

Surah Al-Kahf

AND THE MODERN AGE



IMRAN N. HOSEIN

Although his pioneering work entitled 'Jerusalem in the Qur'an' (written in 2002) has become a best-seller with translations in many languages, 'Surah al-Kahf and the Modern Age' (written in 2007) is likely to be recognized in the years that lie ahead, as Imran N. Hosein's most important work.

The book begins with a fascinating chapter on 'The Qur'an and Time' which convincingly explains the enigmatic Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him): "when Dajjal is released he would live on earth for 40 days; one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and all his days (i.e., all the rest of his days) like your days". (Sahih Muslim)

That explanation and analysis paves the way for the book to reveal, for the first time, the link between four parables/narratives located in the Surah and such major Signs of the Last Day as Dajjal the false Messiah and Gog & Magog.

Indeed the heart of the book is located in the unique interpretation and analysis of those four parables/narratives: 'The Young Men in the Cave', 'The Rich Man and the Poor Man', 'The Encounter of Moses with Khidr', and the story of 'Dhul Qarnain', and the explanation of their links with Dajjal and with Gog & Magog.

The book makes a bold and pioneering attempt to so interpret this Surah of the blessed Qur'an that the reality of the world in which we now live is dramatically explained. It may take some time before Imran's interpretation of the Qur'an concerning the reality of the modern world is accepted by the world of Islamic scholarship, but acceptance is inevitable.

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Surah Al-Kahf And The Modern Age
Imran N. Hosein





**SÛRAH AL-KAHF AND
THE MODERN AGE**

Ansari Memorial Series

SŪRAH AL-KAHF AND THE MODERN AGE

An analytical study of Sūrah al-Kahf of the Qur'an that seeks to explain the *reality* of a mysterious European Jewish-Christian alliance that is waging unjust war on Islam and oppressing Muslims while pursuing a sinister global agenda on behalf of the Euro-Jewish State of Israel.



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Masjid Jāmi'ah, City of San Fernando
Trinidad and Tobago

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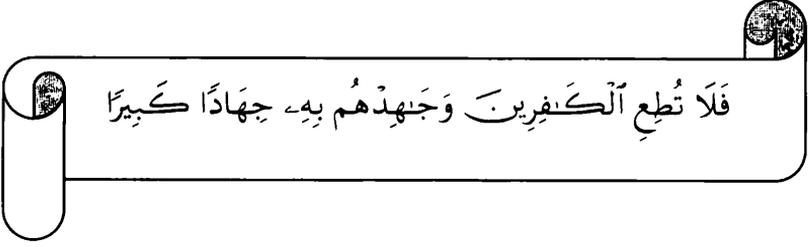
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فَلَا تُطِيعِ الْكٰفِرِيْنَ وَجٰهِدْهُمْ بِهٖٓ جِهَادًا كَبِيْرًا

“Therefore listen not to the Unbelievers, but strive against them with the utmost strenuousness, with the (Qur’ān)”

(Sūrah al-Furqān, 25:52)

Abū Darda reported that Allah’s Messenger said, “If anyone memorizes the first ten verses of Sūrah al-Kahf, he would be protected from Dajjāl.”

(Sahīh Muslim)

“He who among you will survive to see him (Dajjāl) should recite over him the opening verses of Sūrah al-Kahf.”

(Sahīh Muslim)

“He who recites three verses at the beginning of al-Kahf would be protected from the trial of the Dajjāl.”

(Tirmīdhī)

Abu Sa’īd al-Khudri reports that the Prophet said: “Whoever recites Sūrah al-Kahf on Jum’ah (i.e., ‘Friday’ of the pagan world) would have illumination from the light (of the Sūrah) from one Jum’ah to the next.”

(Nasā’i, Baihaqī, Hākīm)





*For my beloved wife Aisha,
I built a house for her here on earth,
May Allah Most Kind build for her one in Heaven. Āmīn!*



FOREWORD

Shaikh Imran N. Hosein's two books entitled *Sūrah al-Kahf: Text, Translation and Modern Commentary*, and *Sūrah al-Kahf and the Modern Age*, are useful additions to the dearth of English literature on *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (exegeses or commentaries on the Last Testament) and *Ta'wīl al-Qur'ān* (i.e., interpretation and analysis of that Holy Book). The books are timely because they place the unfolding of contemporary historical developments in perspective, and serve as a beacon for Muslims in general and the Muslim youth in particular.

Shaikh Imrān's books must be read in the context of what he alludes to as "the reality of a mysterious European Jewish-Christian alliance that is waging unjust war on Islam and oppressing Muslims while pursuing a sinister global agenda on behalf of the Euro-Jewish State of Israel." Already there has been a call in one European country to ban the Noble *Qur'ān*, and not too long ago, in that very country, there was an onslaught against *Sayyidunā* Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the form of outrageous cartoons.

Sayyidunā Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the first *Mufasssir* (commentator) of the Noble *Qur'ān*, and this tradition of explaining Allah's *Kalām* (Word) continued post the Prophetic era. This accounts for the numerous *Qur'ānic* commentaries that are available in Arabic, Farsi and Urdu which are, however, inaccessible to the vast majority of English-speaking Muslims who reside outside the confines of the Muslim world.

Shaikh Imrān's lucid commentary, analysis and interpretation of

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Sūrah al-Kahf in the English language is pertinent since *Sayyidunā* Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) singled this particular *Sūrah* of the *Noble Qur'ān* to be read every day of *Jumu'ah* (i.e., Friday) without fail. The reason for this is that *Sūrah al-Kahf* encapsulates signs of the End of Time and some of the mysteries that we ought to reflect upon.

Before delving into the explanations of the four parables, namely, the Companions of the Cave, the owner of the two gardens, the encounter of *Sayyidunā* Musa (peace be upon him) with *Sayyidunā* Khidr (peace be upon him) and Dhū al-Qarnain's rule over the world, Shaikh Imrān takes the reader on a spiritual and philosophical journey for the sake of unravelling the true import of the Qur'anic concept of Time. It was necessary for him to do so in order that the mysteries in the parables might be fully discerned.

Sūrah al-Kahf, according to *Sayyidunā* Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him), contains the signs required for the believers' defense and protection from *Dajjāl*, the false Messiah or Anti-Christ. Shaikh Imrān sheds new light on the subject of *Dajjāl* and gives the reader a comprehensive insight into manifestation of evil at the end of history. He graphically describes the historical process of the appearance of the ominous *Ya'jūj* and *Ma'jūj* (Gog and Magog), the havoc they would cause in the world, and their eventual destruction.

The merit of Shaikh Imrān's comprehensive interpretation and analysis of *Sūrah al-Kahf* lies in the fact that he follows the tradition of the classical Qur'anic commentators by making cross references to other relevant Qur'anic verses and the *Ahadith* of *Sayyidunā* Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

FORWARD

As an accomplished scholar of Islam, International Relations and Philosophy, Shaikh Imrān's treatment of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is an eye opener for Muslims and all those who wish to see with 'two eyes' (i.e., the external and the internal). His insight into world politics is phenomenal. He convincingly succeeds in unmasking the Truth from falsehood for the purpose of making the reader grasp the *reality* of the world today.

Shaikh Imrān is to be commended for shedding new light on *Sūrah al-Kahf*. His two books will undoubtedly assist Muslims residing in this mundane world to see with 'two eyes' the unfolding of history within the context of the portents of the Last Age. Only then would Muslims be in a position to reclaim their rightful place in history and play a meaningful role in disseminating the teachings and values of Islam in this godless and decadent world.

I pray that Allah *ta'ala* might bless these two books on *Sūrah al-Kahf* that have already been completed, and might bless with success Shaikh Imrān's efforts to complete the two additional volumes of his proposed quartet of books on *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the blessed Qur'an, i.e., *Sūrah al-Kahf and Dajjāl the false Messiah*, and *Sūrah al-Kahf and Gog and Magog. Āmīn!*

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25 August 2007

A COMMENT ON THE BOOK 'SURAH AL-KAHF AND THE MODERN AGE':

We live in an age in which the vast majority of the *Ulama* (religious scholars) of Islam seem to have forgotten the inner dimension of the Qur'anic revelation. Even the Sufis in the West are now busy with mystification, while those in the East seem more concerned with magic. Their treatment of our earlier sages is no better than hagiographic. They do not perceive history as an ever-renewed struggle of good against evil – hence their inability to read and understand the movement of history, as well as to anticipate and respond to the challenges of *those forces which move history*. This is true for both the institutions of *Shari'ah* (i.e., the externally imposed sacred law) and *Tariqah* (i.e., the path through which that external law is internalised).

The one astounding exception in this dismal landscape has been Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. But lo and behold! he too remained undetected for over 80 years, for although his readers remained awestruck at his genius, they remained largely impotent in deriving such spiritual insight from his works as would enable them to explain this moment in history. Imran N. Hosein's *Surah al-Kahf and the Modern Age* can claim to be the first to notice that failure, and it has duly acknowledged that debt to Iqbal.

While Iqbal has alluded to the 'key' which opens the door to understanding, Imran N. Hosein has opened wide the door to the understanding of the ultimate manifestation of evil at the end of history. We have always believed that every aspect of evil has

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been clearly laid out before our very eyes in the holy words of Allah and His Messenger. So, when Allah said 'Read!', we did indeed read, but alas with one eye closed. *Surah al-Kahf and the Modern Age* is a practical demonstration of an all-round epistemology that helps us to read with both eyes, appearance and reality, sociology and history, past, present and future. Indeed, never before has the subject of epistemology been given such importance as in Imran N. Hosein's *Surah al-Kahf and the Modern Age*.

Surah al-Kahf and the Modern Age does more than simply introduce such major signs of the Last Day as *Dajjal* the false Messiah and *Yajooj* and *Majooj* (Gog and Magog). This book, as well as all other books of Shaykh Imran Hosein, describe in finest details the entire historical process from the time these monsters emerged, up to the time of their final destruction. Therefore it touches every aspect of life that is, and will be corrupted by them, in particular politics and economics. These enemies of Allah will allow the *Ijtima* (gathering) of the *Tabligh Jamaat*, the gatherings of *Dhikr* in the Sufi *Khanqas*, the breast-beating and wailing of the Shias, and the mayhem of the Wahhabis for, perhaps, some more time. But they will never allow meddling in politics and economics, as though to say, "Do anything you like, but do not touch the systems of production and consumption." So when Allah declares *Jihad* against economic corruption, our response has always been inadequate - individual at times, but never collective.

Iqbal may have claimed a reconstruction of Islamic religious thought. However, the task of reviving Islamic civilization as a living phenomenon and as a dynamic actor in the historical process is still ahead of us. What remains now is for our readers, and the youth in particular, to assimilate the comprehensive literature produced by

A COMMENT ON THE BOOK

Shaikh Imran N. Hoscin, and spread this message to all circles of Islamic activity. I wish I could memorize all the subtle arguments in the book. It must be read again and again, especially with emphasis on epistemology. There are hundreds of hagiographical treatment to Iqbal's mind, philosophy and contribution in Bangla, Urdu and English, but I marvel at the substance, penetration and balanced approach that I find in your brief treatment.

Muhammad Alamgir (Sydney, Australia) June 2007

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ANSĀRI MEMORIAL SERIES

The Ansāri Memorial Series is published in honor of the distinguished Islamic scholar, philosopher and *Sūfi Shaikh*, Maulāna Dr. Muhammad Fadlur Rahmān Ansāri (1914–1974). Publication of the Series began in 1997 to commemorate his 25th death anniversary.

Maulāna Ansāri was an Islamic scholar, a teacher and a spiritual guide who spent his entire life struggling in the sacred cause of Islām in what had become an essentially godless world. His labors in that sacred cause took him on travels completely around the world several times on Islamic lecture-tours in the 1950's to 1970's. He would leave his new home in Karachi (having migrated from India when Pakistān came into being in 1947) and travel west, and then return to his home months later coming from the east.

Maulāna was a graduate of Aligarh Muslim University, India, where he studied Philosophy and Religion. He derived his Islamic philosophical and spiritual thought from the Islamic scholar, Dr. Muhammad Iqbāl. Iqbāl was the author of that masterpiece of Islamic scholarship, *“The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islām.”* Maulāna Ansāri's great work of Islamic scholarship, *“The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society”*, itself constituted a response to Iqbāl's call for *“reconstruction of religious thought.”*

He received his spiritual training from Maulāna ‘Abdul ‘Aleem Siddiqui, an Islamic scholar, *Sūfi Shaikh*, and roving missionary of Islām. Most important of all, he received the *Sūfi* epistemology from

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both Iqbāl and Maulāna Siddiqui and delivered it to his students. The *Sūfi* epistemology recognized that when Truth is embraced (i.e., Islām is accepted) and is lived with sincerity and devotion to Allah Most High, it eventually enters the heart (i.e., Islām grows into *Imān*). In the *Hadīth al-Qudsi* it is reported that Allah Most High declared: “My heavens and My earth are too small to contain Me, but the heart of My faithful servant can contain Me.” This *Hadīth* vividly describes the implications of the entry of Truth into the heart.

When Truth enters the heart, then a divine light (*nūrullah*) also eventually enters, and that light permits the believer’s powers of observation and internal intuitive spiritual insight to penetrate beyond the ‘external’ appearances of things to reach their ‘internal’ reality. At this stage of the growth of Truth in the heart the believer now sees with two eyes – the ‘external’ and the ‘internal’ (*Dajjāl*, the False Messiah, sees with only one eye – the ‘external’). The believer who pursues a ‘*Jihād fillah*’ (i.e., a struggle ‘in’ Allah) is blessed with growth from *Imān* to the stage of *Ihsān*. This is also known as *Tasawwuf*.

It is only with inner light in the discerning heart of a true believer that the continuously unfolding Signs of Allah (*Ayātullah*) can be recognized, and only thus can the world today be read and correctly understood. Those who perceive the *reality* of the world today know that we live in the age of *Fitan*, i.e., the Last Age or the age of *al-Qiyāmah* (which would first culminate with the end of history and the triumph of Islam, and then, subsequently, with the end of the world and its transformation into a new world).

Maulāna Ansāri devoted the last ten years of his life (1964–1974) to the establishment of the Alecmiyah Institute of Islamic Studies in Karachi. He struggled at Alecmiyah to train a new generation of

scholars of Islām who would be spiritually and intellectually capable of using the Qur`ān and *Ahadīth* to understand the mysterious modern age, and to then respond appropriately to its awesome challenges. Out of his labors emerged scholars such as Dr. Waffie Muhammad and Imran N. Hosein (Trinidad, West Indies), Dr. Abul Fadl Mohsin Ebrahim, Dr. Abbas Qasim (*marhūm*), Muhammad Ali Khan and others (Durban, South Africa), Siddiq Ahmad Nasir, Raouf Zaman and Muhammad Saffie (Guyana, South America), Ali Mustafa (Suriname, South America), Basheer Ahmad Keeno (Mauritius), and so many others who graduated from the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies, Karachi, Pakistan.

The Ansāri Memorial Series consists of the following books, all written by one of *Maulānā's* students:

- ❖ Jerusalem in the Qur`ān – an Islamic View of the Destiny of Jerusalem;
- ❖ Sūrah al-Kahf: Text Translation and Modern Commentary;
- ❖ Sūrah al-Kahf and the Modern Age;
- ❖ The Religion of Abraham and the State of Israel — A View from the Qur`ān;
- ❖ Signs of the Last Day in the Modern Age;
- ❖ The Importance of the Prohibition of Ribā in Islām;
- ❖ The Prohibition of Ribā in the Qur`ān and Sunnah;
- ❖ Dreams in Islām – A Window to Truth and to the Heart;
- ❖ The Caliphate, the Hejāz, and the Saudi-Wahhabi Nation-State;
- ❖ The Strategic Significance of the Fast of Ramadan, and *Isrā* and *M'irāj*;
- ❖ One Jamā`at - One Amīr: The Organization of a Muslim Community in the Age of Fitan.

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The Series, which depict at least some of the ‘fruits’ of the ‘tree’ that was planted by the Maulāna, is devoted to an effort of understanding the ‘reality’ of the world today, explaining it accurately, and responding to its unprecedented challenges appropriately.

Three new books are now included in the Series. Two of them, on *Sūrah al-Kahf*, form part of a proposed quartet of books on that *Sūrah*. Other books on *Dajjāl* and on Gog and Magog would complete the quartet *Insha Allah*. The third new book in the Series is comprised of a collection of essays on the theme of ‘Signs of the Last Day in the Modern Age’.

The Series will be incomplete without a biography of that great scholar himself – his life, his work and his thought. Work has already commenced on that biography.

Maulāna Ansāri honored his own *Shaikh*, Maulāna Muhammad ‘Abdul ‘Aleem Siddiqui, by establishing the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies in Pakistan, and by publishing the Aleemiyah Memorial Series. The Ansāri Memorial Series represents a humble effort to follow in that noble tradition.



PREFACE

Praise be to Allah Most High through Whose Kindness *Sūrah al-Kahf and the Modern Age* is now published. May He bless this humble work to reach Muslims in many parts of the world. May it assist them to grow closer to the Qur`ān and to this *Sūrah* – especially every day of *Jum`ah* when the *Sūrah* is to be recited for protection from the *Fitnah* of *Dajjāl*. May it refresh their memory of the meaning of the *Sūrah* and, more importantly, constantly deepen their understanding of the *Sūrah*. *Amīn!*

As war on Islam intensifies and the time approaches when the imposter Euro-Jewish State of Israel makes its bid to become the *ruling* State in the world, and *Dajjāl* the false Messiah would rule the world from Jerusalem and declare that he is the true Messiah, I fear that there would be many who would ban books on the Qur`ān. I therefore pray most humbly, and ask my gentle readers to also kindly join in the prayer, that Allah Most High might protect books (such as this humble quartet of books on *Sūrah al-Kahf*) that employ the blessed Qur`ān to expose those in the godless modern age who are waging unjust war on Islam and Muslims. *Āmīn*.

A mysterious Euro-world-order with a Jewish-Christian alliance wages war on Islam on behalf of the Euro-Jewish State of Israel. If there is any merit at all in this book it can, perhaps, be located in its role as a very humble pioneering work that might possibly inspire others, more competent than this writer, to a more comprehensive effort in using this *Sūrah* of the Qur`ān to explain that world today.

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The first volume of four, containing '*Text Translation and Modern Commentary of Sūrah al-Kahf*', made its appearance at the same time as this main work on the subject entitled '*Sūrah al-Kahf and the Modern Age*', and was meant to function as a companion volume to this main work. I pray that I might be able to write additional volumes on this subject, *Insha Allah*, in order to attempt a more comprehensive modern interpretation of the *Ahadīth* and Qur'anic verses dealing (directly and indirectly) with the critically important topics of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, and of Gog and Magog.

The writing of the first two books on *Sūrah al-Kahf* was kindly sponsored in the names of Rabia Aboobakar Hussein Jakhura and Aboobakar Hussein Jakhura of Malawi in Africa, Abdul Majid Kader Sultan and Fatimah Abdullah of Malaysia, and Hajjah Haniffa Bte Omar Khan Sourattee and Hajjah Mariam Bte Fakir Mohammed of Singapore.

May Allah Most Kind bless them all. *Āmīn!*

Imran N. Hosein
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
June 2007



CHAPTER ONE ﴿—

Introduction

This book analyses and interprets *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān in an attempt to explain the *reality* of the world in the modern age. It is written for the benefit of those who already believe in the Qur`ān as the revealed word of the one true God. Those who do not believe in the Qur`ān, or who reject its claim to be a divine revelation, are invited to prove their claim by responding to the 1400 year-old challenge to produce a chapter like any in the Holy Book.

We can therefore begin by directing attention to the declaration made by the Qur`ān that its primary function is to *explain all things*:

..... وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبَيِّنًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ ﴿



“... And We have sent down to thee (*O Muhammad*) the Book (*i.e., the Qur`ān*) which explains all things”

(Qur`ān, al-Nahl, 16:89)

Muslims sometimes forget that no one can penetrate the *reality* of the modern age in which we now live without explanation and guidance provided by the Qur`ān. This remains true for globalization,

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international politics, the world economy, international monetary affairs, the increasing prosperity of those who belong to or support the modern Euro-Jewish/Euro-Christian world-order, and the increasing poverty and destitution of those who resist Euro-Jewish/Euro-Christian rule. It remains true of the modern feminist revolution. And it is true in respect of the return of the Jews to the Holy Land to reclaim it as their own, the restoration of a State of Israel (in the Holy Land some 2000 years after Allah Most High had ordained its destruction), and the imminent assumption by Israel of the status of 'ruling state' of the world.

Yet he who does not grasp the *reality* of the world today can never be certain that he is rightly guided, and hence cannot function as a reliable guide for others. The predicament of Muslims today is that most leaders do not comprehend *reality*, and are hence themselves profoundly misguided. The true servants of Allah Most High, on the other hand, who are blessed with knowledge of *reality*, are either banned from teaching, or are demonized, marginalized and persecuted to such an extent that they are unable to function as guides. Therefore their guidance hardly ever reaches the masses of Muslims. The scholar of Islam who now attempts with spiritual insight to interpret the blessed Qur`ān and the Ahadīth of Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) to explain today's mysterious world is confronted with another serious problem. His internally-blind peers shun him, and the seriousness and integrity of his scholarship is questioned.

CHAPTER ONE ﴿— Introduction

This book confirms those who comprehend the *reality* of the world today to be a people who have not only studied and understood the explanation and guidance of the Qur`ān but, in particular, of *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān, as it explains the modern age. They also recognize that this *Sūrah* must be recited on every day of *Jum`ah* (i.e., Friday) for protection from the awesome tests and trials of this age.

This book argues that religious knowledge imparted in today`s traditional institutions of higher Islamic learning (i.e., *the Dār al-Ulūm*) is insufficient to penetrate the Qur`anic explanation of the *reality* of the world today. In addition to the perennial truth delivered through traditional religious knowledge, the scholars of Islam need to access ‘strategic knowledge’. Such knowledge is delivered through the medium of what the Qur`ān describes as *al-Basīrah* (i.e., internal intuitive spiritual insight) and through the adoption of a critical approach to the study of modern thought that has come from modern, essentially godless western civilization. This is so because the supreme challenge to Islam and to the religious way of life has come from that civilization.

We argue that unless the scholars are blessed with spiritual insight (in addition, of course, to knowledge that is externally derived), unless they see with the ‘light’ of Allah, the world would usually deceive them. This is so because it is in the very nature of modern western civilization that ‘appearance’ and ‘reality’ are often quite different from each other. The road to hell, for example, is deceptively presented to appear as the road to heaven (i.e., industrialization, modernization, progress and prosperity) and *vice*

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versa, exactly as prophesied by Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*).

All through the history of Islam it has been the authentic *Sufi Shuyūkh* (Shaikhs), more than any others, who have walked the path which led to spiritual insight, and they, more than any other, have succeeded in penetrating the internal *reality* of things. Yet we live in an age in which the authentic *Sufi Shuyūkh* (Shaikhs), such as my distinguished teacher of blessed memory, Maulāna Dr. Muhammad Fazlur Rahman Ansāri (1914-1974), and his distinguished teacher and refulgent lantern of spiritual magnetism, Maulāna Muhammad ‘Abd al-‘Aleem Siddiqui (1892 -1954), are the target of vicious and sustained attacks.

This book also reminds that there are those amongst mankind whose hearts have been so sealed by Allah Most High that they can never understand the Qur’ān:

﴿ وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنْ ذُكِّرَ بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِ فَأَعْرَضَ عَنْهَا وَنَسِيَ مَا قَدَّمَتْ يَدَاهُ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا
وَإِنْ تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَى فَلَنْ يَهْتَدُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

“And who could exceed the wickedness of he to whom his Lord-God’s messages are conveyed, and who thereupon turns away from them, forgetting all his accumulated (*evil*) deeds?

CHAPTER ONE ﴿— Introduction

Behold, over their hearts have We laid veils that prevent them from grasping the truths (*revealed in this Qur`ān*); and into their ears (*We have placed*) deafness; and though you may call them to the (*true*) guidance (*of this Qur`ān*), they will never embrace it.

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf, 18:57)

WHAT IS THE QUR`ANIC EXPLANATION OF THE 'REALITY' OF THE AGE IN WHICH WE NOW LIVE?

In the process of analyzing *Sūrah al-Kahf* we are led to the conclusion that the world now exists in the Last Age (i.e., the age of *al-Qiyāmah*), and that the dominant actors of the modern age are *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, and Gog and Magog. That is a conclusion of tremendous importance since it confirms that we now live in an age that is deceptive, godless, oppressive, and fraught with unprecedented dangers and peril.

Our view, and Allah Knows best, is the 'Last Age' began when Allah Most High changed the direction of prayer (*Qiblah*) for all believers, from Jerusalem to Makkah. The *Qiblah* in Jerusalem was the sacred temple (*Masjid al-Aqsā*) which Prophet Solomon (*alaihi al-Salām*) built, and which held a sacred rock. And the *Qiblah* in Makkah was the sacred temple (*Masjid al-Harām* or *K'abah*) which Prophet Abraham (*alaihi al-Salām*) built and which also held a sacred stone. This change in *Qibla* occurred some seventeen months after the migration of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) (*Hijrah*) from Makkah to Madina.

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As a direct consequence of this change in *Qiblah* the world witnessed the birth a new community (*i.e.*, *Ummah*) within the religion of Abraham (*i.e.*, *Millah*) under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*). This Muslim *Ummah* replaced the Israelites as the new ‘chosen’ community representative of the true religion of Abraham (*peace be upon him*). As a consequence of the Jewish rejection of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) as a true Prophet of the One God, that Israelite religious community (*Banū Isrāīl*) lost whatever had remained of its validity.

The Jews were prepared to recognize Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) as a Prophet sent to the Arabs. But they adamantly rejected the claim that an Arab Prophet could be sent to those (*i.e.*, Jews) who were the “chosen people of the Lord-God”! Rather, they insisted that none but a Jew could be sent as a Prophet over the Jews.

It was as a direct result of Jewish rejection of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*), and of the Qur`ān that was revealed to him, that Allah Most High released *Dajjāl*, the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, as well as Gog and Magog into the world at that time. And so the Last Age appropriately commenced in the lifetime of the Last Prophet, Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*), and that is the explanation for his famous declaration which he made while holding up two of his fingers side by side with each other:

Narrated Sahl bin Sad: I saw Allah’s Apostle pointing with his index and middle fingers, saying, “The time of my advent and the (Last) Hour are like

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these two fingers. The great catastrophe will overwhelm everything. I and the Last Day are like these two (fingers).”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

No one can explain or respond to the challenges of the Last Age without a proper insight into the subjects of *Dajjāl* and of Gog and Magog. What this book demonstrates is that *Sūrah al-Kahf* constitutes the key to the understanding of those subjects. Hence this *Sūrah* explains the strange modern age that continues to unfold so ominously.

The next conclusion to which we have arrived as a result of our study of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is that survival of faith in Islam is not possible unless the believers take steps to disconnect from the godless cities of the modern age and strive to establish Islam in the remote countryside. This was the view of the great Turkish scholar of Islam, *Badiuzzamān Saīd Nursi*. The Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse Tung also had a similar view concerning the methodology of his revolutionary struggle. For our part we propose a strategy of establishing Islam at a micro-level in remotely-located Muslim Villages where Muslim women and children would be shielded from the oppression, godlessness, decadence and anarchy that is overtaking the world.

The epistemologically-challenged scholars of Islam of the modern age advocate the exactly opposite view. They claim that Muslims have an obligation to remain a functional part of the modern world and should follow them in establishing residence in the grand

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cities of the modern age in order to play their part in guiding mankind to the right path.

SŪRAH AL-KAHF, THE JEWS, AND THE LAST AGE

Sūrah al-Kahf has a very special link with the Jews and with the Last Age. Every Jew and Christian should be interested in understanding this link.

The (Jewish) Rabbis in Madina had posed three questions with which to test Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*). If he could correctly answer the three questions it would be confirmed that he was indeed a true Prophet. This book provides a detailed account of the event, the three questions and their answers. The book also attempts an analysis of those answers.

Our careful examination of the questions as well as the answers given in the Qur`ān, reveal that the questions in themselves did not directly target the subjects concerning which Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) was being tested. Rather the real agenda was hidden behind the questions that were posed.

The questions were cunningly posed with an ultimate objective of determining whether Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) knew about *Dajjāl* and about *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog) whose advent constituted major Signs of the Last Day.

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Sūrah al-Kahf commenced with an answer to the first question in which *Dajjāl* remained the unspoken target. The primary objective of this book is to so analyze the *Sūrah* as to extract that guidance within it that would help believers to deepen their understanding of *Dajjāl*, and enhance their capacity to protect themselves and their families from the *Fitnah* (tests and trials) of *Dajjāl*.

When the *Sūrah* responded to the second question it introduced the subject of *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog).

Sūrah al-Kahf contains four stories, presented sometimes as narratives and sometimes as parables. The first story about the young men and the cave deepens our understanding of *Dajjāl* as well as Gog and Magog. The second story about the rich man and the poor man is basically pointing to *Dajjāl*. The third story concerning *Musa (alaihi al-Salām)* and *Khidr (alaihi al-Salām)* is, perhaps, the most important of all and, again, furthers our understanding of *Dajjāl*. Finally the fourth and last story about the great traveler introduces and explains the subject of Gog and Magog. This book explains these four stories and parables of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.

Before we can turn to those beautiful stories and parables we must first examine the concept of *time* in the Qurʾān. Unless we grasp that subject we cannot penetrate the religious symbolism in the Qurʾān and *Ahadīth* pertaining to the Last Age, nor can we understand the dominant actors in the Last Age, namely, *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ and Gog and Magog. It is for this reason that the book

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commences with the highly unusual subject of '*The Qur'ān and Time*'.

I never could grasp, while I was a young student of Maulāna Dr. Ansari at the Aleemiyah Institute of Islamic Studies in Karachi, Pakistan, during the years 1964-1971, the reason he directed so much attention and effort to teach the subject of 'multi-dimensional time' in Islam. It is only now since I have discovered the tremendous link between 'time' and the Signs of the Last Day that I have finally realised the great wisdom of that teacher in what he was trying to impart to us of this difficult subject so long ago.

Yet, not even in the *Dār al-'Ulūm* or institutions of higher Islamic learning is this subject taught any more. One of the causes for this lies, perhaps, in the current war being waged on the spiritual heart of Islam, i.e., *Tasawwuf* or *al-Ihsān*. In addition, many *Sufis* have themselves abandoned the *Sufi* epistemology that recognizes the validity of internal intuitive spiritual insight as a source of knowledge. We have provided some evidence of this perplexing phenomenon in our essay entitled '*Iqbal, the Sufi Epistemology and the End of History*' (Published in our book of essays entitled '*Signs of the Last Day in the Modern Age*').



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The Qur'ān and Time

The very essence of *time* as divinely taught in *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur'ān, and as interpreted in this essay, is that it is complex and multi-dimensional. There is a multi-dimensional movement of *time* as it passes through the ages. Only the faithful and righteous are endowed with *Nur* (i.e., light) which gives them the capacity to penetrate the *reality* of *time*. In a very famous *Sūrah* of the Qur'ān (i.e., *al-'Asr*) named after *time*, Allah Most Wise warns that all except the believers would be at sea about this subject. They would be in a state of loss because of their incapacity to fathom the subject of *time* and thus to swim gracefully with the river of *time* as it flows to a destination which would witness the final triumph of Truth over falsehood (See *Qur'ān, al-'Asr, 103:1-3*).

The youths in *Sūrah al-Kahf* thought that their 300-year long stay in the cave lasted just a day or part of a day because every spiritual experience and contact with the eternal transports us to a world in which we lose track of *time* (i.e., the 'here and now' or the 'moment'). Whoever breaks the barrier that imprisons us in the prison of the 'here' and 'now', can experience *timelessness*. Only true love for Allah Most High and sincere devotion to the religion of truth can break the barrier of *time*.

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This essay argues that none can understand *Dajjāl*, the mastermind of the strange world today, unless he first liberates the mind from the prison of the 'here and now' and penetrates the different worlds of *time*.

All, save those who have faith in Allah Most High, remain imprisoned in the consciousness of only one dimension of *time*. When those who are devoid of faith are raised on the Last Day, veils will be removed from their eyes so they will see with a sharpness of vision hitherto not possible. That new sharpness of vision, in turn, would reveal to them something of the reality of *time*.

The Qur`ān has described a people who would one day be forced out of that prison of *time* to see the real world. Even though they may have lived for scores of years in this life, yet after their resurrection into a new world (which would be *ghair al-ard*, i.e., different from the present order of creation: see Qur`ān, Ibrāhim, 14:48), they would themselves be conscious of the new dimension of *time* into which they have been reborn. They will then declare that the scores of years in their previous life seem like "a day or part of a day":

﴿ لَقَدْ كُنْتُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا فَكَشَفْنَا عَنْكُمْ غِطَاءَكُمُ
فَبَصَرُكُمُ الْيَوْمَ حَدِيدٌ ﴾

(*It will be said*) "You were heedless of this (*Day of Judgement*), now have We removed thy veil, and sharp is thy sight this Day! (*And one of the first*

things that they now see with their sharp sight would be the reality of 'time'.)"

(Qur'ān, Qāf, 50:22)

﴿ قَلَّ كَمَ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ ﴿١١٧﴾ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا
يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ فَسَعَلَ الْعَادِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾ قَلَّ إِنْ لَبِثْتُمْ إِلَّا
قَلِيلًا ۗ لَوْ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿١١٩﴾ ﴾

He will ask (*those who are doomed*): "What number of years did you stay on earth?" They will answer: "We have spent there a day or part of a day; but ask those who (*are able to*) count time." He will say: "Ye stayed not but a little if ye had only known!"

(Qur'ān, al-Muminūn, 23:112-114)

﴿ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ يُقْسِمُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ مَا لَبِثُوا غَيْرَ
سَاعَةٍ ۗ كَذَلِكَ كَانُوا يُؤْفَكُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾ وَقَالَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ
وَالْإِيمَانَ لَقَدْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْبَعْثِ ۖ فَهَذَا
يَوْمُ الْبَعْثِ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥٦﴾ ﴾

On the Day that the Hour (*of reckoning*) will be established the transgressors will swear that they tarried not but an hour: thus were they used to being deluded! But those embued with knowledge and faith will say: "Indeed ye did tarry within Allah's Decree to the Day of Resurrection and this is the Day of Resurrection: but ye were not aware!"

(Qur'ān, al-Rum, 30:55-56)

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These verses of the Qur'ān reveal a relationship between 'faith' and *time* such that those who possess faith would penetrate the reality of *time*. The depth of penetration of that reality would be a measure of 'faith'.

'PROTESTANT' ISLAM AND THE CONCEPT OF TIME

'Protestantism' is a uniquely European phenomenon. It represents a strange conception of religion bereft of its spiritual core. It thus facilitates the emergence of a western 'one-eyed' epistemology that limits knowledge to external observation while casting doubt about, or denying the validity of knowledge internally or spiritually derived. When that epistemology influenced Islamic thought it created a 'Protestant' Islam that abandoned the Islamic spiritual quest. It eventually became a strange and curious creature that worked overtime on behalf of *Dajjāl*, the false Messiah, while waging war on the *Sufis* of Islam and on the use of internal intuitive spiritual insight in the interpretation of religious symbolism.

Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) has explained the subject of *Dajjāl* the False Messiah, or Anti-Christ, in quite some detail. Among the things he said about *Dajjāl* was that:

"... he would live on earth (after Allah Most High releases him) for a period of forty days, one day (being) like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and all his days (i.e., all the rest of his days) like your days".

(Narrated by al-Nawwās ibn Sama`ān and recorded in *Sahīh Muslim*)

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Some scholars of Islam have most unfortunately been deceived, because of the profound intellectual impact of modern Euro-Christian and Euro-Jewish western colonial rule over the world of Islam, into embracing a 'Protestant' version of Islam. As a result they see with only 'one' eye, the 'external', and are either unwilling to, or incapable of interpreting any sacred text pertaining to *time* beyond its literal meaning. Such scholars would insist that somewhere on earth, if we would only search well enough, we could find a place where a single 'day', as we know a 'day', can last for as long as a 'year', as we know a 'year'. We could also find a place where a 'day' can last for a 'month', and another for a 'week'; and that when Allah Most High releases him into the world, if we continue our search in those places, we should eventually be able to locate *Dajjāl*.

Unfortunately the nearest that we can approach to this explanation is at the north and south poles where we can experience six months of continuous light and another six of continuous darkness. But that phenomenon cannot explain the *Hadīth*.

The authentic *Sūfi Shuyūkh* (Shaikhs) of Islam have been, for more than a thousand years, spiritual luminaries who penetrated the very heart of the religious way of life, and like *Khidr* ('*alaihi al-Salām*), they saw with 'two' eyes, i.e., the external and internal. (*Imam al-Ghazzali* is one of them.) Because of the depth of faith they had attained they were able to comprehend the *reality* of *time*.

Following the path of *Khidr* ('*alaihi al-Salām*) we have applied the *Sufi* epistemology of internal intuitive spiritual insight to the

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interpretation of religious symbolism (*t'awīl al-Ahadīth*). Consequently, we have dismissed the view that any amount of searching at the poles, or anywhere else on earth, could result in *Dajjāl* ever being located on earth. Rather, we hold the view that the only place on earth that a believer would ever be able to see and recognize *Dajjāl* in person is in the Holy Land. It would of course be at the very end of his evil reign over the world when 'his day' would be like 'our day' and, hence, when he would be in our dimension of *time*.

Perhaps it is because of special divine blessings conferred upon the Holy Land that the passage from different dimensions of *time* to our *time* has often taken place there. This would explain why Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had to be taken to Jerusalem in order to be raised to the *Samāwāt* (i.e., the seven strata of space and time, other than our own, that Allah Most High fashioned after having created the earth and all within it, for the benefit of mankind. See Qur'ān, al-Baqarah, 2:29).

But at that time *Dajjāl* would have successfully completed his mission and his enigmatic 'forty' days on earth would be about to end. Those who remained strangely incapable of recognizing *Dajjāl* at work right here in our world, cannot function as guides for the believers since they are themselves deceived.

But we do not deny those (Protestant) Islamic scholars the right to keep on searching! They are also waiting for the 'donkey' on which *Dajjāl* would ride (according to a *Hadīth* of the Prophet): "It would

travel as fast as the clouds and would have its ears stretched out wide.” Also, “He (*Dajjāl*) would step into the ocean and the water would reach him up to his knees.” We have used the *Sufi* epistemology to recognize ‘religious symbolism’ at work in these *Ahadīth* and to interpret that symbolism. The symbol of the “donkey” represents modern aircraft. And modern technology permits the depths of the ocean to be penetrated. Thus can we understand the prophecy of *Dajjāl*’s “stepping into the ocean”, etc.

AHMADIYYAH AND THE CONCEPT OF ‘TIME’

The reader would perhaps question the relevance of this section of the chapter. Let us therefore explain. The Ahmadiyyah Movement is a creation of ‘Protestant’ Islam, and it is consequently incapable of understanding the subject of *time* in Islam. Members of the Ahmadiyyah movement have clung to the misguided teachings of their founder concerning the subject of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, as well as the subject of the return of the true Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement, claimed that the prophecies of Prophet Muhammad relating to the return of the true Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) were fulfilled in him. If this claim of his were true (and it is manifestly false) then he, Mirza, would have had to kill *Dajjāl* while he (Mirza) was still alive, for this was the Prophet’s prophecy. Again,

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the implication would be that *Dajjāl* would have lived his entire forty days on earth before he was allegedly killed by the founder of the Ahmadiyyah Movement in his alleged capacity as stand-in for Jesus, the son of Mary.

Mirza Ghulām Ahmad died almost a century ago (from the time of the writing of this book), but neither did he, nor did any of his misguided followers to this day, ever attempt to interpret and explain the ‘forty days’ of *Dajjāl*’s life on earth before the (false) ‘Indian’ Messiah allegedly put an end to it!

It was precisely because of incapacity to penetrate the subject of *time* and the different worlds (*Samāwāt*) of space and time that Ahmadiyyah adopted the position that it has concerning the Prophet’s miraculous journey to Jerusalem and ascension into the *Samāwāt* during the *Isrā* and *M’irāj*. They claim that *Isrā* and *M’irāj* was a spiritual experience which did not involve any miraculous travel through different stratas of space and time. They also deny that Jesus was ever raised through those *Samāwāt* and reject belief in his return. Rather, they hold the view that he survived the attempt of crucifixion to travel all the way to Kashmir where his alleged grave has conveniently been located.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was one of the many false Messiahs (*Dajjalūn kazzabūn*) whose mysterious advent Prophet Muhaamad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) prophesied. When we study Mirza and his false teachings we acquire valuable insight with which to recognize

the footprints of *Dajjāl*. Herein lies the importance of the Ahmadiyyah Movement and, hence, this section of the chapter.

IQBĀL AND ASAD

But Protestant Islam and Ahmadiyyah are not the only ones misled on these two important subjects that are intimately connected to the conception of *time* in Islam. Eminent scholars of Islam such as Dr. Muhammad Iqbāl and Muhammad Asad (*may Allah have mercy on them both*) were similarly epistemologically challenged on the subject of *time*. In fact Iqbāl was led to the false conclusion that heaven and hell were *states* rather than *localities*:

“Heaven and Hell are states, not localities. Their descriptions in the Qur'ān are visual representations of an inner fact, i.e. character. Hell, in the words of the Qur'ān, is ‘God’s kindled fire which mounts above the hearts’ - the painful realization of one’s failure as a man. Heaven is the joy of triumph over the forces of disintegration.”

(Iqbal. ‘Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam’,
Oxford University Press. London. 1934 p. 116)

Asad, on the other hand, was so convinced that Jesus (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) had died, and therefore, would not return, that he publicly proclaimed this dangerously false belief in his famous translation and commentary of the Glorious Qur'ān (See his translation and commentary of the following verses: al-Māidah, 5:117, and Āle ‘Imrān, 3:55).

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In both instances, Iqbal as well as Asad, misunderstanding concerning the reality of *time* led to profound error.

BEYOND 'LITERAL TIME'

In fact, *space* and *time* are both multi-dimensional. And heaven and hell both exist as real *localities*, and not just as *states*, in dimensions of space and time other than the one in which we now live. In this important chapter we attempt to explain *time* in a manner that would hopefully encourage the skeptics to revisit their views on the subject.

Allah Most High has declared that He created the entire earth in *two* days, and both the heavens and the earth in *six* days. These could not be 'days' as literally understood by us since such 'days' came into being only *after* the creation of both the heavens and the earth:

﴿ قُلْ أَيِّنَكُم لَتَكْفُرُونَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَ الْأَرْضَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ
وَتَجْعَلُونَ لَهُۥٓ أَنْدَادًا ذَٰلِكَ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

“Say: Is it that you deny Him Who created the earth in two Days? And do you join equals with Him? He is the Lord of (*all*) the Worlds.”

(Qur’ān, Fussilāt. 41:9)

﴿ إِنَّ رَبَّكُمْ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ
 أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مَا مِنْ شَفِيعٍ
 إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ أَفَلَا
 تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿۱۰﴾

“Verily your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days and is firmly established on the Throne (*of authority*) regulating and governing all things. No intercessor (*can plead with Him*) except after His leave (*hath been obtained*). This is Allah your Lord; You should serve Him. Will you not celebrate His praises?”

(Qur'an, Yūnus. 10:3)

That there is more to ‘time’ than that which is literally understood is also clear from the following statement of the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*):

“Narrated Abu Dhar: I asked, O Allah’s Messenger! Which Masjid was first built on the surface of the earth? He replied, al-Masjid al-Harām (in Makkah). I (then) asked, which was built next? He replied, The Masjid of al-Aqsā (in Jerusalem). I (then) asked, what was the period of time which elapsed between the construction of the two? He said, Forty years. He added, Wherever (you may be, and) the prayer time becomes due, perform the prayer there, for the best thing is to do so (i.e. to offer the prayers on time).”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

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If we understand ‘time’ (forty years) in this *Hadīth* literally then the *Hadīth* would be manifestly false. It requires just a little reflection for one to understand that the blessed Messenger of Allah (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) was not referring in this *Hadīth* to a ‘year’ in the sense of twelve lunar months. When he spoke in this *Hadīth* of that period of ‘forty’ years, and when he referred in the *Hadīth* concerning *Dajjāl*, to a ‘day’ like a ‘year’, he was not referring to a ‘year’ as we know a ‘year’.

Well then, we ask, what kind of a ‘year’ was he referring to when he described a period of time that history has recorded as more than a thousand years long, to be just ‘forty’ years in duration?

It is impossible for the statement concerning the 40-day lifespan of *Dajjāl* on earth (or the forty years which elapsed between the building of the two *Masājid*) to be understood if we limit ourselves to our human notion of ‘time’. Such is derived from our sense perception of ‘night’ and of ‘day’ and of the movement of the sun and the moon. Those bound to the western epistemology cannot interpret it, though quantum physics might shed some light on the matter. Nor can the *Ahadīth* concerning *Dajjāl* etc., be understood by those who are imprisoned in the *literal* interpretation of that which ought to be symbolically interpreted. In fact, it is only the *Sufi* epistemology that can unlock the subject of *Dajjāl*!

We can understand *literally* ‘a day (*yوم*) which would be like our day (*yوم*)’. Such a ‘day’ (*yوم*) would comprise a ‘night’ (*لايل*) and the following ‘day’ (*ناهار*), in other words from ‘sunset’ to

‘sunset’. *Dajjāl* would be in our dimension of *time*, in ‘days like our days’, when he would be at the end of his life on earth. That is quite clear! Whoever is in our dimension of *time* must, it would appear, also be in our dimension of space. This is what the historical record indicates. We have no evidence in history of anyone being in our dimension of *time* but not in our dimension of space. Because of *Dajjāl* being in our dimension of *time*, as well as space, at the end of his life on earth, it would be possible for us to see him in Jerusalem.

The question which arises is: where on earth would *Dajjāl* be during the period of a ‘day like a year’, and then a ‘day like a month’ and finally, a ‘day like a week’? The second question is how long would ‘a day like a year’ last – then ‘a day like a month’ – then, ‘a day like a week’? This important chapter of the book attempts to respond to those questions.

AL-GHAIB – THE UNSEEN TRANSCENDENTAL WORLD

Religion has always affirmed the existence of unseen transcendental worlds which exist beyond (normal) observation and, hence, scientific enquiry, in dimensions of space and *time* other than our own (*al-Ghaib*), and has always required of believers that they believe in these unseen worlds.

When *Dajjāl* is in a ‘day’ other than ‘our day’ it would not be possible for us to see him (even though he would be on earth) since he would be in a different dimension of existence in that unseen world

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(*al-Ghaib*). This is precisely the case with Angels and *Jinn* who are on earth and yet cannot be seen by human beings. The Qur`ān has declared that there are two angels (on the shoulders of) each human being:

﴿ وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ ﴿١٠﴾ كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ ﴿١١﴾ يَعْمُونَ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

“But verily over you (*are appointed angels*) to protect you, kind and honourable; writing down (*your deeds*): they know (*and understand*) all that ye do.”

(Qur`ān, al-Infitār, 82:10-12)

It has further informed us that there is an evil *Jinn* (i.e., a Satan) who is attached to every such human being who turns away from the *Dhikr* (remembrance) of his Lord-God:

﴿ وَمَنْ يَعْشُ عَنْ ذِكْرِ الرَّحْمَنِ نُقَيِّضْ لَهُ شَيْطَانًا فَهُوَ لَهُ قَرِينٌ ﴿٣٦﴾ ﴾

“If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of (*Allah*) Most Gracious. We appoint for him a Satan (*i.e., a disbelieving Jinn*) to be an intimate companion to him.”

(Qur`ān, al-Zukhruf, 43:36)

Even though we cannot see those Angels and *Jinn* who are around us, yet every believer believes in their existence here on earth!

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Here is evidence of our belief in dimensions of existence, and, hence, of worlds of space and *time* other than our own, existing alongside our own world of space and *time* here on earth.

Not only do we believe in such dimensions which transcend our normal experience, but we also have incontrovertible evidence that an Angel can enter into our dimension and so appear in our world of space and *time* that we can see him with our eyes. This was demonstrated on several occasions by the Angel Gabriel (*'alaihi al-Salām*). Here is one such occasion:

Narrated Abdullah ibn Umar ibn al-Khattāb: My father, Umar ibn al-Khattāb, told me: One day we were sitting in the Masjid when there appeared before us a man dressed in pure white clothes, his hair extraordinarily black. There were no signs of travel on him. None amongst us recognized him. He eventually sat with the Apostle (*peace be upon him*). He knelt before him, placed his palms on his thighs, and (proceeded to ask five questions) (The narrator of the Hadīth, Umar ibn al-Khattāb) said: Then he (the inquirer) went on his way but I stayed with him (the Holy Prophet) for a long while. He then asked me: Umar, do you know who this inquirer was? I replied: Allah and His Apostle know best. He (the Holy Prophet) remarked: He was Gabriel (the Angel). He came to you in order to instruct you in matters of religion.

(Sahīh Muslim)

This event qualifies as, perhaps, the most amazing occasion in history in which an angel assumed human form while entering into the dimension of space and *time* in which human beings exist, hence becoming visible and tangible to them.

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A *Jinn* can also assume human form and enter into the human world of space and *time*. The most famous incident of such was the appearance of *Iblīs* (i.e., Satan) in the person of an old Arab man, at the gathering assembled by the Quraish to formulate policy which would solve the problem caused by Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*):

“Satan (i.e., *Iblīs*) himself greeted them at the door of their meeting-place in the guise of an aged sheikh, dressed in a cloak. When they asked him who he was, he replied: ‘A sheikh who has heard of your intended discussion and has come to listen to what you say; and perhaps my opinion and advice will not be lost upon you.’ So he entered with them.”

(Ibn Ishaq, *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*, Tr. By Alfred Guillaume, Ox. Univ. Press. 1955 p. 221)

Now, can we use authoritative sources to explain the existence of dimensions of *time* other than our own? Can we explain ‘a day like a year’?

Since the Qur`ān declares of itself that it *explains all things* (*Qur`ān, al-Nahl. 16:89*), the implication is that it must explain those statements of the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) which are beyond normal human understanding. Our purpose in this essay is to turn to the Qur`ān in an effort to locate the explanation of this enigmatic *Hadīth* concerning the 40-day lifespan (on earth) of *Dajjāl*, the False Messiah.

‘TIME’ EXISTED WHEN WE DID NOT

Islam has taught that there was a *time* when mankind did not exist and that all of mankind was created as an act of divine grace at a moment in *time*; thus *time* pre-existed mankind. Islam has also taught that a time would come when everything would perish and only the divine countenance would remain. (*Qur'ān, al-Rahmān, 55:26-7*); hence *time* would continue to exist even when mankind no longer exists. Consider the following verse:

﴿ هَلْ أَتَى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِينٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُن شَيْئًا
مَّذْكُورًا ﴾

“Has there not been over Man a long period of time when he was not a thing of which mention could be made (*i.e., non-existent*)?”

(*Qur'ān, al-Dahr, 76:1*)

Secondly, Islam has taught that mankind was originally created and placed in *al-Jannah* (paradise) in a dimension of *time* other than the biological time in which we are now located and in which we grow old. And it was in consequence of an act of disobedience of a divine command that mankind was expelled from that dimension of *time* and placed temporarily in this dimension of *time* in which we now exist.

The implication is that while mankind possesses a reality that is dependent on *time*, *time* possesses a reality that is independent of

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mankind. What is the reality of *time*? Allah Most High has declared of Himself that He is *time*:

Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Apostle said, Allah said, "The offspring of Adam abuse Dahr (Time), and I am Dahr (Time); in My Hands are the night and the day!"

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

SACRED 'TIME' AND THE MODERN GODLESS AGE

It is a basic characteristic of the modern godless age that it uses every possible trick to try to destroy the harmonious natural link between *time* and *life* as ordained in Islam, the one true religion. It thus seeks to corrupt our perception of *time* as well as our capacity to measure *time* in any other than a mechanical way. In fact that godless age seeks to replace our natural *sacred* conception of *time* with a *secular* conception of *time*.

The modern godless Euro-Christian and Euro-Jewish age has, for example, renamed all twelve months of the year, from 'January' to 'December', and all seven days of the week, from 'Sunday' to 'Saturday', with the names of pagan European gods and goddesses. That did not occur by accident. It has nevertheless escaped the attention of modern Islamic scholarship.

Also, a day no longer ends with the spectacular and dramatic event of sunset, as it naturally does. Instead, it now ends at midnight and a new day consequently begins at that totally irrelevant,

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inconsequential and meaningless moment in *time* when the overwhelming majority of people are asleep.

A new month no longer begins and a previous month ends as nature has ordained, with the excitement and the incomparable splendor and beauty of a slender new moon gracefully adorning the sky just after sunset. Rather, the length of each month was arbitrarily determined by a European Pope. Some months were arbitrarily assigned 30 days, and others stuffed with 31, while hapless February suffered the abiding embarrassment of being sometimes this (i.e., 28 days) and sometimes that (i.e., 29 days).

Even a day is no longer divided into parts that bear some relationship to the movement of the sun, as in the passage from false dawn to true dawn, to sparkling early morning light, to the bright light of the day, and then to the declining sun, fading light, and to twilight, moonlight, starlight, darknight and intense darkness, etc. Rather a mechanical passage of time is now regulated through the entirely arbitrary division of a day and night into 24 equal parts called hours, and each hour into 60 equal parts called minutes, etc. A misplaced sense of convenience and a quest for the efficient exploitation of *time* for mundane purposes took precedence over that sacred precise passage of a day.

Sacred *time* functioned as a strategically important system of signs and symbols beckoning the human soul to the world of the sacred. Sacred *time* thus helped us to produce sages. The secularization and consequent mechanization of *time* broke those links

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with the world of the sacred and confined the importance of *time* to its functional material worldly utility.

It is also no accident that the cemeteries of modern cities are located far outside those cities and towns. The hidden purpose is to imprison the mind and heart in the life of this world and, in the process, to cause us forget about death, about life beyond death and, consequently, about other dimensions of *time*.

Television and the rest of the news media are used to manipulate news and events in such wise as to imprison mankind in the *tyranny* of the 'moment'. Images and stories flash across the television screen with a rapidity that distorts, reduces and eventually destroys the mind's capacity to ponder and reflect. Most people are hence reduced to living mindlessly, day-to-day and moment-to-moment. Yesterday fades away and no longer impacts on the consciousness. Tomorrow is but an extension of today's fantasies.

The entirely predictable consequence has been that people have lost the capacity to connect the past with the present. Nor can they anticipate a future that would add up to make a meaningful whole. They cannot read and understand the movement of history. They are not even conscious of the movement of *time in* history. Hence they cannot recognize, nor understand, a mysteriously unfolding imperial agenda in the Holy Land, as well as in the world at large, that a strange Euro-Christian and Euro-Jewish alliance has been pursuing for centuries.

That agenda is about to culminate with the Euro-Jewish State of Israel emerging as the third and last *ruling* State in the world, and with someone *ruling* the world from Jerusalem and declaring himself to be the true Messiah. That is the ultimate deception! Yet the modern age has mysteriously succeeded, and amazingly so, in persuading so many in the world of Islam to slavishly imitate and follow that strange Euro-Christian and Euro-Jewish alliance's modern western civilization down into the proverbial lizard's hole.

'TIME' AND SIGNS OF THE LAST DAY

True religion exists when 'truth' penetrates and then resides in the heart. The manner in which we measure the passage of *time* is a matter of great importance indeed since it reveals the kind of heart a person has. Among the Signs of the Last Day as disclosed by Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah be upon him*) is that:

"Time would move faster, so that a whole year would pass like a month, a month would pass like a week, a week like a day, a day like an hour, and an hour like the amount of time it takes to kindle a fire."

(Narrated by Anas ibn Malik and transmitted in the Sunan of Tirmīdhī)

He explained that the perception of *time* moving faster would be in consequence of the 'remembrance' of Allah Most High (*Dhikr*) departing from the heart, and a preoccupation with the worldly life (*Dunyah*) taking exclusive possession of the heart. Such hearts would

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not be bothered in the least with such things as *Dhikr* i.e., the 'remembrance' of Allah Most High.

What is 'remembrance'? When a man visits in his heart the woman that he loves, he shudders as an enchanting fragrance envelops his heart. It happens every time! When he hears her name mentioned, the same thing happens. That is 'remembrance'.

Clearly 'remembrance' is only possible when there is true love. And so it is really when love of Allah Most High departs from the heart that 'time' moves faster and yet faster. Hence it follows that when sincere love for Allah Most High takes possession of the heart, *time* would surely move slower and a believer would interact with the passage of *time* in life in a manner that would be meaningful and beneficial.

These hapless people who are imprisoned in a world of ever-fleeting *time* are paying the price of being further trapped in the fleeting moment and hence the 'here' and 'now'. They will never be able to read and understand the passage of *time* or the movement of *time* in history. They will thus be taken for a ride and remain totally heedless of their pathetic state as they fall into a bottomless pit.

The consequence of spiritual vacuum in the Last Age would be moral collapse to such an extent that:

“ . . . people would make business agreements with one another and scarcely anyone would fulfill his trust”.

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The spiritual vacuum and moral collapse would so incapacitate judgment as to render people incapable of distinguishing men of integrity from charlatans:

“ . . . it would be said that among such and such a tribe there is a trustworthy man. People would remark how intelligent, excellent and resolute a man he is while (in fact) he would not have as much faith (in Allah) in his heart as a grain of a mustard seed.”

(Both quotes above taken from a Hadīth narrated by Hudhaifa and transmitted in the Saḥīḥ of Bukhāri as well as Muslim.)

The blessed Prophet also warned that such would be a time of great betrayals in which:

“Temptations would be presented to men’s hearts as a reed mat is woven stick by stick, and any heart which is impregnated by them would have a black mark put in it. The result would be that hearts would be of two kinds: one, white like a white stone, which would not be harmed by temptation as long as the heavens and earth endure, and the other, black and dust-colored like a vessel which is upset, incapable of recognizing what is reputable, or rejecting what is disreputable, but being enveloped by its passion.”

(Narrated by Hudhaifa and transmitted in the Saḥīḥ of Muslim.)

There can be no doubt whatsoever that this so-called age of ‘progress’ is, indeed, the age when these signs of the Last Day have appeared.

This is the age of secularism. Even the state is secular, and so too politics, the economy, education, the market, the media, sports, and entertainment. The dining room, living room and even bedroom are

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today also secularized. Secularism begins by ‘excluding God’, and culminates by ‘denying Him’! When knowledge is secularized it leads to the belief that knowledge comes from only one source, i.e., external observation and rational enquiry. The implication of the adoption of this epistemology is the inevitable conclusion that since this material world is the only world we can ever ‘know’ in this way, it follows that this is the only world that really ‘exists’.

Thus it is secularism leads to materialism, i.e., the acceptance, for all practical purposes, that there is no *reality* beyond material *reality*, and hence, that there are no other dimensions of *time* other than this world of *time* in which we exist. Materialism has led, naturally so, to greed, lies, promiscuity, injustice, oppression, godlessness, and great betrayals since the moral foundations of society cannot be sustained without the spiritual heart of religion. That heart can neither be built, nor sustained, without belief in transcendental verities (such as God, Angels, heaven and hell) that exist in a world beyond the material world. Even the passage of life through *time* can easily become meaningless when no other *time* exists than ‘here’ and ‘now’, and no other world exists other than this.

THE INTEGRATION OF LIFE WITH ‘TIME’

The counting of the passage of years is a matter of great import. How a person counts the passage of *time* determines who he is! “Tell me how you count the passing years and I will tell you who you are!”

Omar Khayyam lamented the passage of the years:

“Whether in Nishapur or in Babylon,
Whether the cup with sweet or bitter run,
The wine of life keeps oozing drop by drop,
The leaves of life keep falling one by one!”

(Rubaiyyat)

But the passage of *time* provokes a quite different response in the heart which possesses faith in Allah Most High, and in a life that is positively integrated with the movement of *time*! It provides a means for the believing woman, for example, to interact positively and harmoniously with her passing years.

Anyone with a personality that is sufficiently developed aesthetically to appreciate beauty would agree that nothing in the heavens above can compare in beauty with the sight of the new crescent moon and star joined together in an enchanting embrace. The passage of a new lunar month in the sky above symbolizes the passage of life itself.

Thus it is that when a baby-girl was born it was as though a new moon had appeared in the sky and that a new world had come into being. Everyone adored her. Everyone took her in their loving arms. She crawled - she walked - she played - she laughed - she sang - she danced. She had narry a care in the world as she playfully traversed the *springtime* of her childhood and youth. She was a miracle to behold.

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Then she blushed with shyness as she welcomed her *summertime* when she bloomed and blossomed into a woman more beautiful than a raindrop on a rainbow that falls gently upon a rose petal. The world gazed in wonder at her beauty and from their lips came the words: *Subhan Allah!* The singers sang of her, the poets composed verses about her. And this, also, was a miracle to behold.

And then *autumn* overtook her as the green leaves of her life began to turn to brown. Wrinkles appeared around her eyes and here and there a strand of her hair turned to grey.

Finally her *winter* arrived when the moon returned like an old dry withered branch of a date palm (Qur'ān, Yāsīn, 36:39) and she made ready to gracefully fold her tent, to say goodbye, and to disappear into the darkness of the night.

But she was so full of gratitude to Allah Most High all through the journey of life through *time*. When she had her *season of spring* she thanked Him for it, and so too her *summer* and then her *autumn* and finally her *winter*. She had no sorrow over the arrival of *autumn* or *winter*. She was proud of her grey hairs when they began to mingle with the natural color of her hair. Not for anything that the world could offer did she ever wish to return to her *spring* or *summer* for she loved her *autumn* and her *winter* just as much. And so she aged gracefully.

The older she grew the more beauty she radiated – an external expression of inner beauty. And when the *time* came for the angel of death to take her away, when it was *time* for the moon to disappear

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into the darkness of the sky and for the dark night to envelop the world, there were no regrets in parting from the only world she had ever known. She wanted to leave this world with gratitude to Allah in her heart because He had promised those who so thanked him that He would bestow on them an increase of bounty and favors (Qur'ān, Ibrāhīm, 14:7). She did not sigh! She did not share Indian Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar's lament:

‘Umr daraz maang layay thay char din,
Do arzoo main kat gayay thay, do intizar main!

[From the ‘chest of drawers’ of lifespans,
I sought and obtained (a lifespan of) four days,
Two (of the four) have gone in wishing and
the other two in waiting!]

Rather, such a believing woman was ever ready to travel on in *time* to new worlds of *time*. She never defied the passage of *time*, and so she never disrespected Allah Most High – because He is *time*. Whoever lives in harmony with *time* lives in harmony with his Lord and Creator! Whoever can penetrate *time* beyond the ‘here and now’ can read and understand the signs of Allah and the signs of the Last Day as they unfold in the movement of history.

The dimension, in which we measure the passage of *time* with days and nights and the seasons of our life as well as the seasons of nature, is provided to us that we might measure the passage of our own individual and collective sojourn on earth. It is a test and trial. It does not represent the totality of *time*. Rather it constitutes the

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foundation for our growth into other dimensions of *time* described in the Qur`ān. As we grow in *time*, i.e., in our perception of *time* and capacity to grasp and understand *time* as it unfolds in our lives as well as in the external world, we simultaneously enhance our capacity to understand the Last Age as it unfolds in the last stage of the historical process. And that is by far the most important thing that we argue in this chapter.

‘TIME’ IN THE QUR`ĀN

Allah Most Wise has taught the subject of ‘*time*’ by scattering pearls of ‘*time*’ here and there in the Holy Qur`ān and in the life and words of the blessed Messenger of Allah (*sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam*), and then placing upon the enquirer the onus of gathering those pearls and stringing them together as in a necklace.

My distinguished teacher of blessed memory, *Maulāna* Dr Muhammad Fadlur Rahman Ansāri (*rahimahullah*) described that ‘necklace’ as the ‘*system of meaning*’ of the subject. We have made a humble attempt in this very important section of this chapter to not only locate some of those pearls of ‘*time*’ in the Qur`ān but to also try to string them together as a necklace.

The Arabs considered ‘*Time*’ (*al-Dahr*) to be the ultimate reality. They believed ‘*time*’ to be the only thing that survived. Everything and everyone would perish and pass away because they would be ‘destroyed’ by ‘*Time*’:

﴿ وَقَالُوا مَا هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا وَمَا
يَمْلِكُنَا إِلَّا الدَّهْرُ وَمَا لَهُم بِذَلِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِنْ هُمْ إِلَّا
يُظُنُّونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

“And they say: What is there but our life in this world? We shall die and we live and nothing but Time (*al-Dahr*) can destroy us. But of that they have no knowledge: they engage in mere conjecture.”

(Qur'ān, al-Jāthiyah, 45:24)

Modern godless western civilization which recognizes no reality beyond material reality, has declared that 'time is money'. Time has become a commodity that can be traded, bought and sold. Whenever money, for example, is lent on interest, the *time* value of money is expressed in interest payments.

Allah Most High responded (in a *Hadīth al-Qudsi*) by declaring that He Himself is *time (al-Dahr)*:

“Narrated Abu Hurairah: Allah's Apostle said, Allah said, 'The offspring of Adam abuse Dahr (Time), and I am Dahr (Time): in My Hands are the night and the day!'”

(Sahīh Bukhārī)

When Allah Most High declares that He is *time* the implication is that there is such a thing as *absolute time*, i.e., that *time* that exists independently and is not conditioned by other than itself. And when He goes on to point out that “*in My Hands are the night and the day*”,

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the further implication is that *time*, as we know it, i.e., the conception of *time* that is grounded in the alternation of night and day, is *relative* in nature – i.e., relative to Allah's 'absolute' *time*. *Time* as we know it, in which measurement is done through the counting of 'days', 'nights', 'weeks', 'months', 'years', etc., may be described as *serial time*.

The Qur`ān explains that serial *time* is just the beginning of *time* and has been provided for purposes which are utilitarian i.e., so that people may have a means of counting the passage of years and of measuring *time* in their own mundane temporal world. Serial time is real. It is not to be considered as an illusion or a thing that is unreal:

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَرَهُ
مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۗ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ
ذَٰلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٥﴾

“It is He Who made the sun to be a shining glory and the moon to be a light (*of beauty*) and measured out stages for her: that ye might know the number of years and the count (*of time*). Nowise did Allah create this but in truth and righteousness. (*Thus*) doth He explain his Signs in detail for those who understand.”

(Qur`ān, Yūnus, 10:5)

﴿ وَجَعَلْنَا اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ آيَاتَيْنِ ۖ فَمَحَوْنَا آيَةَ اللَّيْلِ وَجَعَلْنَا
 آيَةَ النَّهَارِ مُبْصِرَةً لِّتَبْتَغُوا فَضْلًا مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ
 السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابِ ۚ وَكُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلَنَاهُ تَفْصِيلًا ﴿١٢﴾

“We have made the Night and the Day as two (of Our) Signs: the Sign of the Night have We made obscure while the Sign of the day We have made to enlighten you; that ye may seek Bounty from your Lord and that ye may know the number and count of the years, and all things have We explained in detail.”

(Qur'ān, Banū Isrāīl, 17:12)

The Qur'ān goes on to reveal that between 'serial' and 'absolute' time there exists seven different worlds of time described as seven *Samāwāt* (that are usually erroneously translated as seven heavens):

﴿ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ثُمَّ أَسْتَوَىٰ
 إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَسَوَّاهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ
 ﴿٢٩﴾

“It is He who hath created for you all things that are on earth; moreover His design comprehended the sky for He gave order and perfection to the seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*); and of all things he hath perfect knowledge.

(Qur'ān, al-Baqarah, 2:29)

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﴿ تَسْبِيحٌ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ۗ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴿٤٤﴾ ﴾

“The seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) and the earth and all beings therein declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise: and yet ye understand not how they declare His glory! Verily He is Oft- Forbearing, Most Forgiving!”

(Qur`ān, Banū Isrāīl, 17:44)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعَ طَرَائِقَ وَمَا كُنَّا عَنِ الْخَلْقِ غَافِلِينَ ﴿١٧﴾ ﴾

“And We have made above you seven tarāiq (*tracts or celestial orbits*); and We are never unmindful of (Our) Creation.”

(Qur`ān, al-M`uminūn, 23:17)

﴿ قُلْ مَنْ رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٨٦﴾ ﴾

Say: “Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Throne (*of Glory*) Supreme?”

(Qur`ān, al-M`uminūn, 23:86)

﴿ فَقَضْنَهُنَّ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ وَأَوْحَىٰ فِي كُلِّ سَمَاءٍ
أَمْرَهَا ۗ وَزَيْنًا السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصْبِيحٍ وَحِفْظًا ۗ ذَٰلِكَ
تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ ﴿٤١﴾

“So He completed them as seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) in two Days and He assigned to each heaven its duty and command. And We adorned the lower heaven with lights and (*provided it*) with guard. Such is the Decree of (*Him*) the Exalted in Might Full of knowledge.”

(Qur'an, Fussilat, 41:12)

﴿ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ وَمِنَ الْأَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ
الْأَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُو أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ
أَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا ﴿٤٢﴾

“Allah is He Who created seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) and of the earth a similar number (*i.e., seven stratas of the earth*). Through the midst of them (*all*) descends His Command: that ye may know that Allah has power over all things and that Allah comprehends all things in (*His*) Knowledge.”

(Qur'an, al-Talāq, 65:12)

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ
مِن تَفَوتٍ ۗ فَارْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ﴿٤٣﴾

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“He Who created the seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) one above another; no want of proportion wilt thou see in the Creation of (*Allah*) Most Gracious, so turn thy vision again: Seest thou any flaw?”

(Qur`ān, al-Mulk, 67:3)

﴿ الْمَ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ﴾ ﴿٦﴾

“See ye not how Allah has created the seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) one above another?”

(Qur`ān, Nūh, 71:15)

﴿ وَبَنَيْنَا فَوْقَكُمْ سَبْعًا شِدَادًا ﴿١٢﴾ وَجَعَلْنَا سِرَاجًا وَهَّاجًا

﴿١٣﴾

“And (*have We not*) built over you the seven firm (*bodies*), and placed (therein) a Light of Splendor?”

(Qur`ān, al-Naba, 78:12-3)

These *seven* firm bodies are usually recognized as seven ‘heavens’. But they are not heavens at all! Rather they should be recognized as *seven* different worlds of space and *time* that stand in-between earth and Allah Most High on His Summit-Throne (*al-`Arsh*). Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) made mention of this in the following *Hadīth*:

Narrated al-`Abbās ibn `Abd al-Muttalib: “I was sitting in al-Batha with a company among whom the Apostle of Allah (*peace be upon him*) was sitting.

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when a cloud passed above them. The Apostle of Allah (*peace be upon him*) looked at it and said: What do you call this? They said: Sahab. He said: And muzn? They said: And muzn. He said: And anan? They said: And anan. Abū Daūd said: I am not quite confident about the word anan. He asked: Do you know the distance between the Samā (sky) and Earth? They replied: We do not know. He then said: The distance between them is seventy-one, seventy-two, or seventy-three years. The Samā which is above it is at a similar distance (going on until he counted seven *Samāwāt*). Above the seventh Samā there is a sea, the distance between whose surface and bottom is like that between one Samā and the next. Above that there are eight mountain goats the distance between whose hoofs and haunches is like the distance between one Samā and the next. Then Allah, the Blessed and the Exalted, is above that.”

(Abū Daūd)

It would appear that a different *Ālam* (world or cosmos) exists in each of these seven *Samāwāt*. The Qur`ān commenced *Sūrah al-Fātihah* with a description of Allah Most High as *Rab al-Ālamīn* (i.e., the Lord-God of all the *seven* worlds):

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

“Praise be to Allah, the Lord-God of (*all*) the worlds.”

(Qur`ān, al-Fātihah, 1:2)

What this implies is that in the same way that Allah Most High is *Rab* (Lord-God) to humankind in this *Ālam*, so too is He *Rab* to those who are located in all the other *Ālamūn* (plural of *Ālam*) and who are also supposed to worship Him:

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﴿ تَسْبِيحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ تَسْبِيحَهُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ حَلِيمًا غَفُورًا ﴾ ﴿١١﴾

“The seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) and the earth, and all beings therein, declare His glory: there is not a thing but celebrates His praise; and yet ye understand not how they declare His glory! Verily He is Oft-Forbearing, Most Forgiving!

(Qur’ān, al-Isrā, 17:44)

The Qur’ān actually identifies these *seven* worlds as different dimensions of space and *time*. For example it makes mention of a world (*Ālam*) with a dimension of *time* in which:

❖ A ‘day’ is like fifty thousand years:

﴿ تَعْرُجُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ وَالرُّوحُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ ﴾ ﴿١٤﴾

“The angels and the Spirit ascend unto Him in a Day the measure whereof is (*as*) fifty thousand years.”

(Qur’ān, al- M’ārij, 70:4)

And it makes mention of a second world (*Ālam*) with a dimension of *time* in which:

❖ A 'day' is like a thousand years:

﴿ وَدَسْتَعَجِلُونَكَ بِالْعَذَابِ وَلَنْ يُخْلِفَ اللَّهُ وَعْدَهُ وَإِنَّ يَوْمًا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ كَأَلْفِ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٤٧﴾ ﴾

“Yet they ask thee to hasten on the Punishment! But Allah will not fail in His promise. Verily a day in the sight of thy Lord is like a thousand years of your reckoning.”

(Qur'ān, al-Hajj, 22:47)

﴿ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يَعْرُجُ إِلَيْهِ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ مِّمَّا تَعُدُّونَ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾

“He rules (*all*) affairs from the heavens to the earth: in the end will (*all* affairs) go up to Him on a day the measure whereof will be (*as*) a thousand years of your reckoning.”

(Qur'ān, al-Sajda, 32:5)

❖ A day is like three hundred years

In *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the *Qur'ān*, the supreme importance of *time* in relation to the subject of *Dajjāl* was dramatically emphasized when Allah Most High declared that He caused the young men to remain in the cave for many years. He then raised them to wakefulness in order to determine which of them would be able to accurately assess the period of *time* that they had tarried in the cave. They had actually slept

﴿ وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا ﴾



“So they stayed in their Cave three hundred years and (*some*) add nine (*more*).”

(Qur'ān, al-Kahf, 18:25)

Some of the young men responded that they had stayed in the cave for just a day or part of a day. Others, however, could discern spiritually that the passage of *time* in the cave perhaps exceeded that which was suggested by some of their companions. Indeed some people suggested that the youths had slept in the cave for as long a period of *time* as *three hundred* solar years (equivalent to 309 lunar years).

❖ A day is like a hundred years:

The Qur'ān has also described the event in which a man passed by a 'town' that was lying in ruins (i.e., Jerusalem) and wondered skeptically how could Allah Most High revive that 'town'. Whereupon Allah caused him to die (metaphorically) for a hundred years and then revived him to ask him how long he had tarried there. His response was “a day or part of a day”:

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﴿ أَوْ كَالَّذِي مَرَّ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا قَالَ أَنَّىٰ
يُحْيِي هَٰذَا اللَّهُ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا فَأَمَاتَهُ اللَّهُ مِائَةَ عَامٍ ثُمَّ بَعَثَهُ
قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتَ قَالَ لَبِثْتُ يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ قَالَ بَلْ
لَبِثْتَ مِائَةَ عَامٍ فَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ طَعَامِكَ وَشَرَابِكَ لَمْ يَتَسَنَّهْ
وَأَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ حِمَارِكَ وَلِنَجْعَلَكَ آيَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَانظُرْ إِلَىٰ
الْعِظَامِ كَيْفَ نُنشِزُهَا ثُمَّ نَكْسُوهَا لَحْمًا فَلَمَّا تَبَيَّنَ
لَهُ قَالَ أَعْلَمُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٢٥٩﴾

Or (*take*) the similitude of one who passed by a town, all in ruins to its roofs. He asked, "How shall Allah bring it (*ever*) to life, after (*this*) its death?" but Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, then raised him up (*again*). He asked, "How long didst thou tarry (*thus*)?" He replied, "(*Perhaps*) a day or part of a day." He responded, "Nay, thou hast tarried thus a hundred years; but look at thy food and thy drink, they show no signs of age; and look at thy donkey. And that We may make of thee a sign unto the people, Look further at the bones, how We bring them together and clothe them with flesh." When this was shown clearly to him, he said: "I know that Allah hath power over all things."

(Qur'an, al-Baqarah, 2:259)

The seven different dimensions of space and *time* appear to exist alongside each other rather than a second beginning where the first ends:

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ
الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفْوُتٍ ۗ فَأَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ



He Who created the seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) one beside another; no want of proportion wilt thou see in the Creation of (*Allah*) Most Gracious, so turn thy vision again: Seest thou any flaw?"

(Qur`ān, al-Mulk, 67:3)

There is a remarkable description of the proximity of different dimensions of *time right here on earth* in the same passage of the Qur`ān quoted above (Qur`ān, al-Baqarah, 2:259), in which Allah Most High makes mention of the traveler who passed by Jerusalem after the Babylonian destruction and who could not conceive of the dead city ever being revived to life.

The traveler was put to death (sleep is a form of death) for a hundred years and then revived to consciousness. As with the youth, so too did the traveler have the consciousness of having tarried for just a day or part of a day. But the Qur`ān gives a vivid description of *two different dimensions of time existing beside each other on earth* when it described the fate of the donkey in one dimension of *time*, and of the food in another. While the donkey, in our dimension of *time*, starved to death, and the body decomposed until even the bones had crumbled to dust, the food which was preserved in another dimension of *time* remained fresh even after a hundred years. The lesson from this

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narrative is that both dimensions of *time* exist side by side right here on earth!

We witness exactly the same phenomenon in the next chapter of this book in the story of the young men who were put to sleep in the cave and who slept for three hundred years. Our analysis of that story indicates that their bodies were located simultaneously in two dimensions of *time* during their long sleep in the cave. In the first dimension of *time* their bodies kept on rolling to the left and to the right in synchrony with the movement of the sun, i.e., morning and evenings. In the second dimension of *time* their bodies displayed no visible signs of biological growth and ageing despite the passage of three hundred years.

Different dimensions of time and of space can all be located *Tibāqa*, i.e., together or alongside each other.

We can now understand how unseen recording angels who exist in a different dimension of *space* and *time* can be constantly present on both our shoulders as we live here on earth, and how unseen *Jinn* can also be constantly present all around us. They are present around us while yet not present in the same dimension of *space* and *time* in which we exist. Hence it is that we cannot see them. Consider the following verse of the Qurʾān:

﴿ يَسْبِيءَ آدَمَ لَا يَفْتِنَنَّكُمْ الشَّيْطَانُ كَمَا أَخْرَجَ أَبَوَيْكُمْ
مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ يَنْزِعُ عَنْهُمَا لِبَاسَهُمَا لِيُرِيَهُمَا سَوْآتِهِمَا ۗ إِنَّهُ

يَرٰنَكُمْ هُوَ وَقَبِيْلُهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا تَرَوْنَهُمْ ۗ اِنَّا جَعَلْنَا
 الشَّيْطٰنَ اَوْلِيَاءَ لِلَّذِيْنَ لَا يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ﴿٧٧﴾

O Children of Adam! let not Satan seduce you, in the same manner as he got your parents out of the Garden, stripping them of their raiment, to expose their shame: for he and his tribe watch you from a place where ye cannot see them (*i.e., they observe you from a dimension of space and time beyond your observation – hence from an unseen world*): We made the Evil Ones friends (*only*) to those without Faith.

(Qur'ān: al-'Arāf, 7:27)

The lesson from the above narrative pertaining to the 'food' and the 'donkey' extends beyond recognition of two worlds of *time* existing side by side right here on earth. The food, while still located in this world of *time*, was also preserved in a second world of *time* in which it remained fresh despite the passage of three hundred years. In other words, continuous travel or passage between two worlds of *time* occurred in this event.

The same thing occurred in the case of the young men in the cave as described in *Sūrah al-Kahf*. Their bodies remained physically for three hundred years in the cave in this world of *time* while yet preserved in another world of *time* in which they never grew old. And the same travel or passage through different worlds of time occurred in the *Isrā* and *M'irāj* of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*).

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In view of the fact, however, that the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had to be taken by *Burāq* to the Holy Land in order to be further transported into the *Samāwāt*, it now seems clear that this phenomenon of travel between other dimensions of *time* and our *time* is possible, perhaps only in the Holy Land. Hence the 'town' that was lying in ruins had to be Jerusalem, and so the miraculous event concerning the donkey and the food occurred in the Holy Land. The Cave in *Sūrah al-Kahf* also had to be located somewhere in or around the Holy Land. It was from the Holy Land that Jesus, the Son of Mary (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon them both*), was raised into the *Samawāt*. And when he returns from the *Samawāt* it should be in or around Jerusalem that he would descend.

DR ANSĀRI AND EVOLUTIONARY TIME

Our teacher of blessed memory, *Maulāna* Dr. Muhammad Fadlur Rahmān Ansāri (1914 – 1974), interpreted the divine guidance in much the same way as did *Maulāna* Jalāluddīn Rūmī to explain that while all creation commenced with the command "*Kun*" (Be!) yet all created things proceeded to evolve through different stages in different worlds. He described a world of light in which beings of light, namely Angels, came into being, and a world of fire in which *Jinn* came into being, and, finally, a world of clay in which humankind emerged. He consequently believed that 'time', like

everything else in Allah's creation, evolved until it finally emerged in the form in which we perceive it now.

What this chapter suggests is that the evolution of *time* took place in its passage or movement through different *Samawāt* or worlds of *time*. And once we understand and accept that process the interpretation of the all-important *Hadīth* concerning *Dajjāl's* life-span on earth becomes possible. Here is a description of *Maulāna's* Qur'anic cosmology in which *time* evolves. The quotation is taken from his two-volume masterpiece, '*The Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*':

"God's relationship with the cosmos as its Creator emerges in the Qur'an at two levels, i.e., the levels of *al-Amr* and *al-Khalq*. — both established and united under that Attribute of God which relates to cherishing, nourishing, evolving and perfecting, i.e., *al-Rabb*:

﴿..... أَأَلَا لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ تَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٥٤﴾﴾

"..... Lo! His is al-Khalq and al-Amr. Blessed is Allah the Rabb of the worlds (i.e., the entire cosmos)."

(Qur'an, al-'Arāf, 7:54)

Thus, the Creation began with God's *Amr*:

﴿بَدِيعَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِذَا قَضَىٰ أَمْرًا فَإِنَّمَا يَقُولُ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴿٥١﴾﴾

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“The Originator of the heavens and the earth; and whensoever He decrees an affair (*Amr*). He only says to it ‘Be’ and it becomes. (*Hence the origination of the cosmos also took place as a result of Allah’s Command ‘Be’.*)”

(Qur’ān, al-Baqarah, 2:117)

﴿ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ ﴾

“His Amr (*i.e., law of bringing something into existence*) is that when He intends a thing, He only says, to it (*by way of Command, or, Amr*): ‘Be’! and it becomes.”

(Qur’ān, Yasin, 36:82)

Hence the first stage in the creation of the cosmos should be affirmed in terms of ‘Becoming’. We may also call it the stage of subtle existence, intangibility (as opposed to the tangibility of matter), and spacelessness-cum-timelessness.

Looking at the process of creation in the background of the concept of evolution projected explicitly in the Qur’ān, we arrive at the view of evolutionary creation, wherein — like the evolutionary hypothesis in modern Science — we are led to the affirmation of the ‘Primeval Atom’ as the starting point, which functioned as the *nucleus* and out of which grew the entire cosmos through an evolutionary process — even as we find it mentioned in the *Hadīth* quoted in the foregoing on page xiii (see below), wherein the concept of the ‘First Created Light functioning as Nucleus’ has been projected.

The unique position which he holds among all creatures has been unambiguously affirmed also in a *Hadīth* reported by the Holy Prophet’s Companion Jabir and upheld as authentic in Islamic history by eminent authorities, among whom may be mentioned, by way of example, one of the

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classical Qur'anic commentators. Allama Alusi (vide his classical *Tafsir*, the *Rūh al-Ma'ani*, vol. 1, p. 51). It is to the effect:

“Jābir reports: I said ‘O Messenger of Allah! Inform me about that which Allah created before all (other) things’. He replied: Verily, Allah, the Almighty, created before all (other) things the Light of thine Prophet through His Light” (Quoted on the authority of *muhaddith* ‘*Abd al-Razzāq* [the eminent forerunner of *Imām al-Bukhārī* and author of *Al-Musannaḥ*] by *Allāma Yusuf b. Ismail al-Nabhāni*, in *Al-Anwār al-Muhammadiyah min Mawāhib al-Ludunniyah*, p. 12, Beirut, 1310 A.H.). The *Hadīth* then proceeds to inform that the entire universe was created by God from that original created Light, which the luminaries of Islam have named as the ‘Light of Muhammad’.

As for the nature of the evolutionary process, it should be conceived, in the very nature of the case, in terms of progressive decrease in subtlety, refinement, intangibility and qualitiveness, and progressive increase in respect of concreteness, crystallization, tangibility and quantitiveness: on the basis of a progressive crystallization of the process of *al-Khalq*, which implies the creation of new objects from the existing materials. In other words, it must have begun a progress towards more and more profound ‘expression’. This is what we understand from the Qur'ān as well as from Science.

Indeed, different things appear in the Qur'ān to have emerged into dynamic existence at different stages of the evolutionary process. Thus, there existed the angels, the *jinn* and the human beings in that pre-physical, or, transcendental, dimension of existence; and, among them, the angels and the *jinn* were there prior to the existence of the human beings, as the Holy Qur'ān testifies (*Qur'ān, al-Baqarah, 2:30-34*). Then, according to what we read in the Holy Book in plain terms, humanity was made to appear before

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God in her transcendental, or, pre-earthly, dimension of existence, to proclaim the Covenant of Monotheism (*Qur'ān, al-'Arāf, 7:172*) — which means that human beings existed at that stage of Creation. Similarly, the event of the 'Covenant of the Prophets' has been mentioned therein to have occurred in that stage of Creation (*Qur'ān, Ale 'Imrān, 3:81*, — which proves the existence of the Prophets at that stage.

All this means that a Realm of Created Beings and Things became gradually established in respect of their essential or ideal nature, even in the first stage of creation. But evolution was to continue, and has continued, according to God's Plan. However Allah set a measure or scale of growth of all things:

﴿..... قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا﴾

“Allah has set a measure (or, a scale of growth and maturity — which enshrines its destiny) for every thing.”

(*Qur'ān, al-Talāq, 65:3*)

In consequence certain things that had emerged from potentiality into actuality, had to stay in the state they had acquired — the angels, for instance; while others had to continue their evolutionary journey, finally emerging in the Spatio-Temporal Order of Existence — the human beings, for instance.

(*'Qur'anic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society', Vol. 2, pp 16-17*).

The Qur`anic cosmology presented above describes a process of evolutionary creation. It therefore confirms an evolution of *time* through different dimensions of *time*. The logical implication is that all creation evolved through different dimensions of *time* before

finally emerging in the dimension of space and *time* in which we live and die. The Qur`ān affirms the existence of *seven* different *Samawāt* that exist *each beside the other*, and this implies that *seven* different dimensions of *time* are all simultaneously present, all accessible, and all capable of impacting on life on earth:

﴿ الَّذِي خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِهِ
الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفْوُتٍ ۗ فَأَرْجِعِ الْبَصَرَ هَلْ تَرَىٰ مِن فُطُورٍ ۗ﴾



“He Who created the seven skies (*hence seven different dimensions of space and time*) layer after layer (*or strata after strata, each beyond the other, each merging perfectly with the other*): no defect wilt thou see in the Creation of (Allah) Most Gracious. So turn thy vision again: seest thou any flaw?”

(Qur`ān, al-Mulk, 67:3)

﴿ أَلَمْ تَرَوْا كَيْفَ خَلَقَ اللَّهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ طِبَاقًا ۗ﴾

“Do you not see how Allah has created the seven cosmic stratas (*samawat*) layer after layer (*or strata after strata one beyond the other*)”

(Qur`ān, Nuh, 71:15)

Similarly the Qur`ān affirms that mankind passed through the same process of emergence (or evolution) through different dimensions of space and *time* until we emerged in this world:

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﴿ فَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالشَّفَقِ ﴿٦﴾ وَاللَّيْلِ وَمَا وَسَقَ ﴿٧﴾ وَالْقَمَرِ ﴿٨﴾
إِذَا آتَّسَقَ ﴿٩﴾ لَتَرْكَبُنَّ طَبَقًا عَن طَبَقٍ ﴿١٠﴾ ﴾

“So I do call to witness the ruddy glow of Sunset; The Night and its Homing; And the Moon in her Fullness: Ye shall surely travel from stratum to stratum (*i.e., from one dimension of space and time to another, and then another, etc., in the seven stratas of creation*).”

(Qur’ān, al-Inshiqāq, 84:16-19)

Every human being experiences in the phenomenon of *true* dreams – sometimes known as prophetic dreams – the passage, or evolution, of a created event through these different worlds. Dreams that come true provide direct evidence that a transcendental world exists. Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) declared of true dreams and visions (and this includes spiritual insight) that they would be the last surviving part of prophethood that would remain in the world after him. But they do something else. When faith in Allah Most High enters into the heart then two things depart from the heart – namely *fear* and *grief*, and *hope* takes in their place – *hope* for good in this life and in the next. When the believer experiences continuous *true* dreams then *hope* is transformed into *joy* since they represent confirmation of the fulfillment of *hope*:

“When the time (of the end of the world) draws close, the dreams of a believer will hardly fail to come true. and a dream of a believer is one of the forty-six parts of prophethood.”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

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The only possible way that one can explain the phenomenon of a *true* or prophetic dream is that *events exist before they occur*. In other words, the process of creation of an event commences with the divine command *be!*, and then passes through various dimensions of space and *time* until it culminates as an actual event in this world of space and time. It is when that event is intercepted before it occurs in this world, and the news of the event is communicated in the form of a dream, that we experience the phenomenon of a *true* or prophetic dream.

Thus a *true* dream can only be explained if one accepts the existence of dimensions or worlds of space and *time* beyond that which we directly experience. There is a *reality* that is transcendental (or spiritual). Spiritual 'substance' emerges in material 'form' in every thing that exists, and every thing that occurs. All that appears in material 'form' were so 'fashioned' by Allah Most High that they might function as symbols (*Āyāt*) which would lead to, and reveal, their spiritual 'substance'.

And so, the event seen in a *true* predictive dream would be an event created by Allah Most High which first exists only in the dimension of spiritual 'substance'. It subsequently emerges as material 'form', and the dream then becomes a reality.

It should be clear that we cannot locate the second sky or stratum physically at a point where the first sky or stratum ends, for that would place the second sky or stratum in the same dimension of space as the first. It might be more appropriate to conceive of all *seven* stratas with

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their different dimensions of space and *time* as overlapping each other or merging into each other, instead of a spatially vertical juxtaposition of the *seven* skies or strata. So one does not need a space-ship with which to travel for light years before exhausting one dimension of space and *time* and entering another. *One can step from one dimension of time into a second in a fleeting moment.* Nor would it require any movement in our space or our *time* to take that step. Rather we can do it every time we stand in worship to perform our *Salāt* (prayer). This explains both the miracle of the blessed Prophet's *Isrā* and *M'irāj* when he traveled in a fleeting moment from Makkah to Jerusalem and through all *seven* transcendental worlds of space and *time* before returning to Makkah. This may also explain the phenomenon of the ascension of Jesus (*'alaihi al-Salam*) into the heavens and his eventual return to this dimension of space and *time* at that time when *Dajjāl* would have completed his mission. When Jesus returns to our dimension of *time* after more than 2000 years away from us, he would not have aged by as much as even a day.

SŪRAH AL-FĀTIHAH AND THE DIFFERENT WORLDS OF TIME

The blessed Prophet declared of *Sūrah al-Fātihah* that it was the greatest *Sūrah* of the *Qur'ān*. There was nothing in previously revealed scriptures that could compare with it, and that it could cure all illnesses. Consider the following *Ahādith*:

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Narrated Abu Said Al Mualla: While I was praying, the Prophet called me but I did not respond to his call. Later I said, "O Allah's Apostle! I was praying." He asked, "Didn't Allah say: O you who believe! Give your response to Allah (by obeying Him) and to His Apostle when he calls you?" (8.24) He then asked, "Shall I not teach you *the most superior Sūrah in the Qur'ān*?" He said, "(It is), Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. (i.e., Sūrah al-Fātiha) which consists of seven off recited verses of the Magnificent Qur'ān which was given to me."

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

Abdullah Ibn 'Abbās reported that the Prophet said: "Rejoice in the two lights brought to you which have not been brought to any Prophet before you: *al-Fatihah* and the last verses of Sūrah al-Baqarah (2: 284-5)."

(Muslim)

Abū Hurayrah reported that the Prophet said: "By Him in whose hands is my soul, nothing like it (i.e., *Sūrah al-Fātiha*) has been sent down in the Taurat, nor in the Injīl, nor in the Zabūr, nor (elsewhere) in the Qur'ān."

(Tirmīdhi)

'Abd al-Malik Ibn 'Umayr reported that the Prophet said that "*Sūrah al-Fātiha is a healing for every sickness.*"

(Tirmīdhī, Dārimi and Bayhaqi)

Narrated Alaqah ibn Sahar at-Tamīmi: Alaqah came to the Apostle of Allah (*may peace be upon him*) and embraced Islam. He then came back from him and passed some people who had a lunatic fettered in chains. His people said: We are told that your companion has brought much that is good. Have you something with which you can cure him? *I then recited Sūrah al-Fātiha* and he was cured. They gave me one hundred shecp. I then came to the Apostle of Allah (*peace be upon him*) and informed him of it. He asked: Is it only this?

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The narrator, Musaddad, said in his other version: Did you say anything other than that? I said: No. He said: Take it, for by my life, some accept it for a worthless chain, but you have done so for a genuine one.”

(Sunan Abū Daūd)

Narrated Abū Saīd: Some of the companions of the Prophet went on a journey until they reached some of the Arab tribes (at night). They asked the latter to treat them as their guests but they refused. The chief of that tribe was then bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and they tried their best to treat him but in vain. Some of them said (to the others), “Nothing has benefited him, will you go to the people who are spending the night here, maybe some of them might possess something (that can cure).” They went to the group of the companions (of the Prophet) and said, “Our chief has been bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion) and we have tried everything but he has not benefited. Have you got anything (useful)?” One of them replied, “Yes, by Allah! I can recite a Ruqya, but as you have refused to accept us as your guests, I will not recite the Ruqya for you unless you fix for us some wages for it.” They agreed to pay them a flock of sheep. One of them then went and recited (*Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*): All the praises are for the Lord of the Worlds. He then blew with his breath over the chief who was then healed as if he was released from shackles. He got up and started walking, showing no signs of sickness. They paid them what they agreed to pay. Some of them (i.e. the companions) then suggested to divide their earnings among themselves, but the one who performed the recitation said, “Do not divide them till we go to the Prophet and narrate the whole story to him, and wait for his order.” So, they went to Allah’s Apostle and narrated the story. Allah’s Apostle asked, “How did you come to know that *Sūrah al-Fātiḥa* was recited as Ruqya?” Then he added, “You have done the right thing. Divide (what you have earned) and assign a share for me as well.” The Prophet smiled thereupon.

(Sahīh Bukhārī)

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Our view, and Allah knows best, is the above indicate that the *seven Āyāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Fātihah* have the capacity to spiritually transport the true servant of Allah, even while he is in *Salāt*, through the *seven* dimensions of space and *time* and to deliver him/her spiritually to a special proximity with Allah Most High in a *timeless* world. This phenomenon constitutes the *M'iraj* of the believers.

In other words, spiritual travel (*M'irāj*) commences at the very beginning of *Salāt* with the recitation of *Sūrah al-Fātihah*. Each of the *seven Āyāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Fātihah* can spiritually transport the worshipper through one of the *seven Samawāt* or dimensions of space and *time* until, by the time he recites *Āmīn*, he arrives spiritually at the *'Arsh*. He would then be in the special presence of Allah Most High, and the rest of the *Raka'ah* (or cycle of prayer) would be performed in that special divine presence.

This, perhaps, explains why the blessed Messenger of Allah (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) always recited each verse of *Sūrah al-Fātihah* separately and never joined two of its verses together in recitation. It also forces those who thought otherwise to now recognize the *Basmallah* as the first verse of *Sūrah al-Fātihah* and, consequently to further recognize the imperative of reciting it aloud in *Salāt* along with its other six *Āyāt*.

We may now conclude with the recognition of the following *seven* worlds or dimensions of *time*:

1. a day like 50,000 years

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2. a day like 1000 years
3. a day like 300 years
4. a day like 100 years
5. a day like a year
6. a day like a month and
7. a day like a week.

We are now at last in a position to examine the enigmatic *Hadīth* concerning *Dajjāl* and his life-span on earth of ‘forty’ days.

DAJJĀL’S EMERGENCE IN TIME

No one can discern the subject of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah (Anti-Christ) unless and until he succeeds in first comprehending the subject of ‘time’. This is because Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) has clearly revealed ‘time’ to be at the very heart of *Dajjāl*’s mission since, “*when he is released, he would live on earth for forty days – ‘one day like a year’, ‘one day like a month’, ‘one day like a week’, and all his days (i.e., all the rest of his days) like your days’.*” (*Sahīh Muslim*)

It should now be quite clear that *Dajjāl* passes through three different dimensions of space and *time* before he finally emerges in concrete form in our world where we would actually be able to see him. In our book entitled ‘*Jerusalem in the Qur’ān*’ we have located and explained where *Dajjāl* would be located on earth during these

three periods of his life prior to that *time* when he would make his physical appearance in Jerusalem.

But the further questions arise:

- ❖ How long would a day like a year be?
- ❖ How long would a day like a month be?
- ❖ How long would a day like a week be?

Since different dimensions of space and *time* other than our own cannot be observed normally, there can be no precise mathematical formula through which we can measure 'a day like a year'. Nor can we, through observation and rational effort, measure 'a day like a month' or 'a day like a week'. But we can certainly recognize that the three periods of *time* in which *Dajjāl* traverses three different dimensions of *time* (a day like a year, a month, a week etc.) are such that the first is the longest, the second is shorter than the first, and the last is the shortest. *The only way we can determine or recognize his passage from the first to the second and finally to the third dimension of time, before he emerges in our world, is through his 'footprints'. By that I mean that we have to carefully observe events as they emerge in the passage of history and then, with a careful use of the Ahādīth of the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam), we will be able to recognize and even anticipate his movement from 'day' to 'day'.*

It is through the use of this method that we have come to the conclusion that *we are now located at that moment in Dajjāl's life on earth,*

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and in the historical process, when 'a day like a month' is about to end, and 'a day like a week' is about to commence.

When *Dajjāl* was located in *a day like a year* we observed that the island of Britain was his headquarters and that Britain became the *ruling state* in the world. Then we observed that when *Dajjāl* moved to *a day like a month* USA became his headquarters and USA succeeded Britain as the *ruling state* in the world. We would now be able to recognize when *'a day like a month'* has ended and *'a day like a week'* has begun when another state replaces USA as the *ruling state* in the world.

This writer believes, at the time of this writing, that the Euro-Jewish State of Israel is poised to wage a war through which it would attempt to seize direct control over all the vast oil resources located in and around the River Euphrates (i.e., in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Gulf States, etc.). Britain and USA would, of course, assist Israel in that attack.

Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had prophesied these wars (i.e., the British, and American wars on Iraq to seize control of Iraq's oil, and the Israeli war that is about to take place) when he declared:

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "Soon the river Euphrates will uncover a treasure (like a mountain) of gold. Whoever is present at that time should not take anything of it." Al-A'raj narrated from Abu Huraira that the Prophet said the same but he said, "It (Euphrates) would uncover a mountain of gold (under it)."

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

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Narrated Ubayy ibn Ka'b: I heard Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) say, "The Euphrates would soon uncover a mountain of gold and when the people would hear of it they would flock towards it but the people who would possess that (treasure) (would say): If we allow these persons to take a piece of it they will take away the whole thing." So they will fight and ninety-nine out of one hundred would be killed. Abu Kamil in his narration said: "I and Abu Ka'b stood under the shade of the battlement of Hassan."

(Sahīh Muslim)

I believe that the massive deaths prophesied (99 out of every 100) in the war to gain control over that mountain of (black) gold uncovered by the River Euphrates can be understood in the tremendous number of deaths already estimated to have occurred in Iraq. However, I believe that it can better be understood in the context of the possible future use of such weapons of mass destruction as nuclear weapons.

I believe that Israel would exploit the opportunity of that big war to expand its territory "from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates" and would thus achieve its mythical Biblical frontiers. I expect at that *time* there would also be a concomitant collapse of the American dollar, economy and power to such an extent that Israel would replace USA as the *ruling state* in the world! After all, an Israeli nuclear attack to seize control of the oil that the blessed Prophet described as "a mountain of gold" would result in such a dramatic rise in the price of both oil and gold as would precipitate the meltdown of the fraudulent dollar. The price of oil has also already risen to such an extent that any further dramatic increase would deliver to Israel the capacity to hold

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the entire world to energy ransom. Energy blackmail would thus be used by the so-called 'chosen people' of the Lord-God to establish their so-called Holy Israel as the new *ruling state* in the world.

While it may be true that this humble writer is the first to interpret the *Ahadīth* pertaining to *Dajjāl* in this way, it should not invalidate the interpretation, nor should it weaken our resolve to resist Israeli oppression. As events continue to unfold we confidently expect them to confirm our interpretation of the prophecy of the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) that would eventually deliver victory to truth and justice. Since ours is an opinion we must qualify our interpretation of religious symbolism in the Qur'ān and *Ahadīth* with 'Allah Knows best'.

Finally if we can calculate the period of *time* (using our own measurement of *time*) when *Dajjāl* was in 'a day like a year', and 'a day like a month', we would then arrive at an understanding of the approximate amount of *time* that would elapse in 'a day like a week', i.e., a much shorter period of *time* than the previous 'day'. At the end of 'a day like a week' we can expect *Dajjāl* to be born into our world (of space and *time*) of Jewish parents, as prophesied by the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) and to eventually assume *rule* over Israel and the world while he is still a young man. At that time he would proclaim himself to be the Messiah. When the Jews complete their acceptance of his (false) claim, his mission would have been successfully completed.

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Readers may wish to visit the analysis presented in our book, '*Jerusalem in the Qur'ān*', in which we described the three stages in *Dajjāl's* mission which are linked to three different dimensions of *time* and which would culminate with him *ruling* the world from Jerusalem and triumphantly declaring that he is the promised Messiah.

In the first stage, which lasted for a long *time*, a *Pax Britannica* world-order waged strange colonial wars on the rest of the world and eventually and cleverly succeeded in 'liberating' the Holy Land . . .

Then in the second stage of that master-plan – a stage which is still in progress and which would last for a shorter *time* than the first – a *Pax Americana* world-order replaced *Pax Britannica* and proceeded to mysteriously protect the arrogant, aggressive and expansionist Euro-Jewish State with countless UN Security Council vetoes . . .

And then in the third, final and briefest stage of the master-plan, a *Pax Judaica* world-order of universal *messianic* dictatorship is about to replace *Pax Americana* . . .

The most important point we make in '*Jerusalem in the Qur'ān*' is the world is now located at that moment in *time* when stage two of the master-plan is about to culminate and be replaced by stage three.

Let us now attempt to respond to a vexing question that seeks an explanation of the *Hadīth* in which our dear Prophet explained how we should pray in *Dajjāl's* 'day like a year, month and week'. He declared that we would have to calculate the *times* for the five daily prayers:

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An-Nawwas ibn Sam'an reported: Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) mentioned of the *Dajjāl* one day in the morning. He sometimes described him as insignificant and sometimes described (his turmoil) as very significant (and we felt) as if he were in the cluster of the date-palm trees. We asked, "Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*), how long will he (*Dajjāl*) stay on Earth?" He said, "For forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and the rest of the days will be like your days." We asked, "Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) would one day's prayer suffice for the prayers of the day equal to one year?" Thereupon he said, "No, but you must make an estimate of the time (and then observe prayer)."

(Sahīh Muslim)

After Allah Most High created the earth, He went on to create seven more worlds of space and time (*saba'a samawāt*) different from our world. These worlds exist between this world and Allah's 'Arsh.

When *Dajjāl* is released, said the blessed Prophet (*peace be upon him*), he would live on earth while passing through three different dimensions of space and time. At the end of his passage through those three dimensions, he would be born into this world of space and time and his day would then be like our day.

If a Muslim were to travel and to enter any of these *Saba'ah Samawāt* (i.e., seven dimensions of space and time), as the blessed Prophet (*peace be upon him*) did in the *Mirāj*, then he would have to calculate the timings of *Salāt* in each *Samā*(i.e., each dimension of space and time). The same is true about performing *Salāt* in the grave. The blessed Prophet did make mention about the possibility of *Salāt* in the grave:

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Narrated Anas ibn Malik: Allah's Messenger (*peace be upon him*) said, "I happened to pass by Moses on the occasion of the Night Journey near the red mound (and found him) performing his Salāt (prayer) in his grave."

(Sahīh Muslim)

Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah: Allah's Messenger (*peace be upon him*) said, "When the dead body is buried in the grave, there is presented before him (the scene of) the setting sun. He then sits down and rubs his eyes and he says, Leave me so that I may observe my prayer."

(Sunan Ibn Mājah)

PROPHET MUHAMMAD, THE MASTER-PLAN AND 666

I believe that Prophet Muhammad prophesied those three stages of the master-plan (that is the ultimate world-system) through which *Dajjāl* the false Messiah (Anti-Christ) would eventually accomplish his mission of impersonating the true Messiah and thus of *ruling* the world from an imposter State of Israel in the Holy Land. The Prophet said "*when Dajjāl is released he would live on earth for forty days – a day like a year – a day like a month – a day like a week – and all his days (i.e., all the rest of his days) like your days*" (*Sahih Muslim*). He also prophesied, in what has come to be known as the *Hadīh* of *Tamīm Dāri*, that an island which specialized in spying, and was located about one month's journey by sea from Arabia, would be *Dajjāl's* initial base, i.e., in the first stage of his mission that would last for 'a day like a year'. I believe that island could not have been any other than Britain!

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The Bible described the very same three-stage process that would culminate with a new international monetary system of electronic money and with the Anti-Christ *ruling* the world from Jerusalem. It did so when it declared:

“ . . . and he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their forehead, and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred, three score, and six” (Revelation: 13:16-18).

When the Bible’s religious symbolism is elucidated it reveals that the number ‘*six hundred*’ in relation to the Anti-Christ refers to the first stage of the master plan that lasted for a long *time* and witnessed the emergence of the first *ruling state* in post-Biblical history and to *Pax Britanica*. The number ‘*three score*’ refers to the present second stage that lasts for a shorter period of *time* and witnesses the emergence of the second *ruling state* and to *Pax Americana*. Finally the number ‘*six*’ refers to the third and last stage of the master plan with which the Anti-Christ finally completes his mission and emerges in human form to *rule* the world from Jerusalem and from an imposter *ruling State* of Israel with *Pax Judaica*.

The most distinctive feature of the unfolding master-plan from its very beginning with the Euro-Christian crusades, have been its godlessness, decadence, deception and barbaric oppression.



CHAPTER THREE ﴿—

The Sūrah and the Sunnah

Jn attempting to determine the *Sunnah* (i.e., the way or example) of Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) as it relates to *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qurʾān (Chapter 18 entitled ‘The Cave’) we examine two incidents which occurred in the lifetime of the blessed Prophet and involved his companions.

FIRST INCIDENT

We learn from the first event that the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) ordered one of his companions, Abbād ibn Bishr (may Allah be pleased with him), to memorize the entire *Sūrah*.

If the Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) gave such an order to even one companion, then the memorization of this *Sūrah* must be recognized as a *Sunnah* of the Prophet. It is our fervent hope and prayer that this particular narration will encourage our readers to joyfully embrace this *Sunnah*, i.e., to make every effort to memorize the entire *Sūrah al-Kahf* and then to recite it as frequently as possible in their *Salāt* (i.e., prayer). Here is a narration of that event concerning Abbād ibn Bishr:

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“Calmly, ‘Abbād pulled out the arrow from his body and went on with his recitation, still absorbed in his Salāt. The attacker shot a second and a third arrow both of which also found their mark. Abbād pulled out one and then the other. He finished his recitation, made Rukū (bending down) and then Sujūd (prostrating to the ground). Weak, and in pain, he stretched out his right hand while still in prostration and shook his sleeping companion. ‘Ammar awoke. Silently, ‘Abbād continued the Salāt to its end and then said, “Get up and stand guard in my place. I have been wounded.”

‘Ammār jumped up and began to yell. Seeing them both the attacker fled into the darkness. ‘Ammar turned to ‘Abbād as he lay on the ground, blood flowing from his wounds.

“Ya Subhānallah (Glory be to Allah)! Why did you not wake me when you were hit by the first arrow?”

“I was in the midst of reciting verses of the Qur’ān which filled my soul with awe and I did not want to cut short the recitation. The Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) had commanded me to commit this Sūrah (i.e., Sūrah al-Kahf) to memory. And so, death would have been easier for me than interrupting the recitation of this Sūrah”, replied ‘Abbad to his companion.

Khalid Muhammad Khalid, ‘Rijāl hawla al-Rasūl’;
published as ‘Men around the Messenger’, Islamic Book Trust,
Kuala Lumpur (www.ibtbooks.com). 2005 p. 440

If the blessed Prophet ordered one of his companions to memorize a *Sūrah* of the Qur’ān it does not mean that it is compulsory for all Muslims to do the same, but it become a *Sunnah*. We conclude from the above, as well as from that which is to follow, that the memorization of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is a *Sunnah*. And whoever performs a

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deed which is a *Sunnah*, and Allah accepts it, will receive the reward for it.

This writer was blessed to have completed his memorization of *Sūrah al-Kahf* during the spiritual retreat of *ʿIttikāf* in *Ramadān* of 1424H while writing this book. He felt an indescribable joy, unlike anything that the *Dunyāh* could offer, when he stood in *Salāt* and, for the first time ever, recited the entire *Sūrah* in *Salāt* (prayer) while following in the footsteps of Abbād ibn Bashr. The writer prays that those who read this book may be similarly inspired to memorize the entire *Sūrah* and recite it in *Salāt Insha Allah*.

SECOND INCIDENT

The second incident involving a companion of the Prophet and the recitation of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is taken from *Sahīh al-Bukhāri*. The *Hadīth* makes mention of a Companion who recited *Sūrah al-Kahf* and was rewarded by Allah with a divine *Sakīna* (tranquility which embraces the heart) which descended upon him like a cloud, and which frightened his horse. The *Hadīth* does not make it clear whether the divinely bestowed *Sakīna* was received in response to the recitation of this particular *Sūrah* of the blessed Qurʾān, or whether it was in response to the recitation of the Qurʾān itself without reference to the *Sūrah*. Our view is that both possibilities are present:

“Narrated by al-Bara bin Azib; A man was reciting *Sūrah al-Kahf* while his horse was tied with two ropes beside him. A cloud came down and spread

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over that man, and it kept on coming closer and closer to him till his horse started jumping (as if afraid of something). When it was morning, the man came to the Prophet, and told him of that experience. The Prophet said: That was al-Sakīna (peace and tranquility) which descended because of (the recitation of) the Qur`ān.”

(Sahīh al-Bukhāri)

THE PROPHET AND SŪRAH AL-KAHF

We have established from the above beautiful narration that the memorization of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is a *Sunnah*. Indeed, the Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) recalled his own memorization of the *Sūrah* in the following:

“Narrated by Abdullah: The Prophet said: Sūratu Banī Isrāīl, al-Kahf, Maryam, Tāhā and al-Anbiyā are from the very old Sūrahs which I learnt by heart, and they are my first property.”

(Sahīh al-Bukhāri)

“Narrated by Abdullah bin Masūd: The Prophet said: Sūratu Banī Isrāīl, al-Kahf, Maryam, Tāhā, and al-Anbiyā are amongst my first earnings and my old property”

(Sahīh al-Bukhāri)

Let us now continue our introduction to the *Sūrah* with the vitally important statement of Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) that the believers should recite *Sūrah al-Kahf* every *Yoūm al-Juma`ah* (i.e., Friday) for the *Nūr* (light) of the *Sūrah*

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and for protection from the *Fitnah* (trial, deception) of *Dajjāl*, i.e., the false Messiah or Anti-Christ:

“Narrated by Abū Sa’īd: The Prophet said: If anyone recites Sūrah al-Kahf on Yoūm al-Jum’ah (i.e., ‘Friday’ of the pagan world), a light will shine brightly for him till the next Jum’ah.”

(al-Tirmīdhī; Baihaqī transmitted it in Kitāb al-Da’wah al-Kabīr)

“Abu Sa’īd al-Khudri reports that the Prophet said: Whoever recites Sūrah al-Kahf on Jumu’ah (i.e., ‘Friday’ of the pagan world) will have illumination from the light (of the Sūrah) from one Jum’ah to the next.”

(Nasā’i, Baihaqī, Hākīm)

“Ibn ‘Umar reports that the Prophet said: Whoever recites Sūrah al-Kahf on Jumu’ah will be blessed with a light that will rise from underneath his feet to the peak of the sky. This will be a light for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be forgiven for what is between the Jumu’ah, i.e., or the day of the congregational prayers [and the next] Jumu’ah.”

(Sayyed Sāqib: ‘Fiqh as-Sunnah’ declares that this Hafīth is related by Ibn Mardwīyah with a faultless chain)

We prefer to use the name ‘*Youm al-Juma’ah*’ that is located in the blessed Qur’ān, rather than the name ‘Friday’, for the sixth day of the week. Despite the fact that the name ‘Friday’ met with approval from a European Pope it nevertheless remained a name with pagan origins. ‘Friday’ is derived from ‘*Fria*’, a pagan goddess, and ‘day’ is derived from ‘*daeg*’ which means day. Hence the word ‘Friday’ means ‘the day of the goddess *Fria*’. Here is what Encyclopedia Encarta has to say about ‘Friday’:

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Friday (Anglo-Saxon frīgedaeg: from Old High German Frīa, a goddess: Old English daeg, "day"), English name of the sixth day of the week. The day was held sacred to Venus, the goddess of love, by the Romans, who called it dies veneris ("day of Venus"). In the Romance languages the name of the day is derived from the Latin, as in the French vendredi, the Italian venera, and the Spanish viernes. Germanic peoples held the day sacred to the Norse goddess of love, Frigg, or Frija. The Germanic languages, like English, use variations of the Old High German frīatag ("day of Frija") to designate the day. The Hebrew name for Friday, yom shishi, means "sixth day." Among many Slavic peoples, however, Friday is not regarded as the sixth day of the week, as evidenced by its Russian name, pyatnecza, or "fifth day.")

And so, not only is it a *Sunnah* to memorize *Sūrah al-Kahf*, but it is also a *Sunnah* to recite it every *Youm al-Juma'ah*. It is our fervent prayer that all the readers of this book will be encouraged, *Insha Allah*, to follow the *Sunnah* in respect of both memorizing the *Surah* and of diligently reciting it every *Youm al-Juma'ah*.

The Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) also said that when *Dajjāl* confronts a believer he should recite the first ten verses of this *Surah* over him and *Dajjāl* will not be able to harm him or her:

"Abū Darda reported that Allah's Messenger said: If anyone memorizes the first ten verses of *Sūrah al-Kahf*, he will be protected from *Dajjāl*." (We have attempted in a subsequent chapter of this book to describe and analyze those first ten Ayāt or verses of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.)

(Sahīh Muslim)

CHAPTER THREE ﴿﴾— *The Sūrah and the Sunnah*

“He among you who will survive to see him (Dajjāl) should recite over him the opening verses of Sūrah al-Kahf.”

(Sahīh Muslim)

“Narrated Abū Darda’: Allah’s Messenger (*peace be upon him*) said, He who recites three verses at the beginning of al-Kahf will be protected from the trial of the Dajjāl.”

(Tirmīdhī)

In explaining this *Sūrah* we have to introduce the reader to the subject of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ in Islam.

The first thing that we know of *Dajjāl* is that which is revealed through his very name. The Prophet (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) described him by name as *al-Masīh al-Dajjāl*. *Al-Masīh* means ‘the Messiah’, and *Dajjāl* means ‘deceiver’. Thus he would deceive the Jews into embracing him as the Promised Messiah when, in fact, he would be a false Messiah.

Allah, Most High, had promised the Israelite people that He would send to them a special Prophet who would be known as *al-Masīh* (the Messiah) and who would bring back the golden age (i.e. the time of David and Solomon) when the Holy State of Israel ruled the world from the Holy Land. Allah fulfilled His promise by sending *al-Masīh* in the person of Jesus, the son of the Virgin Mary.

However, most of the Israelites rejected the claim of Jesus (*peace be upon him*) to be the Messiah. Among other things they slandered his mother and considered him to be a bastard. Hence they could not recognize him to be the Messiah. They subsequently confirmed their

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rejection when they conspired to have him crucified, and then saw him die before their very eyes without ruling the world from Jerusalem. In addition, his death by crucifixion confirmed him in their eyes, according to Torah, as the “cursed of the Lord”.

Having disposed of someone they considered to be a false Messiah, they have been waiting ever since for the true Messiah to come in fulfillment of the Divine promise.

As a consequence of their disbelief and rejection of Jesus, and their wickedness in conspiring to kill him and then boasting of how they had killed him, Allah Most High responded by releasing into the world a *being* created by Him, i.e. *Dajjāl*, the false Messiah. His mission would be to deceive them into embracing him as the true Messiah. In the process he would lead them with consummate deception down the road to hell. *Sūrah al-Kahf*, *Dajjāl* and the Jews are therefore connected intricately together.

Any introduction to *Dajjāl* must also involve an introduction to such related concepts as the simultaneous release into the world of the tribes of *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog). The sign given in the Qur'ān that confirms their release is also a sign linked with the Jews. Another related concept is that of the advent of *Imām al-Mahdi* who would lead the Muslim army that would destroy the oppressor and imposter State of Israel. Finally, the subject cannot be addressed or understood without examining the belief in the return of Jesus (*peace be upon him*). His return would witness the end of both Judaism and Christianity as religions, and the triumph of Truth of Islam.

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Let us now examine the historical background to the revelation of *Sūrah al-Kahf* since it provides even more information about the Jews.



CHAPTER FOUR ❦—

Historical Background to the Revelation of Sūrah Al-Kahf

THE CHALLENGE OF ISLAM

Ever since the time of Prophet Ishmael, and for thousands of years prior to the birth of Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon them both*), the pagan Arabs of Arabia had never had the experience of a Prophet of Allah Most High living in their midst. The religion of Abraham and of his son, Ishmael (*peace be upon them both*), had been corrupted, and so the Arabs, even while worshipping Allah, also worshipped idols rather than the One unseen God, Allah. Thus they recognized Allah to be one of the many Gods that they worshipped. Yet despite this long period of time lived in a wilderness devoid of divine revelation and prophetic guidance, they still clung to some remnants of the true religion of Abraham.

For example, Abraham had built the *Ka'aba*, the Temple or House of Allah in Makkah, and had established the annual *Hajj* (pilgrimage) to that Temple or Holy House. All the Arabs honored that Temple or Holy House and they continued to perform the *Hajj* for thousands of years after Abraham had established it. The tribe of the Quraish, which traced its lineage to Ishmael, was recognized by all Arabs as the custodian of the *Ka'aba*, and that not only gave them

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great honor and esteem amongst the Arabs, but it also translated handsomely into privilege and wealth. (For a detailed description of all the remnants of the original true religion of Abraham (*'alaihi al-Salām*) that survived amongst the pagan Arabs, see my book entitled *'The Religion of Abraham and the State of Israel – A View from the Qur'ān'*.)

Suddenly a man who was born into the tribe of the *Quraish* and who grew up amongst them, proclaimed that he was a Prophet of Allah Most High like the Prophets Abraham and Ishmael. Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) refused to worship the idols and the gods of pagan Arabia. He denounced idolatry and polytheism as false. He declared that there was no god beside Allah, the one unseen God who was the God of Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus (*peace be upon them all*). He declared that Allah had no daughters and that He never fathered a son. He never appeared in the person of anyone (not in ancient Egypt, India, Arabia, and Bethlehem, or even in Chicago). Allah never appeared in the form of anything - not in wood, marble or stone. Allah was the God of all of mankind - Arab as well as non-Arab, white as well as black. He was the God of Makkah and the *Quraish*, as well as the God of all other cities, all other tribes and all other races.

Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) proclaimed that Allah recognized all of mankind to be "*as equal in His sight as were the teeth of a comb.*" He was the God of free men and women, as well as the God of those who were slaves. Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) denounced all

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forms of oppression including the oppression of the weak, the poor, the stranger or foreigner, the slave, women and children. He also forbade cruelty to animals.

The religion of Islam that he preached challenged the entire system of dominance and oppression on which Arabian society was based. Therefore it was a significant threat to the established order. Islam remains, to this day, a challenge to a contemporary Judeo-Christian Euro-world-order of godlessness, corruption, decadence and relentless barbaric oppression. In fact, it is the only force in the world that continues to demonstrate a capacity to challenge the all-powerful Euro (white) oppressors, and their colored clients, who together have established and sustain that Euro-world-order of unprecedented barbaric oppression.

The Quraish were horrified over the proclamations and preaching of Muhammad (*peace be upon him*). He challenged the very foundations of their religious, social, economic and political order. In fact, the challenge was even greater than that! Arabia prided itself with its literary accomplishments. Even though most Arabs could neither read nor write, they had a highly developed language, the Arabic language, and an unrivalled appreciation for poetry. They honored their poets and conferred on them the highest status in society. It was therefore stunning to the Arabs that from Muhammad's lips should flow a Qur'ān (literally 'reading') which surpassed in literary excellence the very best poetry that Arabia had ever experienced. That Qur'ān challenged the doubting Arabs on a battleground in which they perceived themselves to be strongest of all, and they found themselves

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incapable of responding to its public challenge. The Qur'ān also challenged the rest of humanity who doubted that it was the word of the one true God) to produce a chapter (*Sūrah*) like unto any in it. The threat of Islam was a threat the likes of which pagan Arabia had never before experienced. That was their predicament.

How should pagan Arabia respond to that challenge? What could they do? Everything they had tried, failed to stop Islam. They counseled amongst themselves and decided to seek help from the Jews who were resident in the northern city of Yathrib (now renamed Madīna). They asked the Rabbis. "How can we tell whether or not Muhammad is indeed a true Prophet like Abraham and Moses?" In consequence of the Jewish response to that question, Allah Most High sent down *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān itself preserved this link between the *Sūrah* and the mission to Yathrib when it recalled two questions posed by the Rabbis:

﴿ وَسَأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا ۚ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قُلُوبًا غَافِلِينَ ﴾

“And they (*i.e.*, the Rabbis of Yathrib) question thee (O Muhammad) about Dhūl Qarnain

(Qur'ān, al-Kahf, 18:83)

﴿ وَسَأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۚ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَرُ ۖ بَلْ يُرَىٰ فِي سَمَاءٍ مَوْجِدٍ ۚ يَتَّبِعُ الْوَجْهَ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْغَنِيُّ ۚ وَهُوَ يُنَزِّلُ الْمَطَرَ ۚ إِنَّهُ ذُو الْعَرْشِ الْمُبِينُ ﴾

“And they (*i.e.*, the Rabbis of Yathrib) ask you (O Muhammad) concerning the Rūh

(Qur'ān, Banū Isrā'īl, 17:85)

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Revelation of Sūrah Al-Kahf*

The history of this mission to Yathrib, to which we now turn, explains the connection between this *Sūrah* and the Jews.

MISSION TO YATHRIB (MADINA)

The Quraish decided to send a delegation comprising al-Nadr bin al-Hārith and Uqba bin Abū Mu`ayt to Yathrib (now renamed *Madīna al-Nabi* or, for short, *Madīna*), a city some 300 kilometers to the North of Makkah, to consult with the Jewish Rabbis. They instructed the delegation as follows:

“Ask them about Muhammad; describe him to them and tell them what he says, for they are the first people of the scriptures and have knowledge that we do not possess about Prophets.”

(‘The Life of Muhammad’ – A Translation of Ibn Ishaq’s *Sīrat Rasūl Allah*.
Translated by A Guillaume, Oxford University Press, Karachi,
1982. p. 136)

There was a large Jewish community in Madina and, as was well known, Jews always had Prophets living in their midst. Indeed, Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) had declared that there was never a time, from the age of Moses (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) to the age of Jesus (*‘alaihi al-Salām*), when the Jews did not have a Prophet living in their midst! The Quraish reasoned that since the Jews had such intimate experience and vast knowledge about Prophets they would best be able to advise them concerning the validity of the claim of Muhammad (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) about prophethood.

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In fact, Arabia also knew that the Jews had migrated to the Arabian city of Yathrib because they expected a Prophet to come to Yathrib. Indeed the Jews had been publicly proclaiming (literally shouting from the mountain-tops) for many years: "A Prophet is coming! A Prophet is coming! When he comes, he would be our Prophet. He would empower us and we would overcome our enemies." The Jews were waiting, most of all, for the advent of a special Prophet who was Divinely promised to them, and would be known as the Messiah (*al-Masīh*). When they saw the spiritual signs that a Prophet was coming to the world and that he would be coming to Yathrib, they naturally concluded that he must be the Messiah. If he was not the Messiah then he could be the Prophet 'like unto Moses' who was to come from the 'brethren' of the Israelite people, or he could be Elijah (known in the Qur'ān as *Illyās*). His people had persecuted Elijah and he had mysteriously ascended into heavens. In consequence, there arose the belief that Elijah would one day return:

" . . . And it came to pass, that when the Lord would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, and it came to pass as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder: and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

(2 Kings: 2-11)

According to Malachi, God preserved Elijah alive to entrust him at the end of time with a glorious mission (iv. 5-6) at the New Testament period. This mission was believed to immediately precede the advent of the Messiah (Matt., xvii, 10, 12; Mark, ix, 11).

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The delegation of the Quraish approached the Jewish Rabbis of Yathrib who were themselves awaiting a Prophet and had adequate means with which to recognize and identify him. What was the criteria by which the Jews could recognize the long-awaited Prophet? What advice did they give to the delegation?

THE THREE QUESTIONS

The Jewish Rabbis of Yathrib advised the Quraish to ask three questions to Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*):

“Ask him about three things of which we will instruct you: if he gives you the right answer then he is an authentic Prophet, but if he does not, then the man is a rogue, so form your own opinion about him:

Ask him what happened to the young men who disappeared in ancient days, for they have a marvelous story;

Ask him about the mighty traveler who reached the confines of both East and West;

And ask him what is the spirit (*Rūh*)

If he can give you the answer then follow him, for he is a Prophet. If he cannot, then he is a forger and treat him as you will. “

(Ibn Ishaq, 'Sīrat Rasūl Allah', Trans. A. Guillaume, Oxford Univ. Press, Karachi, 1967, p. 136)

The Rabbis must certainly have been interested in the outcome of the encounter with Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*). They really wanted to know his answers to the three questions. They would certainly have been surprised if he was indeed a true Prophet, since

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they believed that prophethood was their exclusive privilege. They still believe to this day that no one after Abraham (*peace be upon him*) could be a Prophet unless he was also a Jew. Why was this so?

Although Ishmael was also a son of Abraham (*'alaihi al-Salām*) the Torah has been corrupted to falsely proclaim that he was a “*wild ass of a man*” and that he was excluded from the Covenant that Allah Most High made with the seed of Abraham (*'alaihi al-Salām*). Jews believe in the corrupted rewritten Torah and hence considered it an impossibility that a Prophet could arise from the seed of Ishmael (*'alaihi al-Salām*, - see our book entitled “*The Religion of Abraham and the State of Israel – A View from the Qur’ān*”). Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) was an Arab, and thus a descendent of Ishmael. That would not have prevented them however, from showing some interest in the outcome of the encounter. In any case when Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) answered the questions the Quraish would have to turn to them to discover whether the answers were true or false.

The answers to the questions eventually came down in the Qur’ān, but strangely enough, a *Hadīth* in *Sahīh Bukhāri* makes it appear that the Rabbis must have concealed those answers from their own people since some of them were still ignorant concerning the answers. Years later, when the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had himself migrated to Madina, some Jews approached him and asked him the same third question (i.e., the *Rūh*). He responded by reciting the Qur’ānic reply that Allah Most Wise had revealed years earlier. However, the *Hadīth* strangely made it seem that it was revealed at

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that time:

“Narrated Abdullah: While I was going with the Prophet through the ruins of Madīna and he was reclining on a date-palm leaf stalk, some Jews passed by. Some of them said to others: Ask him (the Prophet) about the Rūh (spirit). Some of them said that they should not ask him that question as he might give a reply that would displease them. But some of them insisted on asking, and so one of them stood up and asked: O Abul-Qāsim! What is the Rūh (spirit)? The Prophet remained quiet. I thought he was being inspired Divinely. So I stayed till that state of the Prophet (while being inspired) was over. The Prophet then recited:

“And they ask you (*O Muhammad*) concerning the Rūh, Say: The Rūh is by the Amr (*command*) of my Lord. And of knowledge you have been given only a little” (*Qur’ān, Banū Isrāīl, 17.85*).

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

This alleged *Hadīth* appears to qualify as deliberate disinformation, and its purpose appears to be to confuse. Ibn Ishāq narrates the same incident differently. He quotes Abdullah ibn Abbās to the effect that it was the Jewish Rabbis of Yathrib (i.e., Madina) themselves who approached the Prophet after his arrival in that city and questioned him:

I was told on the authority of Ibn Abbas that he said, when the Apostle came to Madina, the Jewish Rabbis asked him: “When you said - and you have only a little knowledge about it - did you mean us or your own people?” He said, “Both of you.”

(Ibn Ishāq. Op. Cit., p. 139)

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The fact that the Rabbis questioned the Prophet concerning the answer to the question about the spirit (*Rūh*) confirms that the revelation with the answer to the question had come down previously and that it had already reached them in Madīna prior to the Prophet's arrival in that city.

Upon the return of the delegation to Makkah, the Quraish approached the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*), posed the three questions to him, and challenged him to answer them correctly if he was indeed a Prophet! The Prophet paused for a moment and then declared that he would answer the questions the next day, but he forgot to say 'If God so Wills' (*i.e., Inshā Allah*) (Ibn Ishaq, Op. Cit., p. 136).

This writer is of the opinion that Allah Most Wise may have caused the Prophet to forget to say *Inshā Allah*, and as a consequence the expression *Inshā Allah* occupies a position of strategic importance in the subject of *Sūrah al-Kahf* and the Modern Age. What is that importance?

Our opinion is that Allah Most Wise directed attention to an age that would come when sacred (or religious) terminology such as *Inshā Allah* (*i.e., "if God so Wills", or "please God"*) would disappear from the vocabulary used by the modern tongue; and that when such a thing were to come to pass it would be a sign by which believers could recognize such an age to pose the greatest of all trials for mankind. This book warns that "*Inshā Allah*" is already fast disappearing from the vocabulary of the modern tongue!

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The Quraish approached Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) the next day for the answers that he had promised them. He did not have the answers since Angel Gabriel (*'alaihi al-Salām*) had not visited him to convey the answers. When this continued for a few days it became a matter of severe embarrassment for the Muslims and of rejoicing for the Quraish. Indeed it took two weeks before Angel Gabriel (*'alaihi al-Salām*) finally appeared and Allah Most High responded to the questions by revealing *Sūrah al-Kahf*. Ibn Ishaq comments on the matter as follows:

“This delay caused the Apostle great sorrow, until Gabriel brought him the Chapter of the Cave (*Sūrah al-Kahf*), in which he reproaches him for his sadness, and told him the answers of their questions, the youths, the mighty traveler, and the spirit.”

(Ibn Ishāq, op. cit., p. 137)

The answers to two of the questions are in *Sūrah al-Kahf*. While the third answer, concerning the *Rūh* (i.e., spirit), is in *Sūratu Banī Isrāīl* (Chapter 17 of the Qur'ān).

Maulāna Abul 'Ala Maudūdī (*rahimahullah*), the eminent scholar of Islam, eliminated the question concerning the *Rūh* from the three questions and instead made the claim that the third of the three questions pertained to someone named *Khidr* (*'alaihi al-Salām*) whose mystical encounter with Moses (*'alaihi al-Salām*) was described in *Sūrah al-Kahf*:

“This *Sūrah* was sent down in answer to the three questions which the polytheists of Makkah, in consultation with the people of the Book, had put

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to the Holy Prophet in order to test him. These were: Who were ‘the Sleepers of the Cave’? What is the real story of Khidr? What do you know about Dhūl Qarnain?”

(Maudūdī, English Translation of ‘Tafheem al-Qur’ān’,
“Introduction to Sūrah al-Kahf’.)

It appears that the learned *Maulāna* wished to have all three questions answered in *Sūrah al-Kahf*, and this, perhaps, was the reason why he excluded the question concerning the spirit (*Rūh*) and replaced it with the story of Moses and *Khidr* (*‘alaihi al-Salām*). The assertion by *Maulana* Maududi is, however, quite problematic since it would have been highly unlikely that the Jewish Rabbis would have considered the knowledge of a story such as that of *Khidr* (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) to be proof of Muhammad’s (*peace be upon him*) prophethood. After all, *Khidr* (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) demonstrated that Moses (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) was wrong in his understanding of all three events narrated in the story, and Moses (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) was regarded as the Prophet *par excellence* of the Jews. If the Jews regarded the knowledge of *Khidr* (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) to be proof of prophethood then they would have had to locate and follow a *Khidr* (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) who was blessed with internal intuitive spiritual knowledge. But instead they have always clung to external legalistic knowledge derived from the Torah as their basic requirement for survival and success throughout history. We are not convinced by *Maulāna* Maudūdī’s claim on this matter.

The fact that Allah Most Wise chose to place answers to two of the questions in *Sūrah al-Kahf*, while placing the answer to the third question in *Sūratu Banī Isrāīl* indicates that these two *Sūrahs* of the

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Qurʾān are linked together and must be studied together. The one helps to explain the other. We have noted that *Sūrah al-Kahf* must be read every *Yoūm al-Jumʿah* (i.e., Friday) for protection from *al-Masīh al-Dajjāl*, the false Messiah, who would target and deceive the Jews and lead them to their ultimate destruction. We have also noted that *Sūrah al-Kahf* was revealed in response to the Jewish test of prophethood that the Rabbis had given to the pagan Arabs. This was in response to their request for a test by which the validity of the claim to prophethood of Muhammad (*sallallahu ʿalaihi wa sallam*) could be determined. And so, it is not surprising that *Sūrah al-Kahf* is linked to that *Sūrah* of the Qurʾān that is named after the Jews. In fact, this constitutes the third link between *Sūrah al-Kahf* and the Jews.

The (Jewish) Rabbis in Madina had declared that they would recognize Muhammad (*sallallahu ʿalaihi wa sallam*) as a true Prophet of the God of Abraham (*ʿalaihi al-Salām*) if he correctly answered the three questions posed to him. Only a true Prophet with special knowledge could be privy to such knowledge. The Rabbis were privy to that knowledge because of the long and continuous line of Prophets who had come to the Israelites. They were confident that Muhammad (*sallallahu ʿalaihi wa sallam*) could not answer the questions and hence they admitted no possibility that they might have to accept an illiterate gentile Arab as a true Prophet of the God of Abraham (*ʿalaihi al-Salām*).

A careful examination of the questions reveal that the Rabbis were testing Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu ʿalaihi wa sallam*) and that they were not interested in simple answers to the questions they had posed. Rather they cloaked (or veiled) the real questions behind the

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ones that they posed. What were those real questions?

We believe that the Rabbis posed the questions cunningly with the objective of determining whether Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had knowledge about *Dajjāl* and about *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog). These were powerful and dangerous Beings whom Allah Most High had created, and whom He would release into the world in the Last Age. When Allah Most High released these Beings He would use them to test as well as to punish mankind. The only ones who could successfully survive those tests and trials of the Last Age would be those who had faith in Allah Most High, and in the true religion of Abraham (*'alaihi al-Salām*), and who faithfully followed Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*). All the rest of mankind would be deceived, or would otherwise lose faith. An essentially godless global society that would emerge in consequence of the 'globalization' of the Last Age would swallow such people and carry them into the hell-fire! The Prophet warned that Gog and Magog would transform 999 out of every 1000 of mankind into godless copies of themselves (*Ahlu Y'ajūj wa M'ajūj*) and that they would all enter into the hell-fire (*Sahīh Bukhāri*).

Instead of asking directly about *Dajjāl* the Rabbis asked about some young men of old who fled into a cave and had a miraculous experience. Then instead of asking directly about *Y'ajūj* and *M'ajūj*, they asked about a great traveler who traveled to the two ends of the earth. The third question, which concerned the *Rūh* (spirit), was strategically different from the other two. It was a direct question, and hence its strategic role appears to have been one of creating confusion.

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Revelation of Sūrah Al-Kahf

THE THREE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS

- THE RŪH

The question concerning the *Rūh* was quite tricky. The human soul or spirit is known as *Rūh*. So too is the *Rūh al-Quddus* or the Angel Gabriel. Finally when Allah declared that He had breathed into man of His *Rūh*, the implication was that He, also, possessed a Divine Spirit (*Rūh*). Allah Most High revealed the answer to the third question in the Qur`ān as follows:

﴿ وَدَسَّأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۗ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنَ
الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴾

“And they question thee (*Oh Muhammad*) concerning the *Rūh* (*Spirit*). Say: The *Rūh* (*Spirit*) is by command of my Lord, and you have been granted only little knowledge (*i. e., of this subject*).”

(Qur`ān, Banū Isrāīl. 17:85)

Since the question was direct, the answer was similarly direct. But all three possibilities mentioned above were simultaneously addressed in the terse answer. The question was summarily dismissed. This answer reached the Jews in Madina, and when the Prophet himself migrated to Madina the Jews questioned him about the answer. They wanted to know who was the revelation referring to when it declared “and of knowledge ye have been given but little? Was it us, the Jews, or they, the Arabs, who have been given little knowledge?

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Both, answered the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*)”.

It is significant that the above answer was placed by Divine decree in *Sūratu Banī Isrāīl* (the seventeenth *Sūrah* of the Qur'ān) whereas the answers to the other two questions were placed, again by Divine decree, in the next *Sūrah*, i.e., *Sūrah al-Kahf*.

Thus Divine Wisdom recognized that there was a strategic difference between the first question and the other two questions, and conveyed to the Jews, as well as to all others, through this simple device, the recognition of that strategic difference. What was the difference?

- THE GREAT TRAVELER

When the *Sūrah* responded to the second question concerning the great traveler it did so in a manner that immediately and directly addressed the question by naming the great traveler as *Dhūl Qarnain*. Not only did the *Sūrah* describe his journeys to the East and West but, astonishingly, it went on to directly address the real question which lurked behind the posed question, namely *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog). It did so by describing a third journey – concerning which the Rabbis had remained suspiciously silent. It is quite clear that the real target of the question was Gog and Magog who are one of the major signs of the Last Day (*al-Qiyāmah*). This was surely a subject about which only a Prophet would have knowledge. The question was one that approached its target indirectly. In this respect, it differed from the question concerning the *Rūh*.

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- THE YOUNG MEN AND THE CAVE

Sūrah al-Kahf commenced with an answer to the above question. The answer was worded in such a way that it responded directly and in detail to the specific question which was posed, but only indirectly to the real question veiled behind it. That real question could only be on a subject, like Gog and Magog that only a Prophet would know.

Secondly, it is most likely that it would also be a subject concerning the signs of the Last Day (*al-Qiyāmah*). What could be the real target of the question?

The answer in *Sūrah al-Kahf* provided detailed information concerning the young men who fled to the cave. Yet, although there is clear evidence that the answer took account of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, it did not directly address *Dajjāl*. It stopped short of naming him by name. The Rabbis were left guessing. Indeed *Dajjāl* is never mentioned directly anywhere in the Qur'ān since the Divine intent was to keep the Jews guessing. In fact, the answer had matched the question in respect of sheer strategy.

Years later, after the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had migrated to Madina, he addressed the subject of *Dajjāl* in quite some detail and then startled the Jews by declaring that the recitation of the first ten *Āyāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Kahf* would provide believers with protection from the terrible tests and trials of *Dajjāl*. The first ten *Āyāt* included the opening verses of the story of the young men and the cave. Prophet Muhammad also clearly established the fact that *Dajjāl* would emerge as a Jew and that he was already released into

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the world. He did this when he publicly voiced his suspicion that a young Jew in Madina (*Ibn Sayyād*) was *Dajjāl*.

In answering this question in the manner in which it did, the Qur`ān gave notice that He who had provided an accurate yet brief answer to the question concerning the great traveler, also knew the real target of the question concerning the young men and the cave, namely *Dajjāl*.

Let us briefly restate the differences in the questions and answers:

1st Question: The target of the question, i.e., the *Rūh* or spirit, is directly addressed, although it is a tricky question. In answering the question Allah Most High refers to both the question as well as to those who asked the question: "And they ask thee concerning" The answer is placed in *Sūrah Banū Isrāīl*.

2nd Question: The target of the question (Gog and Magog) is not directly addressed. It is concealed. Hence the answer is placed in a different *Sūrah*, namely *Sūrah al-Kahf*. In answering the question Allah Most High refers to both the question as well as to those who asked the question: "And they ask thee concerning"

Although the real target of the question is concealed, Allah Most High chooses to address it directly and to identify that target as Gog and Magog whose release into the world would constitute a major Sign of the Last Day.

3rd Question: The third answer, like the second, is placed in *Sūrah*

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al-Kahf. This indicates a similarity with the second question and dissimilarity with the first. Hence we conclude that the real target of the third question, like that of the second, is concealed. What can it be other than a subject similar to Gog and Magog?

In answering the third question Allah Most High neither refers to the question nor to those who asked the question. He does not say: “And they ask thee concerning” This cannot be by accident. In answering the third question Allah Most High chose to let the target of the question, i.e., *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ, remain unmentioned. It was left to the Messenger of Allah to identify that target when he established a link between *Sūrah al-Kahf* and *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ.



CHAPTER FIVE ﴿—

The Story of the Young Men and the Cave

Ask him what happened to the young men who disappeared in ancient days, for they had a marvelous story?" This was one of the three questions posed by the Jewish Rabbis of Madina. They declared with confidence to the delegation of the Quraish from Makkah that if Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) could answer the three questions correctly it would then be confirmed that he was, indeed, a true Prophet of the God of Abraham, for only a Prophet could answer these questions correctly.

The answers to the three questions were all divinely revealed and the answer in response to the above question is located in verses 9 – 25 of *Surāh al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān.

The following is the Arabic text and English translation of those verses with such brief explanatory comments as are necessary for an initial understanding of the text. The story commences at verse nine and concludes at verse twenty-six. The translation is that of Muhammad Asad. Our own comments are in italics:

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Verse 9

﴿ أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ
ءَايَاتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴾

“(And since the life of this world is but a test) do you (really) think that (the parable of) the Men of the Cave (which we now relate in answer to the question of the Jewish rabbis) and of (their devotion) to the scriptures (which they, perhaps, took with them into the cave) could be deemed more wondrous than any (other) of Our messages? (This Qur’ān which is now being revealed to you is a greater Sign!).”

Verse 10

﴿ إِذْ أَوْىءَ الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ
رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴾

“When those youths took refuge in the cave, they prayed, O our Sustainer! Bestow on us Grace from Thyself, and endow us, whatever our (outward) condition, with consciousness of what is right (and grant us a way out of this trial of ours in which the godless world is waging war on Islam).”

Verses 11 & 12

﴿ فَضَرَبْنَا عَلَىٰ آذَانِهِمْ فِي الْكَهْفِ سِنِينَ عَدَدًا ﴿١١﴾ ثُمَّ
بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِنَعْلَمَ أَيُّ الْحِزْبَيْنِ أَحْصَىٰ لِمَا لَبِثُوا أَمَدًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

“And thereupon We veiled their ears in the cave for many a year, (*they were thus cut off from the outside world*). and then We awakened them: (*and We did all this*) so that We might mark out (*to the world*) which of the two points of view showed a better comprehension of the time-span during which they had remained in that state. (*Indeed the very essence of the lesson which is divinely taught in this narration, and which unfolds in this essay, is that ‘time’ is not simple and uni-dimensional, but rather complex and multi-dimensional. There is a multi-dimensional movement of ‘time’ as it passes through the ages, and in that passage of ‘time’ only those with faith in Allah Most High, and whose conduct is righteous, survive; all others end up in the garbage bin of history. See Qur’ān, al-‘Asr, 103:1-3.*)”

Verses 13 - 15

﴿ نَحْنُ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ نَبَأَهُم بِالْحَقِّ ۗ إِنَّهُمْ فِتْيَةٌ ءَامَنُوا
 بِرَبِّهِمْ وَزِدْنَهُمْ هُدًى ﴿١٣﴾ وَرَبَطْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ ۖ إِذْ قَامُوا
 فَقَالُوا رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَن نَدْعُوَ مِنْ دُونِهِ
 إِلَهًا ۗ لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذَا شَطَطًا ﴿١٤﴾ هَٰؤُلَاءِ قَوْمُنَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ
 دُونِهِ ءَالِهَةً ۗ لَوْلَا يَأْتُونَ عَلَيْهِم بِسُلْطٰنٍ بَيْنِ يَدَيْنِ ۗ فَمَنْ
 أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا ﴿١٥﴾ ﴿

“(And now) We shall truly relate to thee their story. Behold, they were young men who had attained to faith in their Lord-God (*and, in consequence of the manner in which they responded to the trial to their faith posed by the world which was waging war on Islam*) We deepened their consciousness of the

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right way and endowed their hearts with strength (*and courage*). so that they stood up and said (*to one another, i.e., publicly proclaimed in an act of defiance of a godless world*): Our Lord-God is the God of the heavens and the earth. Never shall we invoke any deity other than Him: (*They thus rejected sovereignty other than Allah's*). If we did (*such a thing*) we should indeed have uttered an enormity (*it would, indeed, constitute blasphemy!*) These people of ours have taken to worshipping (*other*) deities instead of Him. without being able to adduce any reasonable evidence in support of their beliefs; and who could be more wicked than he who invents a lie about Allah (*or who concocts a falsehood concerning Allah by issuing, for example, a command to submit to the authority of the modern secular nation-state?*)”

Verse 16

﴿ وَإِذِ اعْتَرَلْتُمُوهُمْ وَمَا يَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ فَأْوُوا إِلَى
الْكَهْفِ يَنْشُرْ لَكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَيُهَيِّئْ لَكُمْ مِنْ
أَمْرِكُمْ مَرْفَقًا ﴾

“Hence, now that you have withdrawn from them and from all that they worship instead of Allah, take refuge in that cave: Allah will spread His grace over you, and will endow you – whatever your (*outward*) condition – with all that your souls may need! “(*The young men then advised each other as follows: When you decide that it is time to escape from them, i.e., the world of Shirk, and from all that they worship instead of Allah, go to the Cave for shelter. Allah will extend His Mercy and Grace over you and will dispose of your affair for you kindly and gently so that you will have comfort and ease.*)”

Verse 17

﴿ وَتَرَى الشَّمْسَ إِذَا طَلَعَتْ تَزَّوَّرُ عَنْ كَهْفِهِمْ ذَاتَ
 الْيَمِينِ وَإِذَا غَرَبَتْ تَقَرَّبُ إِلَيْهِمْ ذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ وَهُمْ فِي فَجْوَةٍ
 مِنْهُ ۗ ذَلِكَ مِنْ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ ۗ مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَهُوَ الْمُهْتَدِ
 وَمَنْ يُضِلِلْ فَلَنْ تَجِدَ لَهُ وَلِيًّا مُرْشِدًا ﴿١٧﴾

“And (for many a year) thou might have seen the sun, on its rising, incline away from their cave on the right, and, on its setting, turn aside from them on the left, while they lived on in that spacious chamber, (bearing witness to) this of Allah’s messages: He whom Allah guides, he alone has found the right way: whereas for him whom He lets go astray thou canst never find any protector who would point out the right way.”

Verse 18

﴿ وَحَسَبُوهُمْ أَيْقَاطًا وَهُمْ رُقُودٌ ۗ وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ
 الشِّمَالِ ۗ وَكَلْبُهُمْ بَاسِطٌ ذِرَاعَيْهِ بِالْوَصِيدِ ۗ لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ
 لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعبًا ﴿١٨﴾

“And thou wouldst have thought that they were awake, whereas they lay asleep. (You would have thought that they were awake because) We caused them to turn over repeatedly, now to the right, now to the left.

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(The young believers chose to keep with them a dog for protection. And that dog, also, was with them in the cave) and their dog (lay) on the threshold, its forepaws outstretched. Had you come upon them (unprepared), you would surely have turned away from them in flight, and would surely have been filled with fear of them."

Verses 19 & 20

﴿ وَكَذَٰلِكَ بَعَثْنَاهُمْ لِيَتَسَاءَلُوا بَيْنَهُمْ ۚ قَالَ قَائِلٌ مِّنْهُمْ
 كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ ۗ قَالُوا لَبِثْنَا يَوْمًا أَوْ بَعْضَ يَوْمٍ ۚ قَالُوا رَبُّكُمْ
 أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثْتُمْ فَابْعَثُوا أَحَدَكُمْ بِوَرِقِكُمْ هَذِهِ إِلَى
 الْمَدِينَةِ فَلْيَنْظُرْ أَيُّهَا أَزْكَىٰ طَعَامًا فَلْيَأْتِكُمْ بِرِزْقٍ مِّنْهُ
 وَلْيَتَلَطَّفْ وَلَا يُشْعِرَنَّ بِكُمْ أَحَدًا ﴿١٩﴾ ﴿ إِنَّهُمْ إِنْ
 يَظْهَرُوا عَلَيْكُمْ يَرْجُمُوكُمْ أَوْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي مِلَّتِهِمْ وَلَنْ
 تُفْلِحُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا ﴿٢٠﴾

“And so, *(in the course of time)* We awakened them: And they began to ask one another *(as to what had happened to them)*. One of them asked: “how long have you remained thus?” *(The others)* answered: “We have remained thus for a day, or part of a day.” *(Those who were endowed with deeper insight)* said: “Your Sustainer knows best how long you have thus remained. *(And because they must have been famished with hunger they went on to declare)*: Let, then, one of you go with these silver coins to the town, and let him find out what food is purest there, and bring you thereof *(some)*

provisions (*that you might satisfy your hunger*). But let him behave with great care and by no means make anyone aware of you: For, behold, if they should come to know of you they might stone you (*or curse, revile, abuse you*) and even force you back to their faith – in which case you would never attain to any good!”

Verse 21

﴿ وَكَذَلِكَ أَعْتَرْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ لِيَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ
وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا إِذْ يَتَنَزَّعُونَ بَيْنَهُمْ أَمْرَهُمْ
فَقَالُوا ابْنُوا عَلَيْهِم بُنْيَانًا رَّبُّهُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِهِمْ قَالَ الَّذِينَ
عَلَبُوا عَلَىٰ أَمْرِهِمْ لَنَتَّخِذَنَّ عَلَيْهِم مَّسْجِدًا ﴿٢١﴾

“And in this way have we drawn (*people’s*) attention to their story (*i.e., to the historic event*), so that they might know (*for certain when they reflect over the event*) – whenever they debate among themselves as to what happened to those (*men of the cave*) – that Allah’s promise (*of resurrection and of a time of great evil and trials which is to come, i.e., the age of Fitan when Dajjāl would be released*) is true, and that there can be no doubt as to (the coming of) the Last Hour. And so, some (*people*) said: “Erect a building in their memory; Allah knows best what happened to them.” Those whose opinion prevailed in the end said: “Indeed, we must surely raise a *Masjid* (*i.e., a house of worship*) in their memory!” (*It is thus permissible to erect a building in memory of a pious servant of Allah and one may even build a Masjid in memory of such a believer.*)

Verse 22

﴿ سَيَقُولُونَ ثَلَاثَةٌ رَّابِعُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ وَيَقُولُونَ خَمْسَةٌ
 سَادِسُهُمْ كَلْبُهُمْ رَجْمًا بِالْغَيْبِ ۗ وَيَقُولُونَ سَبْعَةٌ وَثَامِنُهُمْ
 كَلْبُهُمْ ۗ قُل رَّبِّي أَعْلَمُ بِعِدَّتِهِمْ مَا يَعْلَمُهُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيلٌ ۗ فَلَا
 تُمَارِفِهِمْ إِلَّا مَرَاءَ ظَهْرٍ وَلَا تَسْتَفْتِ فِيهِمْ مِنْهُمْ أَحَدًا ۗ



“(When this story is narrated by the Jewish Rabbis, as well as others in times to come) some will say. “(They were) three, the fourth of them being their dog,” while others will say. “five, with their dog as the sixth of them” – idly guessing at something of which they can have no certain knowledge – and (so on, until) some will say, “(They were) seven, the eighth of them being their dog.” Say (to them, if and when they confront you on this issue): “My Sustainer knows best how many they were. None but a few have any (real) knowledge of them (and those few do not include the Jewish Rabbis of Madina who posed the question). Hence, do not argue about them otherwise than by way of an obvious argument, and do not ask any of those (story-tellers) to enlighten thee about them (since they have already distorted and corrupted the story).”

Verses 23 & 24

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَايٍ ۗ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا ﴿٢٣﴾ إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ

اللَّهُ وَادِّكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ وَقُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِّي رَبِّي
لَأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا ﴿٢٤﴾

“And never say about anything, “Behold. I shall do this tomorrow,” without (adding), “If Allah so wills.” And if you should ever forget (to do so, and become aware of it later, as occurred to the Prophet in this instance) call thy Lord-God to mind and say; “I pray that my Lord-God guide me, ever closer than this to a consciousness of what is right!”

Verse 25

﴿وَلَبِثُوا فِي كَهْفِهِمْ ثَلَاثَ مِائَةٍ سِنِينَ وَازْدَادُوا تِسْعًا
﴿٢٥﴾﴾

“And (some people assert), they remained in their cave three hundred years”: and some have added nine (to that number since 300 solar years would be equivalent to 309 lunar years).”

Verse 26

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا لَبِثُوا لَهُ غَيْبُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ
أَبْصَرُ بِهِ وَأَسْمَعُ مَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَلِيٍّ وَلَا يُشْرِكُ
فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا ﴿٢٦﴾﴾

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“Say: Allah knows best how long they remained (*there*). His (*alone*) is the knowledge of the hidden reality of the heavens and the earth: how well does He see and hear! No guardians have they apart from Him, since He allots to no one a share in His rule. (*Nor does He share His Supreme authority with anyone!*)”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf, 9-26)

This reply of *Sūrah al-Kahf* concerning the young men was transmitted to the Rabbis in Madina. From that day to this day more than 1400 years have passed, but to the best of our knowledge Jewish scholars have yet to comment on the answer.

This book extends an invitation to the entire world of Jewish scholarship to respond to the answer to their question provided in *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān.

SYNOPSIS OF STORY AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR OUR AGE

Muhammad Asad has commented on the *Surah* and his comments reveal a deep understanding of the very essence of both the *Surah* as well as the story of the young men and the cave. We quote him at length so that our readers who are unfamiliar with his great work may be introduced to it and may benefit not only from his comments but also from the entire translation:

This *Sūrah* – revealed immediately before *al-Nahl* (the Bee.) i.e. in the last year of the Makkah period - is almost entirely devoted to a series of

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parables or allegories built around the theme of faith in Allah Most High vs an undue attachment to the life of this world; and the key-phrase of the whole *Sūrah* is a statement in v. 7. “*We have willed that all beauty on earth be a means by which we put men to a test*” – an idea that is most clearly formulated in the parable of the rich man and the poor man (vs. 32-44).

The story of the Men of the Cave - from which the *Sūrah* takes its title - illustrates (in vs. 13-20) *the principle of world-abandonment for the sake of faith*, and is deepened into an allegory of death, resurrection and spiritual awakening. In the story of Moses and the unnamed sage (vs. 60-82), the theme of spiritual awakening undergoes a significant variation: it is shifted to the plane of man's intellectual life and his search after ultimate truths. *Appearance and reality are shown to be intrinsically different – so different that only mystic insight can reveal to us what is apparent and what is real.* And, finally, the allegory of *Dhu al-Qarnain*, “The Two – Horned One”, tells us that world's renunciation is not in itself a necessary complement to one's faith in Allah Most High; in other words, worldly life and power need not conflict with spiritual righteousness so long as we remain conscious of the ephemeral nature of all works of man and of our ultimate responsibility to Him Who is above all limitations of time and appearance. And so the *Sūrah* ends with the words. “Hence, whoever looks forward to meeting his Sustainer let him do righteous deeds, and let him not ascribe unto anyone or anything a share in the worship due to his Sustainer.

As regards the story of the men in the cave as such, of the Men of the Cave as such, most of the commentators incline to the view that it relates to a phase in early Christian history – namely, the persecution of the Christians by Emperor Decius in the third century. Legend has it that some young Christians of Ephesus, accompanied by their dog, withdrew into a secluded cave in order to be able to live in accordance with their faith, and remained there, miraculously asleep, for a great length of time (according to

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some accounts, referred to in v. 25 of this Sūrah, for about three centuries). When they finally awoke - unaware of the long time during which they had lain asleep - they sent one of their company to the town to purchase some food. In the meantime the situation had changed entirely: Christianity was no longer persecuted and had even become the official religion of the Roman Empire. The ancient coin (dating from the reign of Decius) with which the young man wanted to pay for his purchases immediately aroused curiosity; people began to question the stranger, and the story of the Men of the Cave and their miraculous sleep came to light.

As already mentioned, the majority of the classical commentators relied on this Christian legend in their endeavour to interpret the Qur'anic reference (in v. 9:26) to the Men of the Cave. It seems, however, that the Christian formulation of this theme is a later development of a much older oral tradition - a tradition which, in fact, goes back to pre-Christian, Jewish sources. This is evident from several well-authenticated *ahadīth* (mentioned by all the classical commentators), according to which it was the Jewish rabbis (*Ahbār*) of Madina who induced the Meccan opponents of Muhammad to "test his veracity" by asking him to explain, among other problems, the story of the Men of the Cave. Referring to these *ahadīth*, Ibn Kathīr remarks in his commentary to v. 13 of this Sura, "It has been said that they were followers of Jesus the son of Mary, but Allah knows it better: it is obvious that they lived much earlier than the Christian period - for, had they been Christian, why should the Jewish rabbis have been intent on preserving their story, seeing that the Jews had cut themselves off from all friendly communion with them (i.e. the Christians)?" We may therefore safely assume that the legend of the Men of the Cave - stripped of its Christian garb and the superimposed Christian background - is of substantial Jewish origin. If we discard the later syncretic additions and reduce the story to its fundamentals - voluntary withdrawal from the world, age-long "sleep" in a secluded cave and a miraculous "awakening" after an indeterminate period of time - we

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have before us a striking allegory relating to a movement which played an important role in Jewish religious history during the centuries immediately preceding and following the advent of Jesus, namely the ascetic *Essene* Brotherhood (to which Jesus himself may have belonged), and particularly those of its branches which lived in self-imposed solitude in the vicinity of the Dead Sea as has recently, after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, come to be known as the “Qumrun community”. The expression *ar-Raqīm* occurring in the above Qur’ān verse (and rendered by me as “scriptures”) lends strong support to this theory. As recorded by Tabari, some of the earliest authorities – and particularly Ibn Abbas – regarded the expression as synonymous with *marqām* (“something that is written”) and hence with *Kitāb* (“a writ” or “a scripture”); and Razi adds that “all rhetoricians and Arabic philologists assert that *ar-raqīm* signifies [the same as] *al-kitāb*”. Since it is historically established that the members of the *Qumrān* community – the strictest group among the Essenes – devoted themselves entirely to the study, the copying and the preservation of the sacred scriptures, lived in complete seclusion from the rest of the world and were highly admired for their piety and moral purity, it is more than probable that their mode of life made so strong an impression on the imagination of their fellow co-religionists that it became gradually allegorized in the story of the Men in the Cave who “slept” – that is, were cut off from the outside world – for countless years, destined to be “awakened” after their spiritual task was done.

But whatever the source of this legend, and irrespective of whether it is of Jewish or Christian origin, the fact remains that it is used in the Qur’ān in a purely parabolic sense: namely, as an illustration of Allah’s power to bring about death (or “sleep”) and resurrection (or “awakening”); and, secondly, as an allegory of the piety that induces men to abandon a wicked or frivolous world in order to keep their faith unsullied, and of Allah’s recognition of that faith by His bestowal of a spiritual awakening which transcends time and death.

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(Muhammad Asad's Translation and Commentary of the Glorious Qur'ān.
pp. 437-439)

We noted above that Ibn Kathīr, the commentator of the Qur'ān, disputed the generally held view that the young men in the cave were Christian and held the view that they lived much earlier than the Christian period. Had they been Christians, he asked, why would the Jewish Rabbis have been intent on preserving their story? And we may add for good measure, why would they have considered knowledge of their story to be a criterion that could authenticate a claim to prophethood? After all, the Jews had rejected Jesus (*'alaihi al-Salām*) as the Messiah, and as a Prophet. They considered him to have been an imposter, a liar, and a bastard child (and we seek refuge with Allah from such blasphemous statements). It is obvious, therefore, that the young men must have belonged to *Banū Isrā'īl*.

Time and again in history the Israelite people betrayed Allah by blaspheming against Him. This sin of blasphemy is referred to in the Qur'ān as *Shirk*. Thus, when Moses went up the mountain for his meeting with Allah Most High, they worshipped a golden calf in his absence. This story in *Sūrah al-Kahf* appears to relate to another such time since the young men referred to "our people" when they said: *These, our people, have taken for worship Gods other than Him (i.e., Allah)*. Not only did that age witness widespread blasphemy (*Shirk*), but also those who resisted the blasphemy (*Shirk*) were intimidated and persecuted. This was quite clear from the fact that the youths had kept a dog with them for protection: . . . *and their dog lay on the threshold (of the cave) with its forepaws outstretched*, as also from the

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warning given to the young man who was being sent down into the city to purchase food: . . . *let him behave with great caution, and not reveal your whereabouts to anyone. For, behold, if they should come to know about you, they might (literally) stone you (i.e., terrorize you), or force you back to their faith, in which case you will never attain to success.*

The young men set a golden example in responding to the blasphemy (*Shirk*) of their society with uncompromising fidelity to Allah. They did not waver in their faith and did not compromise despite intimidation and persecution. Instead they showed magnificent courage in not only proclaiming their faith in the face of all threats, but also in challenging that godless world, and in condemning its godlessness: *Thus, We strengthened their hearts when they stood up and proclaimed (in an act of defiance of a godless world): Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never shall we recognize any god other than Him. (They thus rejected sovereignty other than Allah`s). If we did speak (such a thing) it would, indeed, constitute an enormity. These, our people, have taken for worship Gods other than Him (i.e., Allah). Why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do? And who could be more wicked than he who invents a lie against Allah (by claiming the right to worship another).*

Finally, when persecution had become intense they felt compelled to leave their people. They resorted to *Hijrah*, i.e., migration from the territory in which there was persecution to a territory of relative safety. And so they chose to flee from their town

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and its oppression and, while fleeing, they paused to rest for awhile in a cave: *When you (decide that it is time to escape from them, i.e., the world of Shirk) and from all that they worship instead of Allah, take refuge in that cave.* In the case of Prophet Abraham (*'alaihi al-Salām*), he and his family fled from Babylon and were guided by Allah to migrate to the Holy Land of Palestine. And in the case of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*), he and his companions fled from Makkah to Madina. And so, these young believers set an example of conduct which was similar to that of the most exalted of all of the Prophets, i.e., to give up home, hometown, comforts, jobs, etc. and migrate as refugees to distant lands in order to preserve their faith!

The Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) warned Muslims that the time would come when they would have to emulate the young men who fled to the cave. He did so in the following *Hadīth*:

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri reported that the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) said: A time would soon come when the best possession of a Muslim will be his goats with which he would seek asylum in a valley or in the hills for the sake of his faith.

(*Sahīh al-Bukhāri*)

Since the *Sūrah* is to be read for protection from *Dajjāl*, and since the age of *Dajjāl* would be the last age or the age of *Qiyāmah*, it follows that the *Sūrah* also sends a message indicating that mankind would embrace godlessness and idolatry in that age similar to that described above. The *Sūrah* also clearly warns believers in Islam who would remain faithful and resist being a part of that godless world.

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that they would be subjected to the intimidation, persecution and oppression to which the above young men were subjected. That is the explanation of the war on Islam now raging around the world with the greatest intensity.

When the young men entered the cave, they did so with very deep spiritual fervour for they immediately prayed to Allah and asked for help and mercy from the Divine Presence itself: *Oh Lord, bestow on us mercy from Thyself*. Allah Most High was impressed by such a display of faith. Indeed Allah Most High would always be moved by such a display of faith. He responded to assist them. *Sūrah al-Kahf* delivered the momentous promise that He will do the same for us!

The solution to the young men's problem concerning the survival of their faith lay in cutting themselves off from the godless world. The guidance provided for us in *Sūrah al-Kahf* today is clear: If it ever becomes necessary in this age to detach himself from the godless world, to part from it and make *Hijrah*, in order to preserve faith in Allah and in Islam, then the believer must do so. Already the war against Islam has begun. It will rage more and more fiercely. The Prophet warned of the terrible suffering and oppression of today's Last Age in the following *Hadīth*:

“Yahya related to me from Malik from Abu Zinad from al-Araj from Abu Hurayra that the Prophet (sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam) said: The Hour will not come until a man passes by the grave of another and says: If only I were in his place.”

(Muwatta, Imam Malik)

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Allah Most High responded to their prayer by putting the youths to sleep and by shutting off their hearing from all sounds from that outside world. And so they slept for years and years: *Thereupon We drew a veil over their ears (while they remained) in the cave for a number of years.* (They were thus cut off from the outside world.) Had it been possible for others to flee to a similar place and to have the provisions of sustaining themselves while living a life that was detached from the godless world, then the same purpose would have been achieved!

The question arises: How did Allah Most High sustain their bodies during the years that they slept in the cave? Secondly, how did He prevent their bodies from getting what is known as bedsores, something which must necessarily occur when a patient is kept lying in one position for too long a period of time?

The story, as narrated in *Sūrah al-Kahf*, is strongly suggestive of the use of solar energy for nourishment as well as for propelling motion. If solar energy can be used for moving a body it can be used for propelling fans, running cars, providing energy for factories etc. The implication for the believers in this age is that they must prepare themselves to make maximum use of solar energy for survival during the prolonged period of great hardship which will befall them when *Dajjāl* uses oil as the ultimate weapon. He will do so when he finally succeeds in seducing the whole world into a complete and irreversible dependency on oil for transportation, travel, food production, industry, etc., and when he forces the price of oil to rise to exorbitant heights.

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Our enemies would then take total control of the world's oil supplies and subject mankind to the political blackmail of submission to Israel's *messianic* rule over the world as the price to be paid for oil.

As this book goes to the press it appears that the Euro-Jewish State of Israel is poised to wage a nuclear war through which it would attempt to seize direct control over all the vast oil resources located around the River Euphrates (i.e., Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the Gulf States, etc.) Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had prophesied these wars (i.e., the British, and American wars on Iraq to seize control of Iraq's oil, and the Israeli war that is about to take place) when he declared:

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "Soon the river 'Euphrates' will uncover a treasure (a mountain) of gold, so whoever will be present at that time should not take anything of it." Al-A'raj narrated from Abu Huraira that the Prophet said the same but he said, "It (Euphrates) will uncover a mountain of gold (under it)."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Narrated Ubayy ibn Ka'b: I heard Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) say: The Euphrates would soon uncover a mountain of gold and when the people would hear of it they would flock towards it but the people who would possess that (treasure) (would say): If we allow these persons to take out of it they would take away the whole of it. So they would fight and ninety-nine out of one hundred would be killed. Abu Kamil in his narration said: I and Abu Ka'b stood under the shade of the battlement of Hassan.

(Sahih Muslim)

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It would appear from the Qur'anic story that whenever the sunlight entered the cave in the morning the bodies of the sleeping young men were attracted to it, and rolled towards it. This phenomenon is today known as *phototropism*. Then when the sun was setting in the evening, and sunlight once again filtered through the cave, but from the opposite direction, the bodies rolled in the opposite direction. *And (for many a year) you would have seen the sun, while rising, incline away from the cave on the right, and, while setting, turn away from them on the left, while they remained in the open space in the middle of the cave. And you would have thought that they were awake, whereas they were asleep. (You would have thought that they were awake because) We caused them to turn over repeatedly, now to the right, now to the left.* This phenomenon of constant daily rolling of the bodies prevented ulcers (bedsores). Secondly, it would appear that the sunlight on the bodies gave to the bodies the minimum amount of energy needed for the survival of vital organs. This process is called *photosynthesis*.

Only Allah knows for how long the young men slept in the cave, although the Qur'ān does mention three hundred (solar) years. Then when Allah woke them up from their sleep and they began to question each other as to the length of time they had been asleep, it was quickly apparent that they had different capacities for sensing the reality of things (as distinct from their appearances). Some said that they had slept for a day or part thereof. That was what it appeared to be. Others, who were not informed by mere appearances, rightly concluded that only Allah knew for how long they had slept. *Then We roused them in*

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order to test which of the two points of view (of the now awakened youths) was best at calculating the term of years they had tarried (in the cave). While the first viewpoint displayed no spiritual comprehension of the time-span, the other recognized it. So mankind will also, in the age of *Fitan*, display these two contrasting viewpoints in respect of the spiritual reality of ‘time’. It will be an age when time will move swiftly. The Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*), said that:

“Narrated Anas ibn Mālik: Allah’s Messenger said: The Last Hour would not come before time contracts, a year being like a month, a month like a week, a week like a day, a day like an hour, and an hour like the kindling of a fire.”

(Tirmīdhi)

There is a clear hint that *Dajjāl* would be responsible for lulling mankind into this perception or consciousness of ever-accelerating ‘time’. The Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) said of *Dajjāl* that “*he would live on earth for forty days, one day like a year, one day like a month, one day like a week, and the rest of the days like your days!*”

Those believers who are protected by *Sūrah al-Kahf* from the *Fitan* of *Dajjāl* would be able to recognize and understand ‘time’, ‘duration of time’, and ‘passage of time’ in the age of *Fitan* in much the same way that some of the youths in the cave recognized that they had not slept a normal sleep of just a day or part of a day.

In a previous chapter of this book we examined the subject of ‘the Qur’ān and time’ and we were introduced to Islam’s conception of seven different worlds of ‘time’ all of which transcend our own

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world of 'time'. In the story of the young men and the cave we are told that they slept for three hundred years and yet, when they were awakened from their sleep and they sought to make an estimate of the duration of *time* that they were in the cave, some of them responded with an estimate of "a day or part of a day". What this estimate implies is that there were no visible signs of ageing despite the passage of such a long period of time. The hair on their heads, their beards, the length of their finger-nails, the skin on their faces, etc, had all remained unchanged. This implies that they survived the three hundred years while existing simultaneously in two dimensions of time, firstly, our own biological dimension of 'time' in which their bodies kept on rolling from left to right twice a day at sunrise and sunset, and secondly, in another dimension of 'time' which was non-biological and in which they had not aged despite the passage of three hundred years.

The story has thus introduced us to different dimensions of time that exist beside each other right here on earth. The understanding of this subject is the very key to the interpretation of the enigmatic *Hadīth* pertaining to *Dajjāl's* life span on earth. And it is for precisely this reason that we began this book with a chapter devoted to 'time'.

Since they must have been very hungry, it was decided that one of them should go to the town to buy some food. He was given some silver coins to purchase the food. But he was warned to make sure that he searched for the purest food: *and let him search for food which is purest, and bring you some (that you might satisfy your hunger).*

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Secondly, he was warned not to disclose the whereabouts of the others in the cave because of the grave danger to which they would then be exposed: *But let him behave with great caution, and not reveal your whereabouts to anyone. For, behold, if they should come to know about you, they might stone you to death, or force you back to their faith, in which case you will never attain to success.*

We can only speculate about what happened when the young man left the cave and went down to the city to buy food. The world must have so changed that the roads, houses, clothing of the people etc., must have been very different. He must have been amazed, shocked and baffled to the very roots of his being and may even have been terrified by the total change that had taken place since he left his town. The Qur`ān does not concern itself with those details, nor with that part of the story. Rather, it restricts itself to informing us that the godless world had so changed during the period when the youths were asleep that its godlessness had been replaced by faith in Allah Most High. This was clear from the decision that was taken by the people of that town to commemorate the event by constructing a *Masjid*. Only believers would make such a decision!

The fact that the godless world that was persecuting the believing youths had perished, and had been replaced by a world of believers, must have sent a powerful message of hope to the Muslims in Makkah who were being persecuted by the pagan Arabs. It must have reassured them that Truth would eventually triumph over falsehood.

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It certainly assures us in this age that the present war on Islam would not last forever and would be eventually replaced by victory for Islam. Since the recitation of *Sūrah al-Kahf* offers protection from the *Fitnah* of *Dajjāl*, the implication is that the inclusion of this story in the *Surah* is meant to offer hope to the believers in the age of *Fitan*. When the whole world unites to wage war on Islam, and when the believers are subjected to such oppression that a man would pass by a grave and wish that he were in the grave, this story would continuously offer reassurance to the Muslims that Islam would eventually triumph over all its rivals. They should not, therefore, lose faith, or allow a sense of despair to affect them.

The fact that the young men gave careful instructions concerning the food which was to be bought indicates to us, in this age of *Fitan*, that our food would be corrupted, polluted, genetically altered, etc., to such an extent that food may no longer be able to perform the functions which Allah Most High ordained. For example, milk and other dairy products may have a role to play in making it possible for the body to maintain its immune system. When cows are injected with hormones in order to increase milk production, the milk so produced may be so corrupted that it may no longer perform that function, or can have other serious side effects.

Nabi 'Esa (Jesus) (*'alaihi al-Salām*) is reported to have offered advice to *Banū Isrā'īl* which was similar to that found in the story of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.

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“Yahya related to me from Malik that he had heard that ʿĪsa ibn Maryam used to say: O Banū Isrāʾīl! You must drink pure water and the green things of the land and barley bread. Beware of wheat bread, for you will not be grateful enough for it”.

(Muwatta, Malik)

Finally, it is not without significance that the Qurʾān pays minute attention to the money that was to be used by the youth to buy food. It was *Wariq* (silver coins): *Let one of you go with these silver coins to the town.* The warning of *Sūrah al-Kahf* is clear. The believers must pay the most careful attention to money in the Last Age. They must be able to distinguish between real money and fake money. Real money, as used by all the Prophets of Allah Most High all through the ages, has always been gold or silver coins, or commodities such as wheat, barley, dates, salt, etc. Real money has intrinsic value (i.e., the value of the money is located in the money itself). In fake money, on the other hand, the value of the money is arbitrarily designated by the one who issues it. It cannot be redeemed for real money. When the value of the money collapses, legalized theft takes place through a massive transfer of wealth from the masses to a predatory elite located within and beyond the borders of the state. That is *Ribā*. (see my two books on the subject: *The Importance of the Prohibition of Ribā in Islām* and *The Prohibition of Ribā in the Qurʾān and Sunnah*).

We live in an age in which mankind has been trapped in a world of fake money and people are being ripped off of their wealth. Many are already entrapped in slave labor.

BASIC IMPLICATIONS OF THE STORY FOR MUSLIMS WHO LIVE IN THE MODERN WORLD

We have examined the general significance of the story. Now let us confine ourselves to the basic cause of conflict between the young men and the world in which they lived. It was located in the fact that that world had taken gods other than Allah for worship. *These, our people, have taken for worship gods other than Him (i.e., Allah). Why do they not bring forward an authority clear (and convincing) for what they do? And who could be more wicked than he who invents a lie against Allah (by claiming the right of submission to such gods). That was the sin of blasphemy (Shirk), the one sin which Allah would never forgive:*

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ ۖ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا ﴾

“Lo! Allah does not forgive when anyone else beside Him is recognized as God (or worshipped as a God or as someone who possesses sovereignty, supreme authority, etc). He forgives anything else beside such (a sin) to whom He pleases; and Whoever recognizes or worships any beside Allah as God has indeed committed a monstrous sin.”

(Qur`ān, al-Nisā, 4:48)

We live today in a world that is totally embraced by blasphemy (*Shirk*). Indeed *Shirk* has taken control of the whole world. And many of the scholars of Islam and popular Islamic organizations either

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cannot recognize it, or are unwilling to denounce it in the manner of the young men of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.

The *Shirk* of the modern world can be easily discerned from the fact that Allah has strictly prohibited *Ribā* (borrowing and lending money on interest), intoxicants, gambling, homosexuality and lesbianism, abortion, etc. Yet modern states around the world, including so-called Islamic states, have permitted, or are permitting, all of them. Legislation is constantly being enacted to permit all that Allah prohibited.

Again, Allah has permitted plural marriages (up to a maximum of four wives) on the condition that the husband can maintain his wives, and that he treat them with equity. Allah has also declared that the life of the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) constitutes the best model of conduct for the believers. The Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) had many wives.

The *Shirk* of the modern age can be clearly discerned in the fact that, around the world today, governments are enacting legislation to prohibit what Allah has permitted. Thus the law prohibits plural marriages, and prohibits the marriage of girls under 16 (and sometimes under 18) years of age.

And so, they prohibit that which Allah has permitted, and they permit that which Allah has prohibited!

Now let us examine the following verses of the *Qur'ān* concerning the case of someone who prohibits what Allah has permitted, or permits what Allah has prohibited. And let us also

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examine the explanation of the Qur'anic verses given by the Prophet (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam):

﴿ أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ
بِهِ اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَوْلَا كَلِمَةٌ أَفْضَلَ لَقُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَإِنَّ
الظَّالِمِينَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٦٦﴾

“Is it that they (*who care for no more than this world*) believe in forces supposed to have a share in Allah’s divinity, which enjoin upon them as a moral law something that Allah has never allowed? Now were it not for (*Allah’s*) decree on the final judgment, all would indeed have been decided between them (*in this world*): but, verily, grievous suffering awaits the evildoers (*in the life to come*).”

(Qur’an, al-Shūra, 42:21)

﴿ اتَّخَذُوا أَحْبَارَهُمْ وَرُهَبَانَهُمْ أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ
وَالْمَسِيحَ ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا إِلَهًا وَاحِدًا
لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۗ سُبْحٰنَهُ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٦٧﴾

“They have taken as lords beside Allah their Rabbis and their Monks and the Messiah son of Mary, when they were ordered to worship only One God. There is no god save Him. Glory be to Him. Far removed is He from all that they ascribe as partners (*unto Him*)!”

(Qur’an, al-Tauba, 9:31)

CHAPTER FIVE ﴿— The Story of the Young Men and the Cave

‘Adi bin Hatim, who had been a Christian before embracing Islam, once came to the Prophet. When he heard him reciting the above verse of the Qur’ān he said: Oh Messenger of Allah, but they (the Jews) do not worship them (the Rabbis). The Prophet replied: Yes, but they prohibit to the people what is Halal and permit them what is Haram, and the people obey them. This is, indeed, their worship of them.

(Sunan, Tirmidhi)

The Christians claim that Jesus (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) vested this authority to legislate that which is permitted and that which is prohibited to his disciples before he ascended into the heavens. He is reported to have said:

“I tell you this: whatever you forbid on earth shall be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth shall be permitted in heaven.”

(Matthew: 18:18)

It is clear that this verse of Matthew should have read that whatever was forbidden in heaven must also be forbidden on earth, and whatever is permitted in heaven must also be permitted on earth!

Around the world today, Muslims submit to the authority of governments that are committing *Shirk*. They vote for them in elections. They swear by constitutions that give authority to the governments to commit *Shirk*. They are employed by those governments, and serve them faithfully. They honor, support and obey such governments. There is no question, therefore, that all of us (*illa ma sha’ Allah*) are also in *Shirk*! Yet so many of the scholars of Islam adopt a neutral attitude towards such nations, or turn a blind eye to

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their *Shirk*, or, worst of all, become active supporters of such governments.

The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) warned that *Dajjāl* would test mankind with a barrage of *Shirk*. He went on to further warn that the attack of *Shirk* would be as difficult to recognize as it would be to recognize “a black ant on a black stone on a dark night”. It is very easy for us to recognize the fulfillment of this prophecy in the names of the days of the week and months of the year which are now in universal use by all nations (*illa mā shā Allah*).

All the days of the week from ‘Sunday’ to ‘Saturday’, and all the months of the year from ‘January’ to ‘December’, have all been named after pagan gods/goddesses! When we use these names for the days of the week and the months of the year and abandon, for all practical purposes, the *Sunnah* (in respect of the names of the days of the week and the months of the year) we enter into *Shirk*. Indeed some of the names of the days of the week as well as months of the year are actually given in the Qur`ān itself. The *Sunnah* in respect of those names is:

Youm al-Ahad (the first day of the week); *Youm al-Ithnain* (the second day of the week); *Youm al-Thalatha* (the third day of the week); *Youm al-Arba`a* (the fourth day of the week); *Youm al-Khamīs* (the fifth day of the week); *Youm al-Jum`ah* (the day of the *Jum`ah* or congregational prayer); *Youm al-Sabt* (the Sabbath day).

(At least two of the names of days of the week are located in the Qur`ān, namely *Youm al-Jum`ah* and *Youm al-Sabt*.)

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Similarly the *Sunnah* in respect of the names of the months of the year is as follows:

Muharram; Safar; Rabī' al-Awwal; Rabī' al-Thāni; Jumādi al-Awwal; Jumādi al-Thāni; Rajab; Shabān; Ramadān; Shawwāl; Dhū al-Qa'ada; Dhū al-Hajj.

(At least one of these names of months of the year is mentioned in the Qur'ān, i.e., the month of *Ramadān*.)

It was because of the grave warning concerning *Shirk* which was located at the heart of the story of the young men in the cave that the Qur'ān ended the story, at Verse 26, with the following statement concerning Allah Most High and His Supreme Authority:

﴿... وَلَا يُشْرِكُ فِي حُكْمِهِ أَحَدًا﴾

“. . . . nor does He share His Command (or Governance) with anyone whatsoever.”

(Qur'ān, al-Kahf, 18:26)

The Qur'ān has revealed to us the *Duah* (prayer) of *Nabi Mūsa* (*'alaihi al-Salām*) who prayed to Allah when he found himself in the midst of a people who had embraced the sin of *Shirk* and would not disengage from it. This was his prayer:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لَا أَمْلِكُ إِلَّا نَفْسِي وَأَخِي ۖ فَافْرُقْ بَيْنَنَا

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وَبَيْنَ الْقَوْمِ الْفَاسِقِينَ ﴿٢٥﴾

“He said: O my Lord! I have power only over myself and my brother: so separate us from this rebellious people!”

(Qur’ān, al-Māidah, 5:25)

Now that we have exposed and explained the universal blasphemy (*Shirk*) of the modern age, and we have also drawn attention to the war on Islam now raging around the world, it remains for us to apply the lesson from the story of the young men in this *Sūrah* of the blessed *Qur’ān*. When it becomes necessary to do so, in order to preserve our faith in Allah Most High, we, in turn, must flee in the very same way that they fled from the godless world that was waging war on Islam.

The eminent Turkish Islamic scholar and thinker, *Badi’uzzaman Sa’id Nursi*, is reported to have advised Muslims in post-Caliphate Turkey to withdraw from the cities to the country-side and to seek to preserve their faith in ten thousand Muslim villages.

We hold the same view. We firmly believe that survival of faith for Muslims in the Gog and Magog modern age lies in withdrawal from the cities of the modern world to remotely-located Muslim Villages where micro-Islamic communities can be established. At the nucleus of the remotely-located Muslim Village must be the most pious of the believers. They must set the standard of conduct (of worship in particular) to be emulated by all others resident in the Village.

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Sūrah al-Kahf has advised the believers to keep the company of such people, particularly in the age of *Dajjāl* and of Gog and Magog, and beware of turning away from these great role models and being seduced by the attractions (glitter, pomp) of the modern world. It has done so in this verse of haunting beauty which we both translate and explain:

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ
وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرْطًا ﴿١٨﴾

Simple translation:

And content yourself with those who call on their Lord-God morning and evening seeking His (*very*) face; and do not let your eyes pass beyond them in quest of the pomp, glitter and beauties of this world's life; and pay no heed to any whose heart We have rendered heedless of Our remembrance because he had always followed his own desires, abandoning all that is good and true.

(Qur'ān, al-Kahf, 18:28)

Explanatory translation:

And (*until that time of judgment comes*) let your heart be contented (*in seeking the company of those sincere believers*) who call on their Lord-God morning and evening (*with all their heart and soul*), seeking His countenance (*hence this is passionate rather than mechanical worship*); and do not let

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your eyes pass beyond them in quest of the pomp, glitter and beauties of this world's life (*let not the godless world seduce you with its attractions, or bribe you with a handout to get you to turn away from such sincere servants of Allah Most High*); and pay no heed to (*do not obey, do not follow the leadership of*) any whose heart We have rendered heedless of all remembrance of Us (*i.e., constant remembrance in the heart of the Lord-God*) because he had always followed (*only*) his own desires (*i.e., his own agenda in his lust for power or fame or wealth, etc.*), abandoning all that is good and true (*and waging war on the true servants of Allah*).

Commentary:

In this hauntingly beautiful verse *Sūrah al-Kahf* gives additional advice and warnings regarding the method with which believers should respond to the dangers of the godless world in the age of trials of *Dajjāl*, and of oppression and corruption of the Gog and Magog world-order.

The essence of that guidance is that they should carefully choose the company that they keep, the people with whom they associate and, hence, the *Jamā'ah* to which they belong and the place they choose to reside. They should remain attached to those sincere servants of Allah Most High who radiate constant piety, humility, godliness and firmness of character in their personality.

Such believers would display firmness in their resolve to remain faithful to Allah and His blessed Messenger (*peace be upon him*) while war on Islam is raging in the world.

In addition, they should avoid the company of those who exhibit godlessness, sinfulness, greed, lust, pride, haughtiness, arrogance, vindictiveness and spite in their conduct, and who support those who are waging war on Islam. Such would be a people who pursue their own worldly agenda and whose works would be in vain.



CHAPTER SIX ❦—

*The Parable of the Rich Man and
the Poor Man*

In the previous chapter the Qur'anic story in *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the young men who fled into the cave was narrated and analyzed. We ended that chapter by noting that the young men fled from *Shirk* (blasphemy). This is the greatest and most dangerous of all sins since it is the one sin which Allah Most High has declared that He would not forgive (i.e., if someone were to die without earning forgiveness for such sin).

But shortly after concluding the story of the young men in the cave *Sūrah al-Kahf* returned to the same theme in order to direct attention to another form of *Shirk* which would be prevalent in the age of *Dajjāl*. In the story of two men, one to whom Allah Most High had given wealth in the form of two very fertile gardens, while the other was poor since he was not given wealth, the rich man was corrupted and deceived by his wealth and consequently his faith was destroyed. Theoretically he worshipped Allah. Factually, however, he worshipped his wealth (i.e., the *Dunyah*). And that was *Shirk*. Allah's punishment eventually overtook him and his wealth was destroyed.

The poor man, on the other hand, recognized the corruption in the heart of the rich man to be blasphemy (*Shirk*), and warned of the

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divine punishment that could ensue, i.e., that Allah Most High could destroy his gardens and thus take away his wealth.

The poor man did not envy the rich man's wealth. Rather, he counseled him to bow to the supremacy of the Divine by recognizing that his wealth had come from Allah Most High. He should respond with gratitude to Allah Most High Who is the bestower of wealth. The poor man also expressed the hope that his Lord-God would give him something better in the next world than the gardens of the rich man, and better than the poverty with which he lived in this world.

This narrative in *Sūrah al-Kahf* accurately describes the world today in which the clutches of godless secularism and materialism has resulted in the new modern way of life. Greed, lust for wealth, material possession, and sex, are corrupting the vast majority of people around the world. This even includes many Muslims.

The *Sūrah* warns those who yearn for this world (*Dunyah*) that it has nothing abiding to offer. Everything perishes and passes away. Therefore, instead of living 'in' this world and 'for' this world, one should live 'in' this world but 'for' the next world. The believer should strive in this world to pursue the mission of living 'for' Allah. If he is poor he should bear his trials with patience while living 'for' Allah, confident that when Allah Most High accepts his submission, worship and patience, he would be rewarded with abundant good in the life hereafter.

This message was summed up in a truly unforgettable verse of *Sūrah al Kahf*:

﴿ أَلْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
 الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴾ ﴿٣٦﴾

“Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world: but good deeds, the fruit whereof endures forever, are of far greater merit in thy Lord-God’s sight, and far better as (the foundation for) hope.”

Here is the Qur’ānic text of the parable concerning the rich man and the poor man. The parable begins at verse thirty-two and ends at verse forty-six:

Verse 32

﴿ وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُم مَّثَلًا رَّجُلَيْنِ جَعَلْنَا لِأَحَدِهِمَا جَنَّتَيْنِ
 مِنْ أَعْنَبٍ وَحَفَفْنَاهَا بِبُخَلٍ وَجَعَلْنَا بَيْنَهُمَا زُرْعًا ﴾ ﴿٣٢﴾

“Set forth for them the parable of two men. For one of them We provided two gardens of grape-vines and surrounded them with date-palms: and in between the two We placed corn-fields.”

Verse 33

﴿ كِلْتَا الْجَنَّتَيْنِ ءَاتَتْ أُكْلَهَا وَلَمْ تَظْلِمِ مِنْهُ شَيْئًا وَفَجَّرْنَا
 خِلْفَهُمَا نَهْرًا ﴾ ﴿٣٣﴾

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“Each of those gardens brought forth its produce and failed not in the least therein. In the midst of them (*i.e., the two gardens*) We caused a river to flow.”

Verse 34

﴿ وَكَانَ لَهُ ثَمَرٌ فَقَالَ لِصَاحِبِهِ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَنَا أَكْثَرُ
مِنْكَ مَالًا وَأَعَزُّ نَفَرًا ﴾ ﴿٣٤﴾

“And so, this man had an (*abundance*) of produce. He said to his companion in the course of a mutual argument: I have more wealth than you, and more honor and power in (*my following of*) men (*i.e., the number of people who follow me!*)”

Verse 35

﴿ وَدَخَلَ جَنَّتَهُ وَهُوَ ظَالِمٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَالَ مَا أَظُنُّ أَن تَبِيدَ
هَذِهِ أَبَدًا ﴾ ﴿٣٥﴾

“Then he went into his garden in (*that*) state of internal corruption and proceeded to declare: I do not believe that this (*wealth of mine in these gardens*) will ever perish.”

Verse 36

﴿ وَمَا أَظُنُّ السَّاعَةَ قَائِمَةً وَلَئِن رُّدِدْتُ إِلَىٰ رَبِّي لَأَجِدَنَّ

﴿ خَيْرًا مِّنْهَا مُنْقَلَبًا ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

“Nor do I believe that the Hour (of Judgment) will (ever) come. (It is so utterly remote a thing as to be, in effect, a thing that would never occur.) (In fact) even if I am brought back to my Lord I shall surely find (there) something (i.e. reward) better in exchange.”

Verse 37

﴿ قَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ وَهُوَ يُحَاوِرُهُ أَكَفَرْتَ بِالَّذِي خَلَقَكَ ﴿٦٧﴾ مِّنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِّنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ سَوَّكَ رَجُلًا ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

“His companion responded to him, in the course of the argument with him. Would you show ingratitude to He Who created you out of dust, and then out of a drop of sperm, and then fashioned you into a man?”

Verse 38

﴿ لَيْكِنَّا هُوَ اللَّهُ رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِرَبِّي أَحَدًا ﴿٦٩﴾ ﴾

“For my part (I declare) that He, Allah, is my Lord-God. and I shall not associate any other with my Lord-God.”

Verse 39

﴿ وَلَوْلَا إِذْ دَخَلْتَ جَنَّتِكَ قُلْتَ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ ﴿٧٠﴾ إِنَّ تَرَنِّ أُنَا أَقَلَّ مِنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴿٧١﴾ ﴾

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“(He then went on to ask the rich man): Why did you not say, when you entered your garden: *(This is all)* Allah’s Will! There is no power but with Allah! If you were to *(assess)* me *(in terms of my worth)* you would find me with less wealth and sons than you.”

Verse 40

﴿ فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَن يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِّنْ جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا ﴾ ﴿٤٠﴾

“But *(bear in mind)* it may be that my Lord can *(eventually)* give me something better than your garden, and that He can inflict your garden with thunderbolts *(by way of reckoning)* from heaven, making it *(but)* slippery sand *(i.e., destroying it)*!”

Verse 41

﴿ أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَأْوَاهَا غَوْرًا فَلَن تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ طَلْبًا ﴾ ﴿٤١﴾

“Or the water of the garden would *(be made to)* run off underground so that you would never be able to retrieve it *(in which case, also, the gardens would perish)*.”

Verse 42

﴿ وَأَحِيطَ بِثَمَرِهِ فَأَصْبَحَ يُقَلِّبُ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَىٰ مَا أَنفَقَ فِيهَا وَهِيَ خَاوِيَةٌ عَلَىٰ عُرُوشِهَا وَيَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أُشْرِكْ بِرَبِّي

﴿ أَحَدًا ﴿﴾

“(So said, so done). His fruits (and enjoyment) were encompassed (with ruin) and he remained twisting and turning his hands over what he had spent on his property which had (now) tumbled to pieces to its very foundations. and he could only say: Woe is me! Would that I had never blasphemed (i.e. committed Shirk) in my worship of my Lord and Cherisher!”

Verse 43

﴿ وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُ فِئَةٌ يَنْصُرُونَهُ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَمَا كَانَ مُنْتَصِرًا ﴿﴾

“Nor could he find those who could help him against Allah, nor was he able to deliver himself (from his awful state).”

Verse 44

﴿ هُنَالِكَ الْوَلِيَّةُ لِلَّهِ الْحَقِّ هُوَ خَيْرٌ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ عُقْبًا ﴿﴾

“For thus it is: all protective power belongs to Allah alone, the True One. He is the Best to reward, and the Best to determine what is to be.”

Verse 45

﴿ وَأَضْرَبَ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنْ

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السَّمَاءِ فَآخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ
هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيحُ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ
مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿٤٥﴾

“And propound unto them the parable of the life of this world: (*it is*) like the rain which We send down from the skies, and which is absorbed by the plants of the earth; but (*in time*) they turn into dry stubble that the winds blow freely about. And it is Allah (*alone*) who prevails over all things.”

Verse 46

﴿الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ۗ﴾ ﴿٤٦﴾

“Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world: but good deeds, the fruit whereof endures forever, are of far greater merit in thy Lord-God’s sight, and far better as (*the foundation for*) hope.”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf, 18:32-46)

The passage in *Sūrah al-Kahf* which narrates the parable of the rich man and the poor man, warns of the dangers posed when wealth corrupts and destroys faith. It ends with a reminder of the Day of Judgment and of the fate that awaits those who lose faith

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STORY

This parable provides a contrast between two men and their ways of life which symbolizes life in the age of *Dajjāl*.

Allah Most High Who sometimes bestows wealth as a trust and a trial in this life. And Allah sometimes punishes with wealth since that wealth would become the road to ruin. If wealth was not lawfully earned, such as through modern usurious banking and insurance, it would be *Haram* and would ensure that the possessor would burn in the fire of hell.

Secularism and a resultant philosophy of materialism that dispenses with God and religion, would corrupt the heart with deadly diseases. The dominant disease of the Last Age would be such lust for wealth that would render people blind to spiritual reality. They would be brainwashed and live in an illusory world of fantasy (a fool's paradise) while merrily walking the road to hell-fire. The significance of this story in *Sūrah al-Kahf* is located in the warning that it delivers concerning that disease.

The modern world glamorizes wealth and the lifestyle of the wealthy. Eventually the poor grow to hate and despise their poverty and persuade themselves to do whatever it takes, lawful or unlawful, to extricate themselves from the *curse* of poverty. This results in banditry, theft, violent crimes of robbery, kidnapping etc. In fact the entire society becomes corrupted because the rich, also, use unlawful means to constantly increase their wealth.

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The poor man in this *Sūrah* boasted of nothing. His trust was in Allah Most High. Eventually Allah destroyed the rich man's wealth, and the poor man was the happier in the end. There is a powerful message of comfort, hope and support in this parable for poor believers who live in a world that recognizes the rich man to be a 'somebody', and the poor man to be a 'nobody' – a world which demonizes poverty as an evil that must be eradicated.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali has captured the essence of the parable in this (edited) version of his commentary:

"The arrogant one was puffed up with his possessions, his income, and his large family and following, and thought in his self-complacency that it would last forever. He was also wrong in looking down on his companion, who, though less affluent, was the better man of the two. It was not wealth that ruined him, but the attitude of his mind. He was unjust, not so much to his neighbor, as to his own soul. In his love of the material, he forgot, or openly defied, the spiritual. As verse 37 shows, he took his companion with him, to impress him with his own importance, but the companion was unmoved. Here comes out the grasping spirit of the materialist. In his mind 'better' means more wealth and more power of the kind he was enjoying in this life, although, in reality, even what he had, rested on hollow foundations, and was doomed to perish and bring him down with it.

The companion's argument was divided into five parts. He remonstrated against the proud man for denying Allah. Then he proclaimed, on the basis of his own spiritual experience, that Allah is One and that He is Good. He also pointed out to him the better way of enjoying Allah's gifts, i.e., with gratitude to Him. He expressed contentment and satisfaction in Allah's dealings with

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him. Finally, he gave a warning of the fleeting nature of this world's goods and the certainty of Allah's punishment for inordinate vanity."

(Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Translation and Commentary of
Sūrah al-Kahf of the Qur'ān, Notes 2376-80)

How should believers respond to the secularism and materialism which today dominate mankind and the world? *Sūrah al-Kahf* provides the key to the answer. Abdullah Yusuf Ali continues:

"The punishment that was visited on the rich arrogant man was that of thunderbolts (*husbanan*), but the general meaning of the word includes any punishment by way of a reckoning (*hisab*), but, perhaps, an earthquake is also implied, as it alters water-courses, diverts channels underground, throws up silt and sand, and covers large areas with ruin. 'Fruits', 'spent', 'twisting of the hands', should all be understood in a wide metaphorical sense, as well as the literal sense. He had great income and satisfaction, which were all gone. He had lavished significant resources on his property. His thoughts had been engrossed on it: his hopes had been built on it: it had become the absorbing passion of his life. If he had only looked to Allah, instead of to the ephemeral goods of this world!

In this case, in his mind, there was his own Self and his Mammon as rivals to Allah! He had built up connections and obliged dependants, and was proud of having his 'quiver full'. But where were all these things when the reckoning came? He could not help himself: how could others be expected to help him? All else is vanity, uncertainty, and the sport of Time. The only hope or truth is from Allah. Other rewards and other successes are illusory: the best Reward and the best Success come from Allah."

(Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Translation and Commentary of
Sūrah al-Kahf of the Qur'ān, Notes 2380-85)

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The modern godless world has turned away from Allah Most High, and it has done so surreptitiously. It pretends that it still believes in Allah, but in reality it does not!

The story of the two men also points ominously at the future of mankind with particular reference to the age of *Dajjāl*. The world of *Kufr* and *Shirk* will perish in the same way as did the gardens of the rich man, i.e., natural disasters and an ever-diminishing supply of fresh water:

﴿..... وَيُرْسِلْ عَلَيْهَا حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ
صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا﴾ ﴿٤١﴾ أَوْ يُصْبِحَ مَأْوَهَا غُورًا فَلَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ لَهُ
طَلْبًا﴾ ﴿٤١﴾

“ He may let loose a calamity out of heaven upon this (*thy garden*) (*by way of reckoning*) so that it becomes a heap of barren dust or its water sinks deep into the ground so that you will never be able to find it again (*in which case, also, the gardens will perish*).”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf. 18:40-41)

That diminishing supply of fresh water has already begun. The countdown has already started.

THE RICH MAN AND THE POOR MAN IN TODAY'S WORLD OF ISLAM

Sūrah al-Kahf teaches a very important lesson concerning worldly wealth. It recognizes its importance and utility and admits the lure of wealth. But wealth can perish, and one should not therefore look upon it as the be-all and end-all of life. Rather, says *Sūrah al-Kahf*, it is good deeds that survive the march of time, hence we should devote more attention to good conduct than to the pursuit of wealth:

﴿ الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمْلاً ﴾

“Wealth and children are an adornment of the life of this world: but good deeds, the fruit whereof endures forever, are of far greater merit in thy Lord-God’s sight, and far better as (*the foundation for*) hope.”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf, 18:46)

Wealth and children are transient things in the world that men long for, but there is something else that is better since it abides beyond the count of time – and that is, good deeds. And so, as the world becomes more and more corrupt in the Last Age, and as darkness envelops the world, the believer should strive strenuously to be righteous in conduct.

Dajjāl’s strategy of corrupting and controlling mankind through wealth can be clearly discerned from the story of the rich and poor men. He uses *Ribā* (usury) as well as control of the state on the one

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hand to enrich those who do not resist him, and on the other to impoverish those who resist him. This is *Dajjāl's* economic strategy through which he seeks to control the world on behalf of the Euro-Jewish State of Israel. The strategy appears to be largely successful. Around the world today those who possess power and who rule, are rich and grow constantly richer, while those who resist the rulers of the world are reduced to poverty and grow constantly poorer.

Around the world of Islam today, the rich support governments that have, in turn, become clients of the rulers of the world. And the poor masses have been effectively excluded from power and the decision-making process. This has worked admirably to Israel's benefit. Prophet Muhammad prophesied that *Dajjāl* would do precisely that:

Nawwās ibn Sam'an said that Allah's Messenger spoke of *Dajjāl* one day in the morning He said: He (*Dajjāl*) would come to the people and invite them (to a wrong religion); they would affirm their faith in him and respond to him. He would then give a command to the sky: there would be rainfall upon the earth and it would grow crops. Then in the evening, their pasturing animals would come to them with their humps very high, their udders full of milk and their flanks distended. He would then come to another people and invite them. But they would reject him so he would go away from them; they would then (suffer from) drought and nothing would be left with them in the form of wealth.

(*Sahīh. Muslim*)

It is amazing, really, that the subject of the prohibition of usury (*Ribā*) in Islam, which is of such tremendous strategic importance, is

yet so neglected. This writer's experience is that very few Muslims today have an adequate knowledge of the subject, and that is largely because the scholars of Islam avoid teaching the subject. We hope that our two books on the subject of *Ribā* (i.e., '*The Prohibition of Ribā in the Qur'an and Sunnah*' and '*The Importance of the Prohibition of Ribā in Islam*') would assist readers in understanding the subject. In addition there is the recording of our seminar on '*Islam and Money*' which can be viewed on our website: www.imranhosein.org.

Wealth corrupts those who embrace materialism and lust for wealth also corrupts those who acquire wealth unjustly. When such corrupt people become the ruling elite they use power to oppress the poor. The impoverished Muslim masses around the world of Islam resolutely oppose the ever-increasing oppression of the Euro-Jewish State of Israel, and they are destined to become a force with which to be reckoned. That is the *morale* of the story as narrated in *Sūrah al-Kahf*. Faith in Allah Most High would translate into an indestructible power that would eventually overcome Israel's power and might. And so a clash between the ruling elite and the impoverished masses must eventually occur. Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) has already prophesied that Muslims would overcome oppression in the Holy Land through an armed conflict.

The rich predatory elite who invariably controll political power, the military, and other such institutions of the state, seek an accommodation with Israel that would protect their vested interests. This is described as the 'peace process.' Accustomed as they are to

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power and privilege, they are terrified at the prospect of resurgent revolutionary Islam of the poor masses winning power and then dealing with them in the manner in which revolutionary Islamic Iran dealt with its predatory elite. And so the pressure to accommodate Israel comes from a terrified wealthy Muslim elite living in mortal fear of the impoverished Muslim masses and of Islam's stern and uncompromising justice.

It is quite clear that the predatory rich who have been corrupted by their wealth would never join in the armed struggle to liberate the oppressed in the Holy Land. It is equally clear that their poor brethren would joyfully embrace that armed struggle.

This aspect of the story of the rich man and the poor man in *Sūrah al-Kahf* was recently manifested in dramatic form in Palestinian elections in which the poor masses demonstrated their uncompromising capacity to resist Israeli oppression by voting in a government comprised of the *Hamas* Islamic resistance.

Those poor have taken their strength and hope from the following passage of the story in *Sūrah al-Kahf* in which the poor man addressed the rich man:

﴿ إِن تَرِنَا أَنَا أَقْلٌ مِّنْكَ مَالًا وَوَلَدًا ﴾^٤

“If you were to (assess) me (in terms of my worth) you would find me with less wealth and sons that you.”

﴿ فَعَسَىٰ رَبِّي أَن يُؤْتِيَنِي خَيْرًا مِّن جَنَّتِكَ وَيُرْسِلَ عَلَيْهَا
حُسْبَانًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُصْبِحَ صَعِيدًا زَلَقًا ﴾ ﴿٤٠﴾

“But (*bear in mind*) it may be that my Lord will give me something better than your garden and that He will inflict your garden with thunderbolts (*by way of reckoning*) from heaven, making it (*but*) slippery sand (*i.e., destroying it!*)”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf. 18:39-40)

Finally there is another complication that emerges when wealth corrupts the heart. Such an individual becomes internally blind and, as a consequence, cannot penetrate truth in the Qur’ān. *Sūrah al-Kahf* disclosed what Allah Most High does to such people:

﴿ . . . إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَن يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي
ءَاذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا وَإِن تَدْعُهُمْ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَن يَهْتَدُوا إِذًا أَبَدًا



“. . . Behold, over their hearts have We laid veils that prevent them from grasping the truths (*revealed in this Qur’ān*), and into their ears, deafness; and though you may call them to the (*true*) guidance (*of this Qur’ān*), they will never embrace it.”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf. 18:57)

Believers who read this book ought to summon the insight with which to recognize such ‘hopelessly blind people’ who reject the

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guidance as presented by the rightly guided scholars of Islam and humble servants of Allah. This becomes an absolute imperative when such people, who usually belong to the 'predatory' elite, hijack Muslim communities and proceed through devious, deceitful and cunning means (often a check book) to hoist themselves up until they are recognized as leaders of the Muslim community. Invariably they are a people who identify with, and enthusiastically support, the war on Islam being waged by today's European Jewish-Christian alliance that rules the world. Although they proclaim themselves to be leaders of the Muslims they have effectively left Islam and have joined, instead, that Jewish-Christian ruling alliance. Consider the following verse of the *Qur'ān*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ مِنكُم فإِنَّهُ مِنهٖم إِن اللّٰهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

“Oh you who believe (*in this Qur'ān*) do not take (*such*) Jews and the Christians as (*your*) friends or allies who themselves become friends and allies of each other. And whoever of you turns to them for friendship or alliance becomes, verily, one of them; behold, Allah does not guide such evildoers.”

(*Qur'ān*, al-Māidah, 5:51)



CHAPTER SEVEN ﴿—

The Parable of Moses and Khidr

In this story of the encounter of *Musa* and *Khidr* (peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon them both), *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān has explained *Dajjāl's* 'one eye' while teaching the crucially important epistemological lesson that knowledge comes through two sources. Knowledge from the first source is known as *'ilm al-Zāhir*, and it is based on empirical knowledge and rational enquiry. Such knowledge, which includes scientific knowledge, is finite and limited. Knowledge from the second is known as *'ilm al-Bātin*, and is internal intuitive spiritual knowledge that also may be known as *religious experience*. It is spiritually communicated to an individual and originates in a dimension of reality which transcends material reality. It usually comes in the form of intuitive thought, but it can also be communicated through true dreams or visions as a gift from Allah Most High. Such knowledge is infinite, inexhaustible, and timeless.

Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him) declared that such knowledge, when communicated to a believer through the medium of *true* or prophetic dreams and visions, constituted the last part of prophethood still remaining in the world after him. Here is the *Hadīth* as narrated by several companions of the Prophet:

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Narrated 'Ubada bin As-Samit: The Prophet said, "The (good) dreams of a faithful believer is a part of the forty-six parts of prophethood."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Narrated Anas bin Malik: Allah's Apostle said, "A good dream of a righteous man is one of forty-six parts of prophethood."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Narrated Abu Huraira: Allah's Apostle said, "The (good) dream of a faithful believer is a part of the forty-six parts of prophethood."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri: I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "A good dream is a part of the forty six parts of prophethood."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Yahya related to me from Malik from Zayd ibn Aslam from Ata ibn Yasar that the Messenger of Allah said, "All that would be left of prophet-hood after me would be Mubashshirāt." They asked, "What are Mubashshirāt, Oh Messenger of Allah?" He said, "The true dream which a righteous man sees - or which is shown to him - is a forty-sixth part of prophecy."

(Muwatta Imām Malik)

Narrated Abu Huraira: I heard Allah's Apostle saying, "Nothing is left of the prophethood except al-Mubashshirāt." They asked, "What are al-Mubashshirāt?" He replied, "The true/good dreams (that conveys glad tidings)."

(Sahih Bukhari)

Spiritual knowledge can also be accessed through divine revelation in scriptures. Among the divinely-revealed scriptures are

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the Torah (*Taurāt*), the Psalms (*Zabūr*), the Gospel (*Injīl*) and the Qur'ān.

We now live in an age which has largely rejected the claim of *'Ilm al-Bātin* to be recognized as knowledge. There is an interesting discussion on this subject in the introduction of our book on “*Dreams in Islam*”. We have reproduced that introduction for the benefit of readers as Appendix 1 of this book. There is another important discussion on the subject in our essay entitled “*Iqbal, the Sufi Epistemology and the End of History*” (See our book of essays entitled *'Signs of the Last Day in the Modern Age'*.) But perhaps the most important discussion of all on this subject is to be found in the first two chapters of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's important work entitled *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*". The book can be read at: www.allamaiqbal.com/works/prose/english/reconstruction.

The story of *Musa* and *Khidr* in *Sūrah al-Kahf* explains the supreme importance of *'Ilm al-Bātin* in the age of *Dajjāl* “ . . . who would come with a river and a fire – but his river would be a fire and his fire would be a river”:

Narrated by Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman: Subay' ibn Khalid said: “I came to Kufah at the time when Tustar was conquered. I took some mules from it. When I entered the mosque (of Kufah). I found there some people of moderate stature, and among them was a man whom you could recognize when you saw him that he was from the people of Hijaz. I asked: Who is he? The people frowned at me and said: Do you not recognize him? This is Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman, the companion of the Messenger of Allah. Then Hudhayfah said: People used to ask the Messenger of Allah about good, and I

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used to ask him about evil. Then the people stared hard at him. He said: I know the reason why you dislike it. I then asked: Messenger of Allah, will there be evil as there was before, after this good which Allah has bestowed on us? He replied: Yes. I asked: Wherein does the protection from it lie? He replied: In the sword (i.e., in armed resistance to oppression). I asked: Messenger of Allah, what will then happen? He replied: If Allah has on earth a Caliph who flays your back and takes your property, obey him, otherwise die holding onto the stump of a tree. I asked: What will come next? He replied: *Then Dajjāl will come forth accompanied by a river and fire. He who falls into his fire will certainly receive his reward, and have his load taken off him, but he who falls into his river will have his load retained and his reward taken off him.* I then asked: What will come next? He said: The Last Hour will come.”

(Sunan, Abū Dawūd)

The implication of the above *Hadīth* is that ‘appearance’ and ‘reality’ in the age of *Dajjāl* would differ significantly from each other. The road to heaven, symbolized by the ‘river’, would deceptively appear as a ‘fire’, while the road to hell, symbolized by a ‘fire’, would deceptively appear as a ‘river’. It is only those who are blessed by Allah Most High with internal intuitive spiritual knowledge who can penetrate the internal reality of the ‘river’, the ‘fire’, and of the true nature of the world in the age of *Dajjāl*. They alone would grasp with true knowledge *Dajjāl*’s attacks and hence would not be deceived. It is for this reason that Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings of Allah Most High be upon him*) constantly prayed: “Oh Allah kindly show me things as they are (so that I might not be deceived by what they appear to be)”.

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Spiritual knowledge in this age is transmitted directly to the heart of the believer. When the believer devotes himself to the study of the Qur`ān and struggles to penetrate the internal reality of the Divine Word, he may eventually be blessed with constantly unfolding knowledge from an inexhaustible Qur`ān. *Sūrah al-Kahf* laments mankind's reluctance to travel that road through which the inexhaustible knowledge of the Qur`ān can be accessed:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ
وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرِ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا ﴾

“Thus, indeed, have We given in this Qur`ān many facets to every kind of lesson (*designed*) for (*the benefit of*) mankind. However, man is, above all else, always given to contention (*and hence he does not turn to the Qur`ān to access that inexhaustible knowledge*).”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf, 18:54)

This admonition of Allah Most High has been delivered many times in the Qur`ān. But stubbornness, arrogance, pride, contentiousness and a host of other human failings intervene to cause men to either reject the Qur`ān, or to refuse to access it as an inexhaustible source of ever-unfolding knowledge.

Instead of humble submission and earnest endeavor in order to recognize Truth, man is stubbornly argumentative as he rejects, again and again, the claim of the Qur`ān to be the revealed word of Allah Most High, and an inexhaustible source of knowledge. Instead of

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using externally derived knowledge to assist him in seeking to understand the divinely revealed knowledge, man is today bombarded with an onslaught of www.external-knowledge.com (i.e., the information highway on the internet) that appears to be inexhaustible. This causes the internal spiritual knowledge to dry up within his heart.

The story of Moses (*'alaihi al-Salām*) and *Khidr* (*'alaihi al-Salām*) in *Sūrah al-Kahf* portrays in a vivid manner the difference between one who sees with one eye, and is thus capable of only external vision, and one who sees with two eyes and is thus capable of seeing with both the internal as well as external vision.

Khidr means green, and there is a *Hadīth* which explains how *Khidr* (*'alaihi al-Salām*) got his name:

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet said: "Al-Khidr was so named because he sat over a barren white land and it turned green with plantation after that (i.e., his sitting over it)."

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

My opinion is that the name or title given to *Khidr* (*'alaihi al-Salām*) indicates that whoever is blessed, as he was, with the capacity to see with two eyes, would have knowledge that would be fresh and evergreen, and hence spiritually rejuvenating. Such knowledge would impact on people to bring dead hearts back to life. Knowledge would constantly sprout up as new green vegetation in such a mind and heart that enjoys a perpetual spring. Such knowledge can never be exhausted.

CHAPTER SEVEN ﴿﴾— *The Parable of Moses and Khidr*

The story of Musa and *Khidr* is told in a *Hadīth*. And since that narration is crucially important for the understanding of the Qur'anic narrative in *Sūrah al-Kahf*, let us begin by presenting it in its entirety:

“Uba`i ibn Ka`ab told us that the Prophet said: Once Moses stood up and addressed Banū Isrāīl. He was asked “who was the most learned man amongst the people”. He replied: “I (am the most learned)”. Allah admonished him as he did not attribute the source of absolute knowledge to Him (Allah). So Allah said to him: “at the junction of the two seas there is a slave of Mine who is more learned than you are.” Moses asked: “O my Lord! How can I meet him?” Allah said: “Take a fish and put it in a large basket and you will find him at the place where you will lose the fish.”

“Moses took a fish and put it in a basket and proceeded along with his (servant) boy. Joshua (Yashu`ah ibn Nun), till they reached a rock where they laid their heads (i.e. lay down). Moses slept, and while he was asleep the fish, moving out of the basket, went into the sea. It took its way into the sea (straight) as in a tunnel. Allah stopped the flow of water over the fish and it became like an arch (the Prophet pointed out this arch with his hands).

“They traveled the rest of the night, and the next day Moses said to his boy (servant): Give us our food, for indeed, we have suffered much fatigue in this journey of ours. (But) Moses did not feel tired till he crossed that place which Allah had ordered him to seek.

“His boy (servant) said to him: Do you know that when we were sitting near that rock, I forgot the fish, (and none but Satan caused him to forget to speak about it), and it took its course into the sea in an amazing way? So there was a path for the fish and that astonished them. Moses said: That was what we were seeking after.

“Both of them then retraced their footsteps till they reached the rock. There

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they saw a man lying covered with a garment. Moses greeted him, and he replied saying: How do people greet each other in your land? Moses said: I am Moses. The man asked: Moses of Banū Isrāīl? Moses said: Yes. He then continued: I have come to you so that you may teach me from those things which Allah has taught you. He said: O Moses! I have some of the knowledge of Allah which Allah has taught me and which you do not know, while you have some of the knowledge of Allah which Allah has taught you and which I do not know. Moses asked: May I follow you? He said: But you will not be able to remain patient with me, for how can you be patient about things which are beyond your capacity to comprehend? Moses said: You would find me, if Allah so wills, truly patient, and I would not disobey you in aught.

“Both of them then set out walking along the sea-shore. A boat passed by them, and they asked the crew of the boat to take them on board. The crew recognized al-Khidr, so they took them on board without fare. When they were on board the boat a sparrow came and stood on the edge of the boat and dipped its beak once or twice into the sea. Al-Khidr said to Moses: O Moses! My knowledge and your knowledge have not decreased Allah’s knowledge except as much as this sparrow has decreased the water of the sea with its beak. Then suddenly al-Khidr took an adze (an instrument similar to a hoe or plane) and pulled up a plank, and Moses did not notice it till he had pulled up a plank with the adze. Moses said to him: What have you done? They took us on board charging us nothing: yet you have intentionally made a hole in their boat so as to drown its passengers. Verily, you have done a dreadful thing.

“Al-Khidr replied: Did I not tell you that you would not be able to remain patient with me? Moses replied: Do not blame me for what I have forgotten, and do not be hard upon me for my fault. So the first excuse of Moses was that he had forgotten.

“When they had left the sea, they passed by a boy playing with other boys. Al-Khidr took hold of the boy’s head and plucked it with his hand like this.

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(Sufyan, the sub-narrator gestured with his fingertips as if he were plucking some fruit.) Moses said to him: Have you killed an innocent person who has not killed any person? You have really done a horrible thing. Al-Khidr said: Did I not tell you that you could not remain patient with me? Moses said: If I ask you about anything after this, please leave me. I have made too many excuses.

“Then both of them went on till they came to some people of a village, and they asked its inhabitants for food but they refused to entertain them as guests. Then they saw therein a wall which was about to collapse and al-Khidr repaired it just by touching it with his hands. (Sufyan, the sub-narrator, gestured with his hands, illustrating how al-Khidr passed his hands over the wall upwards.) Moses said: These are the people whom we have called on, but they neither gave us food, nor entertained us as guests, yet you have repaired their wall. If you had wished, you could have charged a price for it.

“Al-Khidr said: This is the parting between you and me, and I shall tell you the explanation of those things which you could not wait with patience (to understand).

“The Prophet added: We wish that Moses could have remained patient by virtue of which Allah might have told us more about their story. (Sufyan, the sub-narrator, said that the Prophet said: May Allah bestow His Mercy on Moses! If he had remained patient, we would have been told further about their story.)”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

We turn now to the parable of *Musa* and *Khidr* as narrated in *Sūrah al-Kahf*. The passage begins at verse sixty and ends at verse eighty-two:

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Verse 60

﴿ وَإِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِفَتَاهُ لَا أَبْرَحُ حَتَّىٰ أَبْلُغَ مَجْمَعَ
الْبَحْرَيْنِ أَوْ أَمْضِيَ حُقُبًا ﴾

“And (*remember*) when Moses said to his boy-servant: I will not give up (*traveling*) until I reach the junction of the two seas even if I have to spend years and years in travel.”

Verse 61

﴿ فَلَمَّا بَلَغَا مَجْمَعَ بَيْنَهُمَا نَسِيَا حُوتَهُمَا فَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي
الْبَحْرِ سَرَبًا ﴾

“But when they reached the junction of the two seas, they forgot their fish, and it took its way through the sea as in a tunnel.”

Verse 62

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَاوَزَا قَالَ لِفَتَاهُ ءَاتِنَا غَدَاءَنَا لَقَدْ لَقِينَا مِنْ
سَفَرِنَا هَذَا نَصَبًا ﴾

“So when they had passed further on (*beyond that place*), Moses said to his boy-servant: Bring us our morning meal; truly, we have suffered much fatigue in this, our journey.”

Verse 63

﴿ قَالَ أَرَأَيْتَ إِذْ أَوْيْنَا إِلَى الصَّخْرَةِ فَإِنِّي نَسِيتُ الْحُوتَ
وَمَا أَذْسَنِيهِ إِلَّا الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ أَذْكُرَهُ ۚ وَاتَّخَذَ سَبِيلَهُ فِي
الْبَحْرِ عَجَبًا ﴿٦٣﴾

“(The boy-servant) said: Do you remember when we betook ourselves to the rock? I indeed forgot (to tell you about the strange thing that happened to) the fish, and how it took its course into the sea in a strange (or marvelous way)! But none other than Satan caused him to forget.”

Verse 64

﴿ قَالَ ذَلِكَ مَا كُنَّا نَبْغُ ۚ فَارْتَدَّا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِمَا قَصَصًا
﴿٦٤﴾

“(Moses) said: That is what we have been seeking. So they went back retracing their way.”

Verse 65

﴿ فَوَجَدَا عَبْدًا مِّنْ عِبَادِنَا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ رَحْمَةً مِّنْ عِنْدِنَا
وَعَلَّمْنَاهُ مِمَّا لَدُنَّا عِلْمًا ﴿٦٥﴾

“Then they found one of Our slaves, unto whom We had bestowed mercy from Us, and whom We had taught knowledge from Us (i.e., We inspired him

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with knowledge directly from the divine presence).”

Verse 66

﴿ قَالَ لَهُ مُوسَىٰ هَلْ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَنِي مِمَّا عُلِّمْتَ

رُشْدًا ﴿٦٦﴾ ﴾

“Moses said to him (*Khidr*): May I follow you so that you teach me something of that knowledge (*guidance and true path*) which you have been taught (*by Allah*)?”

Verse 67

﴿ قَالَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴿٦٧﴾ ﴾

“He (*Khidr*) said: Verily! You will not be able to have patience with me!”

Verse 68

﴿ وَكَيْفَ تَصْبِرُ عَلَىٰ مَا لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ، خُبْرًا ﴿٦٨﴾ ﴾

“And how can you have patience about that which you know not?”

Verse 69

﴿ قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنِ شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا



“(Moses) said: If Allah wills, you would find me patient, and I would not disobey you in aught.”

Verse 70

﴿ قَالَ فَإِنِ اتَّبَعْتَنِي فَلَا تَسْأَلْنِي عَن شَيْءٍ حَتَّى أُحْدِثَ لَكَ
مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا ﴾

“He (Khidr) said: If you are to follow me, then you must not ask me about anything until I myself explain it to you.”

Verse 71

﴿ فَأَنْطَلَقَا حَتَّى إِذَا رَكِبَا فِي السَّفِينَةِ خَرَقَهَا قَالَ أَخَرَقْتَهَا
لِتُغْرَقَ أَهْلُهَا لَقَدْ جِئْتَ شَيْئًا إِمْرًا ﴾

“So they both proceeded, till, when they were in the ship, he (Khidr) scuttled it. Moses said: Have you scuttled it in order to drown its people? Verily, you have done a thing which is Imra (i.e., a Munkar or evil, bad, and dreadful).”

Verse 72

﴿ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ إِنَّكَ لَن تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴾

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“He (*Khidr*) said: Did I not tell you, that you would not be able to have patience with me?”

Verse 73

﴿ قَالَ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا نَسِيتُ وَلَا تُرْهِقْنِي مِنْ أَمْرِي
عُسْرًا ﴾

“(Moses) said: Call me not to account for what I forgot, and be not hard upon me in this matter of mine.”

Verse 74

﴿ فَأَنْطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا لَقِيَا غُلَامًا فَقَتَلَهُ قَالَ أَقْتَلْتُمْ نَفْسًا
رَزِيَّةً بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ لَقَدْ جِئْتُمْ شَيْئًا نُكْرًا ﴾

“Then they both proceeded, till they met a boy, he (*Khidr*) killed him. Moses said: Have you killed an innocent person who had killed none? Verily, you have done a thing which is Nukra (i.e., a great Munkar or prohibited, evil, dreadful).”

Verse 75

﴿ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَسْتَطِيعَ مَعِيَ صَبْرًا ﴾

“(Khidr) said: Did I not tell you that you would not have patience with me?”

Verse 76

﴿ قَالَ إِنْ سَأَلْتُكَ عَنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدَهَا فَلَا تُصَحِّحْنِي ۚ قَدْ
بَلَغْتَ مِنْ لَدُنِّي عُذْرًا ﴾ ﴿٧٦﴾

“(Moses) said: If I ask you anything after this, keep me not in your company. you have received enough excuses from me.”

Verse 77

﴿ فَانطَلَقَا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَتَيَا أَهْلَ قَرْيَةٍ اسْتَطَعَمَا أَهْلَهَا فَأَبَوْا
أَنْ يُضَيِّفُوهُمَا فَوَجَدَا فِيهَا جِدَارًا يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْقَضَ
فَأَقَامَهُ ۗ قَالَ لَوْ شِئْتَ لَتَّخَذْتَ عَلَيْهِ أَجْرًا ﴾ ﴿٧٧﴾

“Then they both proceeded, till, when they came to the people of a town, they asked them for food, but they refused to entertain them. Then they found therein a wall about to collapse and he (Khidr) set it up straight. (Moses) said: If you had wished, surely you could have charged a price for it!”

Verse 78

﴿ قَالَ هَذَا فِرَاقُ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنِكَ ۗ سَأُنَبِّئُكَ بِتَأْوِيلِ مَا لَمْ
تَسْتَطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴾ ﴿٧٨﴾

“(Khidr) said: This is the parting between me and you. I will tell you the

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interpretation of *(those)* things over which you were unable to hold patience.”

Verse 79

﴿ أَمَّا السَّفِينَةُ فَكَانَتْ لِمَسْكِينٍ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْبَحْرِ
فَأَرَدْتُ أَنْ أَعِيبَهَا وَكَانَ وَرَاءَهُمْ مَلِكٌ يَأْخُذُ كُلَّ سَفِينَةٍ
غَضَبًا ﴾ ﴿٧٩﴾

“As for the ship, it belonged to poor people working in the sea. I decided to make it defective by damaging it, because there was a king after them who was seizing every ship by force.”

Verse 80

﴿ وَأَمَّا الْغُلَامُ فَكَانَ أَبَوَاهُ مُؤْمِنِينَ فَخَشِينَا أَنْ يُرْهِقَهُمَا
طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ﴾ ﴿٨٠﴾

“And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared lest he should oppress them by rebellion and disbelief.”

Verse 81

﴿ فَأَرَدْنَا أَنْ يُبَدِّلَهُمَا رَبُّهُمَا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُ زَكَاةً وَأَقْرَبَ رُحْمًا
﴿٨١﴾

“So we intended that their Lord should exchange him for them with one better in righteousness and nearer to *(being a source of)* mercy *(for them)*.”

Verse 82

﴿ وَأَمَّا الْجِدَارُ فَكَانَ لِغُلَامَيْنِ يَتِيمَيْنِ فِي الْمَدِينَةِ وَكَانَ تَحْتَهُ كَنْزٌ لَهُمَا وَكَانَ أَبُوهُمَا صَالِحًا فَأَرَادَ رَبُّكَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَا أَشُدَّهُمَا وَيَسْتَخْرِجَا كَنْزَهُمَا رَحْمَةً مِّن رَّبِّكَ^٥ وَمَا فَعَلْتُهُ^٥ عَن أَمْرِي^٥ ذَلِكَ تَأْوِيلُ مَا لَمْ تَسْطِعْ عَلَيْهِ صَبْرًا ﴿٥﴾

“And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the town: and *(buried)* under it was *(concealed)* a treasure belonging to them; and their father was a righteous man, and your Lord intended that they should attain their age of full strength and take out their treasure as a mercy from your Lord. And I did it not of my own accord. That is the interpretation of those *(things)* over which you could not show patience.”

(Qur`an, Sūrah al-Kahf. 18:-60-82)

THE OMINOUS IMPLICATIONS OF INTERNAL BLINDNESS AND KHIDR’S MESSAGE TO MUSLIMS IN THIS AGE

The implication of this story in *Sūrah al-Kahf*, the *Surah* of the *Qur`an* that protects us from the *Fitnah* of *Dajjāl*, is that the age of *Dajjāl* would witness the emergence of an epistemology that would

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recognize knowledge from only external observation. Anyone who embraces that epistemology of secularized knowledge would become internally spiritually blind. When people accept only one source of knowledge, the external and the observable, they eventually become people who see with only one eye, the external eye, and who consequently become internally or spiritually blind. When people are internally or spiritually blind they would also be spiritually deaf and the remembrance of Allah will depart from their hearts. Religion would then become a mere formality, something restricted to ‘name’ only, i.e., to external form, but devoid of internal substance. The Qur’ān makes mention of this phenomenon that would characterize the age of *Dajjāl*:

﴿ وَلَقَدْ ذَرَأْنَا لِجَهَنَّمَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الْجِنِّ وَالإِنسِ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ لَّا يَفْقَهُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا وَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ لَّا يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا أُولَئِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَلْ هُمْ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ ﴾

“Many are the Jinns and men We have made for Hell: they have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, and ears wherewith they hear not. They are like cattle, nay more misguided: for they are heedless (*of warning*).”

(Qur’ān, al-‘Arāf, 7:179)

﴿ وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ
 وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

“We (*too*) shall turn to (*confusion*) their hearts and their eyes, even as they refused to believe in this in the first instance: We shall leave them in their trespasses, to wander in distraction.”

(Qur`ān, al-An`ām, 6:110)

﴿ خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ وَعَلَى سَمْعِهِمْ^ط وَعَلَى أَبْصَارِهِمْ
 غِشَاوَةً^ط وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾ ﴾

“Allah hath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty (*they incur*).”

(Qur`ān, al-Baqarah, 2:7)

﴿ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَن ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا
 يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

“(Unbelievers) whose eyes had been under a veil from Remembrance of Me, and who had been unable even to hear.”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf, 18:101)

The age of *Dajjāl* would be the age of scientific empirical, to wit: knowledge that can come only through external observation. That age would so secularise knowledge as to conclude that there is no

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reality beyond material reality. It would embrace the *Kufr* of materialism. It is our firm opinion that we are now living in that age of *Kufr*, the age of *Dajjāl* the great *Kaḥfīr*.

Moses (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) formulated his judgment on the basis of external observation of all three events in the story. And on all three occasions his judgment was wrong. He condemned the damage done to the boat. And the reality was that the damage done to the boat protected it from being seized by the King. The ominous implication for mankind is that they also can be mistaken in their judgment, and can pay a terrible price for mistakes. Muslims must search for the guide who, like *Khidr*, is blessed with internal knowledge, and when they find such a guide they should follow him.

Khidr (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) did more in this event than merely protect the poor boatman’s property. *He sent a powerful message to believers who live in the modern age of Dajjāl the false Messiah, that they would protect their wealth, property and even their lives from predators, bandits, kidnappers and the oppression of those who rule over them, if they ensure that their visible property (i.e., their boat) remains unattractive to the predators. He also delivered an important lesson concerning law, i.e., that the moral law is the highest law. If, therefore, in adherence to the moral law, one has to disregard the law of the land, then the believer must give preference to moral law.*

Moses (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) condemned the killing of the boy when, in fact, the boy would grow up to become a *Kaḥfīr* whose *Kufr* would pose a threat to the faith of his parents. In killing the boy *Khidr* (*‘alaihi*

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al-Salām) got rid of a *Kafir* and saved the faith of his believing parents while praying that Allah Most Kind might replace that son with another who would be a source of comfort and happiness for his parents.

Khidr ('*alaihi al-Salām*) did more in this event than merely protect the faith of the boy's parents. *He sent a powerful message to believers that when they are confronted by the Kufr of the modern godless age brought about by Dajjāl the false Messiah, they must follow the example of Khidr ('alaihi al-Salām) in killing the boy by cutting themselves off from that world of Kufr while praying to Allah Most High to replace it with a better world in which believers could live with security of faith. The second implication of the killing of the boy is that they should nip the evil of Kufr in the bud and not allow it to grow until it becomes full-blown Kufr.*

Moses ('*alaihi al-Salām*) perceived the construction of the wall that was collapsing to have been a favor to the people of the town, a favor they did not deserve because of their inhospitable treatment to the two hungry and tired travelers. For this reason he felt that they should be made to pay for it. The reality was that in reconstructing the wall *Khidr* ('*alaihi al-Salām*) prevented the people of the town from gaining access to the wealth that was buried beneath the wall. He thus protected the treasure for the two orphans who would thus be able to receive it and benefit from it when they come of age.

Khidr ('*alaihi al-Salām*) did more than merely rebuild the wall to protect the orphan's wealth. *He sent a powerful message to believers confronted by the 'war on Islam' brought about by Dajjāl the false*

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Messiah. When they witness attempts to dismantle the house of Islam, they must emulate Khidr ('alaihi al-Salām) by rebuilding that house so that the treasure of Truth in Islam might be preserved for the next generation. My view is the fast collapsing house of Islam in the modern age can best be reconstructed or repaired through the establishment of thousands of small Muslim Villages in the remote countryside locations. Such Muslim Villages would have a status akin to the treasure buried beneath the wall. The important point to note is that Allah Most High would Himself protect such Villages from harm in the same way that He protected the treasure in this parable in Sūrah al-Kahf.

DAJJĀL, MOSES, AND KHIDR

Who is *Dajjāl*? How important is the subject of *Dajjāl* in Islam? Why is he known as *al-Masīh ad-Dajjāl* (the False Messiah or Anti-Christ)? And how is this story of *Musa* and *Khidr* in *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the *Qur'ān* related to the subject of *Dajjāl*? It is these fascinating and intriguing questions that we now attempt to answer.

The importance of the subject of *Dajjāl* in Islam is quite apparent from the fact that the blessed Prophet (*ṣdallalahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) has asked the believers to pray in their *Salāt* itself for protection from *Dajjāl*. Consider the following *Ahadīth* narrated by Aisha, Abū Hurairah and Anas bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with them all):

“Narrated by Aisha, the wife of the Prophet: Allah’s Messenger used to

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invoke Allah in the salaah saying: Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min adhab al-qabri, wa a`udhu bika min fitnah al-Masih al-Dajjal, wa a`udhu bika min fitnah al-mahya wa fitnah al-mamat. Allahumma inni a`udhu bika min al-mathami wa al-maghrami. (O Allah, I seek refuge with Thee from the punishment of the grave and from the trials of al-Masih al-Dajjal and from the trials of life and death. O Allah, I seek refuge with you from sin and from debt)."

(Sahih Bukhari)

"Narrated by Abu Hurairah: Allah's Messenger used to invoke (Allah as follows): Allahumma ini a`udhu bika min `adhab al-qabri, wa min `adhab al-nar, wa min fitnah al-mahya wa al-mamat, wa min fitnah al-Masih al-Dajjal. (O Allah! I seek refuge with Thee from the punishment of the grave, and from the punishment of the Hell-fire, and from the afflictions of life and death, and the afflictions of al-Masih al-Dajjal)."

(Sahih Bukhari)

"Narrated by Anas bin Malik: Allah's Messenger used to invoke thus: O Allah! I seek refuge with Thee from miserliness, laziness, from (the infirmity of) old age, the punishment in the grave, from the Fitnah (afflictions) of Dajjal, and from the Fitnah (afflictions) of life and death."

(Sahih Bukhari)

"Narrated by Aisha: I heard Allah's Messenger in his prayer seeking refuge with Allah from the Fitnah (afflictions) of Dajjal."

(Sahih Bukhari)

"Abu Hurairah said that the Messenger of Allah said: When any one of you completes the last Tashahhud (with which Salāt is to be completed), he should seek refuge with Allah from four (trials), i.e. from the torment of Hell, from the torment of grave, from the trial of life and death, and from the evil of al-Masih al-Dajjal (Antichrist)."

(Sahih Muslim)

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It is strange indeed that Muslims should pray to Allah Most High in *Salāt* for protection from *Dajjāl*, and yet remain in a state of profound ignorance about the subject despite the fact that the Qur`ān and the Prophet (*sdallalahu `alaihi wa sallam*) have both taught about *Dajjāl*? That is precisely the general state of Muslims today, i.e., one of either ignorance or confusion regarding the subject of *Dajjāl*.

The Prophet (*sdallalahu `alaihi wa sallam*) not only asked the believers to pray to Allah for protection from *Dajjāl*, but he also advised the believers to stay far away from *Dajjāl* since he would be very dangerous. He also informed us of the precise nature of the greatest danger posed by *Dajjāl*. It would be our incapacity to understand the *reality* of the world in the age of *Dajjāl*, whose primary objective would be to corrupt mankind's capacity to recognise 'truth' and 'true religion'. People would stick blindly and stubbornly to falsehood as well as to corrupted truth, while rejecting the uncorrupted truth in the Qur'an. The Prophet (*sdallalahu `alaihi wa sallam*) explained that *Dajjāl*'s attack would be global in scope, and so all of mankind would be targeted:

“Narrated by `Imran ibn Husayn: The Prophet said: Let him who hears of the *Dajjāl* go far from him for I swear by Allah that a man will come to him thinking he is a believer and follow him because of confused ideas roused in him by him (i.e., *Dajjāl*).”

(Sunan Abu Dāūd)

“Narrated by Anas bin Malik: The Prophet said: There will be no town which *Dajjāl* would not enter except Makkah and Madina. And there would be no entrance (road) (of both Makkah and Madina) but the angels would be

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standing in rows guarding it against him, and then Madina would shake with its inhabitants thrice (i.e., three earthquakes would take place) and Allah would expel all the disbelievers and the hypocrites from it.”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

In view of the nature of the tests and trials posed by *Dajjāl* the Prophet (*sdallalahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) warned that this would be the greatest *Fitnah* (test or trial) that mankind would experience from the time of Adam (*'alaihi al-Salām*) until the last day.

He further informed us that when the mission of *Dajjāl* is nearing completion, Allah would raise *Imam al-Mahdi* from amongst the descendents of Prophet Muhammad (*sdallalahu 'alaihi wa sallam*). *Dajjāl* would attack him in order to destroy him. But Allah would then cause Jesus (*'alaihi al-Salām*) to descend from the heavens, and he would kill *Dajjāl*. Only then would the long and horrid night of temptation and evil end.

We have argued in our book, '*Jerusalem in the Qur'ān*', which is a companion volume to this book, that we are now quite close to the moment when the Son of Mary would return. The implication is that the release of *Dajjāl* into the world took place quite some time ago.

This author is convinced that *Dajjāl* is the mastermind behind the emergence of secular materialist Western civilization, it's modern thought, and the modern lifestyle it fashions and then refashions with even greater decadence. It is that civilization which is subjecting mankind to the supreme test (*Fitnah*) of which the Prophet warned. A basic feature of this book is the insistence that *Sūrah al-Kahf* is not

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only to be read, but also studied, if believers are to be protected from that *Fitnah of Dajjāl*.

This book warns that the Euro-Christian and Euro-Jewish modern way of life that is now being uncritically adopted by most of mankind, including most Muslims, is insidiously deceptive and can mislead even the best of believers. We are living in that age in which the faith of the masses of Muslims is already eroded. Certainly, one of the many ways with which we can respond to this calamity is by redirecting attention to *Sūrah al-Kahf* of the Qur`ān and by making an effort to use the *Surah* to understand the world today.

DAJJĀL'S INTERNAL BLINDNESS – HE SEES WITH ONLY ONE EYE

Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) has conveyed to us important information concerning the most important of all the characteristics of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah. He sees with only 'one' eye and hence is capable of accessing only '*Ilm al-Zāhir*' or empirical knowledge. He is blind in the 'right' eye and this symbolizes internal blindness. Hence he denies the existence of '*Ilm al-Bātin*' or internal spiritual knowledge:

“Ibn Umar said: Once Allah’s Apostle stood amongst the people, glorified and praised Allah as He deserved, and then mentioned Dajjāl saying: “I warn you against him (i.e. Dajjāl) and there was no Prophet but warned his nation against him. No doubt, Noah warned his nation against him, but I tell you

CHAPTER SEVEN ﴿— *The Parable of Moses and Khidr*

about him something of which no Prophet told his nation before me. You should know that he is one-eyed, and Allah is not one-eyed.”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

“Narrated by Abdullah bin Umar: Allah’s Messenger stood up amongst the people and then praised and glorified Allah as He deserved and then he made mention of Dajjāl, saying: I warn you of him, and there was no Prophet but warned his followers of him: but I will tell you something about him which no Prophet has told his followers: Dajjāl is one-eyed whereas Allah is not.”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

“Narrated by Abdullah: Dajjāl was mentioned in the presence of the Prophet. The Prophet said: Allah is not hidden from you; He is not one-eyed, and pointed with his hand towards his eye, adding: while al-Masīh ad-Dajjāl is blind in the right eye and his eye looks like a protruding grape.”

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

“Narrated by Ubadah ibn as-Samit: The Prophet said: I have told you so much about the Dajjāl that I am afraid you may not understand. Dajjāl is short, hen-toed, woolly-haired, one-eyed, an eye-sightless, and neither protruding nor deep-seated. If you are confused about him, know that your Lord is not one-eyed”

(Sunan Abū Dāūd)

“Ibn Umar said: We were talking about Hajjat-ul-Wada’ while the Prophet was amongst us. We did not know what Hajjat-ul-Wada’ signified. The Prophet praised Allah and then mentioned al-Masīh al-Dajjāl and described him extensively, saying: “Allah did not send any Prophet but that Prophet warned his nation of al-Masīh al-Dajjāl. Noah and the Prophets following him warned (their people) of him. He will appear amongst you (O Muhammad’s followers), and if it happens that some of his qualities may be

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hidden from you, but your Lord's State is clear to you and not hidden from you. The Prophet said it thrice: "Verily, your Lord is not blind in one eye, while he (i.e. Dajjāl) is blind in the right eye which looks like a grape bulging out (of its cluster). . . ."

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

"Narrated by Abdullah: The Prophet made mention of al-Masīh al-Dajjāl (Dajjāl the false Messiah) in front of the people saying: Allah is not one eyed while al-Masīh al-Dajjāl is blind in the right eye and his eye looks like a bulging out grape. While sleeping near the Ka'aba last night, I saw in my dream a man of brown color, the best one can see amongst brown color, and his hair was so long that it fell between his shoulders. His hair was lank and water was dribbling from his head and he was placing his hands on the shoulders of two men while circumambulating the Ka'aba. I asked: Who is this? They replied: This is Jesus, son of Mary. Behind him I saw a man who had very curly hair and was blind in the right eye, resembling Ibn Qatan (i.e. a disbeliever amongst the Arabs) in appearance. He was placing his hands on the shoulders of a person while performing Tawaf around the Ka'aba (i.e., going round and round the Kaa'ba). I asked: Who is this? They replied: al-Masīh al-Dajjāl."

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

"Narrated by Anas bin Malik: The Prophet said: No prophet was sent but that he warned his followers against the one-eyed liar (Dajjāl). Beware! He is blind in one eye, and your Lord is not so. And there will be written between his (Dajjāl's) eyes (the word) Kāfir (i.e., disbeliever). (This hadīth is also transmitted by Abu Huraira and Ibn 'Abbās).

(Sahīh Bukhāri)

DAJJĀL'S BLIND EYE LOOKS LIKE A BULGING GRAPE

“Narrated by Abdullah: The Prophet made mention of al-Masīh al- Dajjāl (Dajjāl the false Messiah) in front of the people saying: Allah is not one eyed while al-Masīh al-Dajjāl is blind in the right eye and his eye looks like a bulging out grape”

(Sahīh, al-Bukhāri)

The description pertaining to the bulging grape indicates that the spiritual blindness of *Dajjāl* and of all who follow him would be quite evident to those who see with both eyes. It would as plainly visible to them as would be a bulging grape! The only ones who would be unable to recognize that spiritual blindness, i.e., unable to recognize the eye which looks like a bulging grape, would be those who are themselves spiritually blind.

It should be clear that the information pertaining to *Dajjāl's* eyes relates to religious symbolism and is not to be understood literally. The following evidence conclusively demonstrates the above. Firstly, the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alahi wa sallam*) suspected a Jewish boy in Madina to have been *Dajjāl* even though that boy was not literally one-eyed. Secondly, when Tamīm al-Dārī met with *Dajjāl* in person, and then gave to the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alahi wa sallam*) an eye-witness account of that meeting and a description of *Dajjāl*, there was no mention of his one eye. That should have been the most conspicuous thing of all about his physical appearance if he was literally blind in the right eye.

THE WORD KAFIR WRITTEN BETWEEN DAJJĀL'S EYES

“Narrated by Anas bin Malik: The Prophet said: No prophet was sent but that he warned his followers against the one-eyed liar (Dajjāl). Beware! He is blind in one eye. and your Lord is not so. And there will be written between his (Dajjāl's) eyes (the word) Kafir (i.e., disbeliever). (This *Hadīth* is also transmitted by Abu Huraira and Ibn `Abbās).

(Sahīh, al-Bukhāri)

The proof that the interpretation of the *Hadīth* pertaining to *Dajjāl's* above attack on mankind (i.e., the attack that is linked to his eyes) is epistemological, i.e., pertaining to knowledge, the sources of knowledge, and the means of acquiring knowledge, is located in the crucially important *Hadīth* which places the word *Kafir* between the two eyes of *Dajjāl*. Since his *Kufr* is located between his eyes it is related to his 'sight' or his capacity to see and thus to acquire knowledge. Secondly, the *Hadīth* makes it quite clear that the *Kufr* of *Dajjāl*, and hence of the age of *Dajjāl*, would be quite evident, i.e., not concealed. Someone would have to be blind not to be able to recognize that *Kufr* since it would be written between the eyes, i.e., between the external and the internal capacities for sight.

One of the defining characteristics of modern Euro-Jewish and Euro-Christian western civilization is the *Kufr* that has resulted from the secularization of knowledge and hence, the rejection of spiritual insight as a source of knowledge. The only knowledge recognized by Judeo-Christian West is knowledge of that which can be observed with external faculties of sight etc., and is thus located in the material

universe. The West does not at all conceal this defining characteristic which is so manifest that it is as though the word *Kāfir* is written between its eyes. We do not say that modern western civilization is *Dajjāl*. Rather we hold that it is the creation of *Dajjāl* and that it serves *Dajjāl*. The implication is that all those who imitate modern western civilization will become followers of *Dajjāl* and would eventually embrace his godlessness and have their faith in Allah destroyed. Allah Most High has already declared that 999 out of every 1000 of mankind would be thus ruined and enter into hell-fire!

ALLAH MOST HIGH IS NOT ONE-EYED

In so far as this subject is concerned a one-eyed man is a man who sees with only one eye. i.e., the external eye. All those who follow *Dajjāl* and the way of life he would establish would all become one-eyed people. When the *Hadīth* declared that Allah is not one-eyed, what this meant is that Allah is capable of seeing both that which is *al-Zāhir* (manifest) as well as that which is *al-Batin* (hidden and concealed). Thus He can see both ‘appearance’ and ‘reality’, both ‘form’ and ‘substance’. Allah declares such about Himself in the *Qur’ān*:

﴿ هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ ۗ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ

عَلِيمٌ ﴿

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“He is the First and the Last, the Evident and the Hidden: and He has full knowledge of all things.”

(Qur’ān, al-Hadīd, 57:3)

When Musa (*‘alaihi al-Salām*) replied to the effect that he was the most learned of all men he made the mistake of failing to acknowledge that all knowledge comes from Allah Most High and that He, Allah, is the most learned of all. Nor did he acknowledge that his knowledge was infinitely small and minute when compared with the knowledge of He who is the most learned of all. This is precisely what happens when knowledge is secularized.



CHAPTER EIGHT ﴿—

The Story of Dhūl Qarnain

The Jewish Rabbis in Madina had given the Arabs of the tribe of Quraish three questions to put before Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) in order to test whether or not he was indeed a true Prophet of Allah Most High. One of the three questions pertained to the great traveler who traveled to the two ends of the earth. In posing that question the Rabbis were, in our view, seeking to discover whether or not Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) knew about one of the major Signs of the Last Day, namely, Gog and Magog.

Before we attempt to explain the subject of *Dhūl Qarnain* and its implications for the modern age, let us first record the Qur'anic response to the question posed by the Rabbis concerning the great traveler. The answer commences with verse eighty-three of *Sūrah al-Kahf* and continues until verse one hundred and one:

Verse 83

﴿ وَسَأَلُونَكَ عَنِ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ ۗ قُلْ سَأَتْلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ

ذِكْرًا ﴿

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“And they (*the Rabbis*) ask thee (*Oh Muhammad*) concerning Dhūl Qarnain. Say, I will relate to you something of his story.”

Verse 84

﴿ إِنَّا مَكَّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَءَاتَيْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٤﴾ ﴾

“Verily We established his power on earth, and We gave him the ways and means to all ends.”

Verse 85

﴿ فَاتَّبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٥﴾ ﴾

“One (*such*) way he followed.”

Verse 86

﴿ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَغْرِبَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ وَوَجَدَ عِنْدَهَا قَوْمًا ۗ قُلْنَا يَنْدَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ إِمَّا أَنْ تُعَذِّبَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ تَتَّخِذَ فِيهِمْ حُسْنًا ﴿٨٦﴾ ﴾

Until, when he reached the setting of the sun, he found it setting in a spring of murky water (*i.e., the Black Sea - Tafsīr Jalālain*). Near it he found a people. We said: “O Dhūl Qarnain! (*thou hast authority*) either to punish them or to treat them with kindness.”

Verse 87

﴿ قَالَ أَمَّا مَنْ ظَلَمَ فَسَوْفَ نُعَذِّبُهُ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ ۗ
فِيُعَذِّبُهُ عَذَابًا نُّكْرًا ﴿٨٧﴾ ﴾

“He said: Whoever doth wrong, him shall we punish; then shall he be sent back to his Lord; and He will punish him with a punishment unheard-of (before).”

Verse 88

﴿ وَأَمَّا مَنْ ءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُ جَزَاءٌ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۗ
وَسَنَقُولُ لَهُ مِنَّا يُسْرًا ﴿٨٨﴾ ﴾

“But whoever believes, and works righteousness, he shall have a goodly reward, and easy will be his task as we order it by our command.”

Verse 89

﴿ ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَ سَبِيلًا ﴿٨٩﴾ ﴾

“Then followed he (another) way.”

Verse 90

﴿ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطَّلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ لَمْ
نَجْعَلْ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهَا سِتْرًا ﴾ ﴿٩٠﴾

“Until, when he came to the rising of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had provided no covering protection (*perhaps against the sun*).”

Verse 91

﴿ كَذَٰلِكَ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا بِمَا لَدَيْهِ خُبْرًا ﴾ ﴿٩١﴾

“(He left them) as they were: We completely understood what was before him.” (*i.e., why he acted as he did*).”

Verse 92

﴿ ثُمَّ اتَّبَعَ سَبَبًا ﴾ ﴿٩٢﴾

“Then he followed (another) way.”

Verse 93

﴿ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِن دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَّا
يَكَادُونَ يَفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا ﴾ ﴿٩٣﴾

CHAPTER EIGHT ﴿— The Story of Dhūl Qarnain

“Until, when he reached (*a tract*) between two mountains, he found beneath them a people who scarcely understood a word (*i.e., they could not understand his language*).”

Verse 94

﴿ قَالُوا يٰذَا الْقَرْنَيْنِ اِنَّ يٰجُوجَ وَمَاجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِى
الْاَرْضِ فَهَلْ نَجْعَلُ لَكَ خَرْجًا عَلٰى اَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ
سَدًّا ﴾ ﴿٩٤﴾

“They said: O Dhul Qarnain! Gog and Magog corrupt (*our*) territory with acts of great oppression and corruption. Can we offer you tribute (*i.e., pay you*) in order that you might erect a barrier between us and them?”

Verse 95

﴿ قَالَ مَا مَكَّنِّى فِىهِ رَبِّىْ خَيْرٌ فَاَعِينُونِى بِقُوَّةٍ اَجْعَلْ
بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ﴾ ﴿٩٥﴾

“He said: (*the power*) in which my Lord has established me is better (*than tribute*): help me therefore with manpower (*i.e., labour*): I will erect a strong barrier between you and them.”

Verse 96

﴿ اِنۡتۡونِى زُرَّ الْحَدِيدِ ۗ حَتّٰىۤ اِذَا سَاوٰى بَيْنَ الصَّدَفَيْنِ قَالَ

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أَنْفُخُوا حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا قَالَ ءَاتُونِي أُفْرِغْ عَلَيْهِ قِطْرًا



“Bring me blocks of iron. At length, when he had filled up the space between the two steep mountain-sides, he said, Blow (*with your bellows*). Then, when he had made it (*red*) as fire, he said: Bring me. that I may pour over it. molten copper.”

Verse 97

﴿ فَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ﴾



“Thus were they made powerless to (*either*) scale over it or to dig through it.”

Verse 98

﴿ قَالَ هَذَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّيٰ فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّيٰ جَعَلَهُ دَكَّآءَ ۖ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّيٰ حَقًّا ﴾

“He said: This is a mercy from my Lord: but when the promise of my Lord comes to pass, He will make it into dust; and the promise of my Lord is true.”

Verse 99

﴿ وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ
فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

“On that day We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another (i.e., the world would descend into anarchy); the trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together (i.e., the world would witness such globalization as to become akin to a global village in which all of mankind would be interconnected).”

Verse 100

﴿ وَعَرَّضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرَضًا ﴿١٢﴾ ﴾

“And We shall present Hell that day for Unbelievers to see, all spread out.”

Verse 101

﴿ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنِ ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا
يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

“(Unbelievers) whose eyes had been under a veil from Remembrance of Me, and who had been unable even to hear.”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf, 18:83-101)

SŪRAH AL-KAHF AND THE MODERN AGE

PAX QARNAIN (I.E., DHŪL QARNAIN'S WORLD-ORDER)

Dhūl Qarnain in Arabic refers to someone who possesses two *Qarns*. This can mean either two 'horns' or two 'ages'. But since the Qur'ān has always used the word *Qarn* to refer to an age or epoch (or page of the book of history) and never as 'horn', we choose to translate *Dhūl Qarnain* as one who impacts on two different pages of the book of history. And since we locate the true target of the question posed by the Jewish Rabbis in that major Sign of the Last Day, namely, Gog and Magog, we are of the view that *Qarnain*, i.e., the two ages, refer both to an age in the distant past and to an age which is to come which would be the Last Age or the Age of *Fitan*. We hold the view that we now live in that Last Age, and hence, that this story has direct relevance to living Muslims.

Who was *Dhūl Qarnain*? This writer has not found any compelling necessity to devote attention to the question whether *Dhul Qarnain* was a historical personality or not. Rather we believe that attention should be directed to the conduct displayed by *Dhūl Qarnain* in his exercise of power and authority, for therein lies the very substance of the divine guidance being conveyed in the story

Sūrah al-Kahf has introduced us in this story to the subject of *power* and its relation to *faith* in Allah Most High. *Dhul Qarnain* possessed faith in Allah and he was endowed by Allah with the power to pursue whatever objective he chose. He therefore had the capacity

CHAPTER EIGHT ❖— *The Story of Dhūl Qarnain*

to establish what may be described in international relations as *Pax Qarnain* (i.e., *Dhul Qarnain's* world-order). At the heart of this allegorical story is a description of a world-order constructed once upon a time by one who possessed faith in Allah Most High (i.e., *Pax Islamica*). We are presented with a critically important description of that world-order.

The story then proceeds to warn of the emergence of a Gog and Magog world-order that would witness power being used in exactly the opposite way from that of *Dhūl Qarnain*. Finally the promise was delivered in the previously discussed story of the young men and the cave that history would not end without that page of history being revisited and a world-order being restored in which power would be used as it was used by *Dhūl Qarnain*. This would transpire when the true Messiah, Jesus the son of Mary, returns to the world to restore Truth and the re-establishment of *Pax Islamica*.

PAX QARNAIN – AND THE JOURNEY TO THE WEST

Dhūl Qarnain traveled westwards until he reached a point in his travels where he came upon a body of dark murky water and saw the sun go down beneath that sea of water (in the poetic sense). The implication was that this was the farthest point westwards that he could travel.

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He came across a community of people at that place and Allah Most High gave him the choice of using power either to punish or to reward them. *Dhūl Qarnain's* reply delivered the heart and substance of a *Pax Islamica* or a world-order of Islam. He declared that he would use his power and authority to punish the oppressor, and that when he was finished with punishing him, the oppressor would then face additional punishment from his Lord-God when he returned to Him.

This is the kind of world-order that the Lord-God wants mankind to establish and sustain. Such a world-order, established by those who possess faith in Allah Most High, would witness an essential harmony between the heavenly order above and the world-order below. The implication is that whenever oppression is banished and justice is established, mankind would enjoy a blessed state in which peace and happiness would prevail.

PAX QARNAIN – AND THE JOURNEY TO THE EAST

After describing the journey to the West, *Sūrah al-Kahf* then proceeded to describe *Dhūl Qarnain's* journey to the East, or to the 'rising of the sun'. There he found a people concerning whom Allah Most High declared, "We did not provide for them, as a covering, other than it." The story described *Dhūl Qarnain's* response to those people in language that is extremely difficult to interpret. "*Kadhālika*" was the first part of the response. And this could mean

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thus did he find them and thus did he leave them (undisturbed). The second part of the response described *Dhūl Qarnain* as having fully grasped and understood the situation of these people.

What was that ‘covering’ provided to the people by Allah Most High, other than which they had no other ‘covering’? And how do we interpret *Dhūl Qarnain*’s enigmatic response to their situation?

Our view, which we venture to explain with the proviso that *Allah Knows best*, is that *Sūrah al-Kahf* is here preparing the believers for the age of *Fitan* when the modern world’s hunger for exploitation of all resources of the earth and, in particular, oil, result in callous disregard for human rights. Primitive people, whose only possessions are land and homes, but whose territory is oil-rich (for example), would find themselves dispossessed of both land and homes.

Dhūl Qarnain recognised the human person and human rights to be superior to resources, and so he left those people undisturbed in their possession of their land and homes. When the Last Age comes, and the masses are reduced through *Riba* to biting poverty, believers must ensure that they respect the human person and human rights while they seek to exploit (for example) resources of the earth.

SŪRAH AL-KAHF AND THE MODERN AGE

PAX QARNAIN – AND THE ENIGMATIC THIRD JOURNEY

After describing the two journeys to West and East, and thus answering the question *overtly* posed by the Jewish Rabbis, the Qur`ān then proceeded to describe a third journey which was the real target of the question, although it had not been overtly posed by the Rabbis.

It was while describing the third journey that *Sūrah al-Kahf* mentions for the first time the names of Gog and Magog. Their release into the world would herald a major sign of the Last Day. It should be clear that knowledge of the signs of the Last Day is a subject that lies beyond the reach of human intellect. Indeed such knowledge cannot but be the exclusive preserve of the Prophets of Allah Most High.

The *Sūrah* informs us that *Dhūl Qarnain*, in his third journey, came upon a people living in a pass between two mountain ranges. They complained to him about Gog and Magog's *Fasad* in their territory. They requested him to build a wall that would contain Gog and Magog and protect them. They were prepared to pay Dhul Qarnain to build the wall for them.

Gog and Magog are two communities of human beings who, according to Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*), are descended from Noah (*'alaihi al-Salām*). As mentioned above, they are agents of *Fasād*. But the blessed Prophet went on to disclose a communication from Allah Most High reported in His direct speech

CHAPTER EIGHT ﴿— The Story of Dhūl Qarnain

(*Hadīth al-Qudsi*) to the effect that, “I have created creatures of Mine (i.e., Gog and Magog) so powerful that none but I can destroy them.” With their invincible power they can thus destroy peace on earth. Hence their conduct is the opposite to that of *Dhūl Qarnain*’s.

Dhūl Qarnain built a wall of iron and coated it with molten copper. The wall blocked the entire pass, and as a consequence, Gog and Magog were contained since they could neither penetrate nor scale the wall. He then declared the construction of the wall and the consequent containment of Gog and Magog to be a manifestation of Divine Mercy. But he went on to disclose that Allah Himself would destroy the wall and release Gog and Magog into the world at the time of the Last Age.

The *Sūrah* concluded with a description of what the world would witness when Gog and Magog are released into the world:

﴿ وَتَرَكْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُفِخَ فِي
 الصُّورِ فِجْمَعْتَهُمْ جَمْعًا ﴿١١﴾ وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ
 لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرْضًا ﴿١٢﴾ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنِ
 ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١٣﴾ ﴾

“On that day We shall leave them to surge like waves on one another: the trumpet will be blown, and We shall collect them all together. And We shall present Hell that day for Unbelievers to see, all spread out. (*Unbelievers*)

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whose eyes had been under a veil from Remembrance of Me, and who had been unable even to hear.”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf. 18:99-101)

When Gog and Magog are eventually released into the world (in the Last Age) mankind would witness the emergence of a world-order that would be the opposite of what Islam would have delivered to mankind. Mankind would witness power in the hands of those who have no faith in Allah Most High. Instead of using power to liberate the oppressed and to punish the oppressor, that essentially godless age would witness power used to oppress (in particular) those who have faith in Allah Most High and whose conduct is righteous.

We have argued in our book entitled *'Jerusalem in the Qur`ān'* (see Ch. 10) that Allah Most High released Gog and Magog into the world during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu `alahi wa sallam*).

The Qur`ān provided believers with a momentous sign by which they would not only have concrete evidence of the release of Gog and Magog, but more than that, they would have the evidence that the world was now in the control of Gog and Magog. They would thus be able to identify Gog and Magog as the Ruling Power in the world. This is located in the reference to Gog and Magog in *Sūrah al-Anbiyāh*:

﴿ وَحَرَّمَ عَلَىٰ قَرْيَةٍ أَهْلَكْنَاهَا أَنَّهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ ﴾

حَتَّىٰ إِذَا فُتِحَتْ يَأْجُوجُ وَمَأْجُوجُ وَهُمْ مِّن كُلِّ حَدَبٍ

يَنْسِلُونَ ﴿٣٦﴾

“But there is a ban on a City which We have destroyed: that they (*the residents*) shall not return - until Gog and Magog are let through (*their barrier*) and they swiftly spread out in every direction.”

(Qur’ān, al-Anbiyāh, 21:95-6)

When Gog and Magog have been released and, in addition, “have spread out in every direction”, then at that time the people of the Town who were punished by Allah Most High, and banished from their town or city (which was destroyed by Allah Most High), would be brought back to that town or city. There is only one such town or city (which was destroyed by Allah Most High) which is mentioned in the *Ahādith* pertaining to Gog and Magog. And it is Jerusalem.

Since no other town or city (destroyed by Allah Most High) other than Jerusalem is mentioned in the *Ahādith* pertaining to Gog and Magog, we have come to the conclusion that the town or city mentioned in *Sūrah al-Anbiyāh* (verses 95 and 96) above can only be Jerusalem.

From this conclusion and identification of the town or city now emerges the implication that the return of the Jews to the Holy Land was made possible through the intervention of Gog and Magog. In other words, the Euro-world-order that now rules the world from Washington is the world-order of Gog and Magog. .

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The Qur'an proceeded to warn that when these events take place, the world would witness the countdown to the Last Day:

﴿وَأَقْتَرَبَ الْوَعْدُ الْحَقُّ فَإِذَا هِيَ شَاخِصَةٌ أَبْصَرُ الَّذِينَ
كَفَرُوا يُيَوَّلْنَا قَدْ كُنَّا فِي غَفْلَةٍ مِّنْ هَذَا بَلَّ كُنَّا
ظَالِمِينَ﴾

“Then will the true warning (*of the Day of Accounts*) draw close (*to fulfillment*): then behold! (*on that day*) the eyes of the Unbelievers will stare in horror: Ah! Woe to us! we were indeed heedless of this; nay, we truly did wrong!”

(Qur'an, al-Anbiyah. 21:98)

When Gog and Magog are released they would ‘spread out in every direction’. This indicates that with their invincible power they will take control of the whole world and that, for the first time in history, one set of people would rule all of mankind. That is precisely our present world.

The world order of Gog and Magog would be one of *Fasād* (i.e., oppression and wickedness). *Sūrah al-Kahf* has described the two defining characteristics of the *Fasād* of that world order as being the opposite of the two defining characteristics of the world order of *Dhūl Qarnain*.



CHAPTER NINE ﴿—

Sūrah Al-Kahf: The Beginning

The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) advised the believers to recite the first ten *Ayāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Kahf* and declared that such would protect them from the *Fitnah* (i.e., tests and trials) of *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ:

“Abu Darda reported that Allah’s Messenger said: If anyone memorizes the first ten *Ayāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Kahf*, he would be protected from *Dajjāl*.”

(*Sahīh Muslim*)

“He who among you survives to see him (i.e., *Dajjāl*) should recite over him the opening verses of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.”

(*Sahīh Muslim*)

We now examine those first ten *Ayāt* (verses) to locate the substance of the message that they convey concerning *Dajjāl* and the danger that he poses to the believers. The first thing that we notice about the ten *Ayāt* (verses) of the *Sūrah* is that, assuming that the *Basmallah* is not counted as the first verse, they end with a *Du‘ah* or prayer. Here is the story which explains that *Du‘ah*.

There were some young men who, despite being young, had faith in Allah Most High. They lived in an age that was waging war on Islam and was forcing believers to submit to a godless way of life. They resisted until they were forced to flee from their homes and town

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in order to preserve their faith in Islam. They fled into a cave (and caves are usually located in mountains) and they then made a *Du'ah* (prayer) to Allah Most High for help, protection and guidance. It is with that *Du'ah* (prayer) that the first ten *Āyāt* (verses) end:

﴿ إِذْ أَوْىءَ الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِن لَّدُنكَ
رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴾

“Behold the youths betook themselves to the Cave and they prayed: Our Lord! Bestow on us Mercy from Thyself and dispose of our affair for us in the right way!”

(Qur'ān, al-Kahf, 18:10)

This *Du'ah* (prayer) must be recognized as the very key with which a Muslim can win Divine protection from *Dajjāl* at moments of danger and great trial. For example, if a Muslim is traveling by air and he arrives at an airport and approaches an unfriendly immigration officer who is hostile to Islam and is preparing to harass him, it is this *Du'ah* (prayer) in particular which should be recited on such an occasion. If one has the time to do so one can then follow this up by reciting all ten *Ayāt* at the beginning of *Sūrah al-Kahf*.

Here are the first ten *Ayāt* (verses) of the *Sūrah* together with our comments in which we attempt to locate their link with *Dajjāl* the false Messiah or Anti-Christ (if the reader is of the view that the first verse of the *Sūrah* is the *Basmallah* then, of course, the following would be the second verse):

1st Verse

﴿ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ
عَوَجًا ﴿١﴾

“Praise is due to Allah Who sent down the Book (i.e., the Qur’ān) on His Servant (i.e., Prophet Muhammad) and did not allow (and also will not allow) therein any ‘Iwaj (crookedness, tortuousness, deviation from the path of truth, distortion, deviousness, internal or external contradictions, etc.).”

The verse begins with drama as Allah Most High praises Himself for having sent down the Qur’ān on His Servant Muhammad (sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam). But Muhammad the Arab (sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam,) was not a Jew. and, as a consequence, this Divine act placed the Jews in a frustrating dilemma. The Qur’ān has accused the Jews of having corrupted the text of the Torah through rewriting it with their own hands:

﴿ فَبَدَّلَ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا قَوْلًا غَيْرَ الَّذِي قِيلَ لَهُمْ
فَأَنْزَلْنَا عَلَىٰ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا رِجْزًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ بِمَا كَانُوا
يَفْسُقُونَ ﴿٥٩﴾

“But they, who acted wickedly, changed the (Divine) word from that which had been given them (i.e., the Torah); so We sent on those who acted so

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wickedly a plague from heaven, (*and this we did*) because of their intractable sinfulness.”

(Qur’ān, al-Baqarah, 2:59)

Those who corrupted the text of the Torah (*’Iwaj*) had, in the process, made it impossible for a believer in the tainted Torah to accept a Prophet who was not a Jew. After all, they believed that the Israelite people were *the chosen people of Allah*. They were the spiritual elect of mankind whose destiny it was to eventually rule the world at the end of history. Non-Jews had a spiritual status, when compared with Jews, that was manifestly inferior, and so it was impossible for Jews to conceive of Divine revelation coming down on a gentile, or for a gentile to be chosen as a Prophet of Allah. In particular the Torah had made it impossible for an Arab to be accepted as a Prophet since Arabs were descended from Ishmael (*’alaihi al-Salām*) and the Torah had been rewritten to explicitly declare that Allah’s covenant was with Isaac (*’alaihi al-Salām*) and not Ishmael (*’alaihi al-Salām*). In addition it had slandered Ishmael (*’alaihi al-Salām*) as “*a wild ass of a man – his hand against everyman, and every man’s hand against him*” (*Genesis, 16:12*).

Yet it was frustratingly clear to the Jewish Rabbis in the Arabian city of Yathrib (now known as Madina) that Muhammad, the Arab, was indeed a true Prophet of Allah. Jews were enraged that Allah Most High chose an Arab to be the recipient of the last revelation since, in recognizing him as a true Prophet, it forced them to accept that they had distorted the Torah. Secondly, their assumption of racial

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superiority over the Arabs would no longer have any scriptural support.

The Qur`ān recognized this frustration of the Jews and responded to it:

﴿ بِئْسَمَا اشْتَرَوْا بِهِمۡ أَنفُسَهُمۡ أَن يَكْفُرُوا بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ
بَغِيًّا أَن يُنَزَّلَ اللَّهُ مِنۡ فَضْلِهِ عَلَىٰ مَن يَشَاءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِ
فَبَاءُوا بِغَضَبٍ عَلَىٰ غَضَبٍ وَلِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ ﴾

“Miserable is the price for which they have sold their souls in that they deny (the revelation) which Allah has sent down. (They have done so) in insolent envy that Allah of His Grace should send it to any of His servants He pleases (i.e., *Muhammad the Arab*); thus have they drawn on themselves wrath upon wrath. And humiliating is the punishment of those who reject Faith.”

(Qur`ān, al-Baqarah, 2:90)

And so, right from the very beginning there is a clear indication that the *Sūrah* is addressing the Jewish rejecters of Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) and the Qur`ān. And we must recognize that these very people are *Dajjāl*'s primary target.

This verse directs attention to all the corruption that occurred in the sacred scriptures which were sent down prior to the Qur`ān, in particular the Torah. And so a major clue in understanding *Dajjāl*, and in understanding the attacks which he would launch against his targets, is located in the concocted texts and in particular the Torah.

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Secondly, since the Qur`ān is free from crookedness, and will forever remain so, the Qur`ān can best expose the distortions with which previous scriptures (the Torah in particular) have been corrupted. It is therefore a matter of paramount importance that the Qur`ān be used to locate all that is corrupted in previous scriptures. This requires that we make an indepth study, not only of the Qur`ān, but also of the previous now-corrupted scriptures such as the Torah.

Unless we study the Torah and discover the changes made to it by human hands, we would never be able to understand and explain the emergence of an age of the universal prevalence of `Riba`, alcoholism, and drug addiction. We would be unable to understand the link between alcoholism and the `End of History`. Nor would we be able to understand the emergence of the *Riba* economy with its `paper money` (soon to become invisible and intangible electronic money) and a usurious `banking system` that has taken control of economic life everywhere.

“The Prophet said: The knots of Islam would be undone one by one until every one of them is undone, and the first one to be undone would be the rules in the Book of Allah and the last one would be Salāt (prayer).”

(Musnad Ahmad)

One of the signs of the approach of the Last Day (when the world would come to an end), as predicted by the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam*), is that the ruling of the Book of Allah banning consumption of alcohol would be ignored and there will be universal consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants:

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“Anas told that he heard the Messenger of Allah say: Among the Signs of the Last Hour will be the removal of knowledge, the abundance of ignorance, the prevalence of fornication, the prevalence of wine-drinking, the small number of men and the large number of women, so that fifty women will have one man to look after them.”

(Bukhāri, Muslim)

It is quite clear to those who pursue the Islamic spiritual quest (*al-Ihsān* or *Tasawwuf*) that we now live in that age described by the Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) as the Last Age. One in every six homes in America, for example, is now affected by alcoholism, and the number is constantly growing. The rest of mankind seems destined to embrace, tomorrow, whatever America has embraced today, and that, also, is a Sign from Allah. But most people are heedless of the Signs of Allah:

﴿ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ عَنِ أَيْتِنَا لَغَفْلُونَ ﴾

“. . . . but verily most people are heedless of Our Signs!”

(Qur`ān, Yūnus, 10:92)

The reason for this curse of alcoholism is the rewriting of the divine scriptures sent by Allah Most High. This was done in order to delete the divine prohibition against the consumption of intoxicants as well as usury (*Ribā*). Whoever did the rewriting of the Torah was so evil that he falsely accused a righteous Prophet of becoming drunk. In that state of intoxication he slept with and impregnated his own two daughters one after the other! That was blatant falsehood! It was a

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very grave insult to Lot (*'alaihi al-Salām*), a Prophet of Allah, and it blasphemy against Allah Most High (See book of Genesis in the Torah).

Allah responded to that wickedness by cleansing Lot (*'alaihi al-Salām*) of the filth that had been smeared on him:

﴿ وَلُوطًا ءَاتَيْنَاهُ حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ مِنَ الْقَرْيَةِ الَّتِي
كَانَتْ تَعْمَلُ الْخَبِيثَاتِ ۖ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا قَوْمَ سَوْءٍ فَسَقِينَ ﴿٧٤﴾
وَأَدْخَلْنَاهُ فِي رَحْمَتِنَا ۖ إِنَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾

“And remember Lot, We gave him (*sound*) judgment and knowledge. and We saved him from the town which practiced an abominable evil (*homosexuality*). And We admitted him to Our mercy; for he was one of the righteous.”

(Qur`ān, al-Anbiyāh, 21:74-5)

When they corrupted the Word of Allah Most High they planted an evil seed. Allah responded with Divine punishment by creating *Dajjāl* and then releasing him into the world. *Dajjāl* masterminds the strategy which results in that evil seed growing, in the Last Age, into a great evil tree which none can cut down. *Dajjāl* leads mankind with consummate cunning and skill to a universal dependence on alcohol and other such drugs. Malcolm X might have declared that alcoholism and drug addiction in the secularized western life to be a case of *chickens coming home to roost*.

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We have demonstrated elsewhere that what is true for alcohol is also true for *Riba*. Allah had prohibited the consumption of *Riba* (lending money on interest). They changed the word of Allah by rewriting the Torah to declare that it was prohibited for a believer (i.e., an Israelite) to lend on interest to another believer, but it was permissible for him to lend on interest to gentile folk (i.e., not Israelites):

“Do not charge interest (Riba) to the fellow-Israelite when you lend him money or grain or anything else. You may charge interest (Riba) when you make loans to foreigners (i.e., gentiles). To your brother you shall lend without interest (Riba) all that he needs, so that the Lord, your God, may bless you . . .”

(Deuteronomy, 23:19-20)

The act of changing the Word of Allah Most High was a scriptural crime. It was an act of *Shirk*, and an example of the ‘crookedness’ to which *Sūrah al-Kahf* referred at the very beginning of the *Sūrah*. The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) warned of the consequences of that crime when he prophesied that a time would come when *Riba* would embrace all of mankind in its deadly embrace:

“Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah said: A time will come over mankind when not a single person will remain who does not consume *riba*, and if one does not consume it, its vapor (or, alternatively, its dust) will reach him.”

(Ahmad, Abū Daūd, Nasāi, Ibn Mājah)

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We can now conclude with the observation that the very first verse of *Sūrah al-Kahf* has delivered to the believers a crucially important warning. The crux of *Dajjāl*'s attacks on mankind would be located in the verses of the divinely revealed scriptures (e.g., the Torah) that were changed and corrupted. Believers must therefore recognize and study those changes in order to both recognize *Dajjāl*'s attacks, and to respond to them appropriately.

2nd Verse

﴿ قِيمًا لِّيُنذِرَ بَأْسًا شَدِيدًا مِّن لَّدُنْهُ وَيُبَشِّرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا حَسَنًا ﴾

“(He hath made it) unerringly straight (and clear) in order that He may warn (those who refuse to be instructed and guided by the *Qur’ān* and its eternally authentic and uncorrupted guidance) of truly terrible punishment from Him (with which they will now be inflicted), and that He may give glad tidings to the believers who are righteous in their conduct that they shall have excellent reward.”

There are very significant and ominous implications for mankind which emerge from the fact that Allah Most Wise has declared that the *Qur’ān* is not only free from all corruption and contradiction (internal as well as external) but that He would Himself preserve the *Qur’ān* (from all corruption). Wicked people corrupted previous scriptures, but they cannot do the same to the *Qur’ān*:

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴾

“Behold! It is We who have gradually sent down this Message step by step: and Behold! It is We who will certainly guard and protect it (*from all corruption*).”

(Qur`ān, al-Hijr, 15:9)

In other words, the Qur`ān will function as proof either for or against the servants of Allah who believe or disbelieve in it. Secondly, since Allah now warns of terrible punishment and does not specify who would be punished, how or why, the implication is that it is the Qur`ān that would explain all of the above. But the verse also conveys the message of hope and reward for those who have faith (most of all in the Qur`ān) and whose conduct is righteous. Hence faith in the Qur`ān and righteous conduct (following the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad) are the best response to the *Fitnah* (trials) of *Dajjāl*.

A further implication of this verse is that only those believers who follow the guidance of the Qur`ān would have a chance of surviving the attacks of *Dajjāl*. Hence the leadership of the believers in this age must be chosen from those righteous servants of Allah Most High, who are themselves blessed with the most knowledge of the Qur`ān. But, in particular, such leaders must be capable of understanding and enforcing specific Qur`anic guidance applicable to the modern age.

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3rd Verse

﴿ مَكِّيْنٍ فِيْهِ اَبَدًا ﴾

“ (a state of bliss) wherein they shall dwell beyond the count of time:”

The reward that awaits those who, in consequence of their faith and righteous conduct, survive the evil storm of *Dajjāl*, is that they will receive an ever-lasting reward, namely heaven. But the life of faith and of righteous conduct will come increasingly under attack as *Dajjāl* wages war on religion in general and on Islam in particular. It would be a very difficult life to live. Here are *Ahadīth* which describe that difficult state:

Narrated Abū Tha’labah al-Khushāni: Abu Umayyah ash-Sha’bani said: I asked Abū Tha’labah al-Khushāni: “What is your opinion about the verse *Care for yourselves?*” He said: “I swear by Allah, I asked the one who was well informed about it; I asked the Apostle of Allah about it”. He said: “No, enjoin one another to do what is good and forbid one another to do what is evil. But when you see niggardliness being obeyed, passion being followed, worldly interests being preferred, everyone being charmed with his opinion, then care for yourself, and leave alone what people in general are doing: for ahead of you are days which will require endurance, in which showing endurance will be like grasping live coals. The one who acts rightly during that period will have the reward of fifty men who act as he does.” Another version has: He said: The hearers asked, “O Apostle of Allah, the reward of fifty of them?” He replied: “The reward of fifty of you.”

(Tirmīdhī, Ibn Mājah, Abū Daūd)

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Narrated Anas ibn Malik: Allah's Messenger (*peace be upon him*) said. "A time is coming to men when he who adheres to his religion will be like one who seizes live coals."

(Tirmidhī)

The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) described *Dajjāl's* attacks as the greatest *Fitnah* (i.e., tests and trials) that mankind would experience from the time of Ādam (*'alaihi al-Salām*) to the Last Day.

Narrated Abū Qatādah: We used to go to 'Imrān b. Husain passing in front of Hishām b. Amir. He, one day, said: "You pass by me (in order) to go to some persons, but (amongst the living persons) none remained in the company of Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) more than I and none knows more ahadith than I. I heard Allah's Apostle (*peace be upon him*) said: There would be no creation (creating more trouble) than the Dajjāl right from the creation of Adam to the Last Hour."

(Sahih Muslim)

Divine justice has therefore ordained that the greatest rewards would be given to those who demonstrate the most endurance in holding on to faith in the face of the greatest trial of all.

4th and 5th Verses

﴿ وَيُنذِرَ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا ﴿٤﴾ مَا هُمْ بِهِ
مِّنْ عِلْمٍ وَلَا لِآبَائِهِمْ كَبُرَتْ كَلِمَةً تَخْرُجُ مِنْ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ
﴿٥﴾ إِنَّ يَقُولُونَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا ﴿٦﴾ ﴾

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“Furthermore (*this Qur’ān has come*) to warn those (*also*) who say ‘Allah has fathered a son’. Neither they nor their ancestors have any knowledge of such (*i.e., that Allah fathered a son*). It is a monstrously (*evil*) word which they utter. What they say is nothing but falsehood!”

The famous modern commentator of the Qur’ān, Muhammad Asad (*may Allah Most High have mercy on his soul*), has commented on this verse as follows:

“Most of the classical commentators and, as far as I am aware, all the earliest translators of the Qur’ān relate the pronoun in *Bihi* to the assertion that ‘God has taken unto himself a son’, and hence take the phrase to mean, ‘They have no knowledge of it’, i.e., no knowledge of such a happening. However, this interpretation is weak in as much as absence of knowledge does not necessarily imply an objective negation of the fact to which it relates. It is, therefore, obvious that *bihi* cannot signify ‘of it’; it signifies ‘of Him’ and relates to God. Hence the phrase must be rendered as above – meaning that they who make such a preposterous claim have no real knowledge of Him, since they attribute to the Supreme Being something that is attributable only to created, imperfect beings. This interpretation is supported, in an unequivocal manner, by Tabari and, as an alternative, by Baidāwi.”

(Asad, Translation and Commentary of the Glorious Qur’ān).

Of all the *’Iwaj* (i.e., crookedness) with which previous scriptures were corrupted, one which is singled out for special mention is the declaration that Allah Most High fathered a son. The Qur’ān makes mention of a Jewish belief that Uzair is the son of God, and a similar Christian belief which recognized the Messiah, Jesus, as the son of God:

﴿ وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ عُزَيْرٌ ابْنُ اللَّهِ وَقَالَتِ النَّصْرَى الْمَسِيحُ
 ابْنُ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ قَوْلُهُمْ بِأَفْوَاهِهِمْ يُضَاهِئُونَ قَوْلَ
 الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ قَتَلْتَهُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ



“The Jews declare that Ezra (*‘Uzair*) is a son of Allah, and the Christians declare that the Messiah (*i.e., Jesus*) is the son of Allah. Such are the sayings that they utter with their mouths, following in spirit assertions made in earlier times by people who denied the truth. (*They deserve the imprecation*) May Allah destroy them! How perverted are their minds!”

(Qur’ān, al-Taubah, 9:30)

Such a declaration amounts to blasphemy (*Shirk*). It is a grave sin. Indeed it is the only sin Allah Most High has declared that He would not forgive (*i.e., if one dies without earning forgiveness for such a sin prior to his death*). This reference at the beginning of *Sūrah al-Kahf* to *Shirk* is of great significance in understanding the danger posed by *Dajjāl* since the Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) warned that his *Ummah* would be tested with blasphemy (*Shirk*) and that it would be difficult to recognise that *Shirk*, “. . . as difficult”, said the Prophet, “as it would be to recognize a black ant on a rock on a dark night.” (Narrated by Aisha, and recorded in the Mustadraq of Hakim)

Dajjāl’s greatest weapon would be his capacity to deceive. He would thus so conceal his blasphemy (*Shirk*) that it would be very

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difficult for anyone to recognize it. Already *Dajjāl's* blasphemy (*Shirk*) has raised its ugly head all around the world, and all of mankind, save those servants of Allah Most High who are rightly guided, have been trapped by that blasphemy (*Shirk*). They blaspheme, for example, when they vote in elections in a state whose (secular) constitution declares (as does the constitution of my own native Trinidad and Tobago): "This Constitution is the supreme law of such-and-such-a State, and any other law (including Almighty God's Law) which is inconsistent with this Constitution, is void to the extent of its inconsistency."

The further amazing implication that emerges from "telling lies against Allah", such as the lie about Him having a son, is that Dajjal would trap unsuspecting humanity with great lies that he would weave. His acolytes would spin such lies are "weapons of mass destruction in Iraq", "an Iranian nuclear threat" and that "Arabs and Muslims were responsible for the 9/11 attack on America" and on the subsequent attack on London. The Qur'an proclaims: "They seek to deceive Allah and the believers, but they deceive none but themselves and they fail to perceive this" (Qur'an, al-Baqarah, 2:9). Eventually they are condemned to believe their own lies. Muslims who live in this age must, therefore, heed the words of Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam) who warned: "In the Last Age there would be great liars, so beware." The greatest of lies would be skillfully woven in the relentlessly pursuit of the mission to make the imposter Euro-Jewish State of Israel the *ruling* state in the world.

6th Verse

﴿ فَلَعَلَّكَ بَخِيعُ نَفْسِكَ عَلَىٰ ءَاثِرِهِمْ إِن لَّمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهَذَا
الْحَدِيثِ أَسَفًا ﴾

“Are you going to torment yourself to death with grief over them if they are not willing to believe in this Message (*i.e., this Qur’ān*)?”

“This rhetorical question is addressed, in the first instance, to the Prophet, who was deeply distressed by the hostility which his message aroused among the pagan Meccans, and suffered agonies of apprehension regarding their spiritual fate. Beyond that, however, it applies to everyone who, having become convinced of the truth of an ethical proposition, is dismayed at the indifference with which his social environment reacts to it”

(Asad, Translation and Commentary of the Glorious Qur’ān).

Mankind is comprised of three kinds of people. Firstly, there are those who received the Truth and accepted it. They then acted upon it. They are believers and they are assured of the reward of heaven. Secondly, there are those who received the Truth and rejected it. They then reached a stage in their act of rejection when Allah sealed their hearts to the Truth. No amount of preaching would ever succeed in winning such people to the Truth. They are the disbelievers (*Kuffār*). Heaven is *Harām* (prohibited) for them. And finally, there are those who have either not received the Truth, or have received it and have neither accepted nor rejected it, or have accepted it but not acted upon it, etc. It is the divine prerogative to either punish or to forgive such people.

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In this *Āyah* (verse) Allah Most High reminds the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) that there are those whose hearts are sealed and that no amount of preaching will ever bring them to the Truth. The reminder is also meant for the believers who, in the age of *Dajjāl*, would witness the ever-increasing number of people destined for the hell-fire. No amount of preaching would ever change their hostility to Islam. *Sūrah al-Kahf* is here advising the believers, by way of a question posed to the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*), to direct their attention away from the world that persists in rejection of Islam. They should focus instead on preservation of their own faith. Here are the very beautiful words of Divine guidance in this connection:

﴿ وَأَصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ
وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجْهَهُ ۗ وَلَا تَعْدُ عَيْنَاكَ عَنْهُمْ تُرِيدُ زِينَةَ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَلَا تُطِعْ مَنْ أَغْفَلْنَا قَلْبَهُ عَن ذِكْرِنَا
وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ وَكَانَ أَمْرُهُ فُرُطًا ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

“Let your soul (*i.e.*, heart) be content in being attached to (*and keeping the company of*) those who reach out (*in sincere prayer*) to their Lord-God in the mornings as well as in the evenings, seeking His very Face, and let not your eyes be diverted away from them, attracted to the pomp and glitter of this (*worldly*) Life; and do not obey (*i.e.*, do not submit to the leadership and authority of) any whose heart We have caused to neglect the remembrance of

CHAPTER NINE ﴿— Sūrah Al-Kahf: The Beginning

Us, one who follows his own desires, whose case has gone beyond all bounds.”

(Qur`ān, al-Kahf, 18:28)

The numbers of those who reject Islam would constantly increase in the Last Age. and such people would willingly join in the war on Islam, or would be seduced into doing so. Muslims should recognize the dangers of living in the midst of such a hostile environment. They should pay more attention to preserving their personal security (including, of course, their wives and children) and their faith than on holding on to high-paying job in the devil`s woodyard. They can do this best by following the example of *Dhūl Qarnain* in building a wall that would protect them from the Gog and Magog world-order. That (invisible) wall can best be built around Muslim Villages located in the remote countryside.

7th Verse

﴿ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لِّهَا لِنَبْلُوهُمْ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ

عَمَلًا ﴿

“We have made that which is on earth to be glamorous and an adornment in order that We might test them (*i.e., mankind*) to see which of them is best in conduct.”

Asad comments: “Lit., We have made that which is on earth as its adornment in order that we might put them [*i.e., all human beings*] to a test”,

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meaning that God lets them reveal their real characters in their respective attitudes – moral or immoral – towards the material goods and benefits which the world offers them. In further analysis, this passage implies that the real motive underlying men's refusal to believe in God's spiritual message is almost always excessive, blind attachment to the good of this world, combined with a false pride in what they regard as their own achievements."

(Asad, Translation and Commentary of the Glorious Qur'ān).

Sūrah al-Kahf warns the believers in this *Āyah* (verse) that *Dajjāl* would lay a trap urging them to covet the goods of this world. When the heart becomes too attached to the goods of the world it is easy for that heart to begin to lose the constant remembrance of Allah. In order to survive the trials of *Dajjāl* the believers must live in the world and yet pursue their worldly life with constant *Dhikr* (remembrance) of Allah Most High. The God who we worship is that which is supreme in the heart (regardless of the loud protests of the lips). The heart of the believer in Allah Most High must be a heart in which Allah Most High is supreme. If the *Dunyah* (the world) is supreme in the heart then that person is, *de facto*, a worshipper of the *Dunyah* (the world).

Not only does *Dajjāl* seek to corrupt the faith of the believers through wealth, he also leads them eventually to believe that there is no reality beyond material reality (materialism). That process eventually culminates in *de facto* atheism. Those who control the world today are increasingly embracing atheism. Indeed an increasing number of British people are publicly confirming (*de facto*) their

atheist beliefs. This constitutes dramatic evidence of *Dajjāl's* stunning success.

8th Verse

﴿ وَإِنَّا لَجَاعِلُونَ مَا عَلَيْهَا صَعِيدًا جُرُزًا ﴾

“Verily We shall (eventually) reduce (the earth and) what is on it to dust and dry soil (without growth or herbage).”

In the same way that every living thing was created from water, so indeed would water be the cause of eventual destruction of all life. *Dajjāl's* deception would be such that mankind would be the architects of their own destruction since the waste and over-consumption of water would lead to water scarcity.

This subject of the importance of water and the role that water will play in the Last Age is also intimately connected with *Y'ajūj* (Gog) and *M'ajūj* (Magog) about which *Sūrah al-Kahf* has much to say. The subject would be dealt with, *Inshā Allah*, in volume four of this humble quartet of books on *Sūrah al-Kahf* (i.e., Gog and Magog in the Qur`ān and *Hadīth*).

Eventually the earth would be reduced to a ‘dust bowl’. *Sūrah al-Kahf* returns again and again to the subject of water. For example:

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﴿ وَأَضْرِبْ لَهُمْ مَثَلًا الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا كَمَاءٍ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ
السَّمَاءِ فَأَخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا
تَذَرُوهُ الرِّيحُ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُّقْتَدِرًا ﴿١٥﴾
الْمَالُ وَالْبَنُونَ زِينَةُ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۗ وَالْبَاقِيَاتُ
الصَّالِحَاتُ خَيْرٌ عِندَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَخَيْرٌ أَمَلًا ﴿١٦﴾ ﴾

“Set forth to them the similitude of the life of this world: it is like the water which We send down from the skies: the earth’s vegetation absorbs it. But eventually it becomes dry stubble, which the winds do scatter: it is (*only*) Allah Who prevails over all things. Wealth and sons are allurements of the life of this world; but the things that endure, good deeds, are best in the sight of thy Lord, as rewards. and best as (*the foundation for*) hopes.”

(Qur’ān, al-Kahf, 18:45-6)

Abdullah Yusuf Ali has commented quite beautifully on these two *Ayāt* (verses) of *Sūrah al-Kahf* as follows:

“Rain water is a good thing in itself, but it does not last, and you can build no solid foundation on it. It is soon absorbed in the earth, and produces the flourishing appearance of grass and vegetation – for a time. Soon these decay, and become as dry stubble, which the least wind from any quarter will blow about like a thing of no importance. The water is gone, and so is the vegetation to which it lent a brave show of luxuriance temporarily. Such is the life of this world. contrasted with the inner and real Life, which looks to the Hereafter. God is the only enduring Power, supreme over all.

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Other things are fleeting! But Good Deeds have a lasting value in the sight of God. They are best as (or for) rewards in two ways!

1. They flow from us by the Grace of God, and are themselves rewards for our Faith;
2. They become the foundation of our hopes for the highest spiritual rewards in the Hereafter.”

(‘The Holy Qur`ān: Text, Translation and Commentary’,
‘Abdullah Yūsof `Ali. Notes 2386 & 2387 of
verses 45 & 46 of Sūrah al-Kahf).

9th and 10th Verses

﴿ أَمْ حَسِبْتَ أَنَّ أَصْحَابَ الْكَهْفِ وَالرَّقِيمِ كَانُوا مِنْ
آيَاتِنَا عَجَبًا ﴿٩﴾ إِذْ أَوَى الْفِتْيَةُ إِلَى الْكَهْفِ فَقَالُوا رَبَّنَا
آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا ﴿١٠﴾

“(And since the life of this world is but a test) do you really think that the (event of) the Companions of the Cave and of the sacred scriptures (which they perhaps took with them into the cave) could be deemed more wondrous than any (other) of Our messages?”

“Behold the youths betook themselves to the Cave: they said: “Our Lord! bestow on us Mercy from Thyself and dispose of our affair for us in the right way!”

Sūrah al-Kahf now turns to the story of the young men in the cave concerning which we have devoted a separate chapter of this book. The fact that the first two *Āyāt* (verses) of the passage that is

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devoted to the story of the Cave are located within the first ten *Ayāt* (verses) of the *Sūrah* (chapter) implies that this story is connected to *Dajjāl*.

Even if the *Basmallah* were to be counted as the first verse of the *Surah*, this story would still commence as the tenth verse of the *Sūrah*.

The story of the young men and the cave must therefore be recognized to provide significant and strategically important guidance to believers about appropriate conduct to deal with the trials of *Dajjāl*.



CHAPTER TEN ﴿—

Sūrah Al-Kahf: The End

The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) advised that whoever is confronted by *Dajjāl* should recite over him the first ten verses of *Sūrah al-Kahf* and that such would render him safe from the *Fitnah* of *Dajjāl*. Since the beginning of the *Sūrah* has such strategic importance it follows that we should examine the end of the *Sūrah* as well, to discern any additional guidance they may contain pertaining to the subject.

Here are the last verses of the *Sūrah*:

Verse 100

﴿ وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرْضًا ﴾

“And on that Day (i.e., witnessing the culmination of globalization, mankind will experience unprecedented conflicts, wars, random killings, suicides, etc.,) We shall place hell spread out before those who denied the truth.”

Dhūl Qarnain first built the wall that successfully contained Gog and Magog, and had thus delivered the people from the *Fasād* (i.e., that which corrupts and destroys) that these tribes were inflicting upon them. But he then went on to warn that Allah Most High would one day bring down the wall and when that event took place the Last Age

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would commence. Ten major Signs of the Last Age would then unfold in the world, and among those ten signs was the release of Gog and Magog.

We have already noted previously what kind of a world would emerge when Gog and Magog are let loose, i.e., the very opposite of *Dhūl Qarnain*'s world-order. When power rests on foundations that are essentially godless, such power would be used to oppress mankind and, in particular, those who have faith in Allah Most High and whose conduct is righteous. Such a world-order would result in a state of conflict, rather than harmony, with the heavenly order above. The Qur'ān has described Allah's creation as characterised by perfect peace and harmony.

The Gog and Magog world-order, on the other hand, that would emerge in the Last Age, would be characterized by chaos and anarchy akin to "waves crashing against each other". At that time the trumpet would be blown (but only those in the heavens above would hear it). When the trumpet is blown that would indicate the commencement of *Yom al-Qiyāmah* or the Last Day and that would, in turn, be the sign for the commencement of a divinely-ordained process which would bring all of mankind together in one essentially godless global Gog and Magog society. That global society would comprise of carbon-copies of Gog and Magog who would all be destined for the hell-fire. It is precisely that process of ominous change that mankind has chosen to describe today as 'globalization'! *Sūrah al-Kahf* has informed us that the global society characterized by universal *Kufr*

(disbelief) would witness conflict, chaos and anarchy, and it would be like Hell itself spread out before the world.

Gog and Magog would succeed in seducing 999 out of every 1000 on earth to their decadent lifestyle, but the true servants of Allah Most High would resist them. Rather, they would follow the example of the young men in the cave by choosing world-abandonment for the purpose of preserving faith in Allah Most High.

Believers should eventually abandon the cities of the modern world and relocate to the remote countryside so that they, their wives and children do not have to see 'hell' spread out before the eyes of the secular godless world:

﴿ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ﴿٦﴾ لَتَرُونَ الْجَحِيمَ ﴿٥﴾ ﴾

“Nay, if you could only (*access*) knowledge that is born of certainty (*i.e., internal intuitive spiritual insight*), you would most surely behold Hell (*which at that time would be spread out before the disbelievers*). . .”

(Qur`ān, al-Takāthur, 102:5-6)

Verse 101

﴿ الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنِ ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا
لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ﴿١١﴾ ﴾

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“Those (who would now constitute mainstream society, and would be living the way of life of the people of hell-fire, would be a people) whose eyes had been veiled from My remembrance and who were incapable of hearing (the word of truth)!”

The verse connects to the subject of that hell-fire which “this day We have spread out before the disbelievers”, and warns that hell-fire awaits those who have *eyes* and yet cannot *see* - *ears* and yet cannot *hear* - *hearts* and yet do not *understand*. The inescapable implication of the above is that only the spiritually enlightened would be able to recognise *Dajjāl* who would one day appear as a human being. And only they would recognize Gog and Magog, who are Europeans who originated from the Khazar tribe of Central Europe and who converted to Judaism shortly after the time of Prophet Muhammad. Only they would recognize that momentous divinely-programmed drama when these evil beings pursue their mission to deceive the Israelite people and bring them back to the Holy Land to reclaim it as their own.

It would thus be an epistemological attack that would render most people incapable of ‘seeing’, ‘hearing’, and thus ‘understanding’ the reality of *Dajjāl*’s attack that would take them on the road to the hell-fire.

As explained elsewhere in this book, they would be deceived by ‘external appearances’ while remaining incapable of penetrating the ‘internal reality’ of things. The blessed Prophet (*sallallahu ‘alaihi wa sallam*) warned about this epistemological attack when he declared that *Dajjāl* sees with one eye, the left eye, and that he is blind in the right eye. Our interpretation of this *Hadīth* is that *Dajjāl* is ‘internally’

blind, and that his attack on mankind would have as its objective to render them, as well, ‘internally’ blind!

Believers should seek refuge with Allah Most High from this great *Fitnah* of *Dajjāl*. They should pray:

“*Allahumma arini al-Ashya 'a kama hiya*”

“Oh Allah Kindly show me things as they are (i.e., that I might not be deceived by what they appear to be)!”

Verse 102

﴿ أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ دُونِي
أَوْلِيَاءَ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نَزْلًا ﴾

“Do the disbelievers (who reject this last divinely revealed scripture, i.e., the *Qur'ān*, and this last Prophet of Allah Most High, i.e., Muhammad (*peace be upon him*), believe perchance that they can succeed in poaching upon My (faithful) servants (seducing them) into becoming their friends and allies rather than remaining faithful to Me? Verily, We have readied hell to welcome all those who (thus) disbelieve (and all those who befriend the disbelievers in preference to Allah, His Messenger and the believers).”

If leaders cannot recognize that we now live in the age when *Dajjāl*'s divinely-ordained mission of eventually *ruling* the world from Jerusalem (and from an imposter State of Israel) is about to be completed, how can they function as shepherds and guides for the *Ummah*? Yet, with only few exceptions, these are precisely the kind

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of people who assume leadership of Muslim communities and Muslim countries around the world today. Some of them exhibit external conformity with the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) and sincere attachment to Islam, yet remain completely unaware of the traps that *Dajjāl* has laid for them. They suffer the fate of internal blindness because of their ignorance or obstinate rejection of the fact that Allah Most High can bestow knowledge to the hearts of His servants. Their internal blindness is also brought down upon them as divine punishment for the foolish war that they wage against the authentic spiritual luminaries of Islam (i.e., the authentic *Sufi Shuyūkh* of Islam).

Some leaders of Muslim communities are in constant and shameful collaboration with the enemies of Islam. They assume leadership over Muslims either through public or secret assistance of the enemies of Islam, or through the clever use of check books! The Muslim world today suffers as flocks upon flocks of sheep are led by shepherds who become clients of the wolves, who are protected by the wolves, or whose salaries are paid by the wolves. This includes my own Muslim community in Trinidad and Tobago.

A Euro-Christian/Euro-Jewish alliance was forged to become the basic instrument for creating and sustaining the Gog and Magog world-order that today controls the world. The Qur'ān has specifically prohibited Muslims from becoming friends and allies of that alliance and has warned that whoever embraces, or is embraced, by that alliance would become a member of the family of Gog and Magog and enter into the hell-fire. (See Qur'ān, al-Māidah, 5:51)

Sūrah al-Kahf ends with the confident declaration that Allah's servants who are true guides would resist the disbelievers and would never join the essentially godless society. Nor would they ever be friends and allies of the European Christian-Jewish alliance that now rules the world. Rather than befriending the godless world, the true servants of Allah Most High would struggle to remain faithful to Allah Most High by disengaging from that world.

Verses 103 & 104

﴿ قُلْ هَلْ نُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِالْأَخْسَرِينَ أَعْمَلًا ﴿١٠٣﴾ الَّذِينَ
ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ كَحَسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ
مُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا ﴿١٠٤﴾ ﴾

“Say: Shall we inform you who are the greatest losers in whatever they may do? (They are) those whose efforts have been wasted in the worldly life (because they devoted all their efforts in the pursuit of worldly things without the consciousness that all their labor and efforts were futile since they had gone astray), while they thought that they were acquiring good by their works (i.e., they believed that their achievements were marvelous and that they were making a success of their lives).”

The one-eyed modern western civilization and its ‘colored house-slaves’ around the world a claim that is spurious and completely invalid. They seek to convince mankind that since the world is witnessing unprecedented technological progress, it thus gets better and yet better, and this, consequently, is the best of all worlds. They

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argue that modern western civilization which is responsible for delivering this unprecedented ‘progress’ has rendered all previous civilizations, including Islam, moribund and obsolete! Mankind should therefore abandon all pre-modern ways of life and wholeheartedly embrace and imitate the modern Euro-Christian/Jewish way of life.

USA, UK, Canada, Europe, Australia, Singapore, etc. are portrayed and marketed as heaven-on-earth and all the internally-blind masses of mankind are so brainwashed that they live in dreams of obtaining a passport to that ‘heaven-on-earth’. But the ‘heaven’ that dazzles mainstream society around the world actually takes them into the hell-fire. Yet one-eyed Muslim ‘house slaves’ criticize the establishment of Muslim Villages that seek to disengage from the modern world. These house-slaves would insist that Muslims must remain a part of ‘mainstream society’, even when that mainstream is heading for the garbage bin of history!

Verse 105

﴿ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ وَلِقَائِهِمْ
فَحَبِطَتْ أَعْمَلُهُمْ فَلَا تُقِيمُ هُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَرَنَّا



“(They have gone astray in the sense that) they have chosen to reject the messages of their Lord-God (of which this Qur’ān is the last and the most

important of all) (and these are they who either reject the claim of the Qur’ān to be the revealed word of the One God, or who accept the Qur’ān but fail to live by its guidance), or they have chosen to reject belief that they are destined to meet Him (one day for judgment); for Hence, all their (life’s) work will be worthless, and no weight shall We assign to them on Resurrection Day (when each of mankind, VIPs and all) would be placed on a scale to be weighed).”

Sūrah al-Kahf ends with a dire warning that Allah Most High would respond to those who betray the Truth by refusing to give them any weight on the Day of Judgement, when every human being would be put on a scale to be weighed. Those who weigh heavy on the scale would be rewarded with heaven, while those whose weight is light, or who have no weight at all, would be punished with hell-fire.

Verse 106

﴿ ذَٰلِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ جَهَنَّمَ بِمَا كَفَرُوا وَاتَّخَذُوا ءَايَاتِي
وَرُسُلِي هُزُوًا ﴾ ﴿١٠٦﴾

“The hell-fire would be their (just) punishment for having denied the truth (in this Qur’ān) and (for having) made fun of My messages and My apostles and (for) targeting them for scornful treatment and mockery.”

The Last Age would witness such war on Islam that righteous believers will be mocked and persecuted. But the believers can take comfort from the assurance that Allah Most High would deal with their tormentors by punishing them in the hell-fire. *Sūrah al-Kahf* thus

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ends, as it began, with a warning of terrible punishment from Allah Most High.

Verse 107

﴿ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ
جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا ﴾ ﴿١٧﴾

“(But) verily, as for those who attain to faith (i.e., belief in Allah Most High has entered into their hearts and so they truly fear Him and truly love Him and, as a consequence, they part from those whom He hates, and love those whom He loves) and whose conduct is righteous – (let them have the assurance that) the gardens of paradise will be there to welcome them:”

Sūrah al-Kahf ends, as it began, with a powerful message of hope for those believers whose conduct is righteous. Since they would have to weather the greatest and most evil storm ever, their reward would be the highest heaven of all – *Jannatul Firdaus!*

Verse 108

﴿ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا لَا يَبْغُونَ عَنْهَا حِوَلًا ﴾ ﴿١٨﴾

“Therein will they abide forever, (and) never will they desire any change therefrom.”

Their reward would be not only permanent, but also one in which they would be entirely satisfied, and hence, that they would never seek to change.

Verse 109

﴿ قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفِدَ
 الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ
 مِدَادًا ﴾

“Say: (This is the word of Allah Most High, and the words of my Lord-God are such that) if the ocean (of water) were to become ink, and even if you were to add ocean upon ocean to the first one (know that) they would all be exhausted ere the words of my Lord-God can ever be exhausted.”

Hence people make a terrible mistake when they reject the Qur`ān and the Prophet and make fun of them, or neglect the guidance which comes from them. It is from the Qur`ān and from the blessed Prophet (*sallallahu `alaihi wa sallam*) that mankind can acquire knowledge that comes directly from Allah Most High. Knowledge of the external world is also important since it is Allah Most High Who created the external world. But knowledge that Allah communicates internally to His servants is far more important. It is also inexhaustible.

Verse 110

﴿ قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمْ
 إِلَهٌُ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ
 عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا ﴾

“Say (O Prophet): I am (not divine. not son of God, not any thing like that, rather I am) a human being like all of you. (And say further O Prophet) it has been revealed unto me that your God is (the) One (and Only) God. So whoever looks forward (with hope and awe) to (happily and joyously) meeting his Lord-God (on Judgment Day). let him act righteously (i.e., let him be righteous in conduct). and let him not ascribe unto anyone or anything a share in the worship due to his Lord-God!”

The *Sūrah* began with a severe warning to those who declared that Allah Most High had “begotten a son”. It described such an utterance as *kaburat kalimatan* (a truly terrible thing) and *kaziba* (a lie). The *Sūrah* ends by returning to the same theme of *Shirk*, but this time in order to ensure that Prophet Muhammad’s message would never be so corrupted.

The very substance of the truth that was conveyed by the last Prophet was “your God is One God”. In its very last words *Sūrah al-Kahf* urges those who wish to return to their Lord in a state pleasing to Him to do two things. Firstly, they must be righteous in conduct, and secondly, they must exercise the greatest care to abstain from the sin of *Shirk* (in all its various manifestations).



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THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF DREAMS AND VISIONS IN ISLAM

The Qur`ān informs us that Allah Most High inflicts (epistemological) punishment on the disbelievers by sealing their ‘hearts’, and their ‘hearing’, and by placing veils before their ‘eyes’ (*Qur`ān, al-Baqara, 2:7*). Such people consequently have ‘dead’ hearts and can ‘see’ with only their external eyes. They can acquire knowledge only from observation and from what is known as scientific enquiry. They are incapable of accessing knowledge ‘internally’ or ‘spiritually’ in the form internal insight or through true (i.e., prophetic) ‘dreams’ and ‘visions’.

Dreams and visions belong to the realm of the human heart, and give knowledge that allows us to probe into the very depths of human nature and conduct. True (or prophetic) dreams and visions are divine *gifts* to the heart, and they come only when the heart is sound, healthy, innocent, and saturated with the substance of religion, i.e., faith (*al-Imān*) in Allah Most High. Those who are spiritually alive can be blessed with ‘true’ dreams and visions through which sacred knowledge can be communicated. They can receive inner knowledge of events that would occur in the future, and when the events do occur they validate such visions. They can also receive warnings in dreams,

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and when they have the good sense to heed such warnings they can avert disasters.

Other dreams, such as nightmares, represent *attacks* on the heart that seek to mislead, deceive and corrupt the heart. Such dreams can also function as a means through which the heart can be troubled, tormented and thrown into a state of dysfunction.

Finally there are still other dreams that function either as *medicine* for the heart, or are *windows* to the heart that allow us to see our own hearts, and thus ourselves, – however much it may please or dismay us to see ourselves as we truly are.

We live, today, in a world that is so filled with corruption and godlessness that the overwhelming majority of mankind, including many Muslims, cannot ‘see’ with their internal eye. Most people no longer understand that the only time anyone can be *certain* of the validity of what he claims to ‘see’ internally, is when he ‘sees’ true dreams and visions! Indeed there are many so-called believers in today’s strange world who are actually skeptical of knowledge that is ‘internally’ received and who show no interest in the quest for internal vision.

The religious mind that harbors such skepticism is new to this *ummah* (religious community) and has emerged as a consequence of the impact of the secularization of thought and knowledge by today’s dominant western materialist civilization. That secularism paved the way for metaphysical materialism and for the epistemological attack on internal spiritual knowledge, and eventually gave birth to a new

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religion called humanism. It is based on the scientific method and rationalism, and is distinctly uncomfortable with all that relates to transcendental experience. The *true* dream is most certainly a transcendental experience!

It is by design, and not by accident, that the modern godless age has relegated the phenomenon of *true* (or prophetic) dreams to the obscurity of an academic and intellectual museum. This is because the *true* dream cannot be explained using the western epistemology that programs mankind to be skeptical of the validity of knowledge from any source that transcends scientific observation. The diabolically cunning western method is to seek a natural (scientific) explanation for religious experiences such as 'true' dreams.

The phenomenon of *true* dreams has presented the Muslim, on the other hand, with a heaven-sent opportunity for demonstrating the validity of Islam's epistemology and consequent spiritual interpretation of reality, the universe and human nature. Yet, apart from the rare, authentic and erudite *Sufi* master, of the likes of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal, Muslim scholars living in this modern age of the ascendancy of the West have not produced, from an Islamic psychological perspective, any theoretical work on the phenomenon of dreams. Work is being done by scholars trained in western psychology (*i.e.*, psychology as a discipline which was developed by western secular civilization), but because they are operating in a completely secular scientific framework they cannot comprehend the nature of this phenomenon.

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We wish to pose the question: Why has this great opportunity for using *true* dreams as a means of demolishing the western epistemology been missed by Islamic scholarship and by the so-called great contemporary Islamic reform movements? Iqbal has observed that religious thought in Islam has been practically stationary during the last five hundred years (Muhammad Iqbal: 'Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam'. Lahore. Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986, p. 6).

This is a statement that should truly alarm Muslims and jolt their minds into enquiring into the cause of this intellectual lethargy in our religious thought. Our view is that a scientific, modernist and 'Protestant' version of Islam emerged as a consequence of the intellectual impact of the western colonial rule over Muslims. This modernist Islam was the child of the very western epistemology that invalidated knowledge from any source beyond scientific observation.

This Islam that was shorn of its spiritual heart emerged in Saudi Arabia in the form of the *Wahhabi* movement and proceeded to launch a fierce and relentless attack on Sufism. In the process it unwittingly 'threw out the baby with the bath-water'.

Now we recognize that Sufism had lost its intellectual dynamism and creativity and, like everything else in Islamic civilization, was in a state of drift. Iqbal took note of that failure in a scathing passage in the famous work from which we have been quoting:

"The technique of medieval mysticism by which religious life, in its higher manifestations, developed itself both in the East and in the West, has now

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practically failed. And in the Muslim East it has, perhaps, done far greater havoc than anywhere else. Far from reintegrating the forces of the average man's inner life, and thus preparing him for participation in the march of history, it has taught him a false renunciation and made him perfectly contented with his ignorance and spiritual thralldom."

(Iqbal, Op. Cit. p. 148-9)

The enlightened student of Iqbal, *Maulana* Dr. F. R. Ansari, also noted the degeneration in Sufism, but warned against 'throwing away the baby with the bath-water':

"With the awful degeneration of Muslim society, due to certain historical factors well-known to students of Islamic history, the understanding as well as the practice of *Tasawwuf* also has degenerated in more dimensions than one. Also its name has been misused for certain wrong notions and ideas in certain quarters. In spite of that, however, the denial of the Islamic religious quest (*i.e.*, *Tasawwuf*) of its rightful place amounts to the very negation of Islam. Also, interpreting *Tasawwuf* in terms of mysticism projected by other religions is a flagrant violation of Truth."

(Ansari: *The Quranic Foundations and Structure of Muslim Society*.
World Federation of Islamic Missions. Karachi. Vol. 1. p. 152 fn)

Sufism suffered the fate of being hijacked by professional opportunists who introduced deviant practices through which they established veritable spiritual serfdoms. But in the process of waging a Don Quixoté struggle to purge Islamic beliefs and practices of all that was perceived as *Sufi bid'ah* (innovations), the modernist so-called revivalist Islamic movement acted as a Trojan horse within the body of Islam allowing the western epistemology to penetrate Islamic thought. The 'baby' was thrown out with the 'bath-water'! A

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secularized sanitized version of Islam was then declared to be Islamic revivalism. The so-called great Islamic reform movements proceeded to establish centers of learning and to produce large numbers of scholars who were intellectually incapable of responding to the profoundly dangerous epistemological attack on Islamic scholarship and thought, since they were themselves trapped in western epistemology. Worse than that, their zealotry and misguided attack on even authentic Sufism resulted in such inner damage to their own spirituality that they themselves were now rendered incapable of ever being blessed by Allah Most High with continuous *true* dreams and visions.

But long before the modern materialist West impacted on religious thought by secularizing it, the world of Islam had experienced the same phenomenon in the emergence of the *Mu'atazilite* school of religious thought. Iqbal described that event:

“The *Mu'atazilah*, conceiving religion merely as a body of religious doctrines and ignoring it as a vital fact, took no notice of non-conceptual modes of approaching Reality and reduced religion to a mere system of logical concepts ending in a purely negative attitude. They failed to see that in the domain of knowledge - scientific or religious - complete independence of thought from concrete experience is not possible.” (Iqbal is here referring to religious experience, among other things, and religious experience includes true dreams).

(Iqbal, *op. cit.* p. 4)

It was the genius of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal that he was able to distinguish authentic Sufism from its deviations. It was his genius that

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he succeeded in articulating the *Sufi* epistemology in a manner which demolished the considerable objections of many of the secularly-educated scientific modernists in the modern West as well as in the Muslim world. Had Dr. Muhammad Iqbal studied Islam at *Al-Azhar* University in Egypt or at the Deoband or other Islamic seminaries in India, he would never have emerged as the great scholar and sage that he was. And the reason for this was not limited to his own natural talent but also to the epistemology which he inherited from authentic Sufism, an epistemology which modernist Islam could never deliver.

Secular Europe's scientific method differed from the scientific method that reached Europe from Muslim Spain. What Judeo-Christian secular Europe did was to establish a new dogmatic religion which claimed only that which could be *observed* could be *the subject of a scientific enquiry*. The new dogmatic religion thus fostered habits of concrete thought that negated the very substance and life-blood of religion, *i.e.*, belief in *al-Ghaib* or the unseen world, and direct experience of that unseen world in the miracle of the Qur'ān.

Europe proceeded to establish a basic dogma, *i.e.*, the audacious claim that *only 'scientific' knowledge was 'real' knowledge*, while all else were akin to fairy-tales. And so, the modern religious mind in Europe slowly closed its doors to 'religious experience' and to the study of such phenomena. The *true* dream is a religious experience. William James, however, has done an extremely useful service to religious thought in producing his classical work, '*Varieties of Religious Experience*', in which the *true* dream has pride of place.

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What possible scientific method could there be for examining the phenomenon of a true dream? Here, for example, is what a *true* dream can be: *Last night I dreamt that my neighbor's house was on fire. This morning it was burnt down.*

Islam's explanation of a *true* dream is events exist in an unseen world before they occur in this world. And so the fire existed in an unseen world from whence the information was transmitted by angels in a dream before the fire actually occurred in this world.

This experience of a true dream cannot possibly be the subject of a scientific enquiry because secular western psychology, operating with the new scientific method, *cannot transcend observable phenomena*. Freud was the perfected product of the new scientific thinking and he consequently made a futile effort to locate a natural explanation for the phenomenon of *true* dreams.

It is precisely because of the great danger posed by the new western epistemology and the scientific religion which emerges from that epistemology that Iqbal began his great work, *'The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam'* with two very powerfully written chapters on *'Knowledge and Religious Experience'* and *'The Philosophical Test of the Revelations of Religious Experience'*. He followed them later with another chapter entitled: *'Is Religion Possible?'*

Iqbal made a valiant effort to respond to the challenge posed by modernist Islam in its rejection of religious experience as a source of knowledge. He began his work by addressing the subject in the

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Preface of the book itself. We quote him at length so that those who may be unfamiliar with his thought, or hitherto incapable of understanding him, may now be encouraged to study his great work:

“The Qur’ān is a book which emphasizes ‘deed’ rather than ‘idea’. There are, however, men to whom it is not possible organically to assimilate an alien universe by re-living, as a vital process, that special type of inner experience on which religious faith ultimately rests. Moreover, modern man, by developing habits of concrete thought - habits which Islam itself fostered at least in the earlier stages of its cultural career - has rendered himself less capable of that experience which he further suspects because of its liability to illusion. The more genuine schools of Sufism have, no doubt, done good work in shaping and directing the evolution of religious experience in Islam; but their latter-day representatives, owing to their ignorance of the modern mind, have become absolutely incapable of receiving any fresh inspiration from modern thought and experience. They are perpetuating methods which were created for generations possessing a cultural outlook differing, in many important respects, from our own. ‘Your creation and your resurrection,’ says the Qur’ān, ‘are like the creation and resurrection of a single soul.’ A living experience of the kind of biological unity embodied in this verse requires today a method physiologically less violent and psychologically more suitable to a concrete type of mind. In the absence of such a method the demand for a scientific form of religious knowledge is only natural.”

(Muhammad Iqbal: ‘Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam’,
Lahore, Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986. p. v)

If ever there was a impregnable defense of the *Sufi* epistemology articulated in the idiom of modern thought, Iqbal accomplished it. The tragedy since 1938, when Iqbal’s work was published, is that contemporary Islamic scholarship which has

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emerged from the scientific ‘Protestant’ version of Islam has been intellectually incapable of even understanding these three chapters of Iqbal’s great work.

Iqbal took up the challenge and argued the case for the epistemological validity of ‘intuitive’ knowledge and experience. He declared:

“ . . . Nor is there any reason to suppose that thought and intuition are essentially opposed to each other. They spring up from the same root and complement each other. The one grasps Reality piecemeal, the other grasps it in its wholeness. The one fixes its gaze on the eternal, the other on the temporal aspect of reality. The one is present enjoyment of the whole of Reality; the other aims at traversing the whole by slowly specifying and closing up the various regions of the whole for exclusive observation. Both are in need of each other for mutual rejuvenation. Both seek visions of the same Reality which reveals itself to them in accordance with their function in life. In fact, intuition, as Bergson rightly says, is only a higher kind of intellect.”

(Muhammad Iqbal: ‘Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam’,
Lahore, Institute of Islamic Culture, 1986. p. 2)

It should also be a matter of great significance to our skeptical readers that the Qur’ān itself has chosen to commence its guidance to humanity by insisting, at the very beginning, (*Qur’ān, al-Baqarah, 2:1*) that religious faith is essentially constructed on belief in that which lies beyond our normal observation, - *i.e.*, beyond the world of concrete thought (*al-ghaib*)! True dreams belong to that world. Indeed the most profound experience in the life of the Prophet

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Muhammad (*sallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*) was a nocturnal journey (not a dream) into that unseen world, - a journey on which he was taken in order that he might have direct experience of the transcendental world. Thus the Qur'ān declares:

﴿ لَقَدْ رَأَىٰ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَىٰ ﴾

“He surely saw the greatest of the Signs of his Lord.”

(Qur'ān, al-Najm, 53:18)

Knowledge must be de-secularized if religious Truth is to be allowed to play the role which only Truth can play. That role is one of restoring human society to the beliefs and values of authentic religion which alone can anchor mankind in a life of peace, happiness, fulfillment and success.

In order for knowledge to be desecularized we need to demonstrate the existence in this world of knowledge that has come from *al-Ghaib*, i.e., an unseen world and a source which thus transcends normal experience. Only when knowledge has been desecularized can the modern mind apply itself seriously to restoring the life of the sacred. The late outstanding Islamic scholar, Ismail Faruqi who (like Saudi Arabia's King Faisal, Pakistan's President Ziaul Haq, Panama's President Omar Torrejo, Ecuador's Jamie Roldos, Chile's Salvador Allende, etc.) fell to an act of terrorism long before those terrorists launched their own so-called 'war on terror', attempted to desecularize knowledge. Unfortunately he coined the

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term '*Islamization of Knowledge*' and in doing so the essential goal of *desecularizing knowledge* was rendered obscure to those who inherited his noble mission in the cause of Truth.

A serious study on the phenomenon of dreams by an erudite Muslim psychologist can make a significant contribution towards de-secularizing knowledge and redirecting thought to the recognition of the primacy of the sacred, and to the understanding of the essential harmony in the relationship between '*material*' form and '*spiritual*' substance in the external universe and the human world. Further Islamic scholarship of the quality and caliber of Dr. Muhammad Iqbal is required for undertaking a study on *the metaphysics of the true dream*.



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