if he was standing in front of the holy Prophet ﷺ'."¹⁴

Al-Qadi 'Ayyad further writes as mentioned in Mulla 'Ali al-Qari's *Sharh al-Shifa*, "The second Abbasid Caliph Abu Ja'far al-Mansur once raised his voice in the Prophetic Mosque (*al-masjid al-nabawi*) whilst having a discussion with Imam Malik. Imam Malik immediately said, 'O Leader of the Faithful! Do not raise your voice in this mosque'. The Caliph Abu Ja'far acknowledge the point of Imam Malik and then asked that when he stands in front of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and supplicates, should he face towards the holy Prophet ﷺ or towards the prayer direction (*qiblah*)? Imam Malik replied, 'Why do you turn away from Allah's Messenger ﷺ when the holy Prophet ﷺ is the intermediary (*wasilah*) in the court of Allah on the Day of Judgement for you and your father Prophet Adam [*as*]¹⁵? Rather, face towards the holy Prophet ﷺ and ask his intercession (*shafa'ah*) from him. Allah will accept his intercession for you'. Then he quoted the following verse:

وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ إِذْ ظَلَمُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ جَاءُوكَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا اللَّهَ وَأَسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُمُ الرَّسُولُ لَوَجَدُوا اللَّهَ تَوَّابًا رَحِيمًا ﴿٦٤﴾

"And if these people, when they had wronged their own souls, had come to you (Muhammad), and sought forgiveness from Allah and the Messenger also sought forgiveness for them, then they would certainly have found Allah to be graciously accepting repentance, the ever Merciful." (*Qur'an* 4:64)^{16,17}

Respect towards the prophetic traditions (ahadith)

Imam Malik relates that a person questioned Ibn Musayyab [*ra*] concerning a prophetic tradition (*hadith*) and he was at that time lying down. He got up and sat upright and then narrated the prophetic tradition (though he was unwell and he felt pain when he got up and sat upright). The questioner said, "It was my desire that you do not get up and sit upright (since you are unwell)." He replied, "I did not like to narrate a prophetic tradition whilst lying down."¹⁸

Respect towards the holy Prophet's blessed objects and relics

1. Ibn Sirin relates that he informed 'Abidah about having a hair of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his possession which he received from Anas [*ra*] or from his family. 'Abidah responded, "For me to have one hair of the holy Prophet ﷺ is more beloved to me than the whole world and its wealth and luxuries."¹⁹

¹⁴ Al-Qari (d. 1014 AH), *Sharh al-Shifa li'l-Qadi 'Ayyad*, volume 2, page 71.

¹⁵ *as: alayhi 'l-salam*, upon him be peace.

¹⁶ *Qur'an*, Surat al-Nisa' (Chapter 4), Verse 64.

¹⁷ Al-Qari (d. 1014 AH), *Sharh al-Shifa li'l-Qadi 'Ayyad*, volume 2, page 72.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, page 77.

¹⁹ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Wudu' (4), Chapter 34, Hadith 170.

2. Thabit Bunani relates that Anas b. Malik [*ra*] said to him, "This is the hair of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and (when I die) place it beneath my tongue." The narrator mentions that he placed the hair beneath his tongue and when he was buried, the hair was beneath his tongue.²⁰
3. On the day of the Battle of Yarmuk, the cap of Khalid b. al-Walid [*ra*] went missing. He instructed the soldiers to find it. After a lengthy and thorough search, it was found. (Upon this the soldiers objected that what is the meaning behind searching for this rotting cap especially in the severity of battle?) Thus, Khalid b. al-Walid [*ra*] said, "In this cap is a blessed hair of the holy Prophet ﷺ and whichever battle I took part in wearing this cap, Allah granted me victory in it."²¹
4. There was a blessed hair of the holy Prophet ﷺ with al-Imam Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Bukhari, which he used to carry in his clothes.²²
5. Nafi' [*ra*] relates that 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar [*ra*] would go to visit the places where the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had offered the prayer and he would also water the tree so that it does not become dry under which the holy Prophet ﷺ had rested.²³

Love for the holy Prophet ﷺ

The position and centrality of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ within Islam is of such significance and importance that an individual cannot be a complete believer until he loves the holy Prophet ﷺ more than his own self. Allah has revealed a very firm threat in the Qur'an that any person who considers his forefathers, wife and children, household and other possessions to be more beloved than Allah and His Messenger, such a person should await the grip of Allah (*Qur'an* 9:24)²⁴. In this regard, consider the following two prophetic traditions:

1. Anas [*ra*] relates that the holy Prophet ﷺ stated, "None of you can be a complete believer until I do not become more beloved to him than his father, his son and all other people."²⁵
2. Zuhrah b. Ma'bad [*ra*] relates from his grandfather that they were accompanying Allah's Messenger ﷺ and he was holding the hand of 'Umar b. al-Khattab [*ra*]. 'Umar [*ra*] spoke out, "O Allah's Messenger! Aside from my own self, you are dearer to me than everything else." The holy Prophet ﷺ responded, "By the One in whose grasp lies my life! (You cannot be a complete believer) Until you do not love me even more than your own soul." 'Umar [*ra*] then replied, "Then, By Allah! Now you are more beloved to me than even my own soul." Upon this, the holy Prophet ﷺ said, "Now, O 'Umar! (You are a complete believer)."²⁶

²⁰ Al-'Asqalani (d. 852 AH), *al-Isabah fi Tamyiz al-Sahaba*, volume 1, page 112.

²¹ Al-Hakim (d. 405 AH), *al-Mustadrak 'ala l-Sahihayn*, volume 3, page 339, Hadith 2599.

²² Al-'Asqalani (d. 852 AH), *Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, volume 1 (al-Muqaddimah), page 481.

²³ Al-Hindi (d. 975 AH), *Kanz al-Ummal fi Sunan al-Aqwal wa l-Afal*, volume 13, page 478, Hadith 37255.

²⁴ *Qur'an*, Surat al-Tawbah (Chapter 9), Verse 24.

²⁵ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Iman (2), Chapter 8, Hadith 15.

²⁶ *Ibid*, Book of al-Ayman wa l-Nudhur (83), Chapter 3, Hadith 6714.

Insult to the holy Prophet ﷺ

1. Allah says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“O you who believe! Do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak aloud to him as you speak aloud to one another; (for fear) that your deeds are wasted and you are not aware.” (Qur'an 49:2)²⁷

The people of faith are being cautioned in this verse that in the presence of the holy Prophet ﷺ, when you have a conversation amongst yourselves, your voice must not be louder than the voice of the holy Prophet ﷺ. Also, when you talk to the holy Prophet ﷺ, do not speak to him aloud just as you speak aloud to each other. Furthermore, just as you call one another by name, do not call the holy Prophet ﷺ by name saying 'O Muhammad!' Rather, address him with full respect using honourable titles such as 'O Allah's Messenger!' For, if you do not pay attention to the honour and reverence of the Messenger's company, then as a result of this disrespect and insult, all your good deeds will be wasted and you will not even notice it. Disrespect towards the holy Prophet ﷺ is such a profound sin that the holy personalities of the noble Companions, embodied with sincerity, even their good deeds can be wasted; then if we sinners end up being disrespectful, what will be the state of our good deeds?

2. Allah says:

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَقُولُوا رَاعِنَا وَقُولُوا انظُرْنَا وَاسْمَعُوا وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“O you who believe! (When talking to My beloved Prophet) Do not say *ra'ina*, but say *unzurna*, and listen carefully (to him in the first instance). And for the unbelievers there is a painful torment.” (Qur'an 2:104)²⁸

When the noble Companions could not completely understand the statement of the holy Prophet ﷺ, they would say the word, “*Ra'ina*,” which essentially meant, “O Allah's Messenger! We did not fully comprehend what you have said. Please do us a favour and make us understand once more.” However, the hypocrites would twist their tongues and say, “*Ra'ena*,” meaning, “O our shepherd!” Because in this word there was the possibility of disrespect and insult, for this reason, Allah commanded the noble Companions to say the word, “*Unzurna*,” in future, meaning, “Graciously look towards us,” as there was no room for doubt of any inappropriate connotation. It is understood from this that uttering any word concerning the holy Prophet ﷺ is also forbidden in which there is a mere possibility of

²⁷ Qur'an, Surat al-Hujurat (Chapter 49), Verse 2.

²⁸ Qur'an, Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter 2), Verse 104.

disrespect because disrespecting the holy Prophet ﷺ results in the loss of faith. When Allah does not even permit the use of any word for the holy Prophet ﷺ which has the possibility of being considered offensive, then how can we tolerate such statements and scenes in which there are clear and explicit insults.

*Prayer is good, so is charity, fasting and the pilgrimage;
Despite this though, I cannot still be a true Muslim,
Until I am not exhausted in honour of the Messenger;
God is Witness! My faith cannot at all be complete.*

Insult to religious entities in the Bible

It is not only Islam that prohibits the hurling of insult towards religious symbols and entities, for there are references in the Bible that point to the notion that insulting religious entities is a crime and a sinful deed worthy of punishment. Consider the following two:

1. "And tell the people of Israel that anyone who curses his God must pay the penalty: he must die. All the congregation shall stone him; this law applies to the foreigner as well as to the Israelite who blasphemes the name of Jehovah. He must die." (Leviticus 24:15-16)²⁹
2. "If the defendant refuses to accept the decision of the priest or judge appointed by God for this purpose, the penalty is death. Such sinners must be purged from Israel. Then everyone will hear about what happened to the man who refused God's verdict, and they will be afraid to defy the court's judgment a second time." (Deuteronomy 17:12-13)³⁰

Respect towards other Prophets

Islam does not only teach of respect and reverence towards the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; rather, it also teaches of respect and reverence towards all the noble Prophets and sacred books. In this regard, Allah says:

كُلُّ ءَامَنٍ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتِهٖٓ وَكُتُبِهٖٓ وَرُسُلِهٖٓ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ اَحَدٍ مِّنْ رُّسُلِهٖٓ

"All these (people of faith) believe in Allah, and His angels, and His books, and His Messengers. (Moreover, they say) We do not differentiate between any one of His Messengers." (Qur'an 2:285)³¹ In other words, Muslims have faith in all the Prophets and the sacred books and respect and revere them.



²⁹ The Living Bible (British Edition), Leviticus, Chapter 24, Verses 15-16.

³⁰ Ibid, Deuteronomy, Chapter 17, Verses 12-13.

³¹ Qur'an, Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter 2), Verse 285.

CORRECTING THE FLAWS OF THE ERRED FILM

This film is not worthy of being academically scrutinised, for in it such made-up and indecent scenarios have been attributed to an individual as honest, trustworthy, innocent, and unique in the history of humankind as the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, that in the past fourteen hundred years, not even a staunch enemy has done such a thing. Nevertheless, I wish to clarify certain negative indications present in the film as an example so that the readers become aware that despite its appalling mockery and shameful depiction, the film producer has attempted to cast a shadow over facts and established truths.

FLAW 1

The holy Prophet's father being unknown

The name of the father of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is 'Abd Allah. Al-Halabi writes, "'Abd Allah b. 'Abd al-Muttalib was the most handsome amongst the Quraysh in physical form and the most beautiful in character. 'Abd al-Muttalib married his son 'Abd Allah to Lady Aminah from who Muhammad ﷺ was born."³²

It is not only the case that Islamic literature is in agreement that the name of the holy Prophet's father is 'Abd Allah; rather, non-Muslims also accept this fact. Consider some examples from notable sources as follows:

1. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states, "Muhammad in full ABU AL-QASIM MUHAMMAD IBN ABD ALLAH IBN ABD AL-MUTTALIB IBN HASHIM (b. 570, Mecca, Arabia & d. June 8, 632, Medina) founder of the religion of Islam."³³
2. Philip K. Hitti in *History of the Arabs* writes, "In or about AD 571 a child was born to the Quraysh at Makkah. The form which his name takes in the Koran (four times) Muhammad and once Ahmad. The baby's father, Abdullah, died before his birth; the mother, Aminah, when he was about six years old."³⁴
3. William J Durant in *The Age of Faith* writes, "In 568 the latter's son Abdallah married Amina, also a descendant of Qusay. Abdallah remained with his bride three days, set out on a mercantile expedition, and died at Medina on the way back. Two months later (569) Amina was delivered of the most important figure in medieval history."³⁵

³² Al-Halabi (d. 1044 AH), *al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, volume 1, page 68.

³³ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Micropedia, 15th Edition, volume 8, section under 'Muhammad'.

³⁴ Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, page 111. *History of the Arabs* is the celebrated work of Philip Khuri Hitti (1886-1978) who is notable for almost single handedly creating the discipline of Arabic Studies in the United States. He trained generations of Western scholars and was an authority on the cultures, history, religions, and languages of the Near East.

³⁵ Durant, *The Age of Faith*, From AD 325-1300, page 162. *The Age of Faith* forms part of the major eleven-volume work titled *The Story of Civilisation* of William James Durant (1885-1981) who was an established American writer, historian, and philosopher and was recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for literature as well as The Presidential Medal of Freedom. For over half a century, he is credited for teaching people the wonder and benefit of human heritage and is considered one of the most gifted prose stylists of the twentieth century. The legacy of his works is continued through the Will Durant Foundation in America.

4. David S Margoliouth in *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam* writes, "Mohammed was the child of Meccan parents whose names are given as Abdallah (Servant of Allah) and Aminah (The Safe or Secure). The latter belonged to the Banu Zuhrah, the former was the son of Abd al-Muttalib, of the clan named Banu Hashim. It is certain that the future Prophet's father died before his son was born."³⁶

In the past fourteen hundred years, not even a despicable opponent has rejected the parentage of our beloved Prophet ﷺ; however, the culture in which the film producer lives, there the number of illegitimate children is on the increase. There is an Urdu expression which can describe this film producer's situation well: *andhe ko andhere mein bari door ki soojhi* (a blind man standing in pitch darkness claims to have suddenly seen something very far away!)

Let me present an example of this to you. An African young man once worked at Dr Ghufran's pharmacy in New York. Every year, his mother would come to spend her holidays in America and the young man would take leave for two weeks from work in order to guide his mother on her tours. One day, Dr Ghufran questioned the young man that every year his mother comes for her vacation, but his father has never come; is his father alive or has he passed away? And if he is alive, then where does he live? The young man replied, "I do not know of my father, but when my mother comes to America the next time, I will surely ask her about him." Eventually, when his mother arrived and he questioned her, she responded, "In actual fact, when I desired to have children, in those days I was on vacation in France and had relations with many men whilst I was there. So to find out at this stage whose son you actually are, that is quite difficult."

FLAW 2

Waraqah b. Nawfal compiling the Qur'an

It is shown in this film that Khadijah [ra] seeks help from her cousin Waraqah, who replies that he will compile a book for the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taken from the Old Testament and the New Testament (*Tawrat* and *Injil*). However, Waraqah very soon died and so the 'inspiration' ended, and the holy Prophet ﷺ attempted to commit suicide. This is utter deception and a complete distortion.

To correct the record, I will present the true events surrounding the revelation of the Qur'an and Waraqah, so that the actual fact of the matter becomes clear.

Six months prior to the announcement of Prophethood, the holy Prophet ﷺ began to experience true dreams. He began to seclude himself in the Cave of Hira. Stones began uttering salutations of peace (*salam*) that were heard, as the holy Prophet ﷺ stated, "I still clearly remember, even today, that very stone in Makkah which used to greet me with peace before the announcement of Prophethood."³⁷

³⁶ Margoliouth, *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam*, page 45. *Mohammed and the Rise of Islam* of David Samuel Margoliouth (1858-1940) as well as his other works on the history of Islam became the standard treatises in English for at least a generation. Being an English Orientalist scholar, his efforts in Islamic Studies won him a near-legendary reputation among Oriental Scholars of Europe.

³⁷ Muslim (d. 261 AH), *Sahih Muslim*, Book of al-Fada'il (44), Chapter 1, Hadith 6078.

The manner in which the first revelation occurred

The holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was in the Cave of Hira when an angel appeared and said, 'O Muhammad! I am Jibril (Gabriel) and you are the Messenger of Allah', and then he said, 'Read'.³⁸ The holy Prophet ﷺ replied, "I am not a reader." The holy Prophet ﷺ himself relates: Then he took hold of me, pressed me to his chest, released me and then said again, "Read." I replied, "I am not a reader." Then he took hold of me, pressed me to his chest, released me and the third time said again, "Read." I again replied, "I am not a reader." Then he took hold of me again, pressed me to his chest and upon releasing me, the fourth time –reciting the first five verses of Surat al-'Alaq – said:

أَقْرَأْ بِأَسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ أَقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝
 الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

"Read, in the name of your Lord, who created: created the human being from clotted blood. Read, for your Lord is Most Generous, who taught by the pen, taught the human being what he did not know." (Qur'an 96:1-5)³⁹ Upon this, Allah's Messenger ﷺ did not refuse; rather, with his heart illuminated by these verses, he returned home in such a manner that his heart was trembling (due to the sheer awe and majesty of divine revelation).

When the holy Prophet ﷺ arrived home to Khadijah [ra], he immediately began to say, "Wrap me with a cloak! Cover me with a cloak!" She quickly placed a cloak around him. As his anxiety began to decrease, the holy Prophet ﷺ relayed the full episode to Khadijah [ra] and said, "I fear for myself." To this, she replied, "Never! By Allah! Allah will never forsake you, for you show kindness towards relatives, carry the burden of the helpless, earn to feed the poor, treat the guests well, and assist people faced with difficulties in the path of good."

Khadijah [ra] then took the holy Prophet ﷺ to her paternal cousin Waraqah b. Nawfal. During the time of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*), he had become a Christian, but by this time he had grown old and was blind. Khadijah [ra] said to him, "O cousin of mine! Listen to the words of your nephew." Waraqah said to the holy Prophet ﷺ, "O my nephew! What are you seeing?" Allah's Messenger ﷺ informed him of all that he had seen. After listening to it, Waraqah said, "This is the same angel who was sent by Allah to Prophet Musa (Moses [as]). If only at that time I be full of youth; if only at that time I be alive, when people from your community will send you in exile!" Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "Will they exile me?" Waraqah replied, "Yes. Whenever a person brought a message such as yours, he was faced with enmity and opposition. If I am around during that time of yours, I will help and assist you fully." After this episode, Waraqah did not live for long and soon passed away.

What was the holy Prophet's anxiety?

This sense of anxiety and unease was a natural emotion, for such great and exalted speech had

³⁸ Al-Tabari (d. 310 AH), *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ay al-Qur'an*, in the commentary of 96:1-8.

³⁹ Qur'an, Surat al-'Alaq (Chapter 96), Verses 1-5.

been revealed to him that a firm object such as a mountain cannot even bear. Allah says:

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَرَأَيْتَهُ خَاشِعًا مُتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ^{٤٠}

“Had We sent down this Qur’an on a mountain, you would surely have seen that mountain awe-inspiringly splitting itself apart due to the fear of Allah.” (Qur’an 59:21)⁴⁰ Therefore, this anxiety is not the proof of any weakness or defect; rather, it is the proof of greatness and perfection.

Moreover, this anxiety was not due to the holy Prophet ﷺ having any doubt as to his Prophethood or him being unaware as to what had occurred with him. Rather, the truth is that just as it is necessary for each follower to believe in the Prophethood of his Prophet, similarly, it is necessary for each Prophet to believe in his own Prophethood. Just as Allah says:

ءَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ^{٤١}

“The Messenger believes in that which was revealed to him from his Lord, and the believers (also believe).” (Qur’an 2:285)⁴¹ This belief is attained by the community through the invitation of the Prophet and by listening to his proofs, but recognition of his own Prophethood is granted to the heart of a Prophet directly from Allah; he does not depend on a proof or miracle. The holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had already received numerous indication of his own Prophethood before the announcement of Prophethood as al-Qastalani writes, “When Allah desired to announce the Prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, whichever stone or tree the holy Prophet ﷺ walked passed, it would utter greetings of peace by saying, ‘al-salamu ‘alayka ya rasul Allah’ (peace be upon you, O Allah’s Messenger!).”⁴²

Now just ponder and think about that Prophet who is being informed by the stones of Makkah that he is the Prophet of Allah and in the Cave of Hira, the archangel Jibril informs him that he is the Messenger of Allah; even after this, if a person presumes that he was not aware of his own Prophethood and so became frightened and worried; then such a person is in need of re-examining his research. It is not befitting to the eminent status of a Prophet that the angel Jibril descends upon him with revelation, yet he is not aware of who has descended and some third person (Waraqah b. Nawfal in this case) has to inform him that the one who descended in the Cave of Hira was the archangel Jibril. Whereas, the stones of Makkah and Jibril himself had already notified him that he was indeed the Messenger of Allah.

A question can arise here that if the holy Prophet ﷺ was aware, then why did he go to Waraqah b. Nawfal? The answer to this is in the question posed by Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham [as]) to Allah:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ قَالَ أُولَٰئِكَ تُؤْمِنُونَ^{٤٢} قَالَ بَلَىٰ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي^{٤٣}

⁴⁰ Qur’an, Surat al-Hashr (Chapter 59), Verse 21.

⁴¹ Qur’an, Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter 2), Verse 285.

⁴² Al-Qastalani (d. 923 AH), *al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyah bi'l-Manh al-Muhammadiyah*, volume 1, page 200.

“And recall when Ibrahim said, ‘O my Lord! Show me how you will bring the dead to life?’ Allah said, ‘Do you not then believe in this?’ He replied, ‘Why not! But (this question is) to satisfy my heart.’” (*Qur’an* 2:260)⁴³ The holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was absolutely certain about his Prophethood and also knew that when he was to invite Khadijah [*ra*], she will also believe. However, they went to Waraqah b. Nawfal so that Khadijah [*ra*] gains satisfaction in the first instance.

The mention of suicide

Al-Bukhari, in Hadith number 6982,⁴⁴ has added the mention of leaping from the peak of a mountain (i.e. committing suicide) and regarding this specific addition, al-Bukhari has simply stated that ‘this prophetic tradition (*hadith*) has reached us’. Al-‘Ayni elaborated upon this addition in his commentary and wrote, “Al-Bukhari has not mentioned the chain of transmission (*sanad*) for this nor mentioned the narrator. He has also not specified this to be the words of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Moreover, this incident concerning the holy Prophet ﷺ is not known.”⁴⁵ This categorical statement of al-‘Ayni denotes that in terms of its chain of transmission, this prophetic tradition is ‘broken’ (*munqati‘*), for its narrators are not mentioned nor has any other scholar mentioned its chain of transmission. Rather, other scholars have narrated this prophetic tradition without this addition altogether. And in terms of its text (*matan*), this prophetic tradition is ‘interpolated’ (*mudraj*), for the words of its text have not been established from the holy Prophet ﷺ; rather, someone else’s words have been inserted. Therefore, this addition is not correct both in terms of the chain of transmission as well as the text itself. Moreover, committing suicide is a sin and a Prophet is not susceptible to committing sin or intending of sin. Nevertheless, even if this addition is accepted to be sound, then the cause of such intense anxiety could be due to the following:

After receiving the revelation, the first anxiety of the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, which he shared with Khadijah [*ra*], was as a result of feeling for the weight of responsibility that what if there is some shortfall in properly conveying the message of Prophethood? Then for a while after that, when there was a pause in revelation, the holy Prophet ﷺ became so anxious and restless awaiting revelation that he intended to leap from the peak of a mountain thinking that this pause in divine revelation may be due to Allah being displeased. Just as al-‘Ayni writes, “The holy Prophet ﷺ became fearful that what if this pause in divine revelation was due to Allah being displeased? This fear led him to intend for such an action. However, when Sacred Law (*shari‘ah*) prohibited suicide, the holy Prophet ﷺ never intended to commit suicide.”⁴⁶ The unhappiness of a worldly beloved becomes unbearable and sometimes the lover anxiously and worryingly commits suicide; however, when a true lover begins to think as such concerning his true beloved, then his anxiety and worry is beyond imagination.

After studying the above episode, it becomes clear that the Qur’an had begun being revealed before the meeting of Khadijah [*ra*] with Waraqah and the vast majority of the Qur’an was revealed gradually after the death of Waraqah in accordance with different situations and

⁴³ *Qur’an*, Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter 2), Verse 260.

⁴⁴ This prophetic tradition (*hadith*) is Hadith 6982 of *Sahih al-Bukhari*; and in the edition published by the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation, it is Hadith 7068 in the Book of al-Ta‘bir (92), Chapter 1.

⁴⁵ Al-‘Ayni (d. 855 AH), *Umdat al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, volume 1, page 55.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

circumstances. If the Qur'an was compiled by Waraqah, then how did matters relating to the ascension of the holy Prophet ﷺ, the Battle of Badr, the Battle of the Confederates (*al-ahzab*), and the Battle of Hunayn enter the Qur'an? Moreover, the cause of the holy Prophet's anxiety was not the death of Waraqah; it was the revelation coming to a halt.

In reality, the individual who can defraud the monetary bank of such a strong government as that of the superpower America and alter his identity, for him to twist and distort events that took place fourteen hundred years ago is not something too shameful.

FLAW 3

The donkey being the first Muslim animal

Mockingly, the film shows the holy Prophet ﷺ declaring a donkey to be the first Muslim animal. Can I ask: When Prophet Musa [*as*] and Prophet 'Isa (Jesus [*as*]) rode on the back of a donkey, at that instance what was the donkey? Was not the donkey a Muslim then? Allah says:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكِ الْقُدُّوسِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ ﴿١﴾

“Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth glorifies Allah; the King, the Sacred, the Almighty, the all-Wise.” (*Qur'an* 62:1)⁴⁷ Everything that exists in the universe, whether it is alive or lifeless, it glorifies and exalts Allah. Therefore, everything is Muslim except those who are rebellious from among the humans and the Jinn.

Moreover, everything believes in the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ being the Messenger of Allah, except the wayward from among the humans and the Jinn. Just as Jabir b. 'Abd Allah [*ra*] reports that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, “Everything that is between the heavens and the earth knows that I am the Messenger of Allah, except the rebellious from among the Jinn and humans.”⁴⁸

FLAW 4

The Muslims brutally killing an old lady

The film shows a non-Muslim old lady whose legs are tied to two camels made to run in opposing directions. Thus, in this manner she is murdered. With this portrayal, an attempt is made to prove that Muslims are cruel and barbaric. But this is completely false and to explain this, the Urdu proverb suits this scenario well: *ulta chor kotwal ko dante* (the guilty scolding the innocent!)

In actual fact, this incident is concerning the first female martyr of Islam, Sumayyah [*ra*], who was brutally murdered by the non-Muslims of Makkah. The commentators of the Qur'an have written that the Quraysh tribesmen captured Sumayyah [*ra*] and began to force her to abandon the faith of Islam. However, when Sumayyah [*ra*] refused, they tied her between two camels i.e. one leg was tied to one camel and the other leg to the other camel. Abu Jahl struck Sumayyah [*ra*]

⁴⁷ *Qur'an*, Surat al-Jumu'ah (Chapter 62), Verse 1.

⁴⁸ Ahmad (d. 241 AH), *Musnad Ahmad b. Hanbal*, volume 3, page 310.

in her private parts with a spear and made the two camels run in opposite directions to the extent that her body was torn apart splitting into two. This is the first female martyr of Islam.⁴⁹

If, in today's twenty first century, people wish to see a practical example of this barbaric code of conduct of the non-Muslims of Makkah, they can simply study the Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp in Cuba; the Bagram Jail in Afghanistan; and the Abu Ghraib Prison in Iraq; where non-Muslim soldiers stripped the Muslim detainees of their clothes and then unleashed dogs on them.

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave the woman such a grand honour and status that even in the battlefield, killing a non-Muslim woman is not permitted. 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar [ra] reports that during one of the battles of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, a woman's body was found who had been killed, so Allah's Messenger ﷺ (disliked it and) prohibited the killing of women and children.⁵⁰ This ruling is such that even if a woman becomes an apostate (*murtadd*), she still cannot be killed. Rather, she can be imprisoned and invited towards Islam again.⁵¹

FLAW 5

Being inadequately clothed

In the film, our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ has been depicted as being scantily clad and partially clothed, yet he was more modest and shy than maiden women.

1. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri [ra] reports, "The holy Prophet ﷺ had more modesty than a virgin woman covered with a veil; when he disliked something, we could immediately recognise the displeasure on his face."⁵²
2. Jabir b. 'Abd Allah [ra] reports that Allah's Messenger ﷺ was carrying stones and bringing them for the Ka'bah amongst other people and he was wearing a leg-sheet (long sheet of cloth wrapped around the legs as a garment for the lower part of the body). The holy Prophet's uncle, 'Abbas, said to him, "O my nephew! You could open your leg-sheet and place it on your shoulders beneath the stone (so carrying it will be easier)?" Jabir [ra] continues and relates that the holy Prophet ﷺ unwrapped his leg-sheet and as he was about to place it on his shoulders, he immediately became unconscious and collapsed to the ground. After this episode, he had never been seen unclothed.⁵³

In the commentary of this prophetic tradition, al-'Ayni writes that the holy Prophet ﷺ was free from all forms of vileness and defects prior to the announcement of Prophethood and after it, and he was already very distanced from the attributes as well as the immoral customs of the time of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) from the very young age of his childhood. This was because Allah had gifted the instinctive nature of the holy Prophet ﷺ with such beautiful traits of character and perfect modesty that he was even shyer than veiled virgin

⁴⁹ Al-Zuhayli, *al-Tafsir al-Munir fi 'l-'Aqidah wa 'l-Shari'ah wa 'l-Manhaj*, in the commentary of 16:106; Karam Shah (d. 1418 AH), *Tafsir Diya' al-Qur'an*, in the commentary of 16:106.

⁵⁰ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Jihad wa 'l-Siyar (56), Chapter 148, Hadith 3052.

⁵¹ Al-Jazayri, *Kitab al-Fiqh 'ala 'l-Madhahib al-Arba'ah*, volume 5, page 426.

⁵² Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Adab (78), Chapter 72, Hadith 6169.

⁵³ *Ibid*, Book of al-Salat (8), Chapter 8, Hadith 366.

women.⁵⁴

Since stones are usually rough on the edges and there is the possibility of the shoulders getting hurt, for this reason, when the holy Prophet ﷺ was carrying and bringing them for the renovation of the Ka'bah, 'Abbas out of kindness suggested that he opens his sheet, puts it on his shoulders and then rests the stone on it; this would make it easier for him to carry. Upon the suggestion of his uncle, the holy Prophet ﷺ did open his leg-sheet and when he was about to put it on his shoulders, he fainted and fell to the ground. The holy Prophet ﷺ did not get up until he had wrapped the leg-sheet around again properly; thus, no one was able to see his private parts. Furthermore, 'Abbas only suggested opening the leg-sheet; there is no mention of removing his shirt and the shirt of the Arabs is so long that even if the lower leg-sheet is removed, even then in normal circumstances a person does not become naked. But, because there was the possibility of becoming naked when bowing to lift the stone and this mere possibility was contrary to the quality of the holy Prophet's modesty; for this reason, out of his strong sensitivity, the holy Prophet ﷺ fainted for a few moments. As soon as he fell and gained consciousness, the holy Prophet ﷺ covered his private parts. Therefore, even in that incident he did not become naked nor was he ever seen naked after that. Just as Anas b. Malik [ra] reports that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, "It is my Lord's grace and blessing upon me that I was born circumcised and no one has ever seen my private parts."⁵⁵

Al-Zuhri relates that when the Quraysh renovated the Ka'bah, the holy Prophet ﷺ at that moment had not reached puberty and Ibn Batal relates that at that moment the holy Prophet ﷺ was fifteen years old.⁵⁶ It is understood from this that this particular event of the Ka'bah's renovation is not the one in which the holy Prophet ﷺ placed the Black Stone for he was then thirty five years old. Rather, this incident is much before and occurred during his childhood when some part of the Ka'bah was being repaired, for the Ka'bah was a very old construction and whenever the downfall of heavy rain caused water to gush down the valleys from the mountains, it would cause damage to the walls of the Ka'bah and the surrounding grounds.

3. 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] states, "I have never seen the private parts of Allah's Messenger ﷺ." It is also reported from 'A'ishah [ra] that she said, "Neither I saw the private parts of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, nor did he see my private parts."⁵⁷ The husband and wife, whose modesty was at such a sublime level that they never looked at each other's private parts, to portray them in a half clothed state being in the company of semi-naked women is the most grotesque accusation imaginable!
4. 'Abd Allah b. 'Amr [ra] relates that Allah's Messenger ﷺ by his nature did not use foul language, nor attempted to speak in a foul manner. He used to say, "The best amongst you

⁵⁴ Al-'Ayni (d. 855 AH), *'Umdat al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, volume 4, page 72.

⁵⁵ Al-Tabarani (d. 360 AH), *al-Mu'jam al-Awsat*, volume 7, page 88, Hadith 6144; al-Hindi (d. 975 AH), *Kanz al-'Ummal fi Sunan al-Aqwal wa'l-Afal*, volume 11, page 454, Hadith 32134.

⁵⁶ Al-'Ayni (d. 855 AH), *'Umdat al-Qari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, volume 4, page 71.

⁵⁷ Al-'Ajili al-Azhari (d. 1204 AH), *al-Mawahib al-Muhammadiyah bi Sharh al-Shama'il al-Tirmidhiyyah*, volume 2, pages 356-357; Al-Qari (d. 1014 AH), *Sharh al-Shifa li'l-Qadi 'Ayyad*, volume 1, page 271.

is he whose manners are the best.”⁵⁸ That individual who never even spoke in an immodest and shameless manner, how can it be envisaged that he would ever indulge in immodest activities (i.e. the state of semi-nakedness)? There is a Persian phrase: *ein khayal ast o mahal ast o junoon* (this is just imagination, illogical to the extent of insanity!).

FLAW 6

'A'ishah [ra] being married at a young age

The film has a scene in which a person is shown who says to his wife that he intends to marry his young daughter off to the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. When his wife responds by insisting that their daughter is still a child, he replies, “He has wealth and power; my daughter shall be his bride!” In my view, this is an indication towards the marriage of 'A'ishah [ra] at a young age. However, this is not a new matter, for the orientalist have continued to repeat this objection. The answer to this is as follows:

At the time of his marriage to 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra], the age of the holy Prophet ﷺ was fifty four years. According to the books of prophetic traditions (*ahadith*), the age of 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] was then nine years. In Islam, the prompt marriage of a boy or a girl has been encouraged as soon as they reach maturity, and some girls, against the norm, can mature sooner than others. Such as in Europe and America, girls become mature after eleven years of age, usually, but girls of eight years old becoming pregnant have also been reported, and so, it could be, that 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] also matured sooner, against the norm. Furthermore, 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] was very intelligent and wise from childhood, and one of the purposes of marrying her at a tender age was also that by paying special attention to her education and training, she would become a renowned teacher and preacher. But, because modern people give preference to apparent situations, and they only make the age of nine years their target of censure; therefore, I present to them another point of view according to which the age of 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] at the time of marriage was not nine years, but in fact it was nineteen years.⁵⁹

'Allamah Ghulam Rasul Sa'idi writes that according to the definitive explanation in *Asma' al-Rijal* (cyclopaedia of *hadith* narrators), the sister of 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra], namely, Asma' [ra], was ten years older than her, and it has been explicitly mentioned in *al-Isabah* and *Usud al-Ghabah* that at the time of the Migration to Madinah (*hijrah*), Asma' [ra] was twenty seven years of age. According to this calculation, at the time of Migration, the age of 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] is determined to be seventeen years.⁶⁰ In the second year after the Migration, when the marriage of Fatimah al-Zahra' [ra] took place, her age was also nineteen years. According to this, at the time of marriage, the ages of both Fatimah al-Zahra' [ra] and 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] were almost identical.

Therefore, according to new research, at the time of marriage, the age of 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra] was nineteen years and the age of the holy Prophet ﷺ was fifty four years. Today, in Europe, Britain and America, there is no restriction upon an eighteen or nineteen year old girl marrying a

⁵⁸ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Manaqib (61), Chapter 24, Hadith 3599.

⁵⁹ For further reading, refer to *Hazrat A'ishah Siddiqah (R.A.A.)* of R W Maqsood, pages 11-24.

⁶⁰ Sa'idi, *Sharh Sahih Muslim*, volume 3, page 831.

man three times her age, i.e. fifty or sixty years old, if she so wishes. In fact, there are countless such marriages taking place. Hence, it is improper for anyone to reproach the holy Prophet ﷺ on this marriage.

FLAW 7

Having many wives for reasons of pleasure

The film mentions that our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had sixty one wives and having such a large number of wives is based upon sexual gratification. Though there is an exaggeration in the number being multiplied five or six times; nevertheless, this is an old objection of the orientalist too. Consider the following answer to this:

Regarding this objection, with only one glance at the biography of the holy Prophet ﷺ, no just person can attribute to him having multiple wives for sexual gratification because the drive for sensual desire usually lasts from ages fifteen to fifty years. Between the ages of fifteen to twenty five years, the holy Prophet ﷺ uniquely suppressed his desires in such a noble and exemplary manner that even enemies could not find a fault in his chastity. Then, at the age of twenty five years, he performed his first marriage with a widow, Khadijah [ra], who was fifteen years older than him. He spent a period of twenty five years with that one widow. Just imagine, when he was fifty years of age, his wife Khadijah [ra] was sixty five years old, meaning, that despite the old age of his wife, the holy Prophet ﷺ did not even consider a second wife. Even then, if he is accused of having uncontrollable sexual urges, then the world may never have heard a greater lie than this!

This life of fifty years and the entire age of prime youth was before the eyes of the Makkans; even an enemy never had the courage to draw any accusation on his chaste life in relation to sexual waywardness. In fact, the holy Prophet ﷺ was referred to with the titles 'the Truthful, the Trustworthy'. If the reason behind polygamy was sexual gratification and pleasure, the most appropriate time for that would have been in prime youth and not old age.

Once, the Quraysh of Makkah called the holy Prophet ﷺ and said to him, "If you desire to gather wealth by means of this religion (Islam), we will amass together so much wealth for you that you will become the wealthiest amongst us; if you desire prestige and honour, we will take you as our leader to the extent that no decision will be made without you; if you desire kingship, we will make you our king; and if you desire women, choose from the women of Quraysh and we will give you ten women in marriage. But return to our religion and abandon this new religion of yours."⁶¹ The holy Prophet ﷺ responded, "If the sun is placed in my right hand and the moon in my left, I will still not leave this religion until Allah makes this religion predominant and victorious or until my life comes to an end seeking this."⁶² In this material world, what greater aspiration could there be for a person to become the ruler of one's own country and the wealthiest of all. If there was a desire for multiple marriages, wealth and power in any corner of the holy Prophet's mind, then this was the finest proposition. His mission, however, was the promulgation of monotheism (*tawhid*), for which he clashed with mountains of difficulties, but he did not give up that mission.

⁶¹ Al-Halabi (d. 1044 AH), *al-Sirah al-Halabiyyah*, volume 1, page 430.

⁶² Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH), *al-Bidayah wa'l-Nihayah*, volume 1, page 383.

After the demise of Khadijah [ra], the holy Prophet ﷺ married Sawdah [ra], and up until the age of fifty four years, he had only one wife at any one time. Other marriages took place between fifty four and fifty nine years of age. After the age of fifty nine years, he did not marry again. Any man of reason is unable to accept that a human be content with only one wife at any one time for up to fifty four years of age, and then, all of a sudden, a sexual tempest throws his desires into such commotion that he is compelled into taking many wives. The holy Prophet ﷺ was upon that lofty status of self-restraint that in the state of continuous fasting, he required no food for days upon end. So how can that being not be content with one wife for a few years of old age?

*Wisdom is named madness and madness is wisdom;
The beauty of your wonderworking may do as it will.*

Of all the wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ, only one ('A'ishah Siddiqah [ra]) was a maiden and all others were either aged, widowed or divorcées, and his series of polygamous marriages only began when he was the only sovereign of the Islamic state and thousands were on-the-ready to sacrifice their lives at his indication. If carnal inclination was a factor in his marriages then virgins would have been selected, but, on the contrary, he married the aged, the mature, the intelligent and the loyal women, in order that those feminine issues that were difficult to explain explicitly (such as menstruation, postnatal bleeding and marital affairs, etc.) due to feeling ashamed and modesty, could be taught through those women.

Reasons for having numerous wives

A woman is an integral unit of society; without her good education and upbringing, a good society cannot come into existence. The society in which the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lit the candle of Islam, that society had been wandering aimlessly in the darkness of ignorance for centuries. The society which Islam wanted to establish, in it the free mixing of men and women was prohibited; thus, for the guidance of this important unit, there was a need for a large number of women, whom the holy Prophet ﷺ could personally train and nurture. For this reason, Allah permitted the holy Prophet ﷺ to marry more than four wives so that he would not feel restricted or having any shortcoming in relation to the religious guidance of women.

The holy Prophet ﷺ only performed one pilgrimage (*hajj*) in his lifetime, which is referred to as the Farewell Pilgrimage (*hajjat al-wada'*). On this pilgrimage, he took all his wives with him so that they could all personally experience the rituals of the pilgrimage and so that there would be no difficulty in teaching them to other women.

There are always two aspects to each person's life; the public life that is in front of all people and the private life, the ups and downs of which each individual attempts to keep concealed. Both these lives of our beloved Prophet ﷺ are worthy of envy. It is for this reason that Allah declared his life the most excellent example for us and He granted him two such sincere groups who presented to the nation both these lives of the holy Prophet ﷺ with complete honesty and integrity. One group was that of the noble Companions who conveyed his public life and the other group was that of the chaste wives who conveyed his private life. It is as though we have received half of our religion through the noble Companions and half through the chaste wives. A large wealth of prophetic traditions (*ahadith*) was bestowed upon the Muslim nation by virtue of

the pious wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ. For example, from 'A'ishah Siddiqah [ra], two thousand, two hundred and ten (2210) narrations, and from Umm Salamah [ra], three hundred and seventy eight (378) narrations are mentioned in the books of prophetic traditions.

Moreover, the holy Prophet ﷺ married into various Arab tribes in order to establish new links and in this way Islam was given further support in becoming more effective and expanded. Anyhow, in the background of the holy Prophet ﷺ having multiple wives, there were many educational, cultural, tribal, missionary and political objectives. For example, certain tribes were staunch enemies of Islam, but when the holy Prophet ﷺ married a woman from amongst those tribes, their enmity towards Islam began to decrease as a result of this connection and ultimately those tribes embraced Islam.

The analysis of the famous orientalist Montgomery Watt

“The last feature to be noted about Muhammad’s marriages is that he used both his own and those of the closest Companions to further political ends. This was doubtless a continuation of older Arabian practice. All Muhammad’s own marriages can be seen to have a tendency to promote friendly relations in the political sphere. Khadijah brought him wealth, and the beginnings of influence in Meccan politics. In the case of Sawdah, whom he married at Mecca, the chief aim may have been to provide for the widow of a faithful Muslim, as also in the later marriage with Zaynab bint⁶³ Khuzaymah; but Sawdah’s husband was the brother of a man whom Muhammad perhaps wanted to keep from becoming an extreme opponent; and Zaynab’s husband belonged to the clan of al-Muttalib, for which Muhammad had a special responsibility, while he was also cultivating good relations with her own tribe of ‘Amir b. Sa’sa’ah. His first wives at Medina, ‘A’ishah and Hafsa, were the daughters of the men on whom he leaned most, Abu Bakr and ‘Umar; and ‘Umar also married Muhammad’s grand-daughter, Umm Kulthum bint ‘Ali. Umm Salamah was not merely a deserving widow, but a close relative of the leading man of the Meccan clan of Makhzum. Juwayriyah was the daughter of the chief of the tribe of al-Mustaliq, with whom Muhammad had been having special trouble. Zaynab bint Jahsh, besides being Muhammad’s cousin, was a confederate of the Meccan clan of ‘Abd Shams, but a social motive may have outweighed the political one in her case – to demonstrate that Muhammad had broken with old taboos. Nevertheless the clan of ‘Abd Shams, and Abu Sufyan b. Harb in particular, were in his thoughts, for Abu Sufyan had a Muslim daughter, Umm Habibah, married to a brother of Zaynab bint Jahsh; and when the husband died in Abyssinia, Muhammad sent a messenger there to arrange a marriage with her. The marriage with Maymunah would similarly help to cement relations with her brother-in-law, Muhammad’s uncle, al-‘Abbas. There may also have been political motives in the unions with the Jewesses, Safiyah and Rayhanah.”⁶⁴

The holy Prophet’s domestic life

Not only would the holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ spend a night with each wife in turn, but he would also visit them individually during the day and once a day he would gather all his wives in

⁶³ *bint*, daughter of.

⁶⁴ Watt, *Muhammad at Medina*, pages 287-288. The work *Muhammad at Medina* as well as *Muhammad at Mecca* of William Montgomery Watt (1909-2006) are considered to be classics in the field of comprehensive biography. He was a Scottish historian and one of the foremost non-Muslim interpreters of Islam in the West considered to be an enormously influential scholar in the field of Islamic Studies.

one wife's quarter to meet them collectively, during which domestic issues and matters of mutual concern would be discussed. All the wives would speak openly about their issues and the holy Prophet ﷺ would listen to them attentively; console them and if any tiff or disagreement would arise, he would solve it with great wisdom and love.

1. Anas [ra] reports that Safiyyah [ra] once heard that Hafsa [ra] called her 'a daughter of a Jew' and so she began to cry. When the holy Prophet ﷺ came to see her, he found her crying and asked, "Why are you crying?" Safiyyah [ra] responded, "Hafsa [ra] has called me 'a daughter of a Jew.'" The holy Prophet ﷺ stated, "Indeed you are the daughter of a Prophet (Harun [as]), your uncle (Musa [as]) is also a Prophet and you are the wife of a Prophet (Muhammad ﷺ); therefore, how can she feel superior to you?" Then the holy Prophet ﷺ said, "O Hafsa! Fear Allah."⁶⁵
2. Aswad narrates that he asked 'Ai'shah [ra] about what the holy Prophet ﷺ would do at home? 'Ai'shah [ra] replied, "The holy Prophet ﷺ would be occupied in carrying out household chores and assisting the people at home and when the time for prayer would arrive, he would leave to go and offer the prayer."⁶⁶
3. Hisham narrates from his father that 'Ai'shah [ra] was asked about what the holy Prophet ﷺ would do at home? 'Ai'shah [ra] replied, "Just as one of you would work; (i.e.) the holy Prophet ﷺ used to repair his own shoes and patch his own clothes."⁶⁷
4. 'Amrah [ra] narrates that 'Ai'shah [ra] was asked about what the holy Prophet ﷺ would do at home? 'Ai'shah [ra] replied, "The holy Prophet ﷺ was a human from amongst the humans; he used to clean his own clothes, milk his own goat and serve himself."⁶⁸
5. 'Ai'shah [ra] relates that Allah's Messenger ﷺ would remain standing at night until his feet would swell and the skin would split. 'Ai'shah [ra] enquired, "Why do you go to such great lengths burdening yourself when your past and future sins have been pardoned (i.e. apparent acts that may not be the best, *khilaf al-awla*)." The holy Prophet ﷺ replied, "Should I not prefer that I become a grateful servant of Allah."⁶⁹
6. In Makkah, the holy Prophet ﷺ would return home after carrying out the duty of preaching and propagating feeling tired; after resting for a while, he would get up and stand for worship. So Khadijah [ra] would say, "All day you are faced with all kinds of difficulties due to the enmity of the non-Muslims; therefore, please rest for a little while longer." Upon this, the holy Prophet ﷺ would reply, "The age of sleeping has gone, O Khadijah!"⁷⁰

The love of the pure wives for the holy Prophet ﷺ

The pure wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ were so proud of their love and connection to him that they

⁶⁵ Al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), *Sunan al-Tirmidhi*, Book of al-Manaqib (45), Chapter 64, Hadith 4268.

⁶⁶ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of al-Azan (10), Chapter 44, Hadith 680.

⁶⁷ Ahmad (d. 241 AH), *Musnad Ahmad b. Hanbal*, volume 6, page 106.

⁶⁸ Al-'Ajili al-Azhari (d. 1204 AH), *al-Mawahib al-Muhammadiyah bi Sharh al-Shama'il al-Tirmidhiyyah*, volume 2, Page 312.

⁶⁹ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Book of Tafsir (65), Surat al-Fath (48), Chapter 2, Hadith 4886.

⁷⁰ Qutb (d. 1386 AH), *Fi Zilal al-Quran*, in the commentary of 73:2.

could sacrifice every luxury of the world, but would not be prepared for separation from the holy Prophet ﷺ. For example, when the sequence of conquests had begun and the financial situations of the common Muslims of Madinah had improved, the pious wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ also requested for an increase in their maintenance allowance. This was unbearable on the sensitive heart of the holy Prophet ﷺ, and upon that, Allah said:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكَ إِن كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا وَزِينَتَهَا فَتَعَالَيْنَ أُمَتِّعْكُنَّ وَأُسَرِّحْكُنَّ سَرَاحًا جَمِيلًا
وَإِن كُنْتُنَّ تُرِدْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَالْآخِرَةَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَعَدَّ لِلْمُحْسِنَاتِ مِنكُنَّ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ﴿٢٨﴾

“O Prophet, say to your wives: If you seek the life of this world and its embellishment, then come! I shall make a provision for you and release you honourably, but if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the Hereafter, then surely Allah has prepared a great reward for the righteous amongst you.” (Qur’an 33:28-29)⁷¹

When these verses were revealed, first of all, the holy Prophet ﷺ said to ‘A’ishah Siddiqah [ra], “Today, I am about to ask you something. Do not rush into answering it, but discuss it with your parents and then reply.” After that, the holy Prophet ﷺ recited these verses, and ‘A’ishah Siddiqah [ra] spoke out, “Shall I ask my parents regarding this? (My answer is clear), I choose Allah, His Messenger ﷺ and the Hereafter.”⁷² After ‘A’ishah Siddiqah [ra], the other wives also gave the same reply.⁷³ Allah be glorified! Just imagine, how much love the pious wives of the holy Prophet ﷺ had for him that they declined all the luxuries of the mundane life and accepted poverty and starvation, as they could not bear separation from the holy Prophet ﷺ. It is easy to talk the talk, but not everybody is able to walk the walk and practically show how it is done.

The holy Prophet ﷺ granted eleven women the honour of being his wives. Two of his wives died during his lifetime and towards the end of his life, there were nine wives with him at one time. However, the holy Prophet ﷺ established such an exemplary balance in displaying the best content of character towards them and maintaining justice and equality between them, that each wife declared him her ideal and, despite the presence of her co-wives, was not prepared to separate from him. May Allah be well pleased with these fortunate women. *Amin*.



ADDRESSING THE CONCERNS OF THE MUSLIM NATION

At present, the Muslims all over the world are going through emotions of sheer grief and anguish, but this is not the first or even the last of such incidents. This continuity does not appear to be coming to any end, yet on each occasion we end up burning our own properties, spilling the blood of our own brothers and then we become silent declaring this entire activity to be a

⁷¹ Qur’an, Surat al-Ahزاب (33), verses 28-29.

⁷² Sahih Muslim, Book of al-Talaq (19), Chapter 5, Hadith 3769.

⁷³ Al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of al-Tafsir (65), Surat al-Ahزاب (33), Chapter 5, Hadith 4833.

conspiracy of the outsiders. When will that time come when we will strengthen ourselves and not give others the opportunity to profit from their conspiracies against us? For Allah says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

“Indeed Allah does not change the condition of a people, until those people do not bring about a change in themselves.” (Qur'an 13:11)⁷⁴

*State of that nation, 'til today God has not changed;
The nation lost for a clue of itself coming to change.*

In this respect, I wish to present some suggestions here – the first are some short-term measures relating to this issue followed by discussion on themes that relate to long-term projects and approaches – and I request the men and women of knowledge that they write on this subject continuously and abundantly; perhaps, someone's writing is able to awake the Muslim nation from its sleep of negligence.

Short-term measures

1. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) of Muslim states and other bearers of political leadership and authority need to develop a firm practical policy in this regard and effectively present this issue to international bodies and organisations.
2. Muslim rulers need to bring about unity amongst themselves and have trust in their mutual and collective strength; otherwise, just as in Egypt and Libya, each can await his turn.
3. Religious and social leaders need to persuade people, by effective means including verbal and in writing, to remain peaceful and to make them aware of the dangers and damage that can be caused if the path of extremism and violence is pursued.
4. The common Muslims need to communicate with governmental representatives of their locales in person or through letters and make them aware of their sorrow and anger. Furthermore, whilst remaining firmly within the laws of their land, the need to fully demonstrate and record their protest; however, they must remain well away from causing damage or destruction, for their country is itself damaged by violent protests, the image of Islam is further tarnished and instead of gaining the sympathy of others, their hatred is consequently increased. The common folk should be aware the writer of the satanic book Salman Rushdie, the Danish cartoonist and the Dutch MP who produced the film 'Fitna' will all be watching these scenes on their television screens sitting in their secure environments and would be becoming joyous at the sight of Muslims burning their own properties and spilling their own blood. And worst still, they are doing this in the name of their Prophet who actually was a mercy for all the worlds!

⁷⁴ Qur'an, Surat al-Ra'd (Chapter 13), Verse 11.

Advancement in education

The famous British historian Arnold Toynbee⁷⁵ states, "Civilisations declined when their leaders stopped responding creatively."

In this regard, observe the action of our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ when in the fifth year following the Migration (*hijrah*), the Quraysh of Makkah united together all the tribes of Arabia who were enemies of Islam and prepared a mighty army of ten thousand and marched on towards Madinah to launch their attack. When the holy Prophet ﷺ became aware of these circumstances, he called the noble Companions for consultation. Salman al-Farisi [*ra*] suggested, "O Allah's Messenger! In our land of Persia, whenever a large army would embark upon an offensive to attack us, we would stop their forward advance by digging a trench around our city." The holy Prophet ﷺ was pleased with this suggestion, for the word of wisdom is the lost property of the believer. Consequently, the holy Prophet ﷺ ordered for a trench to be dug immediately.

There are quite similar circumstances today whereby non-Muslim forces have attacked the geographic and the ideological borders of the Muslims and there is an on-going attempt to link Islam with terrorism. However, despite the beatings of the last ten years, we have not learnt any lesson.

*Alas! What a disappointment! The goods of the caravan disappeared;
And from the caravan's heart, the sense of loss too disappeared.*

1428 years ago, the holy Prophet ﷺ benefitted from the practical wisdom of the advanced Iranian nation of that time and by digging the trench as a matter of urgency rescued the Muslims from the coming destruction. Similarly, today if the Muslims take benefit from the technology of the advanced nations of this time and attempt to move forward in the fields of economics, science, business and media as a matter of urgency, then in the coming half century they may become able enough to live their lives with dignity in this modern world and no one would be able to say anything against their religion. For the decisions of the future will not now take place on the battlefield; rather, they will be determined in the fields of education and economics.

*If you don't understand, you will cease, O neglectful Muslims!
Your tale will too cease amongst the legends told.*

The importance of education in the first revelation

In the history of religions, the Qur'an is the first book in whose first five verses revealed Allah has not mentioned prayer, fasting, charity or pilgrimage. Rather, alongside His own Lordship, Allah has twice instructed *reading*, twice mentioned *teaching*, once mentioned *the pen* i.e. writing, and in the word '*al-'alaq*', scientific education and research into this physical world has been encouraged. A famous scholar of the modern era, Maurice Bucaille, in his book *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science (La Bible, le Coran et la Science)* writes, "The Qur'anic description of certain stages in the

⁷⁵ Arnold Joseph Toynbee (1889-1975) examined and traced the development and decay of all of the major world civilisations in the historical record in his twelve-volume analysis of the rise and fall of civilisations, *A Study of History*, which became the magnum opus of his work.

development of the embryo corresponds exactly to what we today know about it, and the Qur'an does not contain a single statement that is open to criticism from modern science."⁷⁶

Maurice Bucaille has further commented on the first verses of the first revelation, he writes, "These formations make the egg literally cling to the uterus. This is a discovery of modern times. The act of clinging is described five different times in the Qur'an. Firstly in verses 1 and 2 of sura 96. 'Something which clings' is the translation of the word '*alaq*. It is the original meaning of the word."⁷⁷ The first stage of a human being's development, '*alaq* (i.e. the clinging clot, clotted blood), is of such a high significance that the entire chapter has been named after it, *Surat al-'Alaq* (Chapter 96).

History is witness to the fact that as long as the Muslims occupied themselves in scientific education as well as religious, they remained the super power of the world, and when they turned a blind eye to science, they became disgraced and ignominious. The land of Afghanistan has produced many *muftis*, preachers and scholars of *hadith*, but they have been unable to produce scientists, and as a result they were defeated; since, they could not counter or even match the technology of modern warfare. If they possessed science and technology, the situation today would naturally be different.

*Had we not forgotten the lesson of the Qur'an;
Time would not have shown the world this time.*

The issue of Muslim unity

The Muslims in the world today face oppression and difficulty and it is said that the Muslims are not united and they do not follow Islam and that is why they are a disgraced people. I do differ partly with this statement. Clearly, one reason for this downfall is the one mentioned but it is not the only one. In the early period of Islam, the Muslims remained oppressed for thirteen years in Makkah. What cruelty and barbarity is there that the likes of Sumayyah [*ra*], Yasir [*ra*] and Bilal [*ra*] were not subjected to it?

Is there anyone who can claim that the Muslims were oppressed in Makkah because they lacked unity and did not practice Islam? Definitely not! In reality, to put an end to the oppression and cruelty of that time there was a need for manpower; since, those were the days of the sword and fighting occurred on a one-to-one basis and the Muslims did not have enough manpower, so they remained under oppression and tyranny. However, when the Muslims gained and increased their manpower in Madinah, oppressing the Muslims became increasingly difficult.

Dear readers! In order to put an end to the tyranny and oppression of that time there was a need for manpower; however, to prevent cruelty in this advanced age there is a dire need for science and technology to be pursued. Until we do not move forward in science and technology, we will continue to be disgraced and humiliated like this. In short, there is only one way of getting out of

⁷⁶ Bucaille (1920-1998), *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science (La Bible, le Coran et la Science)*, page 205. *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science* is the outcome of a long and sustained effort of Dr Maurice Bucaille who was a well-known French medical practitioner, member of the French Society of Egyptology and an author. He also worked as the chief of the Surgical Clinic, University of Paris. This work of his is considered one of the most important ever on Islam and science discourse.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, page 204.

oppression and that is to move forward and pursue science and technology alongside unity of the *Ummah* (Muslim nation) and teachings of the religion of Islam.

*A nation rises by the realm of the intellect so enlightened;
Intellect enlightens by the flame of education so brightened.*

Rise of the Jews in the past century

In the previous century, six million Jews were murdered and they did not have their own state. However, whilst remaining steadfast on their religion, they progressed in education, business, media, science and technology, and today are an influential voice among the advanced nations of the world. Moreover, in the creation of the state of Israel, a scientist, Chaim Azriel Weizmann, played a pivotal and important role who was able to devise a process to produce acetone – a vital ingredient of cordite used in explosive propellants – for the British munitions industry during World War I. Due to his remarkable work in providing a solution to the problem that was being faced by the British, he played a crucial role in the negotiations that led up to the government's Balfour Declaration of 1917, authored by Arther James Balfour, 1st Earl of Balfour, which was an official letter from the British Foreign Office addressed to Lord Rothschild promising the Jews a 'national home' in Palestine, then part of the Ottoman Empire. As a result, when the state of Israel was established, Weizmann became its first President.

Similarly, Dr Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam became the President of India due to his remarkable endeavours and achievements in the field of science. India is a country of Hindus; however, due to their capabilities and abilities, its President was a Muslim and Prime Minister a Sikh.

If the Muslims in Great Britain properly utilise their intellect and strength, it is possible that a Muslim can become a future Prime Minister of this country. If a Muslim can become a Lord, a Member of Parliament or a Minister, he can surely become a Prime Minister if he has the necessary abilities and credentials. The population of the Jews in Great Britain is about three hundred thousand, yet the number of Jewish Members of Parliament is more than sixty. On the other hand, it is estimated that there are nearly two million Muslims in Great Britain. If we had the correct representative proportionally in Parliament, then maybe there would not have been enough votes required for Tony Blair to attack Iraq.

Some Muslims hold the view that it is against the teachings of Islam to participate in the government or the political process of this country. They are requested to study Surat Yusuf (Chapter 12) of the Qur'an and examine how Prophet Yusuf (Joseph [as]) took the responsibility of the treasury and ministry of finance of a non-Muslim ruler of a non-Muslim state, and the manner, full of wisdom, with which he served Islam is unique and unparalleled.

Islam's expectation from the Muslim Youth of the West

The story of Prophet Yusuf [ra] and that of Chaim Weizmann are worthy of close attention. There is not much expected from the state-leaders of the Muslim world. However, there is a ray of hope from the Muslim youth of Europe and America. If they can manage themselves, remain

steadfast on the teachings of Islam and progress in religious and worldly sciences, then the fate of the Muslim nation can change. This is not just a mere sentiment, for I have many examples from history that show that the Muslim youth, both male and female, have played immense roles in confronting tyranny and taking the Muslims out of a state of disgrace.

An example from the Qur'an is presented here. The tribe of Banu Isra'il (Children of Israel) were bound in the chains of slavery to Pharaoh in Egypt and were living a life of misery and suffering. When Prophet Musa [as] began confronting the disbelief and tyranny of Pharaoh, in the beginning of this struggle who were the people that stood shoulder to shoulder with Prophet Musa [as]? It is mentioned in Verse 83 of Surat Yunus that no one believed in Prophet Musa [as], out of fear that Pharaoh would persecute them, except for a few youth from among his people. (10:83)⁷⁸ Later, after witnessing their steadfastness, the remainder of Banu Isra'il then believed in Prophet Musa [as].

Let us now ponder over the revolution that our beloved Prophet ﷺ brought to the Arabian peninsula over fourteen hundred years ago. The initial strugglers in this revolution were also the youthful men and women.

There were only a few individuals who were older than the holy Prophet ﷺ at the time of accepting Islam in Makkah. The remaining eighty percent were either teenagers or in their twenties. Ja'far b. Abi Talib [ra], Sa'd b. Abi Waqas [ra], Mus'ab b. 'Umayr [ra], 'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud [ra], Zubayr b. al-'Awwam [ra] and Talha [ra] etc. were all under the age of twenty years when they accepted Islam. 'Umar b. al-Khattab [ra], 'Abd al-Rahman b. 'Awf [ra], Bilal al-Habshi [ra], Suhayb al-Rumi [ra], and Sa'id b. Zayd [ra] etc. were all between the age of twenty and thirty years at the time of accepting Islam.

Furthermore, the role of the youthful women is also apparent in this movement. Asma' bint Abi Bakr [ra] was sixteen years old when she accepted Islam and she was the one who, despite placing her life in danger, used to take food for her father, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq [ra], and the holy Prophet ﷺ whilst they were in the cave of Thawr. Fatimah b. al-Khattab [ra], the sister of 'Umar b. al-Khattab [ra], was twenty five years old when she accepted Islam and she was the one who, despite being repeatedly beaten and injured by 'Umar [ra] said to him, "O brother! You can end my life but you cannot take Islam out of my heart." Impressed by this sheer steadfastness; the twenty six year old 'Umar [ra] also found himself compelled to accept Islam.

Freedom of speech

Although the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, as well as the American President, Barack Obama, have both condemned this film; nevertheless, they declared the law of freedom of expression to be fair and proper. This is a strange spectacle of the twenty first century that one thing can be worthy of condemnation, yet at the very same time, it can be just and correct. There is a law to please just one individual, but there is no law against the one individual who breaks the hearts of one and half billion Muslims and incites them towards violence and extremism!

⁷⁸ Qur'an, Surat Yunus (Chapter 10), Verse 83.

*Wisdom is named madness and madness is wisdom;
The beauty of your wonderworking may do as it will.*

It is quite clear that the right to freedom of expression is not absolute. Therefore, even in this case the West should set down some restrictions and boundaries to ensure this freedom carries responsibility; since, the freedom of an expression that may cause harm to any innocent soul cannot be tolerated. However, in this case, many lives and possessions have been devastated. Therefore, this issue is worthy of urgent attention so that a handful of extremists, under the pretence of this right of freedom of speech, do not destroy the peace and harmony of the whole society.

Freedom of writing and speech is considered a significant issue in today's age; whereas, it really began when Allah expressed His will to create the first human, Prophet Adam [as] as a vicegerent, and the angels responded, "Will You place therein one who will cause corruption and bloodshed, while we glorify You with praise and exalt you?" (*Qur'an* 2:30)⁷⁹ The world cannot produce a greater example of freedom of speech than this!

When the angels exercise their right of freedom of speech to Allah – who is the absolute Omnipotent, the totally Independent and who is the Creator and Master of everything, not answerable to anyone – and reveal their apprehensions to Him, Allah does not show any displeasure. To note, however, that when someone adopts a word or a manner of expression for the holy Prophet ﷺ in which there is any remote sign of insolence, then that particular individual has been threatened with the destruction of his faith and noble actions. (*Qur'an* 49:2)⁸⁰

Islam is the first to declare freedom of speech, but for that, specific limitations have been imposed. For example, Islam binds its followers not to verbally abuse the deities of others and neither to adopt a defamatory approach to them, as Allah says:

وَلَا تَسُبُّوا الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَيَسُبُّوا اللَّهَ عَدْوًا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

"And (O Muslims) do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest they abuse Allah in animosity, without knowledge." (*Qur'an* 6:108)⁸¹

Final message to the youth

My dear young Muslim brothers and sisters! Deeply love Allah and your beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ; try to follow the path of Islam; and progress in all aspects of life, in particular advance in politics, media, science and technology. If any one of you is successful in inventing something crucially important, then I testify that by looking at your unblemished character, the non-Muslim masses of Europe and America will honour you and by looking at your scientific research, non-Muslim governments will also respect you.

⁷⁹ *Qur'an*, Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter 2), Verse 30.

⁸⁰ *Qur'an*, Surat al-Hujurat (Chapter 49), Verse 2.

⁸¹ *Qur'an*, Surat al-An'am (Chapter 6), Verse 108.

*Be bold, dear youngsters, so the ship exits the shrouding whirlpool;
May it not be, that the nightingale departs the flower garden yearning.*

To research for the cure of illnesses that kill; to produce scientists for the protection and development of state; to fulfil basic needs of the people; and to ponder and examine the universe for the advancement, improvement and ease of humanity are all great forms of worship. In order for the Muslims to be able to live with dignity in the world today, gaining knowledge of science and technology is not only essential, but the foremost obligation (*fard*) and highest form of worship (*ibadah*). In relation to this great worship, the extent of our negligence is such that non-Muslims have landed on the moon, yet we are still faced with the issue of finding and sighting the moon! Non-Muslim nations have reached skies of science and technology through research and study, yet we are here on earth simply chopping one another's legs keeping all of us down!

*Alas! What a disappointment! The goods of the caravan disappeared;
And from the caravan's heart, the sense of loss too disappeared.*

For as long as the Muslims pondered and researched into the universe, they continued to grant prosperity to the world by favouring it with new inventions and the world in return sang songs in their honour. However, when the Muslims turned away from deep contemplation and study, then disgrace and humiliation became their destiny.

*For being Muslim, they were honoured simply in their age;
Disgraced are we, for abandoning the Qur'an in our age.
Had we not forgotten the lesson of the Qur'an;
Time would not have shown the world this time.*



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