# A STUDY OF SELECTED THEOLOGICAL THEMES IN THE *TAFSĪR* OF 'AL-'IMĀM 'AL-'ALŪSĪ'S *RŪḤU'L-MAᶜĀNĪ*

*BY*

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**MATRIC. NO.: 11/68CO014**

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***RAMAḌĀN*, 1439 A.H.**
**JUNE, 2018 C.E.**

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**BEING A Ph.D. THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIONS, FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN.**

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## ABSTRACT

*ᶜAqīdah* (Creed) is the foundation upon which all other Islamic activities are built. This is well enunciated in the Qur'ān, with supportive proofs in the *Sunnah*. However, *ᶜAqīdah* has been generating controversy among *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) of the early, medieval and modern periods. It is against this backdrop that this study aimed at studying selected theological issues in the *Magnum Opus Tafsīr* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*. The objectives of the study were to: (i) assess the view that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is a controversial scholar; (ii) determine the quality and appropriateness of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's argument and its consonance or otherwise with the fundamental principles of Islam; (iii) investigate 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's modes of treating theological matters; (iv) highlight the contributions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī towards the correct understanding of the Qur'ān in general and theology in particular; (v) examine the differences in the classification of *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī;* and (vi) evaluate the discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the convergent and divergent theological verses.

The study adopted historical and exegetical methods. Historical method was used in rendering the historical accounts of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, while exegetical method assisted in analysing 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion of verses with theological connotations in the light of Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*.

The findings of this study were that:

i) 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is an objective scholar, as his *Minhaj* (method) is clear from his discussions on theological issues;
ii) 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī always refers to the *Salaf Ṣāliḥ*, making his arguments to be of high quality and in accordance with the fundamental principles of Islam;
iii) 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's modes of treating theological matters were indicative of his mastery of exegesis for discussing theology-related verses clearly;
iv) theological divergences were not only borne out of philosophical thinking in defence of individual sect and lack of proper understanding of the Islamic texts, but also for lack of reference to the pristine Islam;
v) *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is a class on its own for combining kinds of *Tafsīr*, a quality which seems rare in other *Tafsīr* books;
vi) theological discussions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī subsumed, to a large extent, the views of these Islamic sects: Sunnites, Shiites, Ashᶜarites and Muᶜtazilites, including the *Ṣūfiyyah*; and
vii) discussion on theological issues by the contemporary Muslims is predicated upon the stand of *Salaf* in order for theological differences to be resolvable.

The study concluded that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is an exegetical book, which ranked among similar works by the renowned *Mufassirūn*, based on the understanding of the early predecessors and that theological differences are resolvable through *Tafsīr* if dissociated from individualism, sectarianism, shallow research, superciliousness and haste in giving Islamic verdict. The study, therefore, recommended a re-examination of the divergent theology-related issues based on the understanding of the pristine Islam that is free from extraneous philosophical thinking.

**Word Count: 454**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research was carried out by **SURAJU, Saheed Badmus** with **Matric. No.: 11/68CO014** in the Department of Religions, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, under my supervision.

_____ _____

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**(Supervisor)**

## DEDICATION

This work is humbly dedicated to my parents and parents in-law as well as my spiritual, academic, moral and intellectual fathers as well as mentors in the field of *Tafsīr* (Qur'ānic Exegesis), Professor Badmas Olanrewaju YUSUF and Dr. Yusuf Kolawole JIMOH. This is in appreciation of their efforts in all ramifications, which have illuminated the path of *Tafsīr* in me, in the night before the day light.

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I sincerely appreciate the management of Al-Hikmah University for the permission granted to me to pursue this Ph.D. programme. I pray Allah in His infinite mercy to sustain, bless and elevate it to the highest level of glory. May Allah continue to guide, sustain, protect and enrich the founder, Alhaji Chief (Dr.) Abdur-Raheem Oladimeji (OFR).

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*Mafātīḥu'l-Ghayb* of Fakhru-d-Dīn Ar-Rāzī and some other books. *Jazāhu llāhu khayran fī-d-Dunyā wa'l-Ākhirah wa ḥafiẓahu llāhu wa raᶜā hu wa aṭāla llāhu ḥayāta hu ᶜalā Ṭāᶜatihi bi'l ᶜĀfiyah wa*-s-*Sadād* (Amin).

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O Allah! The Oft-Forgiving, The Most-Merciful, The Grantor, forgive me and my family; accept this little effort from me as a good deed; let it be of benefit to the Muslim *Ummah*; take away our sorrow and grief in this life and the hereafter; unite our hearts; mend our affairs by putting them in the right way and bestow on us mercy from Yourself, all in Your beautiful Names and Attribute (Amin).

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***RAMAḌĀN*, 1439 A.H.**
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## Table of Contents


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Title Page | | ii |
| Abstract | | iii |
| Certification | | iv |
| Dedication | | v |
| Acknowledgements | | vi |
| Table of Contents | | x |
| Glossary | | xiv |
| **CHAPTER ONE:** | **INTRODUCTION** | |
| 1.1 | Background to the Study | 1 |
| 1.2 | Purpose of the Study | 3 |
| 1.3 | Statement of the Problem | 4 |
| 1.4 | Scope of the Study | 6 |
| 1.5 | Justification of the Study | 6 |
| 1.6 | Research Methodology | 7 |
| 1.7 | Literature Review | 8 |
| | Notes and References | 19 |
| **CHAPTER TWO:** | **BIOGRAPHY OF 'AL-'IMĀM 'AL-'ALŪSĪ** | |
| 2.0 | Introduction | 24 |
| 2.1 | Baghdād: The Birth Place of 'Al-'Alūsī | 24 |
| 2.2 | His Family Background | 29 |
| 2.3 | His Name and Genealogy | 31 |
| 2.4 | His Birth and Growth | 32 |
| 2.5 | His Family Life | 35 |
| 2.6 | His Education | 39 |
| 2.6.1 | His Teachers | 41 |
| 2.6.2 | His Students | 45 |

2.6.3 His Contemporaries 47

2.7 His Trips 48

2.8 An X-ray of his Life Activities 51

2.8.1 His Religious Life 52

2.8.2 His Academic Life and Status 53

2.8.3 His Ascetic Life 55

2.8.4 His Mystical Life 56

2.8.5 His Political Life 58

2.9 His Creed and *Madh-hab* 60

2.10 His Works 65

2.11 His Challenges 75

2.12 His Death 77

2.13 Scholars' View about Him 78

Notes and References

**CHAPTER THREE: *RŪḤU'L-MAᶜĀNĪ* AS A BOOK OF *TAFSĪR***

3.0 Introduction 97

3.1 Form and Scope of the *Tafsīr* 97

3.2 History of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* 99

3.3 Its Sources 102

3.4 'Al-'Alūsī's Approach to *Tafsīr* 124

3.5 Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī as *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* 164

3.6 'Al-'Alūsī's and *Tafsīru Bi'l-Ishārah* 170

3.7 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Mystical Exegesis 173

3.8 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Shiites Exegesis 183

3.9 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Muᶜtazilites Exegesis 190

3.10 'Al-'Alūsī's and Verification of *Aḥādīth* 199

3.11 'Al-'Alūsī's and Verses with the Scientific Connotation 203

3.11.1 Verses on Physical Sciences 203

3.11.2 Verses on Biological Sciences 205

Notes and References 208

**CHAPTER FOUR: THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN RŪḤU'L-MA$^{C}$ĀNĪ OF 'AL-'IMĀM 'AL-'ALŪSĪ**

4.0 Introduction 221

4.1 Theology: Its Evolution and Relation with *Tafsīr* 221

4.2 The First Article - Belief in Allah 228

4.2.1 Existence of Allah 231

4.2.2 Essence of Allah 233

4.2.3 Attributes of Allah 234

4.2.4 Lordship of Allah 237

4.2.5 Worship of Allah 238

4.2.6 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in Allah 240

4.3 The Second Article - Belief in the Angels 270

4.3.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Commentary on the Verses of Belief in the Angels 272

4.4 The Third Article - Belief in the Books 275

4.4.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the Books 280

4.5 The Fourth Article – Belief in the Messengers 282

4.5.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the Messenger 285

4.6 The Fifth Article – Belief in the Last Day 290

4.6.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the Last Day 293

4.7 The Sixth Article - Belief in *Al-Qadar*: 299

4.7.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the *Al-Qadar* 303

4.8 Anthropomorphism 307

4.8.1 ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī’s View 309

4.9 ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī’s and Some Other Theological Issues 316

4.9.1. His Views on the Createdness of the Qur’ān 317

4.9.2 His Views on the Visibility of Allāh 321

4.9.3 His Views on *At-Tawassul Wa’l-Wasīlah* 328

4.9.4 His Views on the Return of Prophet ʿĪsā 332

4.9.5 His Views on the Finality of Prophethood 335

4.10 Conclusion 341

Notes and References 344

**CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION**

5.1 Summary 363

5.2 Observations 371

5.3 Research Findings 374

5.4 Recommendations 377

5.5 Contributions to Knowledge 381

5.6 Suggested Areas for Further Study 382

Notes and References 385

Bibliography 386

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*'Ulu'l-ᶜAzm* –**أولوا العزم**- It means the determined among the Prophets of Allah. They include; Prophet Nūh, Ibrahim, Musa, ᶜIsa and Muhammad –عليهم الصلاة والسلام-

*Adh- Dhāt* -**الذات**- This means "the Essence" or "The Personality". But when it is used along with the word *Ismu* to be *Ismu-dh-Dhāt* then it means the proper name or essence of something.

*Ahlu'l-Kitāb* –**أهل الكتاب**- This means the people of the Book.

*Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l Jamāᶜah* – **أهل السنة والجماعة**- The people who stick to the prophetic traditions, ways and methods of doing things as well as the paths of the early Pious Muslim.

*Al- ᶜAqīdah* -**العقيدة**- This literally means creed but technically and commonly used to denote theology which encompasses all the beliefs of a Muslim.

*Al-Aḥādīth* -**الأحاديث**- This is the plural of *Ḥadīth* which simply refers to the report that contains the statements, actions and silent approval of the Prophet –ﷺ- on the actions of his Companions.

*Al-ᶜAdam* – **العدم**– This simply means non-existence

*Al-Fiqh* -**الفقه**- It refers to the knowledge and understanding of the Islamic laws. It is easily translated as "Jurisprudence"

*Al-Ghayb* - **الغيب**- It means the Unseen

*Al-Ijtihād* -**الإجتهاد**- It is used to connote the exertion of personal effort in bringing out Islamic ruling or judgement on issues that have no definite text from the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*.

*Al-Ishārah* -**الإشارة** - This literally means indication, but technically it is used to connote hidden and when used along with *Tafsīr,* it means the hidden meaning of the Qur'ān.

*Al-Ishārī* -**الإشارى**- This is technically used in *Tafsīr* to mean an allegorical interpretation of the Qur'ān or the meaning of a verse that is not explicitly mentioned therein.

*Al-Isrā'iliyyāt* -**الإسرائليات**- This denotes the stories related by and from the people of the Book.

*Al-Istīlā'* -**الإستيلاء**- This means taking possession of something.

*Al-Istiqrār* -**الإستقرار**- This simply means stability.

*Al-Istiwā'* -**الاستواء**- In Islamic Theology, it means the rising of Allah above His Throne.

*Al-Madh-hab* -**المذهب**- It is used to connote the School of law.

*Al-Mu$^{c}$tazilah* -**المعتزله**- This is referring to another set of Muslim group who dissented from the gathering of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri to form a sect with their own principles and doctrines.

*Al-Mufassīr* -**المفسر**- The exegete of the Qur'ān.

*Al-Mumkin* -**الممكن**- In Theology, it is used to denote contingent or temporary. That is, it may happen or not and if it happened it is not everlasting. This is why all other existences apart from that of Allah is referred to as *al-Wujūd al-Mumkin*- - Contigent Existent while that of Allah is referred to as *Wājibu'l-Wujūd* – Necessary Existent.

*Al-Wasīlah* -**الوسيلة**- It means "the means" through which something is achieved.

*Al-Wujūd* – **الوجود**– This means existence. In theology it is used to denote "being" or "entity".

*An –Nubuwwah* -**النبوة**- This means prophethood

*Ar-Ra'y* - **الرأي**- This simply means opinion or view.

*Ar-Ru'yah* - **الرؤية**- It means vision or seeing

*Ar-Rūḥ* -**الروح**- It means the soul or spirit

*As-Sa$^{c}$ah* **الساعة**- Literally, it means time or hour. But, it is used to connote the Last Hour or Day as a name among the names of the Day of Judgement.

*As-Salafiyyah* - **السلفية**- This refers to the people who are treading the path of the early pious predecessor in Islam.

*As-Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ* –**السلف الصالح**- This means the early pious predecessors.

*As-Shiᶜah* - **الشيعة**- This is referring to a group of people among the Muslim *Ummah*, as a sect, who is in support of ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭalīb and his household with their own principles, doctrines and jurisprudence.

*As-Siffah* -**الصفة**- This means attribute

*At-Ta'wīl* - **التأويل**- Literally it means interpretation but it is technically used to denote figurative interpretation of the Qur'ān by changing from its real meaning to one of its possible meanings.

*At-Tafsīr* - **التفسير**- It means the explanation and exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān.

*At-Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y* - **التفسير بالرأي** - This means opinion based explanation of the Qur'ān.

*At-Tafwīd* - **التفويض**- It means consignment. In Islamic Theology, it means referring the meaning of some attributes of Allah to Him by abstaining from giving them any meaning.

*At-Tamthīl* -**التمثيل**- This means similitude. It is at times used synonymously as *Tashbīh*

*At-Tashbīh* -**التشبيه**- This literally means similitude or comparison or likeness. In Islamic Theology, it stands for the word "Anthropomorphism" which means ascribing the attributes and qualities of human beings to Allah in a similar way.

*At-Tawassul* -**التوسل**- It means intercession

*At-Tawḥīd* -**التوحيد**- This literally means unification or solitude but technically it is used to connote Islamic Monotheism.

*ᶜIlmu'l-Kalām* –**علم الكلام**- This is used to denote the Islamic Theology.

*Waḥdatu'l-Wujūd* –**وحدة الوجود**- This can simply be translated to mean "the oneness of being". It is one of the doctrines in Sufism which is technically known as unity of existence.

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background to the Study

The Glorious Qur'ān, as an all-encompassing heavenly revealed book, is full of wonders, discoveries and information of the past, present and future.[1] It contains various branches of knowledge for experts in different disciplines to gain and extract information[2] of what they know and do not know.[3] This encyclopedic nature of the Noble Qur'ān is attested to and confirmed by Allah in Q 6: 38 that *"... We have neglected nothing in the Book ..."*.[4]

In consonance with this verse, the Muslims, both early and the later have made great efforts to develop various fields of knowledge such as Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), Theology (*ᶜAqīdah*), Sciences (*ᶜUlūm*), History (*Tārîkh*), Economic (*Iqtisād*), Administration (*'Idārah*), Mathematics (*Ḥisāb*), Rhetoric (*Balāghah*), Medicine (*Ṭibb*), Zoology (*ᶜIlmu'l-Ḥayawān*), Geology (*Jiyūlajiyyah)*, etc., in the course of explaining the Glorious Qur'ān.

The above efforts brought about the evolution of *Tafsīr* literature which has become a specialization in Islamic Studies. Some *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) had explained the Noble Qur'ān, focusing on a particular branch out of the branches of knowledge available in it; while some have tried in combining these fields together in their *Tafsīr* works. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī is among the second category of scholars whose *Tafsīr* book is regarded as *Tafsīr* encyclopedia.[5] In the opinion of Taqi Usmani, the *Tafsīr* work of 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī is described thus:

> Since this is a publication of latest era, he (the Author) has tried to gather important discussions of previous exegeses. Hence, elaborate discussions have been carried out on language, grammar, literature, rhetoric, jurisprudence,

> beliefs (theology), etymology, geophysics, astronomy, philosophy, spiritualism and relevant narrations. An attempt has been made that no scientific and literary problem should remain unanswered. In the matter of reporting of Traditions, also, *ᶜAllāmah* 'Alūsī had been more careful than other commentators. In this respect, it may be called synopsis of the earlier exegesis and no work on exegeses of the Qur'ān can do without help from this work.[6]

One of the branches of knowledge discussed by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is theology (i.e., Belief or Faith) which is one of the major themes in the Glorious Qur'ān as well as the foundation of Islam[7] without which there is no Islam. Its fundamentality, which is well rooted in the Noble Qur'ān,[8] has brought about differences among the Muslim *Ummah* and led to the emergence of sectarian divisions in Islam.[9] It should be stated that these divisions do not affect the main pillars of faith. However, differences exist on the description and explanation of the six articles of faith. These differences came on board, perhaps, due to the complexity of Arabic language which is the language of the Noble Qur'ān as well as the differences in the exegeses of the companions which could be due to some reasons as discussed by the scholars of exegesis in their books.[10]

Moreover, each of the Islamic sects with theological differences is affiliating the basis of its theological stand to the verses of the Glorious Qur'ān. Thus, it interprets the Qur'ānic verses to suit its sectarian doctrines other than the original meaning of the verse from the Noble Prophet and his companions as well as their successors (*Tābiᶜūn*). This development in the exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān made some *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) to discuss in details the theological verses in their *Tafsīr* works by bringing various theological discussions from different theological schools of thought such as Shīites, Mu'tazilites, *Sūfī*, Ash'arites and *Aḥmadis*. A good example of these *Mufassirūn*

is a renowned theologian [11] Baghdadi Scholar of mid-19th century[12], 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, in his monumental project on Qur'ānic Exegesis.

In contrast to some other *Mufassirūn* such as az-Zamakh-sharī al-Mu$^{c}$tazilī[13], aṭ-Ṭabarisī[14], al-Askarī[15], Haqī al-Barūsawī[16] and Ibn $^{c}$Arabī[17] among others who had explained some theological verses through their sectarian perspectives, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has done justice to theological discussion in his *Tafsīr* work by being unbiased and balanced in the examination of theologian polemics without any preference or inclination to any sect but the early pious predecessors (*Salaf Ṣāliḥ*).

Although 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was born and grew up with Sufism as well as *Sunnism* and *Salafism* background in the year 1217 A.H.[18] in Baghdād during the Ottoman Empire of 19th century, these have not absolutely and negatively affected his position on theological issues as his discussion is basically from the pristine of Islam, i.e., the Qur'ān, *Sunnah* of the Prophet and the statement of the companions of the Prophet. However, this assertion does not mean that his exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān has no weakness. It is against this background that this encyclopedic work of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, which was written between 1252 A.H. and 1267 A.H. i.e. for a period of fifteen years, is selected to be studied from theological angle.

### 1.2. **Purpose of the Study**

The Glorious Qur'ān is undoubtedly the main source which the Muslims, in different sects, are using as a proof in establishing their theological divergences. Thus, theological issues have been and are still a bone of contention among the Muslims, especially in the contemporary society to the extent of making the Noble Qur'ān a book of confusion for both the Muslims and non-

Muslims. Hence, this study generally aims at studying selected theological issues from the perspective of Qur'ānic exegesis using the *Magnum Opus Tafsīr* of 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī's *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as the main focus. In order to achieve this, the study has attempted to assess the view that 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī is a controversial scholar and to determine the quality and appropriateness of his argument and it consonance or otherwise with the fundamental principles of Islam.

The study also aims at investigating 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's mode of treating theological issues. Likewise, it is to shed light on the contributions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī towards the correct understanding of the Qur'ān generally and theology particularly. In addition, it is to clarify the differences on the classification of *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*. It is also to evaluate the discussion of 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī on both the convergent and divergent theological verses.

### 1.3. **Statement of the Problem**

Theology is as fundamental to Islamic religion as water is to life. However, its fundamentality has led to division among the Muslims through their establishment of various groups and by using the Glorious Qur'ān as a reference in supporting their beliefs and doctrines without the proper consultation of the Qur'ānic Exegetes before applying it to suit their targets. Some Muslims even apply the Qur'ānic verses at times to declare other Muslims, who have different theological understanding from theirs, as *Kuffār* (disbelievers), which has led and is still leading to enmity in the Muslim *Ummah*.

Thus, this work examined the Islamic theological issues from the perspective of Qur'ānic exegesis as discussed by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his encyclopedic *Tafsīr* entitled: *"Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-*

*Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī".* The following research questions will guide the study to achieve its set objectives:

a. Can Qur'ānic exegesis be used to bridge the gaps among the Muslims with theological differences?
b. Why theological verses are interpreted wrongly despite the availability of abundant evidence that guides on the correct interpretation?
c. Whether the interpretation of theological verses in *Rūḥu'l–Maᶜānī* is in accordance with the teachings and explanations of the Prophet and his Companions.
d. Whether the 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's interpretation of theological verses is based on personal reasoning or narrations or both?
e. Why some of the theological themes are controversial?
f. Which of the theological themes can bring about differences if not properly handled?
g. What is the importance of these theological themes to the Muslim *Ummah*?

In addition, despite the great theological benefits in the book under study, it is yet to be translated into English language for the English audience. Thus, the exposition of the author's discussion on the topic will be of an immense advantage to the audience as they will be exposed to various theological differences and at the same time guide them to the right stand on the differences.

## 1.4. **Scope of the Study**

This research work covers the study of theological themes which include the six pillars of faith and some other controversial theological issues such as createdness of the Qur'ān, *at-Tawassul*, anthropomorphism, etc., in the exegesis of the Noble Qur'ān. The Qur'ānic exegesis is, however, limited to the monumental *Tafsīr* work of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī entitled: *"Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī"*.

## 1.5. **Justification of the Study**

*Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is one of the voluminous works on the exegesis of the Noble Qur'ān but not as used as other Qur'ānic exegeses voluminous or not, such as *Tafsīru'l Quri'āni'l-ᶜAẓim* of Imām Ibn Kathīr (d. 774 A.H.), *Tafsīr Jalālayn* of Imām al-Maḥallī (d. 864 A.H) and As-Suyūṭī (d. 911 A.H.). Other examples include *Tafsīr Jāmiᶜi'l-Bayān fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'ān* of Imām Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī (d. 310 A.H.) and *Tafsīr fi Ẓilāli'l-Qur'ān* of Ash-Shāhid Sayyid Quṭb (d.1386 A.H.), among the Islamic Scholars in Nigeria, especially the Qur'ānic commentators as well as the students of Qur'ānic knowledge. Even at the international level, only few people are citing the book for reference. This, perhaps, is because of its categorization by some Sunni scholars, such as Az-Zarqānī in his book entitled: *"Manāhilu fi ᶜUlūmi'l-Qur'ān"* and Yasir Qadhi in his book entitled: *"An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'ān"*, under *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah* which is regarded as Mystical *Tafsīr*.

Thus, majority of the Muslims are running away from being influenced by the *Sūfī* ideologies. Therefore, it is necessary to let the Muslim populace, regardless of the sects or groups realize the worth of this book as a compendium of wisdom full of information from both early and later *Mufassirūn*.

Furthermore, till date, to the best of our knowledge, there has not been any known English work on this *Tafsīr* in Nigeria. Also, majority of the books available internationally are in Arabic language. The few English books have no sufficient information on this *Tafsīr* and its author. This is nothing but a neglect of the importance of the monumental work of the 19th century. Thus, this research is needed to bring the book closer to the English audience in order for them to benefit from the encyclopedic knowledge of the author through his exegesis of the Qur'ān.

More importantly, the theological discussion of the author will go a long way in solving the theological crises that exist among the Muslim groups and sects, most especially among their members which have led to enmity as well as describing one another as disbelievers. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has tried to explain any theology-related verse(s) used by the Islamic sects to support their sectarian doctrine with a view to establishing its legality or rejecting its legitimacy.

### 1.6. **Research Methodology**

In order to achieve the set objectives of this study, the research has adopted historical and exegetical methods. Since the author and his discussion are in the past, historical method has assisted in rendering the historical accounts of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. The analytical and exegetical methods have assisted in analysing 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion of verses with theological connotation in the light of the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*.

By this, it has added to the existing knowledge in the field of study. The nature of the study makes it imperative to use the *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as the primary source to deduce relevant facts which are used in examining the book with regards to the themes selected for study.

## 1.7. **Literature Review**

The nature of Qur'ānic exegesis, which is the main idea of this research, makes it indispensable to consult other books of *Tafsīr* relating to theology. Similarly, in writing this research, not only past books of Qur'ānic exegesis which are related to the topic but also past and early books on theology, life history of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and relevant authorities on *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as well as journal articles, dissertations, Ph.D. thesis and websites were consulted in order to gather sufficient information on the selected themes of study. This point is therefore segmented into sections as follows:

i. *Tafsīr* books either relating to theology or from which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had quoted or refferd to.

ii. Biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and information on *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.*

iii. The articles of faith in Islam and other theology-related works.

### i. ***Tafsīr* books either relating to theology or from which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had quoted or refferd to.**

*Tafsīr Al-Kash-shāf ᶜan Haqā'iqi-t-Tanzīl wa ᶜUyūni'l-'Aqāwīl fī Wujūhi-t-Ta'wīl*[19] written by Az-Zamakh-shari al-Muᶜtazilī is an extensive discussion on the literary meaning of the Qur'ān, especially in the areas of rhetoric (*al-Balāghah*) and Arabic Grammar which the author has used to interpret the Qur'ān according to his Muᶜtazilī thought. His theological discussion is limited to the doctrines of the Mu'tazilites in a philosophical way without referring to the early predecessors. This is a vacuum to be filled by this research through its study of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion on theological issues. However, the work is found useful in getting more information on Mu'tazilites theology that is cited by

’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī in his discussion. It gives the research the opportunity of knowing details about some theological discussions from Mu$^{c}$tazilites perspective.

Another reliable *Tafsīr* is *Rūḥu’l-Bayān fī Tafsīr’l-Qur’ān*[20], authored by Ismā’īl Haqi al-Barusawī. It assists in giving additional information on mystical interpretation of the Glorious Qur’ān which is one the features of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī’s *Tafsīr* of the Qur’ān during his discussion on mystical interpretation with a view to clarifying the misconception on these interpretations. The author did interprete verses related to Sufi dotrines without considering whether the interpretation is in consonance with the fundamental principles of Islam. This gap is going to be filled by this research through the study of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī’s discussion on theology-related verses.

*Mafātīhu’l-Ghayb*[21] of Fakhru-d-Dīn Ar-Rāzī is another valuable *Tafsīr* work on theological discussion. The book is found useful on the exegesis of theological verses which even ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī himself used to make reference to in his own *Rūḥu’l-Ma$^{c}$ānī.* Ar-Rāzī has discussed extensively verses on the essence and attributes of Allah which are found not only relevant but also beneficial to the study. His discussion on the concept of *al-Qaḍā’u wa’l-Qadar* (The Decree and The Destiny) is very useful to this study. However, his position on this has been opposed by ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī. Thus, this research will assess the two views in consonance with the position of the early pious Muslims (*Salaf Ṣāliḥ*).

In the work of $^{c}$Abdu’l-$^{c}$Azīz Hāji, entitled: *“Tafsīru ’Ãyāti’l-$^{c}$Aqīdah”*[22], explanation is made on the theological verses of the Noble Qur’ān. The author gathers the explanation of various *Mufassirūn,* including ’al-’Alūsī on some

theological themes like belief in Allah, Angels, Books, etc. This book, of two volumes, is very helpful in gathering more Qur'ānic verses on Islamic theology. However, its discussion does not cover the opinions of the Islamic sects as well as discussion on the divergent theological issues selected for discussion in this research. These gaps are to be filled by this present research.

**ii. Biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and Information on *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.***

Az-Zirkīlī in his *Al-'A ᶜlām*[23], in volume seven (7) of the book, gives a concise account of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life and lists out some of his works. But, does not account for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life activities, challenges, education and some other important points of his life history. These missing areas are intended to be covered by this present study.

Another valuable work on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is *Al-Miskū'l-'Adhfar fī Nashri Mazāyā'l-Qarni-th-Thānī ᶜAshar wa-th-Thālithi ᶜAshar*[24] written by Maḥmūd Shukri 'al-'Alūsī. This book supplies useful information on 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's biography and his environment. However, as informative and helpful as the book is, the author does not the political and academic life of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. The author also has given its information without proper sub-headings which makes it tedious for researchers to search through looking for a particular topic. These vacuums created by this work will be filled by this present research by placing information under them correct sub-headings for easy access.

*Juhūdu Abi-th-Thanā'i 'al-'Alūsī fī-r-Raddi ᶜalā-r-Rāfiḍah*[25] is another compendium on 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's biography. It gives a comprehensive account of his life from birth to death including his works as well as his socio-religious and political lives. It also gives additional information on *Rūḥu'l-*

*Maᶜānī* as well as some discussions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on some Shīite theologies. The author, however, does not extend his theological discussion to other Islamic Sects like *Muᶜtazilah* and *Sūfī* which is a vacuum that this study intends to fill by discussing some of these areas.

*At-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufassirūn*[26]of Muhammad Hussein Adh-Dhahabi gives a detailed information on the science of *Tafsīr* and the biography of Qur'ānic Exegetes which include 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and his *Tafsīr* work. It is found not only useful but also helpful in giving information about the content of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* in a concise form. Its information on the categorization of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* under the kinds *Tafsīr* is useful and sufficient enough in addressing the controversy on this issues. The author fails to mention the life activities of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as well as his trips and challenges. These missing areas will be discussed by this present research.

*Hadiyatu'l-ᶜĀrifīn Asmā'u'l-Mu'allifīn wa 'Āthāru'l-Musannifīn* authored by Al-Baghdādi Ismā'il Bashā[27] is another book on the life history of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. It gives a comprehensive list of his works with no detailed information about his life. However, the book is found relevant and useful to this study.

Another indispensable literature on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is the book of Muhammad Bahjat Al-Athari entitled: *" Aᶜlāmu'l-ᶜIrāq"*[28]. In this book, a detailed information about 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and his environment as well as his life activities is given only that it is not well arranged under sub-topics.

In his book entitled: *"Dhikra Abu-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī"*[29], Abbas al-Azzawi gives comprehensive information about 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's biography including his teachers and students as well as his literary works. But, the book

has no detailed information about 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life activities including his creed and *madh-hab*. This vacuum is going to be filled by the present study.

*Usool al-Tafseer: The Methodology of Qur'ānic Interpretation* written by Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips[30] is an English book that gives a summarized version of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's biography as well as his *Tafsīr*. It, however, does not discuss the theological themes of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* which is the focus of this present research. Muhammad Taqi Usmani gives a summary of the themes of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* including theology in his book entitled: *"An Approach to the Qur'ānic Science"*[31] just by mentioning them in titles without discussing in details. This book is, however, useful in knowing the themes of discussion in the *Tafsīr Rūhu'l-Ma'ānī.*

*An Anthology of Qur'anic Commentaries* edited by Feras Hamza, Sajjad Rizvi and Farhana Mayer is another valuable English book on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and a brief insight into the content of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*, though the work is not only on 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī which makes it not to give a comprehensive information about him. The author affirms that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* makes use of three approaches to Qur'ānic exegeses. This information is found in the first volume of the book entitled "On the Nature of the Divine"[32] which also discusses some theological issues relating to the essence and existence of God from the explanation and exposition of the *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes). It, however, does not discuss other articles of faith which are converged on as well as the divergent theological issues. These missing areas in this book will be discussed by the present research through Qur'ānic exegeses.

Among the articles consulted is the article of Basheer M. Nafi entitled: *"Abu al-Thana' al-Alūsī: An Alim, Ottoman Mufti and Exegete of the*

*Qur'an"*[33]. The work sheds more light on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, his environment and his intellectual works, especially, his exegesis of the Qur'ān. The author presents 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as a controversial Muslim scholar whose intellectual genealogy and leaning seem to be difficult to categorize and too contradictory to pin down. By this, the article has brought out an issue that needs to be re-examined. Thus, the article is useful and relevant.

Another Ph.D thesis on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is the work of M.M. Salih Ibrahim entitled: *"Juhūdu'l-'Alūsī Al-Balāghiyyah min Khilāl Kitābihi Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī"*[34]. The work reflects on the life history of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī from cradle to grave, including his life activities, except his challenges and the views of the scholars about him. However, the work is silent about the theological themes of the *Tafsīr* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī but focuses on the rhetorical aspect (al-*Balāghah*) of the *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.*

Junayd's Dissertation entitled: *"Minhaju-sh-Shaykhi'l-'Alūsī fī Tafsīrihi Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī"*[35] is another relevant work to this study in the area of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's biography even though he has discussed this in brief. The author also discusses some of the theological issues such as belief in Allah, the Angels and the other escathological matters which include punishment in the Grave, Jinn, Resurrection, Paradise and Hell-Fire from the perspectives of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. He, however, does not discuss anything on the divergent theological issues selected for examination in this study. Similarly, he has not discussed all the articles of faith in his study. These are the vacuums to be filled by this present study from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's perspective. It should also be noted that Junayd's work is in Arabic language while this present study is written in English language for the purpose

of bring 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion on theological issues closer to the understanding of the English audience.

Besides, some materials are found resourceful and relevant on the Internet on the biography of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and his Tafsīr even though they are not comprehensive. Hence, the research consulted them for additional information.

**iii. The Articles of Faith in Islam and other theology-related works.**

As regards the books on theology which the research consulted in writing this study, they are many in Arabic and few in English Language. Some of these are:

*Ihyā'u ᶜUlūmi-d-Dīn*[36] of Imām al-Ghazālī is found useful as it sheds more light on the pillars of Islamic faith philosophically especially on the essence and existence of God as well as names and attributes of God. But, it does not discuss them exegetically which is the focus of this work. Another book of Imām al-Ghazāli is *Kitābu'l-Iqtiṣād fi'l-'Iᶜtiqād*[37] which also elaborates the discussion on the essence, existence and attributes of Allah in a philosophical way different from that of his *Ihyā'u ᶜUlūmi-d-Dīn* though very similar. The author rarely brings proof from the Qur'ān which is an area this study intends to look into as theology is a sensitive issue that needs textual evidences. His other book on theology that is also resourceful to this study is *Rakā'izu'l-Ĩmān bayna'l- ᶜAql wa'l-Qalb.*[38]

*Al-'Ĩmān* is another Arabic book on faith written by Muhyi-d-Din ᶜAql[39]. This book focuses on the six articles of faith with extensive discussion on each of the articles. However, the author does not bring the exegesis of the *Mufassirūn* on the Qur'ānic verses quoted and has not linked his discussion with any Islamic sect. These missing areas will be looked into in this present study.

*'Al-'Ibānatu ᶜan 'Usūli-d-Diyānah* of Abu'l-Ḥassan al-'Ashᶜarī[40] is another important work on theological issues in Islam. It is even among the sources on which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī based his theological discussion. It discusses various divergent theological topics such as visibility of God, createdness of the Qur'ān, anthropomorphism, etc., in the light of Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. The book is found relevant to this study. It has, however, not discussed the articles of faith which are the major points of discussion in this research.

*Al-Qaḍā'u wa'l-Qadar* is another book written by Abu Muᶜadh Tāriq bin ᶜIwadillahi[41]. This book gives comprehensive information on destiny through the explanation of different scholars on some Qur'ānic verses and *Aḥādīth* which the common people have taken to be contradictory and ambiguous. It is a useful book on the last pillar of faith which is part of the theological themes this study intends to address. It has, however, not covered all the articles of faith and other controversial theological issues selected for discussion in this study.

Another important Arabic book that has spelt out and discussed the theology of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* only is *Sharḥu'l-ᶜAqīdatu-ṭ-Ṭahāwiyyah* authored by Ibn Abi'l-ᶜIzzi Muhammad bin ᶜAlāu-d-Din[42]. It discusses most of the controversial theology among the Islamic sects in the perspective of the *Ahlus-s-Sunnah wa'l Jamāᶜah*. Hence, the book is relevant and useful to this research work. However, it fails to discuss the theological issues from exegetical perspectives.

*Shurūḥu wa Ḥawāshiyyu'l-ᶜAqā'idi-n-Nasafiyyah li Ahli-s-Sunnah wa'l Jamā'ah*[43] which is a compilation of more than thirteen (13) Islamic scholars of different ages on the theology of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*. This book gives a clear limitation to the scope of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaᶜah* which includes only the

*Ashāᶜirah* (Ash'arites) and the *Mātūrīdiyyah* (Maturidites) with regards to theological issues. This is because the two leading Islamic personalities (Abu'l-Hassan Al-'Ashārī and Abu'l-Mansur Muhammad al-Māturidi) in these two Islamic sects were those that maintained the pristine Islamic theology at that period that is closer to the golden generation of the Prophet and his companions. A critical study of the theological discussion in the book shows that it is similar to the theology of the contemporary *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah* and the *Salafiyyah* but quite different from that of the *Muᶜtazilah, Shiᶜah* and the *Sufi*. By this, the book is useful and beneficial to this research work only that it has not discussed the theological issues from exegetical point of view.

*Kitābu 'Uṣūli'l-Īmān fī Daw'i'l-Kitāb Wa-s-Sunnah*[44] written by a committee of scholars is also found useful and relevant to this study because it reveals information about the belief in Allah and its three divisions as well as the other articles of faith with proofs from the Qur'an and Sunnah. In their discussion on the difference between the prophet and messenger, they say that a messenger does not necessarily bring a new law which is against the submission of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his exegeses on Q22:52. Thus, this study is going to examine this area and fill the vacuum therein. The authors have not also discussed the divergent theological matters selected for discussion in this present study. This work has been translated by A. A. Alaro into English language[45].

Among the few English books on theology is *Introduction to Islamic Theology: The Historical Origin and Doctrines of the Early Muslim Sects* written by Abdul-Ganiy O. Oloruntele[46]. The book is a comprehensive one on the evolution of Islamic Theology, Sectarianism in Islam and doctrines of each of

these sects. The only vacuum to be filled in the book by this study is the exegetical discussion of the Qur'ānic verses on the doctrines.

*A Brief Introduction to the ᶜAqīdah of Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah* authored by Al-Athari Abdullahi[47] is a book which gives an additional information on the meaning and scope of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah* as well as the six articles of faith with detail exposition on the attitudes of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* towards some issues such as *Bidᶜah* (Innovation), friendship and enmity, *Takfīr* and so on. The book is found useful only that it does not include exegetical analysis of the theological verses cited by the author.

*The Pillars of Islam and Īmān* is another book on the six articles of faith written by Zeno Muhammad bin Jamīl[48]. Though the discussion is brief and concise, it is relevant to this study. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips has produced a detail explanation on the first pillar of Islamic Theology, i.e., Belief in Allah. The book is entitled: *"The Fundamentals of Tawheed (Islamic Monotheism)"*[49]. Thus, the book is found useful in our discussion of the first pillar of faith. However, it is devoid of explanation on the other five articles of faith and the exegetical discussion of the verses cited.

Another book that is very relevant and useful to this study on theology is the one entitled: *"Theological Instruction: An Introduction to Contemporary Islamic Theology"* written by Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi and translated by Mirza Muhammad Abbās Ridā[50]. It discusses extensively the existence, essence and attributes of God with proofs. Its discussion on the attributes of God is very wide as it divides it into different parts such as attributes of essence, action as well as Negative attributes. It further explains the divine decree and destiny as well as the free-will of man. It does not leave the belief in the Prophets un-

discussed as well as the concept of eschatology. However, all these discussions are from the perspective of the Shiite theological school which is subset of the focus of this research.

*The Encyclopedia of Islam* is another important material on Islamic Theology (*ʿIlmu'l-Kalām*). The article written by L. Gardet[51] in this book is very useful as it discusses the evolution of Islamic Theology and other related issues. It, however, does not discuss the six articles of faith.

*Fī Ẓilāli'l-Qur'ān: A Study of Sayyid Qutb's Approach to Tafsīr* is another Ph.D. thesis by Badmas Olanrewaju Yusuf[52]. Its discussion on some theological issues such as characteristics of faith, eschatology, Human freewill and *Qadar* and so on is very useful as the discussion is from the modern perspective which will assist us in analysing theology in the contemporary society. Its discussion is, however, limited to the view of Sayyid Qutb among other Qur'anic Exegetes including 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

The Ph.D. Thesis of Yusuf Kolawole Jimoh entitled: *"A Study of Selected Themes in Ar-Rāzi's Mafātīhu'l-Ghayb"*[53] has contributed immensely to the theological discussion of this study as it discusses some theological issues in an exegetical way though from ar-Rāzi's perspective. The thesis is found useful since 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī himself used to make reference to ar-Rāzī in most cases with supportive statement or criticism.

Dennis Morgan Daris has contributed immensely to the discussion on Islamic Theology in his Ph.D. thesis entitled: *"Al-Ghazālī on Divine Essence: A Meaning from the Iqtiṣād fī al-Iʿtiqād with Notes and Commentary"*[54]. This thesis has indeed assisted in understanding the philosophical discussion of Imām al-Ghazālī on the essence and existence of God in his book *al-Iqtiṣād*. We have also

benefited from the notes and commentaries of the author who has made references to several other authorities in Islamic Theology, including the orientalists such as Watt. However, its discussion is not from the exegetical perspective.

Another unpublished work is the dissertation of Nāsir Jabar Marāhīl Gharqūd entitled: *"Qaḍāyā'l-ᶜAqīdah fī Daw'i Sūrati'l-'Aḥzāb wa Āthāruhā ᶜala'l-Fardi wa'l-Mujtamaᶜi"*[55]. The author discusses extensively *Tawḥīd* (Islamic Monotheism) with the evidences from the Glorious Qur'ān along with the explanation of the *Mufassirūn*. It further discusses *al-Ghaybiyyāt,* i.e. Eschatology which, according to the author, includes the Angels, Last Day and the Destiny. The concluding part of the book deals with the impact of *ᶜAqīdah* (theology) on both individual and the society. The book is a useful material for this research only that it is written in Arabic language and it is limited to *Sūratu'l-Aḥzāb*.

On theological discussion, we found the following articles of Muritada Aremu Muhibbu-d-Dīn most useful. They are: "*Imām Fakhr Al-Dīn Al-Rāzī Philosophical Theology in Al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr"*[56] and "*An Assessment of Imām Fakhr Al-Dīn Al-Rāzī's Contribution to Philosophical Theology in his Al-Tafsīr Al-Kabīr*".[57] The articles give additional information on the Names and Attributes of God as well as predestination and Free will of man from different angles. In the second article, the author looks into predestination and freewill from sectarian angle by mentioning the views of Ashᶜarites and Muᶜtazilites, which are parts of the discussion in this study. It is, however, limited to the views of Ar-Rāzi as a *Mufassir*.

Another article written by Hanifi Ozcan on *"The Relationship between God's knowledge and Human Freedom: A New Approach to the Problem"*[58] is also useful as the paper discusses the prior knowledge of God about things that happen in the world in relation to the freedom of man to do things on his own volition. This discussion is an aspect of Decree and Destiny (*al-Qaḍā' wa'l-Qadar*) in Islamic Theology. Thus, it does not cover other areas of destiny as well as other articles of faith which are going to be covered by this study.

On Islamic Theology, a material was found entitled: "Islamic Theology" written by Livnat Holtzman was consulted on http://www.academia.edu/1057821/IslamicTheology[59] . Likewise, another article written by A. Godlars entitled: "Faith in Islam: Theology (Kalam and Faith (Iman)" and available on https://www.islam.uga.edu/faith.html[60], was also found useful to this study for containing information on the definition of faith and theology as well as the differences between the two terms. However, it does not discuss the articles of faith in details as expected from sectarian and exegetical perspectives as well as the evolution of theology.

Bases on the above review of related literatures, it can be stated that there is no single work in English language on the theological study of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.* Thus, the present study will be of immense assistance for the English audience in getting the messages of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on theological verses of the Glorious Qur'ān from exegetical perspectives. This will go along way in correcting the misuse of Qur'ānic verses in defense of individual sect leading to controversy and conflict among the contemporary Muslims.

## Notes and References


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15. Al-Askarī is Abu Muhammad al-Hasan bin ᶜAli al-Hādī popularly known as (d. 260 A.H.). His geneology is linked with that of the Companion, Ali bin ᶜAbi Ṭālib. He is the eleventh Imām of the Twelvers, a group among the Shi'ites. His *Tafsīr* is popularly known as *Tafsīr* al-Hasan al-Askarī.

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## CHAPTER TWO

## BIOGRAPHY OF ’AL-’IMĀM ’AL-’ALŪSĪ

### 2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, an attempt is made to discuss the biography of the author of *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī*, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī. The areas of discussion include not only his place of birth, family background, genealogy, birth and growth, family life, education and his life activities but also his creed and *madh-hab*, works, challenges he faced in his life time, death and the views of scholars about him.

### 2.1 Baghdād*:* The Birth Place of ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī

The emergence of Abū Jaᶜfar al-Manṣūr as the second Abbasid Caliph in the second century of *Hijrah* marked a new era for Muslim developments and Islamic Civilization. In the year 145 A.H[1] equivalent to 762 C.E[2], a new circular fortress-palace of Abū Jaᶜfar al-Manṣūr (d. 157 A.H./775 C.E.) was built by him as the new capital of Abbasid Dynasty in a city called Baghdād.[3] This capital city was initially a small ancient city early occupied by a *Sāsānid* village before it was chosen by al-Manṣūr as an administrative base for the security and sustainability of the dynasty.[4] The city’s specific location, according to Lassner, was dictated by both economic and defensive consideration.[5]

Baghdād was known as the “Round City” (*al-Mudawwarah*) which makes it remain unique in the Muslim history of Urbanism[6]. It was built closer to the Old Persian Capital of Ctesiphon which made it connected with the Persian culture[7]. By this, it became one of the most important urban cities during this period as it was located on the trading routes and remained the Seat of Caliphate for five centuries between 9th and 13th century C.E.[8]. It was the largest city in its time as it was ten times the size of Ctesiphon

and even larger than Constantinople and any other Middle Eastern City except Istanbul in the world outside of China[9]. It is now not only the Capital of the Republic of Iraq i.e., *Al-Jumhūriyyah al-ᶜIrāqiyyah* but also the biggest and largest city of Iraq as well as the second largest city in the Arab world and the Southwestern Asia continent after Cairo in Egypt[10] and Tehran in Iran respectively.

The city of Baghdād was known in the history as the centre of the Muslim World and the base for the development of Arab Civilization which brought about the Islamic Civilization. This was as a result of the momentous intellectual resurgence in the area of learning and scholarship during the golden era of Abbasid Dynasty and especially in the reign of Caliph al-Ma'mūn (813-833 C.E.) [11].

And from the century of its establishment (8th Century) to the ninth Century, it was estimated to have up to a million inhabitants[12]. It is apposite to state here that the crusade of Hülegü Khān against the city of Baghdād in 1258 C.E. and that of Timur Lenk (Tamar lane) in 1401 C.E as well as various disasters such as plagues, floods, famines e.t.c. that besieged Baghdād and led to the destruction of lives and properties, had reduced this early population drastically to less than 50, 000 inhabitants in the 16th century. After a series of revival by the Mamlūk Dynasty in the 18th Century, it gained an increase in the population to 185, 000 in the early twentieth century (1907 C.E). It later increased from 200, 000, in 1921, to 515, 000 in 1947 and from 1,490,000,in 1965, to 4,950,000 in the year 2001 according to Encyclopedia Britannica while the Lancet Report states its inhabitants to be 6,554,126 for the year 2004 and 7,216,050 for the year 2011. The population has reduced to 5,672,513 for both 2015 and 2016 population estimate.[13]

It was officially named as *Madīnatu-s-Salām*[14] (The City of Peace) by its founder, al-Manṣūr. However, it is popularly known with the Old-name-Baghdād[15]-which Islamic Historians said it is pre-Islamic and whose origin is not known in Arabic. Thus, it is a

foreign name that can be traced to Persian origin[16] while some said it is of Indo-European origin. The word Baghdād is said to be a compound Persian word of "*Bag*" which means "god" and "*dad*" which means "given". Hence, in the modern Persian, it means "God given" or "God's gift". It can also mean "the Given Garden" or "the Given Idol".

More so, it was located on the west bank of the Tigris River in Central Iraq based on the prescription of two Persian astronomers who were employed for the purpose of land prescription; Naubakht Ahvaz who was a Zoroastrian and Mashallah who was of Jewish origin. It is about 5300km away from the Persian Gulf and closer to the two major rivers- Tigris and Euphrates- in the Mesopotamia region. These two rivers were the major routes for importing goods and foods, hence, it was closer to the main route through Zagros Mountain to the Iranian Plateau. This was why Al-Manṣūr targeted the place for his new capital City as recorded by aṭ-Ṭabari and quoted by Hitti thus:

> It is excellent as a military camp. Besides, here is the Tigris to put us in touch with lands as far as China and bring us all that the sea yield as well as the food products of Mesopotamia, Armenia and their environs. Then, there is the Euphrates to carry for us all that Syria, al-Raqqah and adjacent lands have to offer.[17]

Furthermore, it was built as a circle about 2km in diameter, with four gates which produced four high ways and led to the four corners of the dynasty. A lot of workers over 100,000 which include engineers, architects and surveyors were gathered from all over the world for its building. It is the Central market for the republic of Iraq with crude oil as the major product while other products include dates, barley, rice, grapes, tomatoes, textiles and clothing, leather goods, furniture etc.

Baghdād was a citadel of learning and commerce because of its location being linked with the trade routes as well as its mild climate and closeness to water. It became a world center of education and Islamic culture for scholars to teach the learners from other places. It housed the Meaning Bureau known as *Baytu'l-Ḥikmah* in the Golden Age of

Islam which made Baghdād to become a consultative city for both Muslims and Non-Muslims Scholars and learners. Thus, *Baytu'l-Ḥikmah* became an institute not only for the preservation and dissemination of knowledge but also the Meaning of materials from other languages to Arabic language and carrying out scientific research on issues as well as making contributions on the previous books through correction and commentary. Some of the scholars that promoted and developed Baghdād as a centre of learning were[18]:

i. Al-Kindi, who contributed to the knowledge of Mathematics and influenced Greek philosophy with the Islamic thought,
ii. Al-Birūni, who contributed to the field of geometry and astronomy as well as physics, mathematics and natural sciences,
iii. Ibn Sīna, who contributed to the knowledge of philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and poetry.
iv. Yahya bin Hārūn, who contributed in the area of translating Persian works into Arabic language.
v. Al-Battāni, who was good in astronomy and mathematics. He was known for his invention of sine and co-sine.
vi. Ar-Rāzī popularly known by the West as Rhazes especially in the medieval Europe. He wrote two hundred works on medicine. He was known for his introduction of the use of minoratives, invention of the Seton and was credited with the discovery of the nerve of larynx.

Others include: al-Khawārizm, Hunayn bin Isḥāq, Ibn Muqaffa$^{c}$, Ibn Ẓuhr (Aven Zoar), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Tufail etc. The availability of more scholars and learners in the city from different places brought about the circulation of education to the nooks and crannies of the city[19].

With the invasion of the Mongols on February 10, 1258 C.E., the long-achieved prosperity, Islamic civilization, Heritage and Governance in Baghdād became history of the past. Many inhabitants of the city were massacred, buildings were burnt through inflammable substances, mosques and libraries as well as hospitals were destroyed. This was really a loss which the Islamic civilization as well as the Muslim world never recovered. The incident of invading Baghdād could best be described as observed by Abdullahi Wassaf thus:

> They swept through the city like hungry Falcons attacking a flight of doves, or like raging wolves attacking sheeps, with loose reins and shameless faces, murdering and spreading terror… beds and cushions made of gold and encrusted with jewels were cut to pieces with knives and torn to shreds. Those hiding behind the veils of the great Haren were dragged… through the streets and alleys, each becoming a play thing … as the population died at the hands of the invaders… The massacre was so great that the blood of the slain flowed in a river like the Nile… and the brightness of the day became darkened for these mothers of virtue.[20]

From the above submission, it can be concluded that the Mongol invasion was a terrorist attack of the highest order which had caused, not only Iraq, as a nation but also the Muslim World, a great loss in terms of knowledge, culture, civilization and ancient heritage. Since then, Baghdād has been under different sieges such as the Timur (Tamer lane) in 1401, the Ottoman Empire in 1534, the World War 1 in 1914, the United Kingdom invasion in 1941, the Coups of Iraqi Army in 1958 and 1968, the Iran-Iraqi War in 1980s and the 2003 United States invasion.[21]

The city of Baghdād became part of Ottoman Empire in 1638 and was ruled for almost 623 years before the Ottomans were drove out in 1918. It was during this period, specifically in 1803, that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī was born. It was intellectually, politically, religiously and spiritually balanced as military training as well as Mystical and *Salafiyyah* teachings were spread all over the city which influenced his educational background and orientations.[22] Thus, he became a highly diversified scholar not only in knowledge but also

in dispositions. It was during this empire that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī died at the age of 53 years in the year 1854 C.E /1270 A.H.

## 2.2 His Family Background

The family of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī originated from the city of Baghdād but was popularly known and identified as *'al-'Usratu'l-'Alūsiyyah*[23] (الأسرة الألوسية) i.e., the Alūsi`s Family. The name of Alūsī was derived and affiliated to a village called 'Alūs which is situated at the south of ᶜĀnat on the upper Euphrates while az-Zirkilī mentions that Alūs as a village falls in the middle of Euphrates river which lies between Shām and Baghdād at five metres away from Baghdād. The fore fathers of this family fled from Baghdād, during the Mongol invasion of Baghdād in 1258 to 'Alūs and remained there until the eleventh (11th) Century after *Hijrah* equivalent to Seventeenth (17th) Century C.E. when their later generation returned back to Baghdād[24].

'Al-'Alūsī's family was a knowledgeable family that had produced scholars of high repute in different fields such as Islamic Jurisprudence (*Al-Fiqhu'l-Islāmi*), Qur'ānic Exegesis (*Tafsīr*), Arabic Grammar (*Naḥw*), Rhetoric (*Balāghah*) and others since 11th, 13th and 14th century A.H. equivalent to 17th, 19th and 20th Century C.E.[27] For instance, *Ash-Shaykh* Ismāᶜīl al-Mufti 'al-'Alūsī was the great ancestor of 'Alusi's family and the Mufti of Baghdād in the 11th Century A.H./17th Century C.E. In 12th Century A.H./18th Century C.E. his grandfather, As-Sayyid Maḥmūd bin Darwīsh, who was also a scholar and preacher came to Baghdād and died therein. Some other eminent scholars of this family apart from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī include:[25]

(a) His father, ᶜAbdullahi Ṣalāḥu-d-Dīn 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1246 A.H.)

(b) His brother, ᶜAbdur-Raḥmān bin ᶜAbdullah 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1284 A.H.). He was knowledgeable in *Tafsīr, Fiqh* and *Ḥadīth*. He was good in speech and possessed

praiseworthy characters. He was the Imām of al-Karkhi Central Mosque till his death.

(c) His brother, ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd bin ᶜAbdullāh 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1324 A.H.). He was blind since his childhood but was an intelligent and a great preacher in ᶜAli Ridā Pasha Mosque for the leaders, elders and executive people.

(d) His sons, Abū Suᶜūd Bihā'u-d-Dīn ᶜAbdullāhi 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1291 A.H.). He was one of the notable scholars of ᶜIrāq, very pious and good in caligraphy.[26] He was *Sūfī* and *Shāfiᶜiyyah* oriented. He later followed the Ḥanafiyyah School of thought. It has been recorded, according to Al-Athari, that his sons were all notable scholars of ᶜIrāq.

(e) His son, Aḥmad Shākir 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1330 A.H.)

(f) His son, Abū'l-Barakāt Khayru-d-Dīn Nuᶜmān 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1317 A.H.)

(g) His Son, Saᶜdu-d-Dīn ᶜAbdul'l-Bāqī 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1292 A.H. or 1296 A.H. or 1298 A.H.)[27]

(h) ᶜAlā'u-d-Dīn bin ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1354 A.H.)

'Al-'Alūsī's family was known for its authority in Arabic Caligraphy (الخط العربى). The father of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, Ṣalāḥu-d-Dīn, was the first person to be known, among the 'Alūsī's family in Iraq, with good virtues. He was a pious and devoted man, a grammarian, *Shāfiᶜi* Jurist and scholar of inheritance. He died of plague at Baghdād in the year 1246 A.H. equivalent to 1833 C.E., when 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was twenty-nine years old. His mother was Ṣāliḥah whose father was *Ash-Shaykh* Ḥusayn, according to Maḥmūd Shukri while Al-Atharī recorded it as Ḥasan al-ᶜUshārī (d. 1200) and was a reputable scholar of *Fiqh*, Grammar and Poetry.

The family was also known as "The Orator Family- آل الخطيب" because of the oratory quality and ability of Maḥmūd bin Darwīsh, the grandfather of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī who was being called "*Al-Khaṭīb*". It was also called "The *Shuyūkh* Family".

'Al-Imam Al-Alusi's indelible contributions and sustainance of his family lineage in the city of Baghdad, specifically, as well as the Ottoman Empire and Muslim world generally, can never be forgotten in terms of scholarship. This made him to be given the popular appellation as " 'Al-'Alūsī 'Al-Kabīr – الألوسي الكبير "

## 2.3 His Name and Genealogy

His name is Maḥmūd Afandi the son of ᶜAbdullāh, Ṣalāḥu-d-Dīn. His agnomen (*Kunyah*) is Abū Thanā'i while his nickname is Shihābu-d-Dīn and his attributive names (*Nisbah*) are 'al-'Alūsī, al-Ḥasanī and al-Ḥusayn.[28]

Genealogically, according to ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī al-ᶜUmarī and quoted by Maḥmūd Shukri and al-Athari, he is related to the two sons of the daughter of the Prophet -ﷺ- (Fāṭimah-); al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. With regards to his genealogy to al-Ḥusayn, it has been traced as follows[29]:

> محمود (أبو الثناء المفسر شهاب الدين) ابن عبد الله بن محمود بن درويش بن عاشور ابن محمد بن ناصر الدين بن حسين ابن الحاج علي المكنى بأبي راشد ابن حسين بن كمال الدين بن شمس الدين محمد بن شمس الدين بن جارس بن شمس الدين الأذربيجاني بن شهاب الدين بن أبى القاسم بن أمير بن محمد بن بيدار بن عيسى بن محمد بن أحمد بن موسى بن أحمد بن محمد بن أحمد الأعرج بن موسى المبرقع ابن الإمام محمد الجواد ابن الإمام على الرضا ابن الإمام موسى الكاظم ابن الإمام جعفر الصادق ابن الإمام محمد الباقر ابن الإمام على السجاد زين العابدين ابن الإمام الحسين ابن الإمام على بن أبى طالب زوج فاطمة الزهراء بنت رسول الله محمد بن عبد الله

**Translation:**

> Maḥmūd (Abu-th-Thanā'i, Shihābu-d-Dīn) the son of ᶜAbdullahi the son of Maḥmūd the son of Darwīsh the son of ᶜĀshūr the son of Muḥammad the son of Nāsiru-d-Dīn the son of Ḥusayn (aṭ-Ṭāhir) the son of al-Ḥāj ᶜAli, who is known as Abu Rāshid the son of Ḥusayn the son of Kamālu-d-Dīn the son of Shamsu-d-Dīn the son of Muḥammad the son of Shamsu-d-Dīn the son of Ḥāris the son of Shamsu-d-Dīn al-Adhribījānī the son of Shihabu-d-Dīn the son of Abi'l-Qāsim the son of 'Amīr the son of Muḥammad the son of Bīdār the son of ᶜĪsā the son of Muḥammad the son

> of Aḥmad the son of Mūsā the son of Aḥmad the son of Muhammad the son of Aḥmad al-Aᶜraj the son of Mūsā al-Mubraqiᶜ the son of al-Imām Muḥammad al-Jawwād the son of al-'Imām ᶜAli ar-Riḍā the son of al-'Imām Mūsā al-Kāẓim the son of al-'Imām Jaᶜfar Aṣ-Ṣādiq the son of al-'Imām Muḥammad Al-Bāqir the son of al-'Imām ᶜAli as-Sajjād Zaynu'l-ᶜĀbidīn the son of al-'Imām al-Ḥusayn the son of al-'Imām ᶜAli the son of Abi Ṭālib (the uncle of the Noble Prophet Muhammad - ﷺ-) the husband of Fāṭimah, the daughter of the Messenger of Allah, Muḥammad -ﷺ - the son of ᶜAbdullah.

It is based on the above lineage to al-Ḥusayn the son of ᶜAli the son of Abi Ṭālib that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was given the attributive name of al-Ḥusaynī. In the case of his genealogy to al-Ḥasan, it has been traced from his paternal grandmother (i.e. the mother of his father, ᶜAbdullah) who was named Fāṭimah according to Maḥmūd Shukri thus[30]:

> فاطمة بنت محمد تاج الدين بن إبراهيم بن إسماعيل ين عمر بن الشيخ عبد القادر الطيار بن حسين بن عبد القادر بن يحي بن أحمد بن قاض القضاة أبى النصر بن عبد الرزاق بن الشيخ عبد القادر الكيلانى (قدس الله سره العزيز) .. ثم ينتهى عهده إلى الإمام الحسن بن على بن أبى طالب

**Meaning:**

> Fāṭimah the daughter of Muḥammad Tāju-d-Dīn the son of Ibrahim the son of Ismāᶜīl the son of ᶜUmar the son of Ash-Shaykh ᶜAbdul-Qādir aṭ-Ṭayyār the son of Ḥusayn the son of ᶜAbdul-Qādir the son of Yaḥyā the son of Aḥmad the son of the Chief Judge Abi-n-Naṣr the son of ᶜAbdu-r-Razāq the son of Ash-Shaykh ᶜAbdu'l-Qādir al-Kīlānī… then it ends with al-'Imām al-Ḥasan the son of ᶜAli the son of Abi Ṭālib.

It is based on the above lineage to al-Ḥasan the son of ᶜAli the son of Abi Ṭālib that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was also given the attributive name of al-Ḥasanī. He is also attributively called al-Baghdādi[31] because of either his birth or stay in the city of Baghdād.

## 2.4 His Birth and Growth

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī was born to the family of ᶜAbdullāhi 'al-'Alūsī and Ṣāliḥah in the town of al-Karkh in Baghdād, the city of Peace.[32] His birth took place on the day of *Jumuᶜah* when *Jumuᶜah* prayer was approaching on the 14th of the month of Shaᶜbān, 1217 A.H equivalent to 11th of December 1802 A.D. This was during the Ottoman Empire of 19th Century in the reign of *Sulṭān* Salim Khān III.[33]

Furthermore, he grew up in the midst of modernization and civilization of the Ottoman Empire in the city of Baghdād. This made him to witness and live through the regime of four *Sulṭāns* of the empire and twelve *Mamlūk* Governors of Baghdād. These *Sulṭāns* and *Mamlūk* Governors, as mentioned by Al-Bukhari, are as follows: [34]

(a) The *Sulṭan*:

i. *Sulṭān* Salīm Khān III the son of *Sulṭān* Mustapha Khān III. He was the twenty-eighth (28th) *Sulṭān* in Ottoman Empire (d. 1223A.H./1808 C.E.). He reigned between 1203 A.H. and 1222 A.H. equivalent to 1789 C.E. and 1807 C.E.

ii. *Sulṭān* Mustapha Khān IV the son of ᶜAbdul'l-Ḥamīd Khān I who was the twenty-ninth (29th) *Sulṭan* in Ottoman Empire. His reign was between 1222 A.H. and 1223 A.H. equivalent to 1087 C.E. and 1808 C.E.

iii. *Sulṭān* Maḥmūd II the son of ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd Khān I (d. 1255 A.H/1840 C.E). He was the thirtieth (30th) *Sulṭān* in Ottoman Empire.

iv. Sulṭān ᶜAbdu'l-Majīd the son of *Sulṭān* Maḥmūd II (d. 1277 A.H./1862 C.E.). He was the thirty-first (31st) *Sulṭān* in Ottoman Empire.

(b) The *Mamlūk*:

i. *Mamlūk* Dawūd Pāshā (d. 1267 A.H./ 1852 C.E.). He was dethroned in the year 1247 A.H./1831 C.E. and was exiled to Brusah[35] where he remained till he died.

ii. *Mamlūk* ᶜAli Riḍā Pāshā al-Lāz (d. 1258 A.H./1842 C.E.). He was the one who deposed Dawūd Pāshā in 1831 C.E. He was in good relation with 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī which made him to appoint 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to some positions among which is the position of *Mufti*.[36] He was deposed and replaced by Najīb Pāshā.

*iii.* *Mamlūk* Muhammmad Najīb Pāshā (d. 1268 A.H./1851 C.E.). He was very hostile to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to the point of deposing him from his Muftiship of Baghdād and also stripped him of his major source of income-*Marjan Waqf*.

iv. *Mamlūk* ᶜAbdu'l-Karīm Pāshā (d. 13022 A.H./1885 C.E.).[37] He was stripped off his position as the Commander in Chief of the Turkish Army and was exiled. There is no record of any relationship between him and 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

v. *Mamlūk* Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Wajīhī Pāshā, who reined between 1264 A.H./1847 C.E. and 1265 A.H./1848 C.E. He spent less period compared to other previous leaders as he put the affairs of the state in the hand of Nāmiq Pāshā but he was finally removed in the year 1267 A.H.

vi. *Mamlūk* Nāmiq Pāshā Al-Kabīr, who was the Commander in Chief of the Army in 1265 A.H. when he started representing his predecessor in state administration before he later became the Governor in the early year of 1268 A.H./1851 C.E. He had to combine the two positions together till he was deposed in the year 1269 A.H./1852 C.E.

vii. *Mamlūk* Muḥammad Rashīd Pāshā who 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was among those that welcomed him to Baghdād as the new *Wālī* in the year 1269 A.H./1852 C.E. 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was also among the scholars and elders that gathered to assist Rashīd Pāshā against the Russian Army in 1269 A.H. It was during his regime that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī died in the year 1270 A.H/1854 C.E. while he (Muḥammad Rashīd Pāshā al-Kawzalakī) died in the year 1273 A.H./1856 C.E.

The above brief discussion on the *Sulṭān* of the Ottoman Empire and some of the Governors of Baghdād, whom 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī lived through their reigns, had shown how he spent his life amidst scholarship and public administration. Thus, he grew up not only within religious scholars of high reputes in different fields of Islamic Sciences but also Public administrators of high caliber with both Islamic and western orientations. This brought about great concern for scholarship in the city of Baghdād and most especially during the governorship of Dāwud Pāshā. This, along with the religious and

knowledgeable family of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, assisted him to have high enthusiasm for scholarship. His environment was full of mystical groups and ideologies to the extent that mysticism was nationally approved. He was not exempted from having affiliation with a *Sūfī* order -*Naqushabandiyyah Tarīqah*- which was the state mystical group that was supported by the then Governor, Dawūd Pāshā and because one of his teachers-Diyāu-d-Dīn Khālid an-Naqushabandi- was the mystical leader of the group.

Furthermore, he grew up under the tutelage of his father before going out to other scholars. In a nutshell, overall study of his life from birth to death shows that he grew up in the city of Baghdād, lived and died therein throughout his life sojourn except few years of travel between 1267 A.H./1851 C.E. and 1269 A.H./1853 C.E. to Istanbul and returning back to Baghdād.[38]

## 2.5 His Family Life

'Al-'Imām'Al-'Alūsī, despite his indelible effort in searching and disseminating knowledge for scholarship, was a family man with six children- all of whom were male- even though their mother(s) were not mentioned historically. They were brought up under the tutelage of their father and all became scholars like their father as well as the grandsons with indelible legacy in the socio-religious and politico-educational history of Baghdād in particular and ᶜIrāq in general. These, children are: Bihā'u-d-Dīn, Saᶜdu-d-Dīn, Khayru-d-Dīn, Ḥāmid, Aḥmad and ᶜAbdu-r-Razāq.

(a) Abu Suᶜūd Bihā'u-d-Dīn ᶜAbdullāhi Afandi 'al-'Alūsī ( أبو السعود بهاء الدين عبد الله أفندى الألوسى): He was born in the year 1248 A.H./1835 C.E. in the city of Baghdād on Monday, 15th of Rabiᶜu'l-'Awwal between *Maghrib* and *Ishā'*. He perfected the recitation of the Qur'ān at the age of five within a year. He was taught the sciences of Arabic language and caligraphy by his father,'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr at his tender age and later became a pillar among the notable scholars of ᶜIrāq. He was a

member of the *Naqushabandiyyah Sūfī* Order but later became a *Salafi* and spread the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* creed till he died. He was afflicted with serious sickness but was healed by *ash-Shaykh* ᶜUthmān at Tuwaylah village in the south of ᶜIrāq. He later became the Judge in *Baṣrah*, after his refusal, for two years after which he returned to Baghdād where he died of liver and heart tumour on Tuesday 3rd of *Shaᶜban*, 1291 A.H./ 1874 C.E. He was credited with some literary works which he wrote when he was healthy and sound.[39] He was blessed with seven children; five males and two females.[40] They include:

(i) As-Sayyid Mustapha Afandi Zaynud-Din (d. 1344 A.H). he was in charge of adjudication in different cities including Makkah al-Mukarramah and later became the Minister of Justice in the Republic of ᶜIrāq.

(ii) As-Sayyid Muḥammad ᶜĀrif Hikmah (d. 1334 A.H)

(iii) Mahmud Shukri 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1342 A.H). A scholar of Hadīth, History, Theology, Linguist, Fiqh and Poetry. He was a prolific writer of more than fifty (50) books.

(iv) Hasan Rushdi 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1334 A.H)

(v) Umar Masᶜūd 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1318 A.H)

(b) Saᶜdu-d-Dīn ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqi Afandi 'al-'Alūsī (سعد الدين عبد الباقى أفندى الألوسى): As the second child of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī was born on *Jumuᶜat* night, 19th of *Ṣafar*, 1250 A.H./1837 C.E. He started his learning from his father who taught him both Arabic and Islamic sciences. He memorized some texts such as *Alfiyatu Ibn Mālik* and others. He became a Judge at the city of Karkūk in the 1294 A.H./1878 C.E. and then in the city of *Badlīs*. He wrote a lot of books and died on a Saturday morning 11th of *Ṣafar* 1298 A.H./1881 C.E. or[41] 21st of *Ṣafar*, 1292 A.H./1885 C.E. He was succeeded by two sons and a daughter[42]. The sons are:

i. As-Sayyid Muḥammad ᶜĀkif, who was born in the year 1271 A.H./1856 C.E. and died in the year 1325 A.H./1910 C.E. He was the more virtuous of the two sons with core values. He was very useful for the government of Irāq during his lifetime. He was blessed with five sons.[43]

ii. As-Sayyid ᶜAbdu'l-Qādir Afandi whose information about his biography needs further research.

(c) Abū'l-Barakāt Khayru-d-Dīn Nuᶜmān Afandi 'Al-'Alūsī ( أبو البركات خير الدين نعمان أفندى الألوسى): As the third born of his father- 'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr-, he was born on the night of *Jumuᶜah*, 12th of Muḥarram, 1252 A.H. equivalent to 1839 C.E. He was tutored by his father and then the student of his father. He was a preacher, Jurist, researcher and a leading scholar in the Alūsī's family after his father. He assumed the position of Judge in many cities such as al-Hilah, Al-Astānah, etc. He was a generous, truthful and an ascetic person. He was nicknamed as the "Leader of the teachers". He died in the year 1317 A.H. equivalent to 1899 C.E., in the city of Baghdād and was survived by nine (9) children; seven (7) males and two (2) females.[44] They are:-

i. Muḥammad Thābit Afandi who was born in 1275 A.H. /1860 C.E. as his eldest son. He was among the men of Jurisdiction in Baghdād. He did in 1329 A.H/1911 C.E and left behind none (9) children who are: (i) Ibrahim 'al-'Alūsī (born in 1308 A.H. and died 1951 C.E.) (ii) Al-Maḥāmī Jalālu-d-Dīn (iii) Ḥasan (iv) Yaḥya (v) ᶜAlā'ullāh (vi) ᶜĪsā (d. 1968 C.E.) (vii) ᶜAbdu-r-Razāq (d. 1972 C.E.) (viii) Mūsā (ix) Ṣayfu-d-Dīn

ii. As-Sayyid ᶜAli ᶜIlāᶜu-d-Dīn Afandi who was born in 1277 A.H./1862 C.E. in the city of *Kāẓimiyah* but died in the city of Baghdād in 1340 A.H./1922

C.E. He was among the scholars of Baghdād with noble characters and wrote some books.

iii. Ḥisāmu-d-Dīn ᶜUmar Abu-n-Naṣr. He was born in 1282 A.H. /1867 C.E. and died in 1339 A.H./1920 C.E.

iv. Maḥmūd Shihābu-d-Dīn Abu-th-Thanā' who was named after his grandfather, 'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr. He was born in 1285 A.H./1870 C.E. and died in Baghdād in the year 1317 A.H/1899 C.E.

v. ᶜUthmān Nūru-d-Dīn Abu as-Suᶜūd who was born in 1284 A.H./1869 C.E. and died the same year.

vi. Ismāᶜil who also died at his infancy. The year is not mentioned.

vii. Ahmad whose date of birth and death is not mentioned.

viii. As-Sayyidah Hāshimiyyah who died in 1354 A.H./1934 C.E.

ix. ᶜAdilah Khātūn who married Nāmiq Pāshā, the Governor of Baghdād who was removed in the year 1320 A.H.

(d) As-Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥāmid Afandi 'al-'Alūsī (السيد محمد حامد أفندى الألوسى): He was the fourth son of Abu-th-Thanā' to be born on the night of Wednesday, 19th of *Shawwāl*, 1262 A.H./1845 C.E. He studied under his brothers the knowledge of Arabic and Islamic Jurisprudence. He died in the city of Constantinople in the year 1290 A.H./1873 C.E. and was succeeded by two daughters[45] according to Al-Athari while Al-Jabūrī said a daughter whose name is not mentioned but died in the year 1326 A.H./1910 C.E.[46]

(e) As-Sayyid Aḥmad Shākir Afandi 'al-'Alūsī (السيد أحمد شاكر أفندى الألوسى): As the fifth son of 'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr, he was born in the year 1264 A.H./1847 C.E. in the night of Saturday 19th of Ṣafar[47]. He was intelligent and morally upright. He became the Judge in some cities in the republic of ᶜIrāq such as *al-Baṣrah, Karbalā*

and others. He lost his father at the age of six (6) and became a public preacher before the age of twenty. He died in the month of Ramadan of 1330 A.H./1914 C.E. He was blessed with some children among whom are[48]:

i. Muḥammad Darwīsh who was born in the year 1292 A.H/1875 C.E and died in the year 1367 A.H./1948 C.E. He was one of the scholars of ᶜ*Irāq* and most virtuous and influential son of Aḥmad Shākir.

ii. As-Sayyid Ḥusayn who left two sons behind; Aḥmad and Maḥmūd

iii. As-Sayyid ᶜAbdu'l-Muṭallib who died in 1917 C.E. during the British invasion of Baghdād.

(f) As-Sayyid ᶜAbdu-r-Razāq Afandi 'al-'Alūsī (السيد عبد الرزاق أفندى الألوسى) was the sixth child of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr, his date of birth is not known but died at his infancy in the year 1267 A.H./1849 C.E.

Based on the above discussion of the marital life of Abu-th-Thanā'i, there is no gainsaying in the fact that he has indeed left an indelible heritage and legacy in the republic of ᶜ*Irāq* generally and Baghdād particularly as well as the Muslim *Ummah* in totality.

## 2.6 His Education

Abu-th-Thanā'i 'al-'Alūsī was influenced academically by not only nature of the family which he was blessed with but also the environment which produced him through his study under various teachers of different intellectual background of both Islamic and Western learning. In his attempt to discharge his parental responsibilities, ᶜAbdullāhi Ṣalāḥu-d-Dīn 'al-'Alūsī paid great attention to the education of his eldest son, Abu-th-Thanā'i from his childhood.

With his father, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī started his educational journey to learn various branches of Islamic Sciences and Arabic Studies. Before the age of seven, he had

perfected the recitation and memorization of some books including the Glorious Qur'ān, *al-Ajrūmiyyah, Alfiyah Ibn Mālik, al-Manẓūmah ar-Rahbiyah, Ghāyatu'l-Ikhtiṣār- Fiqh* book in the *Shāfiᶜ* school of thought- and other Arabic Grammar books, under the tutelage of his father[49]. Aside learning from his father at this period, Abu-th-Thanā' learnt from al-Mulā Ḥusayn al-Jabūri as mentioned by him in his book entitled "*Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb wa Nuz-hatu'l-albāb*"[50]. This means that his teachers at the tender age were two; his father and al-Jabūrī.

At the age of ten, his father gave him permission to go out for further learning from other scholars of his period. Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī joined his cousin, ᶜAli bin Aḥmad to learn Ashᶜāri theology[51]. He also joined some other scholars for his knowledge in different Islamic discipline to the extent of granting him license (*'Ijāzah*) of becoming a scholar, preacher and teacher after staying with them for more than ten years as in the case of *Shaykh* ᶜAlā'u-d-Dīn. Amazingly, he started delivering sermon, at the age of twenty-five, in the presence of great and honourable scholars of his city and time including those who taught him.[52]

The enthusiasm of Abu-th-Thanā' for knowledge made him to augment his academic status by furthering with other scholars of *Māliki* school of thought in *Fiqh* such as *as-Shaykh* Yaḥya al-Marwazi as well as in *Ḥadīth* like *as-Shaykh* Muḥammad al-Kuzbarī. His mixture of intellectuals made him an all-round scholar of various discipline[53] as described by his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī. He was tutored not only by *Sūfī* teacher in different fields but also by Salafi teacher and an alleged Wahābi teacher which made him to approach his *Tafsīr* on the Qur'ān from different angles[54]. He started writing at the age of thirteen years. He also studied some works on philosophy and Greek logic as well as *Taṣawwuf* and Ethic (*'Adab*)[55] even though he later implored his students not to quest for knowledge in sources of logic, philosophy and extreme sufism except when it becomes

necessary and unavoidable[56]. This, perhaps, is because he was influenced by the philosophy of Ibn Sinā (Avicenna) and the *Sūfī* Metaphysicians such as Ibn ᶜArabi though knowledge in those fields was useful for him in defending the pristine Islam against sectarian theological principles.

In spites of his high level of intellectual attainment among his contemporaries, Abu-th-Thanā'i's thirst of knowledge remained unquenched as he continued to make deep and independent research on various issues form Islamic perspective. This is well explicit in his exposition on the Glorious Qur'ān as he moved from a discussion to another and a field of knowledge to another. For instance, when he was discussing the monotheistic nature and the essence of Allah in *Sūratu'l-Ikhlās*, he delved into discussion on the concept of Trinity. And after a long discussion, he expressed his intention of writing a paper on Trinitarian belief of the Christians along with their evidences based on their available books and his refutation of this belief and their proofs one after the other[57]. Thereafter, he prayed Allah to make it easy for him to achieve but there is nothing like this work among his available literary works. His grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī describes him as a wonder among the wonders of his age, and a miracle among the signs of Allah in all sciences[58]. It is also said that he is a scholar of everything in everything, who does not waste an atom of his time to the extent of using the moon light to study in the absence of lamp while his colleagues were busy with play and amusement.

### 2.6.1 His Teachers

Undoubtedly, the likes of Abu-th-Thanā'i in intellectual attainment are expected to have as many influential teachers as possible. His diversified educational background depicts him as a personality having high repute and standard scholars as mentors and models. Among them are those he stayed with for long period of time to get *Ijāzah* (license) while he was only examined by some to test his intellectual ability before giving

him *Ijāzah* and some he met for intellectual conversation. The following are some of the eminent teachers through whom 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī al-Kabīr was blessed with his encyclopedic knowledge:

(i) His father, ᶜAbdullāhi bin Maḥmūd 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1246 A.H./1833C.E. of plague). He taught Abu-th-Thanā'i Arabic Grammar, Inheritance, *Shāfiᶜi* and *Ḥanafi* Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*).

(ii) His Qur'ānic Teacher, al-Mullā Ḥusayn al-Jabūrī. He was a pious and righteous person and resided in the market mosque of *Ḥammādah*.

(iii) His cousin, As-Sayyid ᶜAli bin Aḥmad who instructed him in *Ashᶜari* theology[59]. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī studied under his cousin some religious sciences and rational sciences.

(iv) His Mystical Teacher, Diyāu-d-Dīn Khālid ash-Shahrazūrī. He was popularly known as Khālid an-Naqushabandi, Abu'l-Bihā', who was born in 1190 A.H./1776 C.E. and died in 1242 A.H./1826 C.E. He taught 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī some texts in Islamic theology focusing in attributive names of Allah and initiated him into the *Naqushabandiyyah Ṭarīqah* as confirmed by himself in his *Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb*.

(v) His Research Teacher, al-Mullā Darwīsh bin ᶜArab Hidar who taught him research ethics (آدات البحث) and its commentary that was known as *al-Ḥanafiyyah*. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī met him in his school days at the *Madrasah* Aḥmadiyyah.

(vi) Muḥammad bin Aḥmad whom Abu-th-Thanā' referred to as his short time teacher by reading only one book from him and later left him as they did not understand themselves. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī says:

فلم أفهم منه ما قال كما لم يفهم منى ما قلت كأن بعضنا يتكلم بالعربية والآخر بالعبرانية

**Meaning:**

> I did not understand whatever he says as he also did not understand mine. It is as if a party of us is speaking Arabic language and the other is speaking Hebrew.

(vii) ᶜAbdu'l-ᶜAzīz Afandi Shawwāf Zāduh, who died in the year 1246 A.H./1830 C.E. He taught 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī the knowledge of Inheritance, Research Methodology and Debate Management. He also taught him lexicology as he was known as *Sībawayh* the second. He was described by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as a truthful scholar that is always with the truth and he either keeps silent or speaks the truth.

(viii) As-Sayyid Muḥammad Amīn bin As-Sayyid ᶜAli al-Ḥillī who died in the year 1246 A.H./1830 C.E. of plague. He taught him the explanation of a book "*al-Wadᶜiyah*" authored by *Shaykh* ᶜIṣām. He was eloquent and oratory.[60]

(ix) ᶜAlā'u-d-Dīn ᶜAli bin Yūsuf al-Mūsili who died in the year 1243 A.H./1827 C.E. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī accompanied him for almost fourteen (14) years before he could be granted *Ijāzah* (license) of scholarship.[61] Nafi concludes on the relationship between ᶜAlā'u-d-Dīn and 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī thus:

> The bulk of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī basic education in *Fiqh* and ideology was the outcome of his joining the circle of Shaykh ᶜAlā'ud-Dīn al-Musili, in whose companionship he spent more time than with any other of his teacher.[62]

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī describes him thus:

> والحق إنه كان فى كل علم آية الله تعالى الكبرى وجنته التى لايجوع فيها طالب علم ولايعرى[63]

**Meaning**:

> Truly, he is a major sign of Allah in all fields of knowledge and his garden in which a student of knowledge will not feel hungry and naked.

(x) *Ash-Shaykh* ᶜAli bin Muḥammad Saᶜīd bin ᶜAbdullāh as-Suwaydi who died in the year 1237 A.H./1821 C.E. He was the one that taught 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī the knowledge of the science of *Ḥadīth* through the book of Ibn Ḥajar 'al-ᶜAsqalānī

entitled "*an-Nakhbah*" as he was a main scholar of *Ḥadīth* and History as well as a close adviser to Sulaymān Pāshā aṣ-Ṣaghīr, who was the Governor of Baghdād between 1807 C.E. and 1810 C.E. He was regarded as the second most influential teacher[64]of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

(xi) *Ash-Shaykh* Yahyā al-Mazwarī 'al-ᶜAmādī ash-Shāfiᶜ al-Baghdādi who died in the year 1255 A.H./1838 C.E. He gave 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī *Ijāzah* (license) in many fields of knowledge both in traditional and rational after examination and debate on various issues.

(xii) *Ash-Shaykh* ᶜAbdur-Raḥmān al-Kuzbarī who died in the year 1262 A.H./1845 C.E., in the city of Makkah. He was a Damascene Scholar of *Ḥadīth*. He also gave 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī *Ijāzah* of scholarship.

(xiii) *Ash-Shaykh* ᶜAbdu'l-Laṭīf bin ᶜAli Fatḥullāh who died in the 1250's. His father was the *Mufti* of Beirūt.[65]

(xiv) ᶜAbdullahi Afandi al-ᶜAmarī al-Mūsilī who died in the year 1297 A.H./1879 C.E. He taught 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī some *Qirā'āt* (recitations) of the Qur'ān such as *Qirā'atu* Nāfiᶜ, Ibn Kathīr and Abi ᶜAmr al-Basrī. This means that he was one of the Qur'ānic teachers of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

(xv) Ḥusayn ad-Dāghastānī Afandi

(xvi) Aḥmad ᶜArīf Ḥikmat who died in the year 1275 A.H./1858 C.E. in the city of al-Astānah. They both had conversation and examined each other. Thus, they gave *Ijāzah* to each other.

(xvii) *Ash-Shaykh* ᶜAbdu'l-Fatāḥ Shawwāf Zāduh[66]

(xviii) Ash-Shamsu Muḥammad at-Tamīmī al-Ḥanafī

(xix) As-Sayyid Ibrahīm al-Barzanjī

(xx) *Ash-Shaykh* Aḥmad az-Zanad

(xxi) *Ash-Shaykh* Muḥammad ‘’Asᶜad al-Hīdarī. He was the *Mufti* of *al-Ḥanafiyyah*

(xxii) Al-’Ustādh ᶜAbdu’l-Fatāḥ ar-Rāwī

(xxiii) Al-Ustadh Muḥammad Saᶜīd aṭ-Ṭabaqajihlī[67]

The above listed teachers of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī is the known and available ones. There are others who have been mentioned as he himself affirmed the fact that he has not mentioned them all and that may be he is going to compile them all in a special book. However, he was unable to do this as the book is not enlisted among his books. Undoubtedly, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī had also indirectly gained from many authors he could not meet by reading their works which cut across virtually all fields of both Islamic sciences and the modern sciences. This has reflected in his encyclopedic work on *Tafsīr* which shall be discussed in details in the subsequent chapters.

### 2.6.2 His Students

The high level of intellectual capability of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī and his vast erudition in various disciplines along with his power of eloquency in speech making and debate afford him the opportunity of being known and accepted by people not only in Baghdād but also other places where he travelled to. Thus, he started teaching at his teenage, thirteen years old precisely[68] and became an expert in the field of teaching at the age of twenty-four.[69] According to his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī, he used to have nothing less than twenty-four (24) lessons in a day for people till he became the *Mufti*. This made him busy with teaching many students at different schools; hence, he had over hundreds or thousands of students[70]. On this Maḥmūd Shukrī says:

> واشتغل عليه خلق كثير من قاص ودان وتخرج عليه جماعة من الأفاضل، وقصدته الطلبة من سائر الأرجاء، وتهافتوا عليه ولاتهافت الظمان على الماء

**Meaning:**

> A multitude number of people from far away and nearby were busy with learning from him. And a large number of eminent groups graduated from

him. The students aimed at him from different places. They flocked to him but not like the flocking of thirsty person to water.

In the opinion of al-Kitānī, he says: "A numerous number of people learnt from him"[71]. Among these multitudes of students are his three sons:

(1) Abu Suᶜūd Bihā'ud-Dīn ᶜAbdullahi bin Maḥmūd bin Abdullāhi 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1291 A.H.)

(2) Saᶜdu-Dīn ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī bin Maḥmūd bin ᶜAbdullahi 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1292 A.H/1296 or 1298 A.H.)

(3) Khayrud-Dīn Abi'l-Barakāt, Nuᶜmān bin Maḥmūd bin ᶜAbdullāhi 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1317 A.H.)

His two brothers:

(4) ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd bin ᶜAbdullāhi bin Maḥmūd 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1324 A.H.)

(5) ᶜAbdur-Raḥmān bin ᶜAbdullāhi bin Maḥmūd 'al-'Alūsī (d. 1283 or 1284 A.H.)

Others students are:

(6) ᶜAbdu'l-Ghaffar bin ᶜAbdur-Raḥmān bin Wahab al-Akhras (d. 1291 A.H.)

(7) ᶜAbdus-Salām bin Saᶜīd al-Kabīsī al-Baghdādī Shawwaf (d. 1317 A.H.)

(8) Muḥammad Saᶜīd Afandi al-Baghdādī al-'l-Akhfash (d. 1280 A.H.)

(9) ᶜAbdu'l-Fattaḥ bin Saᶜīd al-Kabīsī al-Baghdādī Shawwāf (d. 1262 A.H.). This means that he died before

(10) Muḥammad 'Amīn bin Muḥammad al-Ad-hamī (d. 1273 A.H.). He was popularly known as al-Wāᶜiz

(11) Muḥammad bin Husayn 'Āl ᶜAbdulLatīf al-Baghdādī

Apart from the above mentioned few students who were known as the prominent students of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, there were other important personalities during his time

that used to attend his sermons and lectures. They include the rulers, judges, preachers, scholars, professionals, riches and the masses.[72]

### 2.6.2 His Contemporaries

Undoubtedly, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was a contemporary of many of his teachers who gave him *Ijāzah* (license) of becoming an authority in different fields of knowledge. Some of those notable scholars are:

1. ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā (d. 1258 A.H./1842 C.E.). He was the one that named his *Tafsīr* as *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.*[73]
2. *Ash-Shaykh* Aḥmad ᶜArīf Ḥikmat (d. 1275 A.H.) whom he met at constantinope and both acknowledged and licensed each other's scholarship.
3. *Ash-Shakyh* Abdu'l-Ghanīy al-Jamīl (d. 1863 C.E.) whom 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī took refuge in his house as *Mufti* when the then Governor of Baghdād, ᶜAli Pāshā, was searching for him to punish him. It was al-Jamīl who did not only secure protection and normalization for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life but also ensured his appointment as the *Amīn al-Fatwa* (First Assistant to the *Mufti*). This took place after 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī supported the defeated Governor, Dawūd Pāshā against the Ottoman in 1831.
4. Muḥammad bin ᶜAwn whom 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī wrote to, as the Sharif of Makkah, not to support Muḥammad ᶜAli against the empire and as well declared the Governor of Egypt as disobedient and aggressive.
5. Muḥammad Saᶜīd aṭ-Ṭabaqjali whom 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī succeeded as the *Mufti* of Baghdād during the regime of Governor ᶜAli Pāshā in 1835 C.E.
6. Musṭapha Rashīd Pāshā who was the Grand Vizier in Istanbul
7. As-Sayyid ᶜAli Al-Gīlānī who was the Naqīb al-Ashraf of the *Qādiriyyah Ṭarīqah Sūfī* order in Baghdād

8. As-Sayyid Amīn al-Wāᶜiẓ who was a friend, students and fellow Salafi of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. He was a preacher in the mosque of ᶜAbdu'l-Qādir al-Gīlānī.[74]

9. Al-Malā ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd who was a poet and popularly known as *'al-'Atraqajī.* He died in the year 1271 A.H./1854 C.E. He dedicated most of his poems to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and his family because of their indelible legacy.[75]

10. As-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-ᶜUmri who accommodated 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in the city of *al-Mosul* in the year 1267 A.H./1851 C.E.

11. Ash-Shāᶜir ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī al-Fārūqī (A Poet)

12. Ash-Shāᶜir ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī al-ᶜUmri (A Poet)

13. Ash-Shāᶜir Aḥmad ᶜIzzat Pasha al-ᶜUmri (A Poet)

14. Ṣaliḥ at-Tamīm, (A Poet)[76]

15. Aḥmad Afandi al-Qāyumqajī

16. Qāsim Al-Ḥamdī

17. As-Sayyid Rādī al-Qazwīnī

18. Ṣaliḥ al-Qazwīnī

19. Mahdi al-Qazwīnī[77]

**2.7 His Trips**

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī had a close relationship with the Ottoman Empire, initially, during the governorship of ᶜAli Pāshā before the table turned round. The cordial relationship, perhaps, was due to his commentary on a book entitled "al-Burhān fi Itāᶜati-s-Sulṭān" which was done to encourage the Muslims to obey their rulers, and the speech he delivered in the presence of ᶜAli Rashīd Pāshā who was moved by his eloquence, hence, drew him closer. In his own submission, Nāfiᶜ opines that it was due to the letter which he wrote to Muḥammad bin ᶜAwn, the Sharif of *Makkah*, warning him not to

support Muḥammad Ali against the empire and his declaration of the Governor of Egypt as a rebel who need to be fought as a *Jihād*.[78]

In line with the above reasons, which was regarded as loyalty to the empire, he was thereafter appointed as the *Mufti* of Baghdād *(Iftā'u'l-Ḥanafiyyah)* which, according to Al-Athari, the Governor promised him the day he heard his speech.[79] He was also awarded the honorary title of "Teacher of the *Astānah*"; Medal Award for answering the Iranian questions and the custodian of *Marjān* (endowment centre).[80] This continued from 1830s to 1840s until the Governor was dethroned in 1842 C.E. and he had to face series of hardships and difficulties. Thus, he started his adventurous journey which took him twenty one (21) months to several places between Baghdād and Constantinope.[81]

With strong opposition and depression, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī departed from the city of Baghdād, unceremoniously, on Thursday, 6th *Jumāda'l-'Ākhirah*, 1267 A.H[82]/8th April, 1851 C.E to *Istanbūl* seeking redress for his unfair treatment and normalization of his affairs and services to the empire. On his way going, he first got to a city known as al-*Mosul* on 10th *Jumāda'l-Ākhirah*, 1267 A.H/12th of April, 1851 C.E[83] and was accommodated by As-Sayyid Maḥmūd al-ᶜUmri among other scholars who also received him with honour and respect. Thereafter, he presented his *Tafsīr* work to the *Mosul's* scholars which made them, as a result of its encyclopedic nature, to highly praise and hold him in high esteem. He engaged in exegetical discussion of Qur'ānic verses with the *Mufti* ᶜAbdur-Raḥmān Afandi al-Kalāk and excelled the *Mufti*.[84]

'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī proceeded with his journey from *Mosul* to *Istanbūl*. He passed through some other cities where he stopped for a while and both the scholars and general people including the notable individuals gathered to welcome him and benefitted from his ocean of knowledge. These cities include: Diyar bakir (ديار بكر), Erzurum ( أرضروم أو أرزن الروم), Sivas(سياس), Irbil (اربل) Samsun(سامسون أو صمصوم), Cizre (جزيرة أبن عمر),

Kirkuk (كركوك), Āmad and Tūqāt before getting to Constantinople, his main destination. It is apposite to state here that hardly would he get to a city without his name being mentioned and became famous before his arrival and having intellectual and academic as well as religious debates with its scholars.[85] For instance, he had exegetical conversation and debate on the view expressed by al-Bayḍāwī on Qur'ān 5 verse 90, which is focusing on treaty of peace between the Muslims and non-Muslims, with the students of knowledge in *Āmadu-s-Saudā'*. Likewise, he had an encounter with a man, who was a *Shīᶜī* known as Malā Ḥusayn al-Ghārī and misbehave to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī but later apologized.

On getting to Constantinople, he was accorded a very dignified and high hospitality on 28th of Ramadan, 1267 A.H.[86] He first met with *Shaykh* Islām as-Sayyid Aḥmad ᶜĀrif Ḥikmat bik Afandi (d. 1275 A.H./1858 C.E.) to whom he lodged his complaint on being maltreated in Baghdād. He became close friend to *Istanbul's* scholars and was given preference over any other person. And after the verification of all the allegations levied against him in Baghdād were proved to be negative, he was finally granted a yearly stipend worthy of twenty-five thousand (25, 000) money of Istanbūl (Lira) and was offered the Judgeship of Erzurum city but he did not accept it.[87] The *Shaykh* Islām also gave him fifty thousand (50, 000) Istanbūl money (Lira) from his personal wealth. He had religious researches and debates with *Shaykh* Islām to which they both recognized the intellectualism of each other, hence, both licensed (gave *Ijāzah to*) each other before 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī left Istanbūl for Baghdād on Saturday, 21st of *Shawwal*, 1268 A.H/1852 C.E.

Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life was normalized through his journey to Istanbūl. He returned through Diyarbakir where he was highly welcomed in the presence of ᶜAbdī Pāshā on Thursday, 6th of *Ṣafar*, 1269 A.H. He then proceeded and got to *al-Mosūl* on 15th of *Ṣafar*, 1269 A.H. Then, he left for *Kirkūk* where he reached on 18th of *Ṣafar*, 1269

A.H. and thereafter, he headed straight for Baghdād and landed in on Thursday 5th of *Rabiᶜu'l-Awwal* 1269 A.H. He was welcomed with joy and happiness from the elders and scholars with poems being composed in his honour.[88] As part of his intellectual legacy, he had documented all his experiences in the journey in three different books as follows:

(a) *Nashwatu-sh-Shumūl fi-dh-Dhahāb ilā Islāmbūl*-نشوة الشمول فى الذهاب إلى إسلامبول. This contains information about his journey to Constantinople, things he encountered and the people he came in contact with.

(b) *Nashwatu'l-Mudām fi'l-ᶜAwdati ilā Madīnati-s-Salām*- نشوة المدام فى العودة إلى مدينة السلام. This contains all the incidents that happened to him on his returning back home.

(c) *Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb wa Nuz-hatu'l-'Albāb fi-dh-Dhahāb wa'l-'Iqāmah wa'l-'Iyāb*- غرائب الإغتراب ونزهة الألباب فى الذهاب والإقامة والإياب. This contains information about the personalities he met, the researchers conducted and the intellectual debate between him and *Shaykh* Islām Aḥmad ᶜĀrif Ḥikmat.

Based on the above discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had displayed the importance and significance of information and this attitude of his has shown that no knowledge is a waste or useless which made him to document his entire life sojourn.

## 2.8 An X-ray of his Life Activities

As 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is seen as a disputed, controversial and very difficult scholar to be pinned down and leaned to a particular thought, group and sect, likewise his life activities are diverged. This, perhaps, may be because of his multifarious life which is the focus of this point. His life activities cut across religious, academic, ascetic, mystical and political lives which are discussed below:

### 2.8.1 His Religious Life

The environment in which he was born and grew up in was religious, most especially his family house from where he emerged. His father was a virtuous, pious, an ascetic scholar, a religious preacher, a devoted worshipper and a dedicated teacher in many *Madāris* (Schools) to the extent of becoming the head of the teachers and reformer of the youths. He was an embodiment of praiseworthy characters.[89] The religious background of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's father has greatly and positively influenced his piety, religiosity, righteousness and morality.

Despite his *daᶜwah* activities by preaching and teaching, he still had time for not only the compulsory *ᶜIbādāt* (worships) but also the voluntary and superogatory ones as was brought up by his father. He stayed up in the night for *Ṣalāh*, recitation and writing of books. Among his daily recitation, according to the *Sunnah*, was his recitation of *Sūratu'l-Mulk* and *Sajdah* in the night before sleeping. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī says at the end of his introduction to *Sūratu'l-Mulk* thus:[90]

> وأخرج ابن مردويه عن عائشة أن النبى - ﷺ - كان يقرأ: الم تنزيل السجدة وتبارك الذى بيده الملك, كل ليلة لايدعهما سفر ولاحضر، ولهذا ونحوه قيل يندب قراءتها كل ليلة. والحمد لله الذى وفقنى لقراءتها كذالك منذ بلغت سنى التمييز إلى اليوم، وأسأل الله تعالى التوفيق لما بعد والقبول

**Meaning:**

> It has been recorded by Ibn Mardawīh on the authority of ᶜĀisha that the Prophet -ﷺ - used to recite "*Alīf Lām Mīm Tanzīl as-Sajdah*" and *"Tabāraka lladhi biyadihi'l-Mulk*" every night. He did not leave them (unrecited) either on a journey or at home. This is why with some other reasons that it is said that reciting them every night is recommended. All praises belong to Allah Who has assisted me to be reciting them like that since I attained the age of distinction till today. I beseech Allah to continue assisting me on it for the rest of my life and accept it (from me).

The above quotation has shown that he was conversant with the Glorious Qur'ān daily in following the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah. He was always with the truth and speaks the truth even before the leaders and elders in his sermons and speeches. He was a scholar of lots of charity, *Ṣalāh* and *Istighfār* (seeking Allah's forgiveness for his

sins). The first part of his night was in communicating with his Lord while his last part was for writing. His life was completely devoted to the religion of Allah all in the name of reviving the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muḥammad -ﷺ . His religious meditation and inclination made him to compose some poetical lines as follows:

أنا مذنب، أنا مخطيء أنا عاصى * هو غافر، هو راحم, هو عافى

قابلتهن ثلاثة بثلاثة * وستغلبن أوصافه أوصافى

**Meaning:**

> I am a sinner, an error maker and a disobedient (servant) while He (Allah) is the Forgiver, the Merciful and the Overlooker. I have met three (qualities) with another three (qualities) soon will His qualities overwhelm my own qualities.

Some other poetical verses that had shown and reflected not only his spiritual attainment but also his preference of the hereafter over this world by yearning for Allah's paradise are:

لقد وصف الرحمان للناس جنة * فشوّق من كل العباد نفوسا

وكنت لا أدرى أن فى الأرض نحوها * إلى أن رأينا منزلا فيك مأنوسا[91]

**Meaning:**

> The Most Beneficent has surely described paradise for mankind
> And every heart of the (true) servant feels its desire
> I do not know the likes of it on the surface of the earth
> Till we secure an abode in you for familiarity.

Furthermore, his level of religiosity was also displayed by him on his sick bed towards the end of his life, when he was unable to stand and sit as well as make *rukūᶜu* and *sujūd* but observed his last *Ramaḍān* fasting in that highly deteriorated health condition.

### 2.8.2 His Academic Life and Status

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī Al-Kabīr did engage himself in academic activities and attain the greatest position an Islamic academic will hope to assume. According to Maḥmūd Shukri, his yearning for scholarship was dearest to him than his life and livelihood till he passed to the great beyond.[92] His major academic activities are teaching,

writing and commentary on books, as well as intellectual debates to correct misconceptions and revive the *Sunnah* of the Prophet.

He started teaching at his tender age till he attained puberty age and became perfect in it in many schools and centers such as the *Madrasah* of Imām Abu Ḥanīfah in the year 1237 A.H., the Qadriyyah *Madrasah*, the *Marjān Madrasah, Madrasati-n-Nuᶜmān, al-Madrasatu'l-Qamariyyah, al-Madrasatu'l-ᶜUmariyyah,* the Mosque of as-Sayyidah Nafīsah, the mosque of *'Al-ᶜAṭā*, the mosque of *Nuᶜmān* and the mosque of al-*Ḥanān*.[93] He was the custodian of books in the school of ᶜAli Pāshā where his father was rated as the third teacher among others. His diligent discharge of duty and responsibility as a teacher and preacher caused him to be awarded the honorary title of "Teacher of the *Astānah*"; Medal Award for answering the Iranian questions which other scholars turned down; the custodian of the endowment for *al-Madrasatu'l-Marjāniyyah* and the *Mufti* of the *Ḥanafiyyah* in Baghdād. Hence, he became a celebrity throughout the whole region of Ottoman Empire.

In addition, his academic activity of writing, which he started since he was thirteen years old, did afford him the opportunity of reading wide to compose valuable and instructional works in different fields of Islamic Sciences. He also had commentaries on many great works of his period for the benefit of the *Ummah*. One of such commentaries is his commentary on the book entitles: *"al-Burhān fī 'Iṭāᶜati'-s-Sulṭān"* which was originally written by *ash-Shaykh* ᶜAbdu'l-Wahāb Affandī Yāsīn Zadah. Other commentaries include his *Sharḥu* (explanation) on *"Al-Qaṣīdatu'l-Qādiriyyah", "al-Qaṣīdatu'l-ᶜAyniyyah", Kashfu-ṭ-Ṭurrah*" and others. These great commentaries especially on "*al-Burhān fī 'Iṭāᶜati-s-Sulṭān*" brought him closer to the men of power in Baghdād during the governorship of ᶜAli Pāshā.

His attainment of Muftiship of Baghdād at the age of thirty-three (33) years was a sign of his dedication to academic activities in his life sojourn.[94] He was appointed on merit by Governor ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā, due to his heart touching, informative, educative and eloquent sermon he delivered in the presence of his teachers and elders in the central mosque of al-Jīlī in the year 1250 A.H.[95]

### 2.8.3 His Ascetic Life

Undoubtedly, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī was living comfortably according to his income from his academic activities. He was not, however, after the material things of this world as he was contented with whatever is at his disposal from lawful sources. Unlike some scholars among his contemporaries who were busy enjoying material things at the expense of others. This made him to mock and condemn some *Sūfī Shuyūkh* among the Turkish ᶜ*Ulamā’* of his period who were enjoying at the sufferings of others in *Istanbūl* during his stay therein for the redressing of his issues. Similarly, he did not hide the truth, like some scholars in *Istanbul,* for material gains. He rather exposed the truth without fear of anyone through speech or writing. This landed him in trouble and crisis with the ruling political power during the governorship of Najīb Pāshā.[96]

Thus, he was deposed of his Muftiship and denied of his income which made his financial situation become unbearable for him, his family and the students that were living under his roof. Hence, he had to sell some of his belongings such as books etc.[97] for survival instead of begging others because of both self and religious reserves which depict him as an ascetic scholar.[98]By this; he was able to bear the situation with patience, fortitude and perseverance without resorting to unlawful means of livelihood to survive.

He took life very simple which caused him to accommodate his students, clothe and feed as well as house them till his death. His thought about life is expressed in the

following lines of poems composed by him during the period of his sickness which led to his death:

يارب ما حبي الحياة لــلذة * أقضي بها زمنى الخؤون المعتدي
لكنما حبــي لذلك رغـبـــة * في أن أجدد دين جـــدى أحمـــد
فأذود عنه من يحاول نقصه * ذود الغيور بمـزبرى وبـمــذودى[99]

**Meaning:**

> Oh Lord! My love of the world is not for the enjoyment of spending my time with the unreliable transgressor
>
> But my love for that is for the interest (I have) in reviving the religion of Aḥmad, my great grandfather (i.e., Islām)
>
> And to defend it against whoever wants to downgrade it by enviously protecting it with all my possessions

### 2.8.4 His Mystical Life

The kind of environment in which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was born and grew up to witness did not afford him the opportunity of not affiliating to a *Sūfī* Order. On this, ᶜAbdullah al-Bukhārī notes:

> وكان في زمان ومكان لايكاد يوجد عالم ليست له طريقة، ومن لم تكن له طريقة يكون محل تهمة[100]

**Meaning:**

> He lived in a period and place where it was difficult to find a scholar without having a *Ṭarīqah* (*Sūfī* Order). And whoever does not belong to a *Ṭarīqah* will be suspected (and accused).

Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was initiated into *Naqushabandiyyah Ṭarīqah*, before twenty years of age, by one of his teachers, *Shaykh* Khālid Diyā'u-d-Dīn an-Naqushabandī during one of his *Sūfī* trips to Baghdād. The *Ṭarīqah* was the most common *Sūfī* Order in Baghdād as it was supported by the then Governor, Dāwud Pāshā. According to Maqsood Jafri, this *Ṭarīqah* was among the *Sunni* Sufistic Order which strictly adhere to the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* and by not going against the *Sharīᶜah*.[101] 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī describes his teacher as the follower of the path of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*[102] and he says in another area thus:

> والذى شاهدنا نحن من أحواله أنه كان يشتغل بتدريس كتب الفقه...ولم نشاهده يدرس شيئا من كتب التصوف بل رأيناه ينهى عن النظر فى بعض

كتب السادة الصوفية كالفتوحات والفصوص ومعظم كتب الشيخ الأكبر قدس سره[103]

**Meaning:**

> What we witnessed in his affairs is that he is always busy with *Fiqh* books…We have not seen him discussing anything from *Sūfī* books. We rather saw him prohibiting research into books of the elders among the Mystics such as *al-Futūhāt, al-Fuṣūṣ* and almost all the books of *ash-Shaykh Akbar* (Ibn ᶜArabi).

The above quotation is not a proof to say that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has not been influenced by one way or the other mystically even if little. This is clearly shown in the writing of his *Tafsīr* where he delved into the validity of *Sūfī* methodology of Qur'ānic interpretation. However, he did not condone any flaw committed clearly by the *Sūfīs* against the *Sharīᶜah* except that he voiced out through writing or speech. This was possible for him because he only took *Ṭarīqah* as a way and not as a defined ideology or distinct ideology. Thus, at times he praised them and at times he condemns their evils. It can be categorically said that he was not a *Sūfī* adherent in issues that contradict the *Sharīᶜah* based on Qur'ān and *Sunnah* such as belief in Pantheism (*Waḥdatu'l-Wujūd*), abandonment of obligatory duties, drinking alcohol, seeking assistance from other than Allah and others.

Based on the above, it is hereby concluded that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was a *Sūfī* of *an-Naqushabandiyyah Ṭarīqah* and not a *Sūfī* of extreme thoughts and doctrines popularly known as *al-Bāṭiniyyah* where the Qur'ān and other Islamic tenets are interpreted symbolically as pointed out and condemned by him in his *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜāni.*[104] These extremists in *Taṣawwuf*, to our dismay, often referred to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as not part of them by calling him "*Ahlu-ẓ-Ẓāhir*-أهل الظاهر while they referred to themselves as "*Ahlu'l-Bāṭin*-أهل الباطن".[105] Thus, his involvement in *Taṣawwuf* was not only based on knowledge in *Kitābu wa Sunnah* (Qur'ān and Traditions of the Prophet) and true perception of the *Ṭarīqah* but also on *al-Wasaṭiyyah* (Moderation) which is one of the tenets of success in life.

### 2.8.5 His Political Life

The ardent zeal and aptitude of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī for the dissemination of knowledge as well as his intellectual disposition amidst the masses without fear of the leaders, made him a famous and recognized young scholar in Baghdād. He held several teaching posts in schools and mosques as well as centers through which his relationship with those in political power was established to bring him fortune and misery in his political sojourn.

His indelible political life cut across the regime of some governors in Baghdād which began with Governor Dāwud Pāshā (1232 A.H-1247 A.H) whom ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī assisted in gathering people around him for the progress and development of the city. This continued until the Ottoman Empire invaded the city with almost twenty thousand soldiers, hence, Baghdād was afflicted with hunger and plague which led to the death of at least one hundred and fifty people in a day. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī among others stood firmly and truthfully in support of Governor Dawūd Pāshā, whose tenure was highly productive, religious and educative,[106] against his siege by the Ottoman Empire’s forces under the leadership of ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā. Shortly, Governor Dawūd was apprehended and dethroned of his governorship. Then, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī went into hiding for the fear of being arrested.[107]

Consequently, he was later arrested and imprisoned by the new Governor, ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā. This in the first instance, because of his support for Dāwud Pāshā against the Ottoman forces.[108] And in the second instance, because of his support for the new *Mufti*, ᶜAbdu’l-Ghaniy Jamīl in instigating a rebellion against the new governor which led to restriction of his movements and activities for almost one and half year.[109] He later regained his freedom through the intercession of the *Naqushabandi* associates before Governor ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā and was thus given back his teaching posts.

Furthermore, he was fortunate to deliver a sermon at the mosque of Al-Jīlī in the month of *Ramaḍān* in the year 1250 A.H. which either by accident or deliberately was attended by the Governor whom he had conflict with. The Governor was moved and amazed by his mode of presentation of issues and explanations which made the Governor to invite him to his palace during *ᶜĪdu'l-Fiṭr* festival. This opened a new door of cordial relationship between 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and ᶜAli Riḍā Pāshā. Thus, he was officially recognized through his official duties as the custodian of *Marjān* endowment and *Mufti Ḥanafiyyah* in Baghdād. By this, another fortunate period set in for him again after a period of misery and fear, hence, his financial status was highly raised and was living comfortably until another Governor was put in place in 1258 A.H./1842 C.E.[110]

The replacement of ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā after his dismissal by Muḥammad Najīb Pāshā brought about another period of misery for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī socially, economically and politically as the new Governor maltreated him and undervalued his status. Thus, he was stripped off his official appointments and denied his salaries. After a moment, he embarked on a journey seeking justice and redress of his affairs from the highest political power in Constantinople. His fortunes and blessings were later returned to him through the intervention of *Shaykh* Islām Aḥmad ᶜĀrif and the Grand Vizier Musṭafa Rashīd Pāshā. He was compensated with a yearly stipend and the Judgeship of Erzurūm (أرضروم) but he rejected the judgeship. Then, his friend *Shaykh* Islām granted him fifty thousand (50, 000) Qurash from his own personal wealth before his return to Baghdād.

Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life became comfortable back after his journey to Constantinople (*Istanbūl*). On his way back to Baghdād, he heard the dismissal of Governor Najīb Pāshā which was due to series of oppression and mismanagements during his reign.[111] This, perhaps, might also be because of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's complaint

against him even though it is not historically evident but psychologically deduced. It was two years after this epic journey that he passed away.

It has been observed that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's closeness to men in political power was not intentional but on purpose to check the excesses of the rulers in their governance and the scholars who in the name of religion engraved in materialism at the expenses of their religions duties of commanding what is good and forbidding what is evil as in the case of *Istanbūl* scholars.

## 2.9 His Creed and *Madh-hab*

### Introduction

The word creed in Islam is known as *ᶜAqīdah* in Arabic language. It is the foundation on which Islam is built. Its fundamentality has been a bone of contention in the Muslim *Ummah* to the extent of dividing it into sects. Thus, it`s quite important, for whoever wants to categorize anybody to a particular creedal sect or school of thought, to be cautious as an intensive knowledge and information about both the Sect to affiliate to and the person to be affiliated, are needed for a just conclusion to be made. It is not an evidence or excuse that a personality possesses one among other doctrines and thoughts of a group or sect, and then he is automatically part of them. Judgment is to be made based on the overwhelming (*Aghlabiyyah or Ghālib*-أغلبية أو غالب) ideas or doctrines or thoughts of such an individual as he has right to his idea or thought and that human's thought can not be the same always. However, no idea or doctrine or thought should contradict Allah's wills and commands as entrenched in the Glorious Qur'ān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet and has practiced or explained by the pious predecessors among the companions and their followers.

Thus, the yardsticks for a correct thought or idea or doctrine are: the Noble Qur'ān, *Sunnah* and understanding of the foremost in faith. It is apposite to state here that nobody

is devoid of flaw except Allah, hence, the gravity or weight or quantity of the flaw will determine whether such individual is to be blamed or excused in proportion to his action. On this Saʿīd bin Musayyib says as quoted in *Jāmiʿu Bayāni'l-ʿIlm* of Ibn ʿAbdu'l-Barri:

> ليس من عالم ولاشرف ولا ذى فضل إلا وفيه عيب ولكن من كان فضله أكثر من نقصه ذهب نقصه لفضله كما أن من غلب عليه نقصانه ذهب فضله[112]

**Meaning:**

> There is no scholar or a noble person or a virtuous man without a flaw. But whoever has more virtues than his deficiency then his deficiency will be overlooked for his virtue just as someone whose deficit overwhelms (his virtue) then his virtue will be useless (because of his overwhelming deficiency).

Likewise, Ibn Taymiyyah is quoted by Al-Bukhārī to have said:

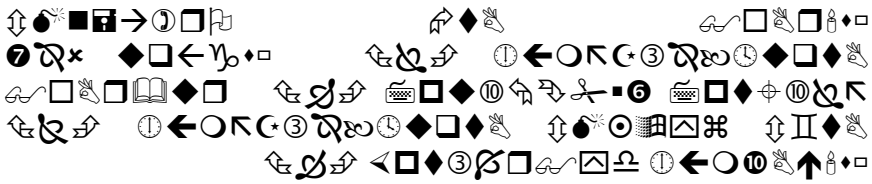
> إن ما ثبت قبحه من البدع وغير البدع من المنهى عنه فى الكتاب والسنة أو المخالف للكتاب والسنة إذا صدر عن شخص من الأشخاص فقد يكون على وجه يعذر فيه إما لإجتهاد أو تقليد يعذر فيه وإما لعدم قدرته[113]

**Meaning:**

> Surely, whatever is established to be bad among the innovations and the prohibition in the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* or what is in contrary to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, when it is done by a person among others (scholars) such a person should be excused for his *Ijtihād* (personal effort) or *Taqlīd* (followership) or because of his incapability (to do otherwise).

Based on the above quotations and others not quoted, it can be concluded that, it is dangerous and disastrous to label or categorize or affiliate another fellow Muslim to a particular sect or group he has not attributed himself to, most especially when the status or condition of the person is not obviously clear for definite conclusion. It is rather encouraged to be giving excuses to one another and particularly the Islamic scholars who are the carriers of Islamic flags, heirs of the Prophet and the torch-bearers of Islamic messages. It should be noted that any attempt to defame or accuse or label any scholar among the Islamic scholars negatively because of an error amidst his virtues may lead to damages and pandemonium in Islamic issues and messages. Similarly, any attempt to qualify him positively because of a virtue amidst his flaws and evils may jeopardize the religion. Thus, the principle of the weightiest is the best to be used in human interpersonal

relation as it is going to be done on the Day of Judgment in line with Q101:6-9 where Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> Then as for him whose balance of good deeds will be heavy. He will live a pleasant life in paradise. But as for him whose balance of good deeds will be light. He will have his home in Hell of *Hāwiyyah*.

**His Creed**

A critical study of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's life shows that he is a man of vast erudition. His knowledge is difficult to be limited to a particular area in the Islamic sciences. With regards to *ᶜAqīdah* (Creed or theology), he is well equipped with knowledge about the doctrines and theological discussion of various sects both Islamic and non-Islamic. This has made it tedious for people to categorically affiliate him to a particular creedal school. Whenever he talks from the perspective of a sect, it is as if he knows nothing about other sects which is not so. He is well grounded in his knowledge about *Muᶜtazilah, Shiᶜah, Ashᶜariyyah, Karramiyyah, Khawārij, Sunnī, Sūfī,* Philosophy, Aitheism and others including the *Salafiyyah*. Thus, judging him from the creedal point of view should be based on his positions on theological issues after his multifarious expositions.

Undoubtedly, and arising from his conclusion on Creedal discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not only a member of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* sect but also the *Salafiyyah* which can be regarded as a sub-sect of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah.* He is found in most cases, of saying the word *Salaf Ṣāliḥ,* upholding the position of *Salaf Ṣāliḥ* and very happy to affiliate himself to it[114] as contained in his book especially his *Tafsīr*. It has also been recorded that he encouraged his children to follow the path of the *Salaf*.

According to Az-Zirkilī, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was of a sound Islamic creed of the early Muslims (*Salaf*) even though he passed through the *Naqushabandiyyah Sūfī* Order.[115] In his own submission, Adh-Dhahabi says:

> والألوسى سلفي المذهب سني العقيدة، ولهذا نراه كثيرا ما يفند آره المعتزلة والشيعة وغيرهم من أصحاب المذاهب المخالفة لمذهبه[116]

**Meaning:**

> And al-Alūsī is of *Salafi* School and *Sunnī* creed. This is why he (always) refutes the ideas of the *Mu$^{c}$tazilah, Shī$^{c}$ah* and others who oppose his (*Sunni* and *Salafi*) school.

Based on the above, he was a *Sunni* scholar that abhorred any act of innovation in the religion of his great grandfather Aḥmad as observed by himself in one of his poems on his sick bed. His true ideology and creed can also be ascertained from his opposition to the ideas and thoughts of the scholars before him who were either *Shi$^{c}$ah* or *Mu$^{c}$tazilah* or *Ash$^{c}$ariyyah* etc., which shall be discussed in details- إن شاء الله- in chapter three and four of this study. His ability to touch and read various books of many sects made it easy for him to constructively criticize any sect that is against the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* theologically.

It has been observed that his errors in some theological issues made some writers such as Al-Maghrāwī, $^{c}$Abdur-Raḥmān al-Qādi etc., to affiliate him to other sects such as *Ash$^{c}$ariyyah, Tafwīdiyyah* and *Sūfiyyah*. However, it can be argued that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had taken some theological position because, perhaps, of the fact that he had some scholars (one or two) who had preceeded him in that or because of the available evidences to him. Thus, at times he allegorically interprets (*Ta'wīl*-تأويل) verses about the attributes of Allah and at times he involves in *Tafwīd* (relegation of the meaning of a verse on Allah's attribute to Allah) without explaining its nature or manner to follow the *Salaf* and at times he does the *Tafwīd* contextually by giving a probable meaning with reference to some *Salafīs*.[117]

This is how he is swerving between the opinions of *Salaf* which undoubtedly one will be *Marjūḥ* (less probable) and the other will be *Rājiḥ* (more probable). But, both are

still within the *Salafiyyah* circle. Thus, his Sunnism and *Salafiyyah* membership is obviously clear as it is the weightiest and heaviest of all if justice is to be done with him.

**His *Madh-hab***

The word "*Madh-hab*" in this discussion refers to *fiqh* schools of law which the common ones are: *Ḥanafiyyah*, *Mālikiyyah*, *Shāfiᶜiyyah* and *Ḥanābilah*. As discussed under "His Creed'','al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is a scholar of vast erudition in various branches of not only Islamic sciences but also modern sciences as displayed in his *Tafsīr* work.[118] His *Fiqh* knowledge cut across *Fiqh Madh-hab* of not only the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* but also other Islamic sects,[119] most especially, the *Shiᶜah* such as *Imāmiyyah*.[120] He has categorically mentioned his *Fiqh* School of thought even though he does not completely lean to it in some cases where proofs are against it.

'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, thus, belonged to the *Shāfiᶜī* school of thought *abinitio* right from the beginning of his education by studying *Fiqhu-sh-Shāfiᶜī* (Islamic Jurisprudence of *Shāfiᶜi*) from his father. He later grew up to study both *Shāfiᶜi* and *Ḥanafi* books of *Fiqh*. This made him to have a shift of thought on *Fiqh Muᶜāmalāt* (Islamic Jurisprudence on Interpersonal relation) to the *Ḥanafiyyah* school of thought in most cases. According to Adh-Dhahabi, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was more of *Ḥanafi* than *Shāfiᶜi* but he had not inclined completely.[121] Likewise, he had never followed any *Madh-hab* dogmatically without any sound proof. For instance, despite his declaration of being *Shāfiᶜi* and *Ḥanafi*, he accepts and upholds the *Hanbali's* view on the uncreatedness of the Qur'ān against the *Muᶜtazilites'* position that the Qur'ān is created.[122]

In conclusion, it can be said that he is a *Shāfiᶜi* by name and *Hanafi* by practice. His efforts in searching for the truth made him to become a *Mujtahid* in the latter part of his life. This is expressed by one of his students as quoted by Al-Atharī thus:

وكان عالما بإختلاف المذاهب مطلعا على الملل النحل والغرائب سلفي الإعتقاد، شافعي المذهب. إلا أنه فى كثير من المسائل يقلد الإمام الأعظم، بل كان فى آخر أمره يميل إلى الإجتهاد، كأمثاله من العلماء النقاد[123]

**Meaning:**

> He was a scholar of different schools (in terms of knowledge). He was well acquainted with (information about various) sects and creeds as well as peculiar knowledge. He was a *Salafi* in creed and a *Shāfiᶜi* in *Fiqh* School except that he inclined to the great Imām (Abū Ḥanīfah) in majority of issues. But, towards the ends of his life, he leaned to *Ijtihād* just as the likes of his among the Critic Scholars.

Thus, in all ramification, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is a *Sūfi-Sunnī* but *Salafi* in creeds, thoughts, actions, behaviors and practices. If any judgment is made in contrary to this submission against him, then such is not only un-academic but also unjust to the status of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

## 2.10 His Works

'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was a scholar of high thought and memory. The worth and value of his intellectualism can be appreciated more by reading through his mammoth work of *Tafsīr* or any of his books. He was a prolific author whose pen is always on paper since he was thirteen (13) years old. He had contributed immensely to both Islamic sciences and Arabic language. These contributions of his cover books, articles, commentaries and poetry. His works can be grouped under the following subject matters:

### A. *Tafsīru'l-Qur'ān* (Qur'ānic Exegesis)

*1. Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī* –

روح المعانى فى تفسير القرآن العظيم والسبع المثانى

This is a *Tafsīr* encyclopedia in which the author has gathered information from the previous exegeses.

*2. Daqā'iqu-t-Tafsīr* - دقائق التفسير

This book, as mentioned by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, is a collection of research works on *Tafsīr* done by some *Mufassirūn* who include ar-Rāzī, al-Baydāwī, ad-Dawānī, Abu-Suᶜūd, Ibn Kamāl Pāshā among others. He gathered them together with commentary and

named it "دقائق التفسير". The ownership and authorship of this work by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is being refuted by Muḥsin ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd in his book entitled "Al-'Alūsī Mufassiran"[124] that it does not belong to him. It rather belonged to another author by name Musṭapha and that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī only commented on it.

The above by Muḥsin seems incorrect as it is contrary to the statement of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī affirming and ascertaining the fact that it belongs to him thus:

وقد أثبت جميع ما كتب هؤلاء الأجلة فى مجموعة لي سميتها دقائق التفسير[125]

**Meaning:**

> Verily I have retained all what is written by these respected scholars in a collection of mine which I titled "*Daqā'iqu-t-Tafsīr*"

Likewise, Al-Athari, one of the students of the grandson of'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, Maḥmūd Shukri says about this book thus:

> مجموعة فريدة فى بابها ذكرها في ص 431 من غرائب الإعتراب، وأطلعنى عليها شيخي المرحوم الإمام السيد محمود شكرى حفيد المترجم له وهى في ضمن المجمعة الوسطى لجده هذا[126]

**Meaning:**

> (It is) a unique collection at his own level. It is being mentioned (by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in another book of his) at page 431 of *Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb*. My deceased teacher, As-Sayyid Maḥmūd Shukri, the grandson of the one whose biography is being given, had made me to study it (under him). It (the book) is one of the average compilations that belong to this grandfather ('al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī) of his (Maḥmūd Shukri).

Thus, it can be concluded that the book-*Daqā'iqu-t-Tafsīr*- as a compilation of other *Mufassirūn* exposition on some chapters of the Qur'ān, belong to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

### B. *Al-ᶜAqīdah* (The Creed or Theology)

*3. An-Nafaḥātu'l-Qudusiyyah fī-r-Raddi ᶜala'-'Imāmiyyah-*

النفحات القدسية في الرد على الإمامية

This book is on the Creed of the *Imāmiyyah* group among the *Shīᶜah* sect of Islām. It is refuting their ideas, thoughts and Creeds that are in contrary to the creed of *Ahlu-s-*

*Sunnah,* most especially the *Salafiyyah* which is another proof to show that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was a *Salafi*. It is of one hundred and forty-four pages according to the edition got from the archive.[127] This book he wrote at early stage of his academic life[128]

*4. Nahaju-s-Salāmah 'ilā Mabāḥithi'l-Imāmah*- نهج السلامة إلى مباحث الإمامة-

This book was his last book which is also on refutation of the Creeds of the *Shīᶜah* such as declaring other Muslims as *Kuffār*, abusing the Companions, the concept of *Imāmah*, conditions and qualities of whoever is to take, the position of *Imāmah*, Concept of *Khilāfah* etc.[129] It was written during his last sickness of his death; hence, he was unable to finish it.The finishing was done by his grandson Maḥmūd Shukri in the year 1301 A.H.[130]

**C. *At-Tārīkh* (History)**

*5. Risālatun fī Tarjamatihi* –رسالة فى ترجمته

This book was written by him at the age of sixteen (16) years on his own autography in the year 1233 A.H. It has been listed, according to al-Bukhārī as part of his books[131] by his son Nuᶜmān Khayru-d-Dīn 'al-'Alūsī and his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī.

*6. Nashwatu-sh-Shamūl fi-s-Safar 'ilā Islāmbūl*-نشوة الشمول في السفر إلى إسلامبول

This book was written in the year 1268 A.H. to document all what he witnessed on his adventurous journey to *Islāmbūl* (Constantinople), the capital city of the Ottoman Empire. It mentions the cities passed by as well as the personalities met by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.It is of fifty-four (54) pages according to the edition published by the State Press of Baghdād in the month of *Rabiᶜu'l-Awwal*, 1291 A.H.[132] There is a new edition for the book in *Dārul'-Kutubi'l-ᶜIlmiyyah* book publisher published on 5th January 2017 with eighty (80) pages and the examiner is Muḥammad Sālim Hāshim.[133]

7. *Nashwatu'l-Madām fi'l-ᶜAwdi 'ilā Dāri-s-Salām* – نشوة المدام في العود إلى دار السلام

This book was written in the year 1269 A.H. to document what and who he had encountered on his way back to *Dārus-s-Salām* (Baghdād) from the city of *Islāmbūl*. It is of One hundred and thirty-four pages according to the edition got online which is the first edition published by the State Press, Baghdād in the month of *Jumāda'l-Ākhirah*, 1293 A.H. It mentions both the cities and personalities that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī came across on this journey. It is in this he mentioned the attitudes of the scholars he met on his way back, some positively described and some negatively described with regards to materialism and possession of knowledge.[134]

8. *Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb wa Nuz-hatu'l-'Albāb fī-dh-Dhahāb wa'l-'Iqāmah wa'l-'Iyāb*- غرائب الإغتراب ونزهة الألباب فى الذهاب والإقامة والإياب

This book is of four hundred and fifty-one pages on his autobiography, biography of other scholars he met on his journey to *Islāmbūl* and from it to Bahgdād, intellectual debates on religious and language issues that took place between him and *Shaykhu'l*-Islam, Aḥmad ᶜĀrif. It contains different issues ranging from *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) to *Tafsīru'l-Qur'ān* (Qur'ānic Exegesis) and other miscellaneous issues. It was written completely in the year 1270 A.H. and published in Baghdād by ash-Shābandir Publisher, 1327 A.H. and sponsored by the owner of the Press.[135]

9. *Shajaratu'l-'Anwār wa Nawāru'l-'Az-hār* - شجرة الأنوار ونوار الأزهار

This book is also known as *Ash-Shajaratu-f-Fāṭimiyyah*. It was written in Constantinople to contain history about the progeny of Fāṭimah the daughter of the Prophet as mentioned by him in *Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb*[136]

10. *Shahyu-n-Naghm fi Tarjamati Shaykhi'l-Islām*- شهي النغم فى ترجمة شيخ الإسلام

This book is on the biography of *Shaykhu'l*-Islām of Ottoman Empire, Aḥmad ᶜĀrif Ḥikmah, who accommodated him in *Islāmbūl*.[137]

*11. Ḥadīqatu'l-Wurūd* -حديقة الورود

This book is also on his autography and the biography of his father, As-Sayyid Abdullāh Afandi. He had mentioned therein the names of his grandfathers and great grandfathers. He stated this as part of his work in *Gharā'ibul-Ightirāb*[138]

***D. Fatāwā* (Legal Verdicts)**

*12. Al-'Ajwibatu'l-ᶜIrāqiyyah ᶜala'l-'As'ilati'l-'Īrāniyyah* -

الأجوبة العراقية على الأسئلة الإيرانية

This book contains thirty (30) questions on different fields of Islamic Sciences such as *Tafsīr*, Language, *Fiqh*, Theology, Philosophy, Logic etc. The questions were sent from the city of 'Irān to the Ottoman authorities in Baghdād perhaps because of the theological polemics between the two countries as ᶜIrāq was a *Sunni* nation while '*Irān* was a *Shiᶜi* country. This means, according to Nafi, that these questions had political implications on the legitimacy of Ottoman rule.[139] Hence, no scholar in Baghdād was ready and able to answer until he volunteered himself for the response which led to his Medal Award from the *Sulṭān*. The book was first published in Constantinople in the year 1317 A.H. by *Maktabatu-s-Sanā'i*ᶜ[140]

*13 Al-''Ajwibatu'l-ᶜIrāqiyyah ᶜala'l-'As'ilati'l-Lāhūriyyah*

الأجوبة العراقية على الأسئلة الاهورية

This book contains questions from the scholars in Lahore, India to the scholars in Baghdād. It is of sixty-five (65) pages on the defense of the companions against those that are abusing and faulting them. It was first published in the year 1301 A.H by al-Hamīdiyyah Publisher in Baghdād. The book was approved with great price by the Ottoman *Sulṭān*, Maḥmūd Thāni[141]. The first printing that looks like manuscript is got from the archive.[142]

14. *At-Tibyān fī Masā'il 'Īrān-* التبيان في مسائل إيران

This books is also on issues from Irān that were explained by 'al-'Alūsī and presented it to *Sulṭān* Maḥmūd Khān.[143]

**E. *Al-Lughghah* (Language)**

15. *Kashfu-ṭ-Ṭarati ᶜani'l-Ghurrah-* كشف الطرة عن الغرة

This book was written as a commentary on another book entitled "*Durratu'l-Ghawās*" authored by al-Ḥarīrī. He wrote it during his stay in Constantinople. It was first published in Damascus by al-Ḥanafiyyah Publisher in the year 1301 A.H. This book is also known as *"Ghāyatūl-'Ikhlāṣ bi Tahdhībi Naẓm Durrati'l-Ghawāṣ*"[144]

16. *Ḥāshiyatu ᶜalā ibni ᶜAṣām* - حاشية على ابن عصام

He wrote this book at the age of sixteen and named it "*Bulūghu'l-Mārām-* بلوغ المرام". It is on *Balāghah-* Rhetoric[145]

17. *Ḥāshiyatu Sharḥi'l-Qaṭar-* حاشية شرح القطر

It is a book on Arabic Grammar which he wrote at his age of thirteen (13) years but did not complete it before his death. It was later completed by his son, Khayru-d-Dīn Nuᶜmān. It was published in Qudus in the year 1320 A.H. He wrote it as his contribution to teaching during his teaching period.[146]

18. *Al-Fawā'idu-s-Sinniyyah mina'l-Ḥawāshī al-Kalanbuwiyyah* –

الفوائد السنية من الحواشى الكلنبوية

This is a book on literature and criticism

19. *Fawā'idu wa Taᶜliqāt fi-n-Nahw-* فوائد وتعليقات فى النحو

20 *Al-Ghurrah-* الغرة

This is the summary of the book entitled "*Durratu'l-Ghawās*" of al-Ḥarīrī. It was after this summary that he then did the explanation and commentary in another book

named "*Kashfu-ṭ-Ṭarrah ᶜani'l-Ghurrah*" which has been mentioned earlier as part of his books.

21. *Taᶜliqāt ᶜalā 'Alfiyati Ibn Mālik*- تعليقات على ألفية ابن مالك

This has been mentioned by him in his *Tafsīr* book *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*

**F. *Al-Manṭiq* (Logic)**

22. *Sharḥu Silmi'l-ᶜUrūj* - شرح سلم العروج

This book is on Logic which he wrote at the age of nineteen (19) years. [147]

23. *Ḥāshiyatun Bahyatun ᶜalā ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥakīm (Ash-Shamsiyyah*) – حاشية بهية على عبد الحكيم (الشمسية)

***G. Ash-Shiᶜr* (Poetry)**

*24. Al-Fīḍu'l-Wārid ᶜala Rawḍi Marthiyyati Mawlānā Khālid* -

الفيض الوارد على روض مرثية مولانا خالد

It is a commentary book on the poems composed in memory of his teacher Khālid an-Naqushabandī. He finished it in the year 1245 A.H. and was published in the year 1278 A.H. by al-Kastaliyyah Publisher in *Maḥrūsah*. The poems were composed by Muḥammad Jawwād as-Sayāhubūsh while 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī did the commentary.[148]

*25. Aṭ-Ṭarāzu'l-Madh-hab fī Sharḥi Qaṣīdati Mad-hi'l-Bāzi'l-'Ash-hab*-

الطراز المذهب فى شرح قصيدة مدح الباز الأشهب

The poems on which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī commented was composed by ᶜAbdu'l-Bāqī Al-ᶜAmari in which he was praising *Shaykh* ᶜAbdu'l-Qādir al-Jīlāni. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī finished writing this book in the year 1255 A.H. and was published in 1313 A.H. by al-Falāḥ Publisher in Cairo on the assistance of al-Hāfiẓ al-Muṣulī.[149] This is one of the books through which he has displayed his intellectual ability in language.[150]

*26. Al-Kharīdatu'l-Ghaybiyyah fī Sharḥi'l-Qaṣīdati'l-ᶜAyniyyah-*

الخريدة الغيبية في شرح القصيدة العينية

This book is a commentary on the poems composed by ᶜAbdul'l-Bāqī Al-ᶜAmarī on the praise of the fourth caliph, ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī also displayed his language ability in this book which was published by al-Ḥajariyyah Publisher in Cairo in the year 1270 A.H. It was among his last writings after which he lived for a while.[151]

27. *Sharḥu'l-Qaṣidati'l-Qādiriyyati'l-Jalīlah-* شرح القصيدة القادرية الجليلة

This has been mentioned by his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukri as part of his books.

***H. Al-Kutubu'l-Mutanawwiᶜah* (Miscellaneous Books)**

28. *At-Tibyān Sharḥu'l-Burhān fi 'Iṭāᶜati-s-Sulṭān-*

التبيان شرح البرهان فى إطاعة السلطان

This is a commentary on the book of *Ash-Shaykh* ᶜAbdu'l-Wahāb Yāsīn entitled "*Al-Burhān fi Iṭāᶜati-s-Sulṭān*". He was encouraged by Governor ᶜAli Pāshā to comment on it in order for the Muslims to obey the constituted authority of the Ottoman Empire. In the book, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was able to establish the legitimacy of Ottoman Caliphate and refute the *Shīᶜi* Imamate political theory and their other claims such as their creed of the expected al-Mahdi ( المهدى المنتظر)[152]

29. *Sufratu-z-Zād li Safarati'l-Jihād-* سفرة الزاد لسفرة الجهاد

This book is focusing on *Jihād*, its virtue, etiquettes and significance to the Muslims as well as the benefits entitle to the warriors. It was written to encourage his people to participate in the *Jihād* against the attack of Russia on the city of *al-Qawqāz* in the Ottoman Empire in 1853 C.E. It is of thirty-five (35) pages according to the edition got online.[153] He finished writing it in the year 1270 A.H. and his son Nuᶜmān Khayru-d-Dīn did the final touch in the year 1272 A.H. but was published by Dāru-s-Salām Publisher in Baghdād in the year 1333 A.H.[154]

30. *Maqāmātu fi-t-Taṣawwuf wa'l-'Akhlāq-* مقامات في التصوف والأخلاق

This comprises of five *maqāmāt* which were written to criticize the *maqāmātu-z-Zamakhsharī* (مقامات الزمخشرى). The first *Maqāmah* was focusing on his will and testament for his children; the second, third and fourth were about his life and the fifth one was on the discussion between him and a Mystic, who used to visit 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī lately in the night, on this life and *at-Taṣawwuf* (الدنيا والتصوف)[155]. It was published in *Karbalā'* in the year 1272 A.H. by al-Ḥajariyyah Publisher with the title "*Maqāmātu Ibni'l-'Alūsī-* مقامات ابن الألوسى" Al-Bukhārī affirms that the first one for his children was published with the title " *'Inbā'u'l-'Abnā'i-* إنباء الأبناء-"[156]

It is apposite to affirm here that his books are not limited to the once mentioned above. It has been established by the Muslim historians of his environment that he had commentaries on books, articles, sermons, epistles, *fatāwā* (Islamic verdicts on issues), essays and poetry of his own.

As regards his poems, some are contained in his book "*Gharā'ibu'l-'Ightirāb"*, "*Ḥadīqatu'l-Wurūd"* and his "*Maqāmāt"*. However, they have been compiled together for him as a *Dīwān* (collection of poems). They remained as manuscripts in the library of General Endowment in Baghdād and some are contained in the collection of poems that belong to his son, Nuᶜmān Khayru-d-Dīn 'al-'Alūsī. Some extracts of his poems are:

يارب ماحبي الحيـــــاة للـذة * أقضى بها زمنى الخؤون المعتدى
لـكـنـما حبي لـذلـك رغـبـة * فى أن أجدد ديـن جدى أحـمـد
وأذود عنـه مـن يـحـاول نـقـصـه * ذود الغيور بمزبـرى وبـمـذودي
وأبث علما في معالـمـه الـهـدى * فأزيل حالك شـبـهة الـمـتـردد
فامنن على جسمي الضعيف بنظـرة * تشفيه من لأواه سـقـم مـجـهد
فالكل عن تشخيص دائي عـاجـز * فمتى أراد عـلاجـه لايـهـتـد[157]

**Meaning:**

Oh Lord! My love of the world is not for the enjoyment of spending my time with the unreliable transgressor

But my love for that is the interest (I have) in reviving the religion of Ahmad, my great grandfather (Islam)

> And to defend it against whosoever wants to downgrade it by enviously protecting it with all my possessions
>
> And I will continuously be spreading knowledge in its milestones of guidance in order to wipe off the concurrent doubt
>
> (Kindly) bestow upon this weak body of mine a look through which you heal it from the arduous sickness of its
>
> All the diagnosis of my ailment proves abortive as whenever an attempt is made for its cure, it does not work out.

Likewise, the following is an extract from his essays as contained in *Aᶜlāmu'l-ᶜIrāq*:

> أن من منن الرب أن جعل في مدينة الجسد ملكا يسمى القلب. منه يصدر النهى والأمر. وبرأيه يظهر الخير والشر. ولما كان ملكا محجبا، وعذيقا في تلك المدينة مرحبا. جعل الله سبحانه له من أشراف مملكته ترجمانا، ونصب له منها سفيرا يسمى لسانا. فغدا يرتجم عما فيه، ويبدي من مقاصده ما يبديه فذالك الأول فى تلك المغانى، وهذا منه – وعينيك- في المحل الثانى:
> أن الكلام لفى الفؤاد وإنما جعل اللسان على الفؤاد دليلا[158]

**Meaning:**

> Verily, among the favours of the Lord is His ability of putting a controller in the body known as the Heart. From it comes the order of prohibition and commandment. Good and evil are made known through its thought. Since it is a hidden authority and a delicate bunch in the body, Allah, -Glory be to Him-, has made for it, among its honourable possessions, an interpreter of everything and its ambassador known as the tongue. It begins to interpret what is in it and exposes what can be exposed in its aims. That is the first of those areas. This is part of it in the second phase:
> Verily, the speech is (residing) in the heart but the tongue is made as the leader over the heart.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī had some other works as manuscripts in the library of general endowment in Baghdād which are written with his good handwriting that his grandson describes as *Lu'lu'* and *Marjān*. For instance, Al-Jābūrī confirms that his handwriting of *Ṣaḥiḥu'l-Bukhārī* which he wrote in the year he died is available at the Library of endowment in Baghdād. He also wrote *Juz'u Tabāraka* with his hand at his tender age while he was reciting and memorizing *Juz'u ᶜAmma*.

With all observations and justice, the works of these great scholars cannot be mentioned in totality as researches are still exposing the missing, hidden and uncompleted ones in the manuscripts centre in Baghdād.

## 2.11 His Challenges

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī had to face a lot of challenges in his attempt to revive the *Sunnah* of the Prophet in the city of Baghdād, his environment during the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth ($19^{th}$) century. These challenges cover his Socio-Economic and Religio-Political as well as heath life since his twenties till the year he died.

With regards to his Social challenges, he was being envied by both his colleagues and scholars including the elders. This was because he became known and recognized at his early age of twenties not only as teacher in reputable schools but also as preacher in mosques and Islamic centres. His eloquence and clarity of speech are other reasons for his social crisis with his contemporaries. His natural and divine praiseworthy characters brought nothing unto him from the envious people except strong enmity and opposition.[159] This hatred as well as enmity reached the climax when his people lied against him before the Governor, Dawūd Pāshā, that he abused Ibn Ḥajar one of the scholars of *Shāfiᶜi* school, hence, he does not fit to become the *Mufti*. However, the Governor did not accept their claims against 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. He rather retained his position for him, as teacher and *Mufti*. He was later deposed of his duties by Governor ᶜAli Riḍā Pāshā.

Economically, he was not comfortable after depriving him his duties as teacher and *Mufti*. His source of income was cut off from him, thus, he became completely destitute to the extent of selling his books and belongings for survival. He was unable to cater for the students living under his roof anymore. This financial incapability made him to seek justice on his affairs and compensation for his services from the ruling Ottoman Supreme Judicial Council. Therefore, he embarked on an arduous journey to *Islāmbūl* in the year 1267A.H. And after the judgment was delivered to his favour, he was granted a yearly stipend, and then the Judgeship of the city of Erzurum which he rejected. His friend, *Shaykhu'l*-Islām Aḥmad ᶜĀrif, also donated money to him out of his own wealth. Thus,

after the justice and redress was ascertained 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī returned back to Baghdād in the year 1269 A.H.

His religious challenges led to his social challenges as he was carrying out his religious duties then some people started hating him and were jealous of him. Another important religious challenge of his was his conflict with the *Shīᶜi* scholars within and outside his city, as he was always refuting their creeds and thoughts. The *Shīᶜi* scholars from *Irān* sent thirty questions to Baghdādi scholars for answers, but, none of them was able to answer until 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī volunteered himself to proffer answers to the questions.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī was neither a politician nor a political officer but had cordial relationship with men of power for religious purpose. He did assist them to maintain law and order of *Sharīᶜah* according to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* as in the regime of Governor Dawūd Pāshā who ruled Baghdād Islamically. The Ottomann forces later disrupted his regime which led to a siege of Baghdād for a long period. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī was among those that supported Dawūd Pāshā in resisting the invaders but they were later defeated. Thus, Dawūd Pāshā was stripped off the post and 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī went into hiding for the safety of his life when he was being declared wanted. He was later arrested and imprisoned after instigation against the new Governor, ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā. However, he was later released by the Governor and after his heart-touching sermon in the presence of the Governor, he was appointed as the standing *Mufti*. He was deposed of this position by Governor Muḥammad Najīb Pāshā who over-throned ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā.

Thus, he misbehaved towards 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, undermined his position and social influence and recognition, though it was not all that easy as 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had gained the loyalty of the populace. It was this situation that led to economic crisis before his journey to Constantinople.

With regards to his health challenge, he had a deteriorating health through a serious cold and fever on his way back to Baghdād from Constantinople in the year 1269 A.H. It later extended to serious headache which he experienced intervally till the year 1270 A.H. when he died.[160]

## 2.12 His Death

The adventurous journey he embarked on in the year 1267 A.H. /1851 C.E. to the City of Constantinople and from there back to Baghdād in the year 1269 A.H./1853 C.E. made him to encounter a lot of stress and difficulties. On his way back to Baghdād, he experienced a heavy rainfall at a place known as az-*Zāb*, which is a city between the northern part of Irbil and the city of Karkūk. He was wet from head to toes to the extent of being afflicted with a serious cold which later developed into serious fever along with a serious headache. This sickness of his became a terminal disease as curing it proves abortive till he died. After arriving at the city of Baghdād, he continued to struggle during this period to complete his pending books such as "*Sufratu-z-Zād li Safarati'l-Jihād*", "*Al-Kharīdatu'l-Ghaybiyyah fī Sharḥi'l-Qaṣīdati'l-ᶜAyniyyah*" and others.[161]

On Friday, 24th of *Dhu'l-Qaᶜdah,* 1270 A.H./1854 C.E., 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī started gasping his last breath after the *Jumuᶜah* Prayer. His body started shaking till Maghrib period. The agony of death continued till twelve O'clock in the morning of Saturday 25th of *Dhu'l-Qaᶜdah,* 1270 A.H./1854 C.E., when his soul was taken in the city of Baghdād at the age of fifty-three (53) years.[162]

His *Janāzah* washing was carried out by his prominent student, As-Sayyid Muḥammad Amīn Afandi. A large crowd witnessed his *Janāzah* prayer and was buried along with his family in the cemetery of *Shaykh* Maᶜrūf al-Karkhi in the city of al-Karkhi at the left side of the way to the mosque at al-Karkhi at five meters away from the entrance door.[163]

## 2.13 Scholars' View about Him

The life of man is full of comment either positive or negative. The kind of life lived by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī amidst others made not only his contemporaries but also those after him to appreciate the essence of Allāh from the wisdom and knowledge he was blessed with. The following are some extracts from the comment of people about him:

1. The poem of al-Fārūqī that were composed for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī when he was appointed the *Mufti* of *al-Ḥanafiyyah*:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| يا سيدا وسم الباغين حين سمـــا | * | وفاق أهل التقى بالـقول والـعـمــل |
| وحاز من جده جدا ولا عـجـــب | * | إذا جده في البرايا سـيـد الـرسـل |
| فالوعظ في قوله كالنقش في حجر | * | والزجر في غيره كالـطـل في طـلل |
| فى راحة من جميع المال راحـتـه | * | وقلبه عند جمع العلـم فـي شـغـل |
| يكاد يدرك معنـى في بصـيرتـه | * | ما ليس يدرك بالأبصار والـمـقـل |
| كالبدر طلعته والـبحر راحـتـه | * | والعزم والحزم مثل النار والـجـبـل |
| لوشاء باحث أهل الـعـلم قاطـبـة | * | على المذاهب والأديان والـمـلـل |
| يامن به لاذت الفتوى فـسـجلها | * | وصانها عن جميع الزيـغ والزلـل |
| مـن عـين كل عدويا مـؤرخـه | * | محمود قد يحرس الفتوى يعنى علي[164] |

**Meaning:**

Oh master and the poison of the Oppressors when he is being elevated to reconcile between the people with words and action.

It is not surprising to see him achieving more than his grandfather as his great-grandfather among the creatures is the leader of the Messengers.

The Sermon, when he delivers it, is like writing on the mountain and the rebuke when he gives it, is like dew in the debris.

His peace of mind is in the relief from the acquisition of wealth while his heart keeps working in the acquisition of knowledge.

He is at the point of knowing something always at its glance what cannot be known through visions and the eye.
His appearance is like the full moon and his calmness like that of the ocean. But, firmness and strong determination (to him) are like the fire and the mountain.

If he like to (he is capable of) dialogue with the scholars of Qāṭabah on various schools of thought, religions and creeds.

Oh who, to him, the Islamic verdicts are resorted to, for recording and preservation against aberration and errors.

Oh the historian, in the presence of the enemies has Mahmud secured the Islamic verdicts excellently.

2. Another contemporary poet of his composed a poem to congratulate him on his Muftiship. This poet is as-Sayyid ᶜAbdu'l-Ghaffār al-Akhras. He says:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| يا قدوة العلماء يا مـن عـلـمـه | * | بحر ومنهل فـضـله مـورود |
| يهنيك يا مولاي منصبك الـذى | * | فاز الولي به وخاب حسـود |
| فلقد حباك الله بالـفـضـل الـذى | * | يسمو على رغم العدا ويسود |
| فى حالتى عـلـم وبـذل مكـارم | * | فعلى كلا الحالين أنت مفيـد |
| وحبتك ألطاف الوزير علي الرضا | * | من ذكره فى الخافقين حـميد |
| ولاك إفـتـاء الأنـام وحـبـذا | * | رأي لعمرى إنـه لـسـديـد |
| إن الشريعة فيك لابس تـاجـهـا | * | قوم وحامل صيفها صنديد |
| وتـنـوف فى كل العلـوم فأرخـوا | * | نوفت في الإفتاء يامحمود |

**Meaning:**

Oh (you) the model of scholars, whose knowledge is like an ocean and his source of virtue, is blossom.

Congratulation on your position which the Governor gets (for you) at the disappointment of the envious

Surely, you have been endowed by Allah with virtues through which you will continue to lead and be elevated in spite the enmity of the enemies

You are quite beneficial to people in terms of knowledge and good morality.

Kindness of the Wazīri ᶜAli Riḍa has been shown to you who whose memory in the mind of people is praiseworthy.

He had appointed you the *Mufti* of all races and how excellent (is it). Verily, the idea (of choosing you) is quite appropriate and correct.

Indeed, the Crown of the knowledge in you is worn by a group and its sword is carried by the courageous.

Oh Maḥmūd! You are highly grounded in all knowledge which is why you have been raised to Muftiship.

3. One of his students according to Al-Athari, describes him thus:

كان أحد أفراد الدنيا بفضله وآدابه وعلمه وذكائه وفهمه. نادرة الأدوار وفلك المجد والشرف الذى له على قطب الكمال مدار كثير الصدقات والصلاة والإستغفار[165]

**Meaning:**

He was one of the unique personalities of life in terms of his virtues, ethics, knowledge, intelligence and understanding. The rarity of his period and the circuit of honor and dignity made him a typical personality. He is frequent in giving charity, observing prayer and doing *Istighfār* (Seeking Allah's forgiveness).

4. Maḥmūd Shukri, the son of Bihā'u-d-Din ᶜAbdullāhi the grandson of Maḥmūd Shihābu-d-Din 'al-'Alūsī says:

> وكان رحمه الله في الفطنة والذكاء، لاتجاريه ذكاء ذا ذهن أشد من البرق لمعا، فكر أحد من السيف قطعا، شهابا ثاقبا، وسمهما لغرض الدقائق صائبا... وكان في قوة الاستحضار لايجارى، وفى البداهة وسرعة الانتقال لا يبارى...

**Meaning:**

> He was an intelligent and a brilliant personality, very sharp in memory to an enviable degree, very articulate in his dissemination of ideas, a glittering light among his contemporaries and highly penetrating in his argument…his retentive memory was very unparallel, very quick and sharp in reasoning to an indescribable level.

He also says in another place thus:

> وكان صدر المدرسين وخاتمة المفسرين، أحد أفراد الدنيا في أدبه وفضله وعمله وبلاغته وذكائه وفهم[166]

**Meaning:**

> He was the peak of the tutors, seal of the exegetes, a unique personality in himself with regards to his moral, virtue, practice, oratory, intelligence and understanding.

5. A group of scholars observe thus:

> A scion of a notable ᶜ*Ulamā'* family descended from the Prophet, he was an influential public figure and reformer at the time of major social and political change. His legacy is disputed and of controversy, and his relationship both to Sufism and the rising *Salafiyyah* movement is interesting for not being mutually exclusive, at least not in his case[167]

6. Muḥammad Husein Adh-Dhahabi comments on him thus:

> كان – رحمه الله - شيخ العلماء فى العراق، وآية من آيات الله العظام، ونادرة من نوادر الأيام، جمع كثيرا من العلوم حتى أصبح علامة فى المنقول والمعقول، فهامة فى الفروع والأصول، محدثا لا يجارى، ومفسرا لكتاب الله لايبارى[261]

**Meaning:**

> He- May Allah have mercy on him- was leader of scholars in ᶜIrāq, a wonder among the great wonders of Allah, a rarity among the rarities of times. He acquired ample knowledge among the sciences to the extent of becoming an erudite scholar in both revealed and reasoned knowledge, very knowledgeable in Jurisprudence and fundamentals (of the religion), an unparralel *Muḥadith* (*Ḥadīth* Scholar) and an uncomparable Qur'ānic Exegete (*Mufassir*)

7. In the opinion of another grandson of his, ᶜAli ᶜAlā'u-d-Dīn the son of Khayru-d-Dīn Nuᶜmān, Maḥmūd Shihābu-d-Dīn 'al-'Alūsī was described as follows:

هو المفسر الكبير والعالم النحرير الذى طارت شهرته في الآفاق ورئيس علماء العراق

**Meaning:**

He is a great Qur'ānic Exegete (*Mufassir*), an indomitable scholar that his fame spread all over the regions and the leader of scholars in *ᶜIrāq*

8. In his own assessment, As-Sayyid Aḥmad Shākir who is among the offspring of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī comments on his father thus:

كان عالما بإختلاف المذاهب مطلعا على الملل والنحل والغرائب، سلفي الإعتقاد شافعي المذهب

**Meaning:**

He was a scholar in divergent opinions of the *Madhāhib* (Schools of thought), well read in various religions, creeds and the unusuals, *Salafi* in his creed and *Shāfiᶜi* in Islamic Jurisprudence.

9. In his own remarks, al-ᶜAllāmah Sadīq Hasan Khān says:

كان رحمه الله خاتمة المفسرين ونخبة المحدثين[169]

**Meaning:**

He-May Allah have mercy on him- was the seal of the *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) and a distinct scholar among the *Muhaddithūn* (*Ḥadīth* Experts)

10. The great Islamic Historian, Az-Zirkilī comments by saying:

مفسر محدث أديب من المجددين... كان سلفي الإعتقاد مجتهدا[170]

**Meaning:**

He is a Qur'ānic Exegete, expert in *Ḥadīth* and a refined personality among the reformers. He is a *Salafi* in his creed and a *Mujtahid*.

11. Al-ᶜAzāwī says about him thus:

إن العصر الحديث فى العراق يجب أن يسمى عصر الألوسي، لأنه كان المصباح المضئ فى كل اتجاه، حيث رفع الأسلوب العلمي بتأليف المتشعب فى النحو والفقه والتفسير والتاريخ... فكان أستاذا كبيرا لمدرسة فى التأليف

**Meaning:**

Verily, the modern period in ᶜIrāq is supposed to be named the Alūsī period because he was its Lamp-bearer in all aspects. He improved the method and style of knowledge by writing different kinds of books on Arabic Grammar, Islamic Jurisprudence, Qur'ānic Exegesis, History … He was a great teacher of a school that is worthy of writing on.

12. It has also been said by some scholars, as recorded by Abdullah al-Bukhārī that had it been ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī lived in Constantinople, the capital city of Ottoman Caliphate, he would have attained the post of *Mufti* and *Shaykhu’l*-Islām as the word “*Shaykhu’l*-Islam” is reserved for Country’s *Mufti*.[171]
13. The general Mufti and *Shaykhu’l*-Islām for the Ottoman empire remarks:

إنكم كلما بالغتم في إكرام هذا الرجل، فهو بالنسبة إلى ما ينبغى له قل من جل

**Meaning:**

> Whenever you exaggerate in honouring this man, it is his worthy as he even deserves more than it.

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī says about himself as recorded by his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī that:

ما استودعت ذهني شيئا فخانني، ولا دعوت فكري إلا وأجابني[172]

**Meaning:**

> My memory has never disappointed me in whatever I consigned it to and my idea has never failed me whenever it is needed.

In conclusion, the above given opinions and views are some extracts of the scholars’ views about ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, a scholar of multifarious dispositions, a rarity of his time, a doyen of knowledge, a researcher per excellent, a role model and an academic reformer of his period not only in ᶜIrāq but also in the whole Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world. Among the milestones, which made ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī not only a leading public figure but also a luminary in Islam, his *Tafsīr* work- *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī*, is very prominent. Hence, it will be the focus of this study in the next chapters.

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41. Al-Atharī, *Aᶜlāmu`l-`Iraq*… 53-55 and Az-Zirkilī, *Al-ʿAᶜlam: Qāmūsu Tarājum li ᶜAsh-haru-r-Rijāli wa-n-Nisāi minaᶜl-ᶜArab wa`l-Mustaᶜrabin wa`l-Mustashriqīn* …3,272

42. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…185. The daughter is mentioned by the Editor of the book, without name, to have got married to ash-Shaykh Sulayman bin Nasrullah al-Jabūrī.

43. Al- Atharī, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* … 56-57

44. Al-Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…193-194. It should however be noted that four children are mentioned by the author of this book, Mahmūd Shukrī while the remaining five including the females are mentioned by the Editor of the book. In *Aᶜlāmu`l-Irāq* of Al-Atharī, five children are mentioned for him.

45. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …81

46. The footnote of ’Al-’Alusi, *Al- Misk Al- Adhfar,* …197

47. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …83

48. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…199-200 and Al- Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-`Iraq*…84

49. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq*…22

50. Abu-th-Thanā` Mahmud ’al-’Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb wa Nuzhatu`l Albāb fi-dh-Dhihāb wa`l-Iqāma wa`l Iyāb,* (Baghdad: Ash-Shābandar Publishing, 1327 A.H) 5-6

51. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim… 469

52. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

53. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…132 and ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhari,… 54 and 89

54. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim …483

55. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

56. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim … 474

57. Abu-th-Thanā, Shihābud-Din Mahmud ’al-’Alūsī, *Rūḥū`l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri`l-Qur`āni`l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-Sabiᶜ`l-Mathānī,* 15 (Cairo: Dāru`l- Ḥadīth, 1426 A.H./2005C.E.) 649

58. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al- Misk Al-Adhfar*,…132

59. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…469

60. `Al-’Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,… 8

61. Al-Atharī, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …22

62. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…469

63. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,…9

64. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…470

65. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,…

66. Loius Cheikhu, *Tārikhu`l-`Adabi`l-ᶜArabiyyah*, 3rd Edition (Beirūt: Dāru`l-Masriq, 1991) 91

67. From number 19 to 23 see Abi-th-Thanā` Shihābu-d-Dīn Maḥmūd bin ᶜAbdullahi `al-`Alūsī, *An-Nafahātu`l-Qudusiyyah fi Raddi`l-`Imāmiyyah* (n.p: n.d). Accessed

on 1st February, 2017; https://ia600300.us.archive.org/14/items/annafahat/NafahatAlusi.pdf

68. Muhammad Hussein Adh-Dhahabī, *at-Tafsīr wa`l-Mufassirūn,* 1, 301

69. `Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al- Adhfar*,…135

70. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā`i Al-`Alūsī fi-r-Raddi ᶜala-r-Rāfiḍah*…59 and S.I. Madwī Muhammad, "Juhūd `Al-`Alūsī Al-Balāghiyyah min Khilāl Kitābihi Rūhu`l-Maᶜani" (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, the Department of Literature and Criticism, College of Arabic Language, Ummu Durmān Islamic University, 2008-2009C.E.) 32. Accessed on 4th February, 2017; http://www.mohamedrabeea.com/books/book1_21177.pdf.

71. ᶜAbdu`l-Hayyi bin ᶜAbdu`l-Kabīr al-Kitānī, *Fihrisi`l-Fahāris wa`l `Athbāt,* 2nd Edition, 1 (Beirut: Dāru`l-Gharbi`l-Islāmī, 1402 A.H.\1982 C.E.) 140

72. `Al-`Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …22 and `Al-`Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…146

73. `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu`l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīr`l-Qur`āni`l-ᶜAzīm*,…122

74. Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…481

75. `Al-`Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*…140

76. Al-Atharī, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …24

77. Al-Muntadā, "Abu-th-Thanā`i `al-`Alūsī: Al- Mufassir Al-Kabīr"…

78. Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…477

79. `Al-`Atharī, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

80. `Al-`Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…140-143

81. Abdullah Rabiᶜu Junayd, "Minhaj Ash-Shaykh `Al-`Alūsī fī Tafsīrihi Rūhu`l-Maᶜānī fi Tafsīri`l-Qurāni`l-ᶜAzīm wa-s-Sab`i'l- Mathānī." (Unpublished Masters' Dissertation, Department of Tafsīr and ᶜUlūmu`l Qur`an, College of the Department of Tafsīr and ᶜUlūmu`l-Qur`ān, College of `Usūlu-d-Dīn, Islamic University,Gazah 1432 A.H./2011 C.E.) 8

82. Abu-th-Thanā Mahmud `Al-`Alūsī, "Nashwatu-sh-Shumūl fi-s-Safar ilā Islambūl"; (Baghdad: Matba`atu`l-Wilāyah,1291) 3. Accessed on 28th December, 2016; http://upload.wikimedia.org/wiki source|ar|c|c5|الشمول-نشوة.pdf

83. `Al-`Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…

84. `Al-`Alūsī, "Nashwatu-sh-Shumūl fi-Safar ilā Islambūl"…6

85. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

86. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar,* …141

87. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …26 and Al-Muntata “Abu-th-Thanā’ al-Alusi: Al-Mufassir Al-Kabir”…

88. ̓Al-̓Alūsī, *Al-Misk Al-Adhfar*,…

89. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …11

90. `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri’l-Qur’āni’l-ᶜAẓīm*…15, 6

91. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

92. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misku’l-Adhfar*, …134

93. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …41; ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misku’l-Adhfar*,… and Al-Muntada, “Abu-th-Thanā’ Al-Alusi: Al-Mufassir Al-Kabir…”

94. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misku’l-Adhfar*,…138. This is mentioned at the footnote by the Editor of the book

95. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …23

96. Nafi, “Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…480

97. Al-Muntadā, “Abu-th-Thanā`i `al-`Alūsī: Al- Mufassir Al-Kabīr”…

98. B.A. Al-ᶜAsalī, “Minhaju’l-Imām `al-`Alūsī fī’l-Qirā’at wa’Atharuhā fī Tafsīrihi: Rūhu’l-Maᶜānī”. (Unpublished Masters’ Dissertation, Department of Tafsīr and Quranic Sciences, College of ’Usūlu-d-Dīn, Islamic University, Gazah, 1430 A.H./2009 C.E.) 30.

99. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misku’l-Adhfar*,… 136 and Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …41.

100. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā’i*…126.

101. M. Jafri, “Islam and Mysticism”. Accessed on 12th February, 2017 at http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_201_250/islam_and_Mysticism.htm.

102. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,… 17.

103. Quoted from ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā’i*…127.

104. `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri’l-Qur’āni’l-ᶜAẓīm*,…1, 28.

105. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā’i*,…121.

106. Al-ᶜAsalī, “Minhaji’l-Imāmi’l-’Alūsī fi’l-Qirā’āt”,… 29 and Juhayd, “Minhaj Ash-Shaykh ’Al-’Alūsī fī Tafsīrihi”,…7.

107. Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…475.

108. Junayd, "Minhaj Ash-Shaykh 'Al-'Alūsī fī Tafsīrihi"…7-8 and Al-ᶜAsalī, "Minhaji'l-Imāmi'l-'Alūsī fi'l-Qirā'āt"…29.

109. Al-Muntadā, "Abu-th-Thanā`i `al-`Alūsī: Al-Mufassir Al-Kabīr"…2 and Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim,…475-476.

110. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …23; Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim…4758; Junayd, "Minhaj Ash-Shaykh 'Al-'Alūsī fī Tafsīrihi"…7-8 and Al-Muntadā, "Abu-th-Thanā`i `al-`Alūsī: Al- Mufassir Al-Kabīr"…2.

111. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,… 143.

112. Ibn Abdu'l-Barr, *Jamiᶜu Bayāni'l-Ilm wa Fadluhu*, First Edition, 2 (n.p: Daru ibnu'l-Jawzī, 1414 A.H.) 821, number 1540.

113. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i* …

114. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,… 1362.

115. Az-Zirkilī, *Al-ʿAᶜlām: Qāmūsu Tarājum li ᶜAsh-haru-r-Rijāli wa-n-Nisāi minaᶜl-ᶜArab wa`l-Mustaᶜrabin wa`l-Mustashriqīn* …7, 176.

116. Muhammad Hussein Adh-Dhahabi, *at-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufassirūn*… 1, 304.

117. For more explanation see `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm*…8 (Part 16) 655-666 on Q20:5; Vol.12 (Part 23), 67 and vol. 1(Part 1), 233-234.

118. M.T. Usmanī, *An Approach to the Qur'ānic Sciences*, First Edition (New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 2006) 519.

119. Such as the *Muᶜtazilah* and *Shīᶜah*. See `Al-`Alūsī, Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī...1, 382.

120. See for instance `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*…1 (Part 2) 638 on Q2:187.

121. Muhammad Hussein Adh-Dhahabi, *at-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufassirūn*…306.

122. `Al-`Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*…13 (Part 25) 86.

123. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …28.

124. Muhsin ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd, *`Al-`Alūsī Mufassiran* (Baghdad: Matbaᶜatu'l-Maᶜārif, 1968).

125. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,…

126. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …31.

127. Accessed on 1st Februrary, 2017; https://ia600300.us.archive.org/14/items/annafahat//nafahat-Alusi.Pdf.

128. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…64.

129. Wikimedia, "Nahaju-s-Salāmah ilā Mabāḥithi'l-Imāmiyyah", Accessed on 22nd February, 2017; http://ar.wikisource.org/wiki/نهج السلامة إلى مباحث الإمامة/مقدمة المؤلف

130. Wikimedia, "Nahaju-s-Salāmah ilā Mabāḥithi'l-Imāmiyyah", accessed on 22nd February, 2017; http://ar.wikisource.org/wiki/نهج_السلامة_إلى_مباحث_الإمامة/مقدمة_المؤلف

131. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i* …65.

132. Wikimedia, "Mulaf: Nashwatu-sh-Shamūl", Accessed on 22nd February, 2017; https://ar.wikisource.org/wiki/ملف:نشوة_الشمول.pdf

133. Accessed on 22nd February, 2017; https://www.al-ilmiyyah.com/product_.php?Action=Detail&isbnId=2-_7451-8736-8.

134. Abu-th-Thanā'i, Shihābu-d-Dīn Maḥmūd 'Al-'Alūsī, "Nashwatu'l-Madām fi'l-ᶜAwdi 'ilā Madīnahti-s-Salām", 7-10, Accessed on 22nd February, 2017; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikisource /ar/6/6f/المدام_.pdf.

135. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar,*…143; `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l- Ightirāb,*…; Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …30 and ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…68.

136. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,…22.

137. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …30 and ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i* …68 and 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l Adhfar,*… 143.

138. `Al-`Alūsī, *Gharā`ibu`l-Ightirāb*,…\

139. Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim …478.

140. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …29.

141. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …30.

142. **الأجوبة العراقية على الأسئلة اللاهورية**, Accessed on 10th February, 2017; http://ia800706.us.archive.org/2/items/aealaeal/aeal.pdf.

143. Az-Zirkili, *Al-ʾAᶜlām: Qāmūsu Tarājum li ᶜAsh-haru-r-Rijāli wa-n-Nisāi minaᶜl-ᶜArab wa`l-Mustaᶜrabin wa`l-Mustashriqīn*…7, 176 and Ismāᶜīl Bāsha, Al-Baghdādī, *Hadiyatu'l ᶜĀrifin Asmā'u'l-Mu'allifīn wa Ātharu'l-Muṣannifīn*, 2 (Beirut: Dārul Iḥyā'i-t-Turāthi'l-ᶜArabi, n.d) 418-419.

144. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhari, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…64.

145. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …32; 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*, … and Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī …

146. Az-Zirkili, *Al-ʿAᶜlām: Qāmūsu Tarājum li ᶜAsh-haru-r-Rijāli wa-n-Nisāi minaᶜl-ᶜArab wa`l-Mustaᶜrabin wa`l-Mustashriqīn*…and Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī …

147. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,… 145.

148. Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī,..7 and Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …30.

149. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* … 30.

150. Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī …

151. Al-Muntada,…7; ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i* …666; 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,… 148 and Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …

152. Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī… 6 and Nafi, "Abu al-Thana` al-Alusi: An Alim …477.

153. Accessed on 24th February, 2017, 244; https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikisource/ar/b/b9/.pdf .

154. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l- ᶜIrāq* …32, ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…69 and 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,…148 at the foot note by Al-Jābūrī.

155. Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī …8.

156. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…67.

157. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,… and Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* …41-42.

158. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* … 38.

159. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,…137 and 139.

160. Al-Muntada, "Abu-th-Thanā` al-Alūsī…3 and 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,… 148.

161. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,…

162. ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā'i*…133.

163. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* … 26 and 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,…149.

164. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Al-Misku'l-Adhfar*,…138-139.

165. Al-Athari, *Aᶜlāmu`l-ᶜIrāq* … 27.

166. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Al-Misku’l-Adhfar*,…133.

167. Feras Hamza, Sajjad Rizri and Farhana Mayer, eds, *An Anthology of Qur’ānic Commentaries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) 47.

168. Muhammad Hussein Adh-Dhahabi, *at-Tafsīr wa’l-Mufassirūn*,…1, 301.

169. Quoted from ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhārī, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā’i* …

170. Az-Zirkili, *Al-ʿAᶜlām: Qāmūsu Tarājum li ᶜAsh-haru-r-Rijāli wa-n-Nisāi minaᶜl-ᶜArab wa`l-Mustaᶜrabin wa`l-Mustashriqīn*…7, 176.

171. Quoted from ᶜAbdullah Al-Bukhari, *Juhūd Abi-th-Thanā’i*…73.

172. ’Al-’Alūsī, *Gharā’ibu’l-Ightirāb*,…

## CHAPTER THREE

## *RŪḤU'L-MAᶜĀNĪ* AS A BOOK OF *TAFSĪR*

### 3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, an attempt will be made to expatiate on the encyclopedic work of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on *Tafsīr* that is known as *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.* The scope of this expatiation will not only cover the history behind the writing of the *Tafsīr*, its form and scope, sources, the approach of the author to the interpretation, categorization of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*, the stand of the author on Mystical Exegesis, *Shiᶜites* Exegesis, *Muᶜtazilites* Exegesis and *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah* but also his ability to verify *aḥādith* and discussion of verses with the scientific connotation.

### 3.1 Form and Scope of the *Tafsīr*

*Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is the largest work of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī and undoubtedly, one of the voluminous works on the exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān.[1] It discusses virtually all branches of knowledge which include language, grammar, literature, rhetoric, Jurisprudence, theology, etymology, geophysics, astronomy, philosophy, spiritualism, etc. Usmani says about it thus:

> An attempt has been made that no scientific and literary problems should remain unanswered. In the matter of reporting of traditions also, *Allāmah* 'Alūsī had been more careful than other commentators.[2]

This work of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī stands out among other *Tafāsīr* (Qur'ānic Exegeses) works not only of its class (i.e. *at-Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y*) but also other classes as a unique exegetical work. Its content has shown that the author had read widely and gathered his information from both the early and later day scholars[3] in various fields of knowledge which makes the *Tafsīr* not only wider in scope but also a desirable work of *Tafsīr* for scholars and students of Qur'ān and other Islamic Sciences as well as Arabic language.

The encyclopedic nature of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī,* has made scholars of '*Uṣūlu-t-Tafsīr* to categorize it under different kinds of *Tafsīr*. For instance, Adh-Dhahabi, in his *at-Tafsīr wa'l-Mufassirūn*[4], opines that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* falls under the category of *at-Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y al-Maḥmūd or al-Jā'iz*, i.e., praiseworthy or permissible *Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y*. In his own submission, Yasir Qadhi regarded it to be in the category of *Sūfī Tafsīr* which according to him,[5] falls under *at-Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah*[6]. This opinion of his, has not only underscored the encyclopedic nature of this work which undoubtedly has various themes covering both Islamic and modern sciences but also rendered useless, the academic researches and labours that the author went through before the completion of this *Tafsīr*.

Without any disagreement, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* contains sections of *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah* in some *Suwar* (chapters) of the noble Qur'ān. But, its percentage is quite minute compare to the percentage of other kinds of *Tafsīr* that are present in it. Thus, this is not an enough proof to declare it as a *Ṣūfī Tafsīr* and with the fact that the author in most cases criticized mystical exegeses that are exegetically (i.e. based on Qur'ān, *Sunnah*, Statements of the Companions and their students as well as Arabic language) baseless. Hence, it is an academic injustice of the highest order to this book and its author.

It is however, apposite to state here that, there is a need to differentiate between *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* and *Tafsīru-ṣ-Ṣūfī* because of justice to knowledge, scholars and their efforts. This clarification shall be done in the subsequent points under this chapter while discussing *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī.*

Besides, according to Aṣ-Ṣābūnī in his *at-Tibyān*[7], *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* can be categorized under the three classes of *Tafsīr*. This assertion of his means that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* combines in itself the methods and features of all the kinds of *Tafsīr*. By this, it can be concluded that its form and scope is very wide and all-encompassing.

It is however worrisome that this kind of intellectual work is given a little or no recognition among the Islamic researchers in their referencing as well as the Students of Islamic Studies in increasing their knowledge and understanding of the Qur'ānic verses. It is not commonly used in Nigeria and among the English audience like other *Tafsīr* such as *Tafsīrū'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm* of Ibn Kathīr (d.774 A.H.) and *Tafsīr Jāmiᶜi'l-Bayān* of Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabari (d. 310 A.H.) among the traditionalists or *Tafsīrū'l-Jalālayn* of the two Jalālu-d-Dīn al-Maḥallī (d. 864 A.H.) and As-Suyūtī (d. 911 A.H.) among the linguists or *Tafsīr fī Ẓilāli'l-Qur'ān* of Ash-Shahīd Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1386 A.H.) among the reformers and modernists. This perhaps, because of its being largely voluminous and of its being categorized by some people, even if it is not completely justified, as *Ṣūfī Tafsīr* in order not to be affected by the *Ṣūfī* creeds.

Thus, this study, in this chapter and the next one, will clarify all these in order for the Nigerian Islamic researchers and students to benefit from the widest scope of this *Tafsīr* work.

### 3.2 History of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*

On the night of one of the Fridays in the month of Rajab, 1252 A.H. equivalent to 1836 C.E,[8] 'al-'Imām al-'Alūsī, the author of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī,* had a dream of what he had been yawning and searching for since his youthful age. After he was reported to have seen his creator many times on the dream, he was at last commanded by Allah, the Most High, to fold the heaven and the earth as well as separate them based on their length and breadth. Thereafter, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī raised one of his hands to the sky and placed the other inside the ocean and then woke up from the dream. He started searching for the meaning of this dream until he got it while reading as a description for writing a book on *Tafsīr*.[9]

Thus, he started writing his *Tafsīr*, after he had gained and benefited from both the early scholars and those of his time, on the night of 16th *Shaᶜabān*, 1252 A.H/1836 C.E., at the age of thirty-four (34) years during the regime of Maḥmūd Khan the son of Sulṭān ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥamīd Khān.[10] The *Tafsīr* was completed on the night of Tuesday 4th of *Rabiᶜu'l-Ākhir* in the year 1267 A.H/1851 C.E. after a period of fifteen years according to a calculation supported by majority of the writers on it.[11] According to another calculation, it took 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī fourteen years, seven months and eleven days.[12] These two calculations are correct in line with the date specified by the author himself in the first[13] and last[14] volume of the *Tafsīr*. In his own book, Sarkīs reported that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī used five years to write his *Tafsīr*, finishing it in the year 1257[15]. However, this contradicts the statement of the author. It is possible that Sarkīs' record was a typographical error of typing five in place of six.

It was a month after that he embarked on his adventurous journey to Constantinople. Hence, he took the *Tafsīr* along with him and taught the people of Erzurum some parts of it for thirteen days before he left the place for *Istanbūl*. The value of his *Tafsīr* before the *Sulṭān*, scholars and the populace, added to his honour and respect when he got to the capital city of Ottoman Empire in *Istanbūl* after presenting it to them[16].

The most amazing part of this historical background is the fact that the author, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, started writing this *Tafsīr* in the night and he coincidentally finished it in the night. According to Adh-Dhahabi, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī used to spend his night on writing and his day for learning and teaching. Hence, whatever he wrote in the later part of the night would be given to the scribes in his house to compile in the early morning which will take them at least ten (10) hours before finishing it. He used to wake up from his sleep so as to read and gather information. He did refrain from playing and wasting his precious time catching fun like his friends in order to reach his peak. This assisted him, in

addition to the Grace and Mercy of Allah, to actualize his dreams with regards to knowledge he had been striving for long ago.

After completing this *Tafsīr*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī started thinking about the title to give the book that would attract the attention of the people. He later tendered it to the Prime Minister of Baghdād, in person of ᶜAli Riḍa Pāshā, to name it. Thereafter, ᶜAli Riḍa named it "*Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm wa-s-Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī*- " **روح المعانى فى تفسير القرأن العظيم والسبع المثانى**" which can be translated as "The Spirit Meaning of the Exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān and the Seven Reoccurrence". It initially consisted of nine large volumes[17] according to Az-Zirkilī. It was first published by his son, Nuᶜmān Khayru-d-Dīn Abu'l-Barakāt bin Maḥmūd bin Abdullāhi 'al-'Alūsī (1317 A.H./1897 C.E.) with Būlāq Press in Cairo in the year 1301 A.H. It was later republished as the second edition in Cairo by the Damascene Salafi Munir Abduh Agha at his *al-Munīriyyah* Press after the right of publication was transferred to him by 'al-'Alūsī's grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī in 1934-35. The third edition was also published in Cairo. According to Al-Jabūrī, the fourth reprint was done in Beirūt in twelve volumes and was later reprinted in Beirūt based on the edition of *al-Munīriyyyah* Press in thirty volumes in the year 1975 C.E.[18] though Nafi made mention of 1985 C.E. Each of the volumes contains a *Juz'u* (Part) of the Qur'ān which means thirty *Juz'u* (Part) in thirty volumes.

Moreover, it has now been compressed into fifteen or sixteen volumes with each volume containing two parts of the Qur'ān depending on the edition by different publishers along with brief commentary from the editors including verification of its *aḥādīth* and referring each *ḥadīth* to its source. For instance, in 1994 C.E./1415A.H., Dāru'l-Kutubi'l-ᶜIlmiyyah in Beirut published its edition in sixteen volumes including the *Fihris* (Table of contents) in a volume. Also, in 1999 C.E./1420 A.H., Dāru Iḥyā'i-t-Turāthi'l-ᶜArabī in Beirut published its edition in fifteen volumes and it reviewers are:

Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Amad and ᶜUmar ᶜAbdu-s-Salām as-Salāwī. Likewise, in 2005 C.E./1426 A.H., Dāru'l-Ḥadīth in Cairo published its edition in fifteen volumes and its reviewers and commentators are: As-Sayyid Muḥammad As-Sayyid and Sayyid Ibrahīm ᶜImrān. Other editions include that of al-Maktabatu'l-Haqqāniyyah in Peshawar, Pakistan[19] and that of al-Maktabatu'-r-Rashīdiyyah in Quetta, Pakistan.[20]

The edition being used for this study is that of Dāru'l-Ḥadīth in Cairo (2005 C.E./1426 A.H.) which is in fifteen large volumes with each volume comprising two *Juz'u* of the Glorious Qur'ān along with commentary, verification of *aḥadīth*, referencing its *aḥādīth* to their sources as well as the statements and opinions of scholars including poems to their sources. By this, it can be said that, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is one of the voluminous and compendium works of *Tafsīr* in size and contents with more abundant themes and knowledge which may not likely be found in other books.

### 3.3 Its Sources

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī had relied on both early and contemporary books of his time in writing his Qur'ānic Exegesis (*Tafsīru'l-Qur'ān*). He had gained a lot and gathered information from the Qur'ānic Exegetes (*Mufassirūn*) before him and later added his own contributions from various readings on different field of both Islamic sciences and modern sciences. He made quotations from different sources of Islamic knowledge and credited them to their sources either by mentioning the books or the authors.

The primary sources on which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī relies in his interpretation of the Qur'ān are the Glorious Qur'ān and the *Aḥādith* of the Prophet. While the secondary sources are not only limited to *Tafsīr* Books but also include *Ḥadīth* Books, *Fiqh* Books, Islamic History Books, Qur'ānic Sciences, *Ḥadīth* Sciences, Arabic Grammar, Dictionaries, Islamic Verdicts Books (*Fatāwā*) and other fields of human endeavours in

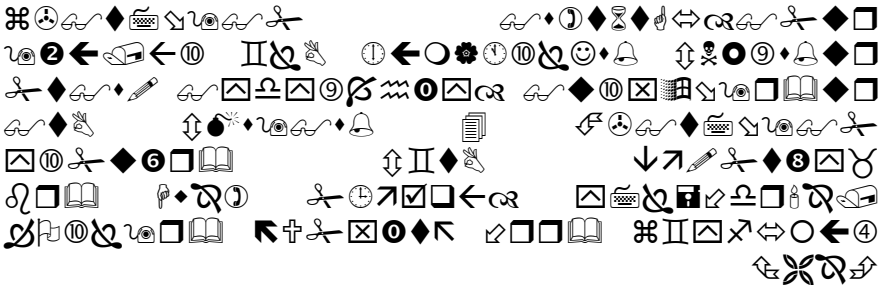
sciences. Some of the major works used by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* are discussed under the following categories:

## 1. *Tafsīr* Books

(a) *Tafsīru Mafātīḥu'l-Ghayb*-تفسير مفاتيح الغيب- that is popularly known[21] as *at-Tafsīru'l-Kabīr*-التفسير الكبير- or *Tafsīru'l-Fakhri ar-Rāzī*-تفسير الفخر الرازى-. The author of this *Tafsīr*, Muḥammad bin ᶜUmar bin Ḥusayn bin Ḥasan bin ᶜAli popularly known as Fakhru-d-Dīn ar-Rāzī,[22] was born in 544 A.H./1150 C.E. in Rayy. This *Tafsīr* work comprises of seventeen volumes according to the edition of Dāru'l-Fikr in Beirut-Lebanon (1414 A.H./1994 C.E.) with the foreword written by the Director of Azhar University, Lebanon branch, As-Shaykh Khalīl Muhyi-d-Dīn al-Mays. The author had discussed various fields of knowledge in it to the extent that some scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah and Abu Hayyān, were recorded to have said about this *Tafsīr* that: "It (i.e. *Tafsīru Mafātīḥi'l-Ghayb*) contains everything excepts *Tafsīr*"[23]. In the opinion of some other scholars like as-Subki, Ibn Khallikān e.t.c., this *Tafsīr* book is viewed in contrary as referenced by Jimoh that: "In addition to *Tafsīr*, everything is to be found there".

It is apposite to state here that the use of this *Tafsīr* book by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is in three forms which are:

(i) His quotation and reference of him for information sake without criticism even if he does not support his idea as evidenced in his commentary on Q12:25 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> So they both raced with one aother to the door, and she tore his shirt from the back: They both found her lord (i.e. her husband) at the door. She said: "What is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife, except that he be put in prison or a painful torment?"

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī quoted ar-Rāzī to have mentioned three wisdoms to be deduced from the verse. These wisdoms from the quotations can be summarized thus:

a. There is no lover that will want or strive to inflict pain in his beloved. Her (Sulaykhah) utmost love for Prophet Yūsuf made her to suggest prison first before a painful torment. She had mentioned this herself as a protective measure for him against any evil and other pain that may be suggested by others. Her intention for mentioning prison was to lessen his punishment as she thought it will not be more than a day or less.

b. The presentation of issue in an indirect manner in order not to reveal the true picture of an issue and without lying against the innocent. The king's wife did not mention directly that she was the one who aimed at Prophet Yūsuf and she did not lie against him.

c. The beloved ones do cover up the mistakes or shortcoming of their beloved either to avoid severe torment or lessen the punishment. Prophet Yūsuf wanted to push her in order to save himself from her wishes. This pushing was the aim of the woman when she said: "ما جزاء من أراد بأهلك سوءا" i.e. "what is the recompense (punishment) for him who intended an evil design against your wife". Q12:25

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī concludes after this information from Ar-Rāzī without any criticism that:

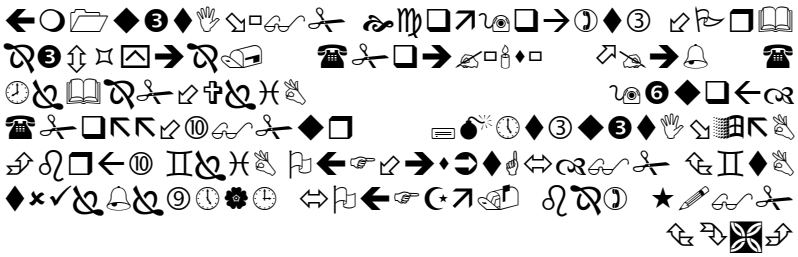
وفيه من الأنظار ما فيه

**Meaning:**

There are series of observation there in.

(ii) His reference to him in form of summary of his opinion or stand on issues without quoting his statement verbally. This is evidenced in 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's

discussion on the name of God "Allah" as a proper noun, non-derivative name and an Arabic word. He refers to the stand of ar-Rāzī without any quotation and in support of his own view on the issue when he is interpreting Q1:1 on *al-Basmalah*. Also, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refers to ar-Rāzī summarily while commenting on Q11:13 which reads:

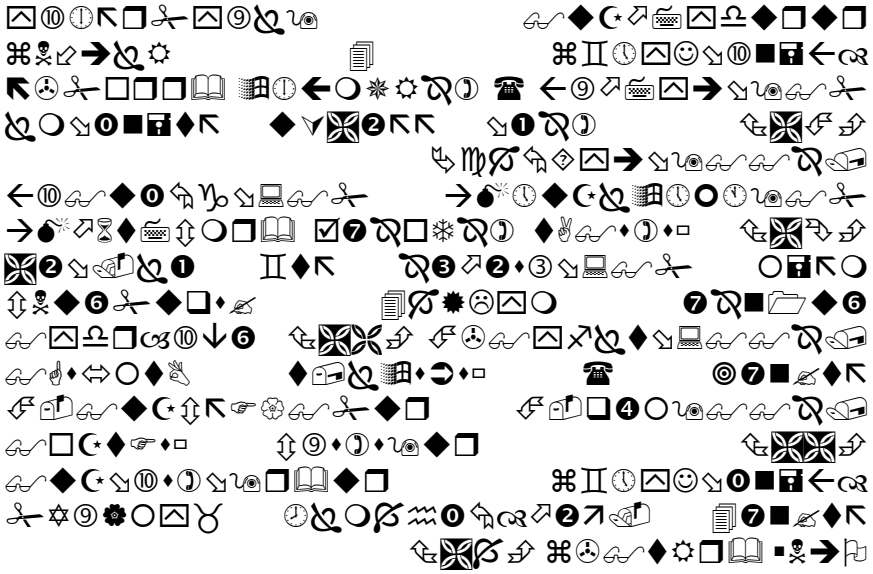


**Meaning:**

> Or do they say, "He invented it?' say, "Then bring ten *surahs* like it that have been invented and call upon (for assistance) whomever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful".

He refers to ar-Rāzī to have used this verse as a proof for the miracle of the Qur'ān to be its eloquency.[24]

(iii) The third form of referencing ar-Rāzī by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī takes the form of criticizing his submission after quoting him as in the case of Q38:30-34 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> And to Dāwud (David) we gave Sulaimān (Solomon). How excellent (a) Slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)! When there were displayed before him, in the afternoon well trained horses of the highest breed (for *Jihād* – holy fighting in Allah's Cause). And he said: "Alas! I did love the good (these horses) instead of remembering my Lord (in the ᶜ*Aṣr* prayer)" till the time was over and (the sun) had hidden in the veil (of night). Then he said "Bring them (horses) back to me". Then he began to pass his hand over their legs and their neck (till the end of the display). And indeed, we did try Sulaimān (Solomon) and We placed on his throne *Jasad* (a devil, so he lost his kingdom for a while) and he did return (to Allah with obedience and in repentance and to his throne and kingdom by the Grace of Allah).

While commenting on the sentence "إنى أحببت حب الخير عن ذكر ربي" i.e. "I did love the good (these horses) instead of remembering my Lord (in my ᶜ*Asr* Prayer)" (verse 32), he quotes ar-Rāzī (part of it) as follows:

> وقال الرازى: قال الأكثرون: إنه عليه السلام فاته صلاة العصر بسبب اشتغاله بالنظر إلى الخيل فاستردها وعقر سوقها وأعناقها تقربا إلى الله تعالى، وعندى لأنه بعيد ويدل عليه وجوه: الأول: أنه لو كان مسح السوق والأعناق قطعها لكانمعنى قوله تعالى: "وامسحوا برءوسكم" (2/5) اقطعوها وهذا لايقوله عاقل، بل لو قيل: مسح رأسه بالسيف فربما فهم منه ذلك البتة، الثانى: أن القائلين بهذا القول جمعوا على سليمان أنواعا من الأفعال المذمومة، فأولها: ترك الصلاة، وثانيها: أنه استولى عليه الاشتغال بحب الدنيا إلى حيث نسى الصلاة، وقد قالﷺ: "حب الدنيا رأس كل حطيئة، وثالثها: أنه بعد الإتيان بهذا الذنب العظيم لم يشتغل بالتوبة والإنابة...[25]

**Meaning:**

> Ar-Rāzī said: The majority (of the Qur'ānic Exegetes) said: Surely, he (Prophet Sulaimān) missed Ṣalātu'l-ᶜAṣr because he was busy gazing at the horses. He then called for the horses to be sacrificed for the sake of Allah, the Most High. However, this to me, is far away from the truth for many reasons (some of which are) as follows: (i) If the meaning of passing the hand on the legs and necks is to cut them off, then the meaning of this verse-وامسحوا برؤوسكم-(Q5:6) will be to cut off the head which no sensible person will agree to. It may be said that: "passing the sword over his head" indicates cutting off the neck (this because of mentioning the sword). But if the word "sword" is not mentioned, then the meaning (of cutting off) cannot be understood from that at all. (ii) The upholders of this view have attributed different kinds of bad and obscene actions to Prophet Sulaimān. (Some of which) are: (a) abandonment of *Ṣalāh* (b) Materialism has overwhelmed him to the extent of forgetting the *Ṣalāh* and the Prophet -ﷺ- had really said that: "Materialism is the peak of all evil" (c) That Prophet Sulaimān, after committing this sin did not repent and turn to Allah. (d) That based on the opinion that the pronoun in -ردّوها- is for the Sun, Prophet Sulaimān has used foul language against Allah…

After the above quotation, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī then addressed all the issues raised in the quotation by ar-Rāzī one after the other. For instance, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refutes:

(i) The issue of abandoning *Ṣalāh* as a bad action by saying that it was not intentional for Prophet Sulaimān and any unintentional action is not accusable and blameworthy. And that the majority of the *Mufassirūn* has not accused Prophet Sulaimān of bad act of abandonment out of forgetfulness. Thus, Prophet Sulaimān is out of this accusation and has not committed any sin by that. (ii) With regards to his love of this world which made him to abandon *ṣalāh*, he was only busy preparing the horses for *jihād* which is also an act of worship. Thus, it is not that he was materialistic. At the end of his refutation of the points raised by ar-Rāzī against the majority of the *Mufassirūn*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī concludes by saying:

> أنا تعجبي منه أشد من تعجبه من الناس حيث خفى عليه حسن الوجه الذى استحسنه الجمهور ولم يطلع على ما ورد فيه من الأخيار الحسان وظن أن القول به مناف للقول بعصمة الأنبياء عليهم السلام حتى قال ما قال ورشق على الجمهور النبال، وبالجملة قد اختلت أقوال هذا الإمام فى هذا المقام ولم ينصف مع الجمهور هم أعرف منه بالمأثور...[26]

**Meaning:**

> My surprise about him (ar-Rāzī) is more than his surprise about the people (the majority) in the sense that the good side (of the discussion, which the majority had tried to accept, is hidden for him. He was not aware of the available good traditions on this issue and thought that discussing and upholding this position has negated the infallibility of the Prophets- May the Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon them- which made him to say what he has said. And he attacked the noble majority… In summary, the statements of this Imām could cause confusion in this regard. And he is not just with the majority who are more knowledgeable than him in the tradition.

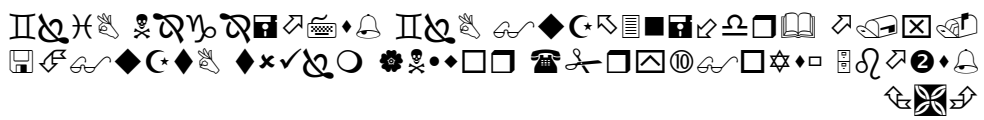
From the above quotation, it can be deduced that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has defended the story of Prophet Sulaimān that is confirmed and verified by both Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* as well as supported by the majority of *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) but has been denied by ar-Rāzī.

(b) *Tafsīru'l-Kash-shāf*- تفسير الكشاف- is another work on Qur'ānic Exegesis form which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has tapped some points to support his discussion of verses and

chapters. This book that is also known as *Tafsīru-z-Zamakh-sharī-* تفسير الزمخشرى, was authored by Jārullāhi Abu'l-Qāsim, Maḥmūd bin Muḥammad bin ᶜUmar al-Khawārizmī al-Ḥanafi az-Zamakh-Sharī. He was born in the year 467 A.,H equivalent to 1075 C.E. in Zamakhshar, Khawarizm that is corresponding to Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan. He died in the year 538 A.H. equivalent to 1144 C.E. in al-Jurjaniyyah, Khawarizm. He was a Persian Muslim Scholar whose *Tafsīr* work is regarded as a literary masterpiece through which he has explained the Noble Qur'ān in favour of his Muᶜtazilite thought and school of theology. This *Tafsīr* work comprises of six volumes according to the edition of Maktabatu''l-ᶜAbīkan in Riyāḍ (1418 A.H/1998 C.E).[27]

It is important to state here that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has made use of az-Zamakhshari *Tafsīr* despite their ideological differences as 'al-'Imām is a *Salafī* among the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* while az-Zamakhshari is a *Muᶜtazilī*. He had referred to az-Zamakhshari to benefit not only from his literary knowledge but also his submissions on issues, though he may disagree with him at times and agree with him at times. Examples of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's use of az-Zamakhshari are in the following ways:

(i) His reference of az-Zamakhshari for literary knowledge as evidenced in his commentary on Q38:3 which says:



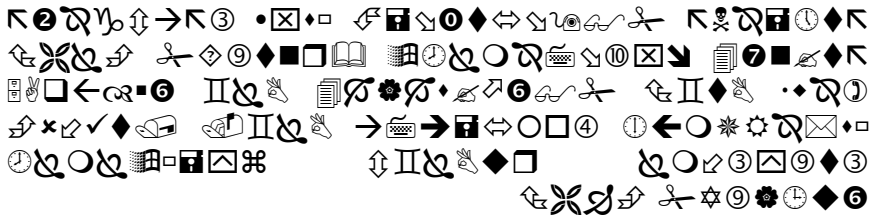
**Meaning:**

> Then he said: "Bring them (horses) back to me." Then he began to pass his hand over their legs and their necks (till the end of the display).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī quoted az-Zamakhshari to have said in his *al-Kash-shāf* that the word "*Mas-hān-*مسحا" in the above verse means "to cut" i.e. cutting off the legs and neck of the horses. In this discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī supported az-Zamakhshari's view by bringing supportive evidences from the traditions on the fact that Prophet did cut off the legs and necks of the horses as contained in the narration of 'Ubay bin Kaᶜb and

recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī that the Prophet ﷺ said with regards to the above verse that Prophet Sulaimān cut their legs and necks with sword.[28]

(ii) His reference of az-Zamakhsharī for his submission on issue as evidenced in his commentary on Q72:26-27 which reads:



**Meaning**:

> (He alone is) the All-knowing of the *Ghaib* (unseen) and He revealed to none His *Ghaib* (unseen). Except to a Messenger (from mankind) whom He has chosen (He informs him of unseen as much as He likes), and then He makes a band of watching guards (angels) to march before him and behind him.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has quoted az-Zamakhsharī, who interpreted the above verse according to his school of thought, to have said thus:

> إن فى هذا إبطال الكرامات أى فى الجملة وهي ما كان من الإظهار على الغيب لأن الذين تضاف إليهم وإن كانواأولياء مرتضين فليسوا برسل وقدخص الله تعالى الرسل من بين المرتضين باللإطلاع على الغيب وإبطال الكهانة والتنجيم لأن أصحابهما أبعد شىء من الإرتضاء وأدخله فى السخط[29]

**Meaning**:

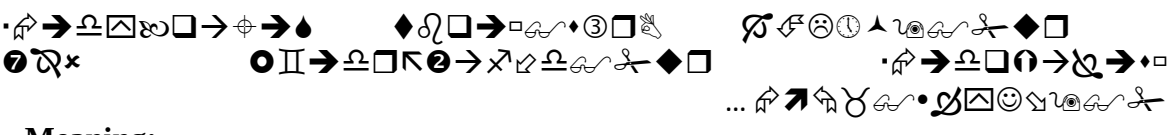
> There is evidence (in the verses) on the nullification of performing wonders (by the saints) in totality. This entails knowing anything among the unseen because those, this (knowledge) is ascribed to, even if they are chosen saints (indeed) but they are not messengers. Allah, the Most High- has specified the Messengers among the chosen ones who could be informed of the unseen (as much as Allah wills). (Likewise there is an evidence in the verses on) the nullification of fortunetelling and star reading. This is because their practitioners are far away from the pleasure (of Allah) into the wrath (of Allah).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī concludes, after a long discussion on the honour of a saint knowing some certain or general unseen, that the majority of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* have supported this in contrary to the opinion stated by az-Zamakhshari.

It has been observed from the whole discussion that the statement of az-Zamakhshari is based and limited to verse 26 of the *Sūrah* without considering verse 27 which the Exegetes have interpreted differently to include not only the messengers and prophets but also the angels and the pious servants (*Awliyā'*) through Allah's guidance.

(c) *Tafsīru'l-Baḥri'l-Muḥīt*- تفسير البحر المحيط- is another work on Qur'ānic Exegesis from which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has benefitted in his attempt to explain the Qur'ānic verses. This book was authored by 'Āthīru-d-Dīn Muḥammad bin Yūsuf bin ᶜAli bin Yūsuf bin Ḥayyān al-Andalūsi. He is popularly known as Abu Ḥayyān and his *Tafsīr* is also known as *Tafsīru Abi Ḥayyān* -تفسير أبي حيان . The author was born in the year 654 A.H. equivalent to 1256 C.E. in Granada, Spain and died in Cairo in the year 745 A.H. equivalent to 1344 C.E. at the age of 88.[30] He was the foremost, during his period, in Arabic Grammar[31] and his *Tafsīr* work was credited with comprising variant readings of the Glorious Qur'ān (*Qirā'āt*), some of which were not present in the Qur'ānic Exegeses before it. This *Tafsīr* work is of eight large volumes.

It is apposite to state here that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refers to Abu Ḥayyān and his *Tafsīr* often as a way of acknowledging the source of his information in his exposition of the Qur'ān. His reference to him or his *Tafsīr* at time is in support or further clarification of discussion as shown while discussing Q4:34 where Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> And as to those women on whose part you see ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (next) refuse to share their bed….

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī refers to this *Tafsīr* thus:

> واختار فى البحر أن فى الكلام مقدرا وأصله: واللاتى تخافون نشوزهن ونشزن فعظوهن، وهو خطاب للأزواج وارشاد لهم إلى طريق القيم عليهن[32]

**Meaning:**

> It is preferred as contained in (*Tafsīr*) *al-Baḥr* that there is an ellipsis in the sentence. And that the basis of the sentence is "And as to those women on whose part you are afraid of ill-conduct and they have committed the ill-conduct, then admonish them'. This address is to the husbands to guide them on how to be firm on (the maintenance of) the women (their wives).

In another citation, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has cited this *Tafsīru'l-Baḥr* for literary benefit as contained in Q78:36-37 which are mentioning the rewards of the inmates of paradise to be from Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Then, the Qur'ān now refers to Him as 'ar-Raḥmān - "the Most Beneficent". The word 'ar-Raḥmān" in this verse (37) is now being discussed to be an attribute qualifying the word *"Rabbu-s-Samāwāt wa'l-'Ard*-رب السماوات والأرض" or "*Rabbika* -ربك" but cannot be a substitute (*Badal*-بدل) for the word "*Rabbika*-ربك" as it is obvious that *al-Badal* (substitute) is not to be repeatedly mentioned.

(d) *Tafsīru Jāmi$^{c}$i'l-Bayān*- تفسير جامع البيان- is another source of information for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in *Magnum Opus* commentary on the Glorious Qur'ān. This book was authored by Abū Ja$^{c}$far Muḥammad bin Jarīr bin Yazīd bin Kathīr bin Ghālib aṭ-Ṭabari, who was born in the late 224 A.H. or early 225 A.H.[33] equivalent to 889 C.E. in the city of Amol in Ṭabaristān[34] and died in 310 A.H. equivalent to 923 C.E. in the city of Baghdād. He was a Persian Muslim scholar and his *Tafsīr*, which is also known as *Tafsīru-ṭ-Ṭabari*- تفسير الطبرى, is a *Sunni Tafsīr*. It is the most earliest major commentary of the Qur'ān to survive in its original form as the first primary source of information for the *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes)[35]. This *Tafsīr* work is of fifteen large volumes according to the edition of Dārul'-Fikr in Beirut (1429-1430 A.H./ 2009 C.E.).

It is a credit to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī for relying on the important and indispensable primary source of *Tafsīr bi-r-Riwāyah* (*Tafsīr* based on Tradition or Narration). He has quoted from this *Tafsīr* and made use of the author's view which at times he may agree with him and sometimes he does not only disagree but also criticize him traditionally. A

good example of this is in his discussion of the sacrificial son of Prophet Ibrāhīm. Is it Ismāᶜīl or Isḥāq? After a long discussion with supportive evidences form the revelation and reason, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī goes along with the view that is in support of Ismāᶜīl as the sacrificial son (*adh-Dhabīḥ* - الذبيح). He refutes the second opinion which is in support of Isḥāq as the sacrificial son after enlisting the upholders among who is Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabari. The extract of this is given thus:

> وقيل: هو اسحاق ونسبه القرطبى للأكثرين وعزاه البغوى وغيره إلى عمر, وعلى, وابن مسعود، والعباس، وعكرمة، وسعيد بن جبير، ومجاهد، والشعبى، وعبيد بن عمير، وأبى ميسرة، وزيد بن أسلم، وعبد الله بن شقيق والزهرى، والقاسم بن يزيد، ومحكول، وكعب، وعثمان بن حاضر، والسدى، والحسن، وقتادة، وأبى الهزيل، وابن سابط، ومسروق، وعطاء، ومقاتل، وهو إحدى الروايتين عن ابن عباس واختاره أبو جعفر ابن جرير الطبرى وجزم به القاضى عياض فى الشفاء والسهيلى فى التعريف والأعلام واستدل له بأنه لم يذكر الله تعالى أنه بشر بإسماعيل قبل كونه فهو إسحاق لثبوته بالنص ولأنه لم تكن تحته هاجر أم إسماعيل فالمدعو ولد من سارة...

**Meaning:**

> It is also said that it (the sacrificial son) is Isḥāq. Al-Qurṭubī has ascribed this to the majority and al-Baghawī and others had linked it to ᶜUmar, ᶜAlī, Ibn Masᶜūd, al-ᶜAbbās, ᶜIkrimah, Saᶜīd bin Jubayr, Mujāhid, ash-Shaᶜbī, ᶜUbayd bin ᶜUmayr, Abi Maysarah, Zayd bin 'Aslam, ᶜAbdullah bin Shaqīq, az-Zuhri, al-Qāsim bin Yazīd, Mak-ḥūl, Kaᶜb, ᶜUthmān bin Ḥādir, as-Sadī, al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, Abi'l-Hudhayl, Ibn Sābiṭ, Masrūq, ᶜAṭā', Muqātil. And it is one of the two narrations from Ibn ᶜAbbās. It is the choice of Abu Jaᶜfar bin Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī and al-Qādī ᶜIyād has categorically stated it in *Ash-Shifā'* and (likewise) as-Suhayl in *at-Taᶜrīf wa'l-'Aᶜlām*. This view has been supported with the fact that Allah- the Most High- did not mention the giving of glad tiding in respect of Ismāᶜīl before his existences. Hence, it is Isḥāq (that is the sacrificial son) because of the established proof and that Hājar, the mother of Ismāᶜīl was not under Prophet Ibrahim then. Therefore, the referred son is the son of Sārah…

After his refutation of the claims in the above quotation, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents the proof of aṭ-Ṭabari and debunk it thus based on his knowledge of the science of *Ḥadīth* (*ᶜIlmul'l-Ḥadīth*):

وبما رواه ابن جرير عن أبى كريب عن زيد بن حباب عن الحسن بن دينار عن علي بن زيد بد جدعان عن الحسن عن الأحنف بن قيس عن العباس بن عبد المطلب عن النبي صلى الله عليه- قال: "الذبيح إسحاق" [36]

**Meaning:**

> And (it is also supported) with the narration of Ibn Jarīr (in his *Tafsīr*)[37] on the authority Abi Kurayb from Zayd bin Habbāb from al-Ḥasān bin Dīnār from ᶜAli bin Zayd bin Jadᶜān from al-Ḥasan from al-Aḥnaf bin Qays from al-ᶜAbbās bin ᶜAbdul-Muṭalib from the Prophet – May the Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him- who said that: "the Sacrificial son is Isḥāq.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, after quoting the above, then criticized it by saying that al-Ḥasan bin Dīnār is an abandoned narrator of *Ḥadīth* (*Matrūk*) and his teacher is *Munkaru' l-Ḥadīth* (a rejected narrator of *Ḥadīth*).

Generally, other *Tafsīr* books used by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his mammoth commentary on the Noble Qur'ān are not limited to the following list:

i. *Tafsīr Anwāru-t-Tanzīl* نفسير أنوار التنزيل authored by al-Bayḍāwī (d 685 A.H./1286 C.E.). Al-Imām Al-'Alūsī refers to him at times by name and at times by the appellation of *al-Qāḍī*-القاضى

ii. *Tafsīru Baḥri'l-ᶜUlūm*- تفسير بحرالعلوم – authored by Abū Layth as-Samarqandī (944-983 A.H.)

iii. *Tafsīru Irshādi'l-ᶜAqli-s-Salīm ilā Mazāyā '-Kitabi'l-Karīm*- تفسيرا رشاد العقل السليم إلى مزايا الكتاب الكريم- authored by Abu-s-Suᶜūd Muḥammad al-Amadi al-Ḥanafi (900-982A.H.)

iv. *Tafsīru'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓīm* -تفسير القرآن العظيم- authored by Abu'l-Fidā Ismaᶜīl bin Kathīr who is popularly known as Ibn Kathīr (701A.H.-774A.H./1300 C.E.-1373 C.E.)

v. *Tafsīru-d-Duru'l-Manthūr* – تفسير الدر المنثور – authored by 'al-Imām as-Suyūṭī al-khudayrī (849-911 A.H/1445-1505 C.E)

vi. *Tafsīru ibn ᶜUṭayyah*- تفسير ابن عطية – It is officially entitled as "*Al-Muharraru'l-Wajīz fi Tafsīri'l-Kitābi'l-ᶜAzīz* – المحرر الوجيز في تفسير الكتاب العزيز- it was authored by ᶜAbdu'l-Ḥaqq bin Ghālib bin ᶜUṭayyah al-Andalūsī (d. 542 A.H.)

vii. *Tafsīru Jāmiᶜ'l-Aḥkām of al-Qurṭubi* (d. 671 A.H./1273 C.E.)

viii. *Tafsīru Maᶜāni'l-Qur'ān wa Iᶜrābuhu* تفسير معانى القرآن واعرابه authored by az-Zujāj

*ix.* *Tafsīru-r-Rāghib* which is officially known as *Al-Mufradāt fī Gharībi'l-Qur'ān*-المفردات في غريب القرآن-. It is authored by Ar-Raghib Al-Asfahāni (d. 502 A.H.).

x. *Aḥkāmu'l-Qur'ān* authored by al-Jaṣṣāṣ – أحكام القرآن للجصاص

xi. *Tafsīr Mujmaᶜi'l-Bayān fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'ān* of aṭ-Ṭabrasī- تفسير مجمع البيان في تفسير القرآن للطبرسي

**2 *Āḥādīth* Books**

The sources of information of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī while explaining the Qur'ān is not limited to the *Tafsīr* books, it includes the sayings and traditions of the Prophet. The number of the *Ḥadīth* used by him in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is too numerous to be mentioned as they cut across virtually all the books of *Ḥadīth* including those of the *Shīᶜah* sect of Islām when discussing issues that they have taken a stand different from others based on their own acceptable *Ḥadīth*. These *Ḥadīth* books include not only the following:

(a) *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥayn*- الصحيحين- This represents both *Ṣaḥiḥu'l-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥiḥu Muslim*. An example of his reference to *Ṣaḥiḥu'l-Bukhārī* is his quotation while explaining the meaning of the verse on the food of the people of the Book as contained in Q5:5 i.e., "وطعام الذين أوتوا الكتاب حل لكم…

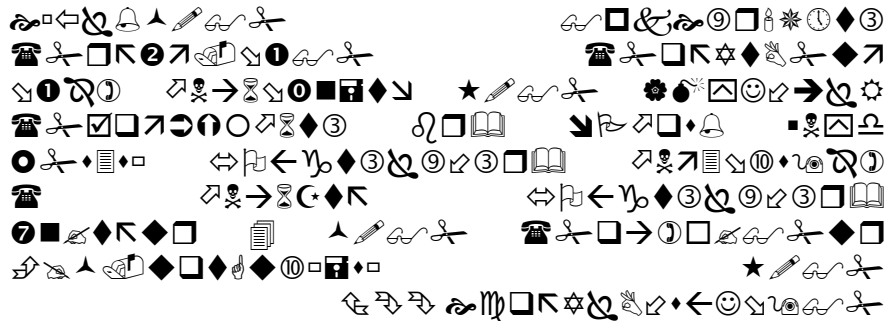
He quotes al-Imam al-Bukhārī thus:

وفي البخاري عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه- أن المراد به الذبائح

**Meaning:**

In (the book of) Bukharī on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him), (said) indeed, the meaning of it (food of the people of the Book) is (their) Slaughter.

The example of his reference to *Ṣaḥiḥu Muslim* is contained in his discussion on Q5:11 which says:



**Meaning:**

O you who believe! Remember the favour of Allah on you when some people desired (made a plan) to stretch out their hands against you, but (Allah) withheld their hands from you. So fear Allah. And in Allah should the believers put their trust.

’Al-’Imām ’Alūsī references *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* to explain those that stretched their hands against the Muslims when they did it and how Allah withheld their hands from the Muslims. He says:

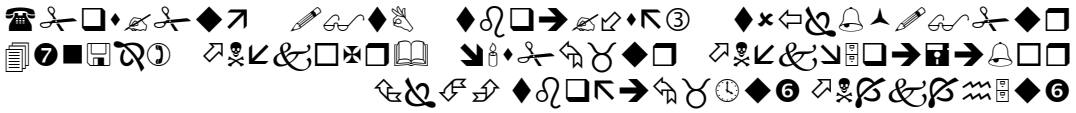
والآية إشارة إلى ما أخرجه مسلم وغيره من حديث جابر أن المشركين رأوا أن رسول الله – صلى الله عليه- وأصحابه رضى الله عنهم- بعسفان قاموا إلى الظهر معا فلما صلوا ندموا إلا كانوا أكبوا عليهم وهموا أن يوقعوا بهم إذا قاموا إلى صلاة العصر، فرد الله تعالى كيدهم بأن أنزل صلاة الخوف[38]

**Meaning:**

And (this) Āyah is pointing to the narration of Muslim and others from the *Ḥadīth* of Jābir that the polytheists saw that the Messenger of Allah and his companions were standing for *Ẓuhr* Prayer at (a place called) *ᶜAsfān*. When they finished their prayer, (the polytheists) regretted for not attacking them (the Muslims). Thus, they decided to attack them whenever they stand for *ᶜAsr* prayer. Allah then destroyed their plan by revealing (establishing) the Prayer of Fear.

(b) *Al-Kutubu-s-Sunan* – الكتب السنن - This is referring to the five books of *Sunan* which are:

i. *Sunanu-t-Tirmidhi* – سنن الترمذى - An example of his reference to this book is found in his discussion on those that are spending in Allah's cause and that their hearts are full of Allah's fear as said by the Qur'ān thus:



**Meaning:**

> And those who give that (their charity) which they give and their hearts are full of fear because they are sure to return to their Lord (for reckoning). Q23:60

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī says:

> فقد أخرج أحمد والترمذى وإبن ماجه والحاكم وصححه وابن المنذر وابن جرير وجماعة عن عائشة رضي الله عنه قالت: يارسول الله قول الله "والذين يؤتون ماآتوا وقلوبهم وجلة" أهو الرجل يسرق ويزنى ويشرب الخمر وهومع ذلك يخاف الله تعالى؟ قال: لا ولكنه الرجل يصوم ويتصدق ويصلى وهو مع ذلك يخاف الله تعالى أن لا يتقبل منه[39]

**Meaning:**

> Indeed it has been transmitted by Aḥmad, Tirmidhi, Ibn Mājah, al-Ḥākim who authenticated it, Ibn Mundhir, Ibn Jarīr and other group on the authority of ᶜAishah رضي الله عنها- who said: I asked Allah's Messenger- ﷺ– about this verse "And those who give that (their charity) which they give with their hearts full of fear (Q23:60) is he a man that still commits zinā and drink alcohol and with that he still fears Allah? He replied: "No: But it is the one that fast, give charity and observe prayer and still fear that his good deeds may not be accepted by Allah from him.

ii. *Sunan Abi Dāwud* – سنن أبى داود – An example of his reference to this book is found while trying to explain the meaning of Allah's statement which says:



i.e

> …. And the men and women who remember Allah much (with their hearts and tongue)…(Q 33:35).

Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes the following *Ḥadīth* from Abu Dāwud:

وأخرج أبو داود والنسائى، وابن ماجه وغيرهم عن أبى سعيد الخدري أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم- قال: "إذا أيقظ الرجل امراته من الليل فصليا ركعتين كانا تلك الليلة من الذا كرين الله كثيرا والذاكرات"[40]

**Meaning:**

Abū Dāwud, Nisā'i, Ibn Mājah and others have transmitted on the authority of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī that the messenger of Allah – صلى الله عليه وسلم – said: "When the husband wakes his wife in the night and then observe two *rakaʿah*, they shall be (written to the among the) men and women who remember Allah much in that might.

iii. *Sunanu-n-Nisā'i-* سنن النائ – 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has quoted this book for reference while discussing varieties of the *Ṣalāh* (Graces, Honours, Blessing and Mercy) to be sending upon the Prophet ﷺ as commanded by Allah in the Qur'ān thus:

إن الله وملئكته يصلون على النبي يأيها الذين ءامنوا صلوا عليه وسلموا تسليمًا

**Meaning:**

Allah sends His *Ṣalāt* on the Prophet and also His angels (ask Allah to bless and forgive him). O you who believe! Send your *Ṣalāt* on (ask Allah to bless) him (Muḥammad) and (you should) greet (salute) him with the Islamic way of greeting.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes an-Nisā'i thus:

وأخرج النسائي وغيره عن أبى هريرة، أنهم سألوا رسول الله ﷺ كيف نصلى عليك؟ قال: "قولوا: اللهم صلى على محمد وعلى آل محمد وبارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد كما صليت وباركت على إبراهيم فى العالمين إنك حميد مجيد

**Meaning:**

It has been transmitted by an-Nisā'i and others on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that they (the companions) asked the Messenger of Allah on how to send blessing upon you? He said "Say: O Allah! Send your *Ṣalāt* on Muḥammad and on the family or the followers of Muḥammad. And (O Allah!) send your blessing on Muḥammad as you send your *Ṣalāt* and Blessing on Ibrāhīm in the worlds, for you are the Most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious.

iv. *Sunnan Ibn Mājah-* سنن ابن ماجه-: 'Al-'Imām 'Al-Alūsi refers to this book while discussing, as an example, on the virtues of knowledge and the status of a scholar as Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> …Allah will exalt in degree those of you who believe, and those who have been granted knowledge… (Q58:11).

He quotes Ibn Majah on this thus:

> وعمر بن كثير عن الحبين قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم- "يشفع يوم القبامة ثلاثة: الأنبياء و ثم العلماء, ثم الشهداء"

**Meaning:**

> Umar bin Kathīr narrated on the authority of al-Ḥasan that the Messenger of Allah –ﷺ – said: "Three kinds of people will intercede on the day of Judgement: The Prophets, then the Scholars and then the Martyrs".

v. *Sunanu'l-Bayhaqi*: - سنن البيهقى: Al-Imām Al-Alūsī refers to this book for example, while discussing the *Sababu-n-Nuzūl* (reason for the revelation) of Q 58:22 which says:



**Meaning:**

> You (O Muḥammad) will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger even though they were their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kindred. For such He has written faith in their hearts, and strengthened them with *Rūḥ* (proofs, light and true) from Himself.

He quotes al-Bayhaqi thus:

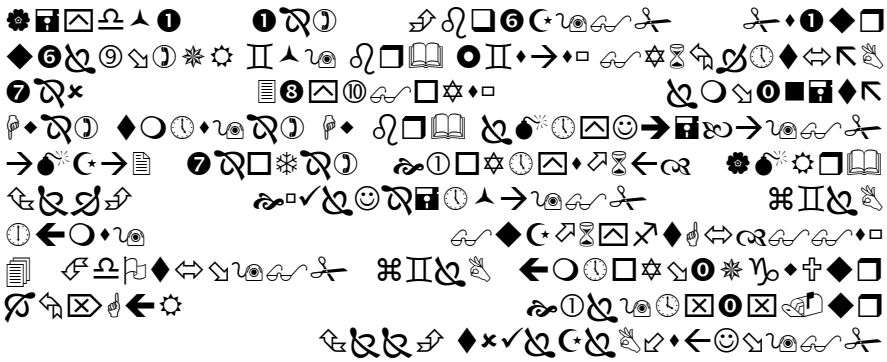
> والبيهقى فى سننه عن ابن عباس عن عبد الله بن شوذب قال: جعل والد أبى عبيدة يتصدى له يوم بدر وجعل أبو عبيدة يير عنه فلما أكثر فصده أبو عبيدة فقتله فنزلت لاتجد "الخ

**Meaning:**

And al-Bayhaqi (has transmitted) in his *Sunan* on the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās from Abdullah bin Shūdhāb who said that the father of Abu ᶜUbaydah took him (i.e. Abu ᶜUbaydah) up on the day of *Badr* (for wrestling). And Abu ᶜUbaydah was turning away from him. But when he (the father) insisted, then Abu ᶜUbaydah fought him (his father) and killed him (his father). Then Allah revealed the verse "You will not find any people…"

(c) *Kutubu'l-Masānīd*- كتب المسانيد – This is referring to the following, but not limited to, books of *'Aḥādīth* which are:

i. *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*- مسند الإمام أحمد-: An extract of this is contained in his discussion on the efficacy of the prayer of Prophet Yūnus which he supplicated Allah with for his safety in the fish as contained in *Sūratu'l-Anbiyā'i* thus:



**Meaning:**

And (remember) Dhun-Nūn (Yūnus), when he went off in anger, and imagined that we shall not punish him (i.e. the calamities which had befallen him)! But he cried through the darkness (saying): "None has the right to be worshipped but you (O Allah) Glorified (and Exalted) are you. Truly, I have been of the wrong-doors". So, we answered his call and delivered him from the distress. And thus we do deliver the believers. (Q21:87-88)

Al-Imām al-'Alūsi quotes from this book thus:

أخرج أحمد والترمذى والنسائى والحكيم فى نوادر الأصول والحاكم وصححه وابن جرير والبيهقى فى الشعب، وجماعة عن سعد بن أبى وقاص عن النبى- صلى الله عليه وسلم – قال: "دعوة ذى النون إذ هو فى بطن الحوت لاإله إلا أنت سبحانك إنى كنت من الظالمين لم يدع بها مسلم ربه في شيء قط إلا استجاب له

**Meaning:**

It has been transmitted by Aḥmad, Trimidhi, Nisā'i, al-Hakīm in *Nawādiri'l-'Usūl*, al-Ḥākim who authenticated it, Ibn Jarīr, al-Bayhaqi in *ash-Shaᶜb* and others on the authority of Saᶜd bin 'Abi Waqās that the

> Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "The supplication of Dhi Nūn when he was in the fish is *Lā ilāha illā anta subḥānaka innī kuntu mina ẓālimīn* (None is worthy of being worshipped except you, Glorified and Exalted are you. I have been, indeed, among the wrong doers). No Muslim will call upon his Lord by it for anything except that he is answered.

Some other books of *Masānīd* that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refers to in summary are:

ii. *Musnad ibn Ḥumayd*- مسند ابن حميد

iii. *Musnad Abi Yaᶜlā* – مسند أبى يعلى

iv. *Musnad Abi Ḥanīfah*- مسند أبى حنيفة

v. M*usnad Imām Shāfiᶜ*- مسند الإمام الشافعي

iv. *Musnad Ibn 'Abi 'Usāmah* – مسند ابن أبى أسامة

vii. *Musnadu-sh-Shihāb of al-Qadāᶜī* – مسند الشهاب لالقضاعى

viii. *Musnadu-sh-Shāshī* – مسند الشاشى

ix. *Musnadu'l-Firdaws of ad-Daylami* – مسند الفردوس لالديلمى

(d) *Kutubu'l-Muṣannafāt* – كتب المصنفات- This category of *Ḥadīth* books represents the following:

(i) *Muṣannafᶜ Abdu-r-Razāq*- مصنف عبد الرزاق

(ii) *Al-Muṣannaf of Ibn 'Abi Shaybah* – المصنف لابن أبى شيبة

(e) *Kutubu'l-Ḥadīth al-Mutanawwiᶜah* – كتب الحديث المتنوعة – This category of *Ḥadīth* books includes those *Ḥadīth* books used by 'al-Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his exegesis of the Noble Qur'ān which are not having special division or category. They include not only the following:

i. *Al-Mustadrak li'l-Hākim* – المستدرك لا لحاكم

ii. *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān* – صحيح ابن حبان

iii. *Ibn Abi Ḥātim* – ابن أبى حاتم

iv. *Aṭ-Ṭabarānī fi'l-Kabīr and al-Awsat* – الطبرانى فى الكبير والأوسط

v. *Al-Bayhaqi fi Shaᶜbi'l-Īmān* – البيهقى فى شعب الإيمان

vi. *Ibn Mundhirī in Targhīb wa Tarhīb* – ابن المنذرى فى الترغيب والترهيب

vii *Al-Haythami fi'l-Majmaᶜ* – الهيثمى في المجمع

viii *Al-Muwaṭṭa* of Imam Malik – الموطأ

ix *Ibn ᶜAdī fi'l-Kāmil* – ابن عدى فى الكامل

x *Ibn ᶜAsākir* – ابن عساكر

xi *Ibn Abi-d-Dunya* – ابن أبى الدّنيا

xii *Ibn Mardawih* – ابن مردويه

xii *Abu Nuᶜaim* – ابو نعيم etc.

Apart from the above *Ḥadīth* books, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has made use of books on commentaries of *Ḥadith* such as *Fatḥu'l-Bārī* of Ibn Hajar al-ᶜAsqalānī, *al-Minhaj* of an-Nawawī which is popularly known as *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥi Muslim*, *Sharḥu-Jamᶜi'l-Jawāmiᶜ* of al-Maḥallī, *Ash-Sharḥu'l-Kabīr li'l-Jāmiᶜi-ṣ-Ṣaghīr* of al-Manāwī, etc.

**3. Fiqh Books**

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī does make use of *Fiqh* books belonging to the four major *Fiqh* Schools of thought. It has been observed, from the critical study of this mammoth commentary on the Noble Qur'ān that he, at times, mentions the Islamic Jurists with their opinions only without mentioning the books that contain it and at times he mentions the *Fiqh* books without the author or the upholder of the opinion, perhaps because the book and the author are not strange to them then. But in the contemporary society, they may be strange to the researchers as many of the books are not at their disposal. Some of these books of *Fiqh* used by 'al-'lmām al-'Alūsī are:

a. *Badā'iᶜu-ṣ-Ṣanā'iᶜ* of al-Imām al-Kāsānī – بدائع الصنائع للإمام الكاسانى

b. *Al-Mubsūt* of 'al-'Imām as-sarkhasī – المبسوط للإمام السرخسى

c. *Al-Iqnāᶜu fi Fiqhi'l-Imām Aḥmad* of al-Hajāwī al- Maqdisi – الإقناع في فقه الإمام أحمد لالحجاوى المقدسص

d. *Al-Insāf fi Maᶜrifati-r-Rājiḥ mina'l-khilāf* of al-Mardwī - الإنصاف في معرفة الراجح من الخلاف لالمردوى

e. *Sharḥu'l-Wajīz of al-Ghazāli* – شرح الوجيز للغزالى

f. *Fatḥu'l-Qadīr* of Kamālu-d-Dīn Muḥammad bin ᶜAbdul-Wāḥid as-Sīwasī popularly known and referred to by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as *Ibnu'l-Hamān* – فتح القدير لكمال الدين محمد بن عبد الواحد السيواسى – المعروف والمشارإليه عند الإمام الألوسى بابن الهمام

g. *Tuḥfatu'l-Muḥtāj ilā 'Adillati'l-Minhāj* of Ibn al-Mulqinu - تحفة المحتاج إلى أدلة المنهاج لابن الملقن

h. *Al-Hidāyah Sharḥu Bidāyati'l-Mubtadī* of al-Marghīnānī- الهداية شرح بداية المبتدى للمرغينانى

i. *Al-ᶜInāyah Sharḥu'l-Hidāyah* of Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Bābartī – العناية شرح الهداية لمحمد محمود البابرتى

j. *Ta'sīsu-n-Naẓar* of ad-Dabūsī – تأسيس النظر للدبوسى

k. *Ad-Durru'l-Mukhtār Sharḥu Tanwīwir'l-'Abṣār* of al-Ḥaṣkafī – الدر المختار شرح تنوير الأبصار للحصكفى

l. *Adh-Dhakhīrah* of al-Qarrāfī – الذخيرة للقرافى etc.

**4. Arabic Dictionary**

The following are some of the Arabic dictionaries used by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī:

a. *Aṣ-Ṣiḥāḥ* of al-Jawhari- الصحاح للجوهرى

b. *Kitābu'l-ᶜAyn* of al-Khalīl bin Aḥmad al-Farāhīdi – كتاب العين للخليل أحمد الفراهيدى

c. *Al-Qāmūsu'l-Muḥīṭ* of al-Fayrūzi Ābādī – القاموس المحيط للفيروز آبادى

d. *Al-Muḥīṭu fi'l-Lughah* of Aṣ-Ṣaḥib bin ᶜAbbād – المحيط في اللغة للصاحب بن عبّاد

**5. Arabic Grammar Books**

This category includes books on *Naḥw* such as:

a. *Al-Kitāb* of Sībawayh – الكتاب لسيبويه

b. *Sharh Kitābi Sībawayh* of Abubakar al-khaffāf – سرح كتاب سيبوبه لأبى بكر الخفاف

**6. *Sīrah* Books**:

These include not only the following:

a. The *Sīrah* book of Ibn Hishām – ابن هشام

b. *Al-Iṣābah* of Ibn Hajar – الإصابة لابن حجر

c. The History book of Ibnu-n-Nuḥās- تاريخ ابن النحاس

d. *Muᶜjamu-ṣ-Ṣaḥābah* of Al-Baghawī – معجم الصحابة للبغوى

**7. *Al-Kutubu'l-Mutanawwiᶜah* – الكتب المتنوعة**

These books are general in discussion which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refers to in his exposition of the noble Qur'ān. Some of these are:

a. *ᶜAmalu'l-Yawmi wa'l-Laylah* of Ibn Sūni – عمل اليوم والليلة لابن السونى

b. *Kashfu'l-Khufā wa'l-Ilbās* of Al-ᶜAjilūni – كشف الخفا والإلباس

c. *Taḥrīmu-s-Simāᶜ* of al-Imām Abubakar at-Ṭarsūsī – تحريم السماع للإمام أبوبكر الطرسوسى

d. *Risālatu'l-Inshā of al-Muḥāsibi* – رسلة الإنشاء للمحاسبى

e. *Kaffu-r-Riᶜāᶜ ᶜan Muḥarramāti'l-Lahw wa-s- Simāᶜ* of Ibn Hajar –
كف الرعاع عن محرمات اللهو والسماع لابن حجر

f. *Al-Qawāᶜidu'l-Kubra* of ᶜIzzu bin ᶜAbdussalam- القواعد الكبرى لعز بن عبد السلام

g. *Ad-Dururu'l-Manthūrah* of ᶜAbdu'l-wahāb Ash-Shiᶜrānī –
الدرر المنثورة لعبد الوهاب الشعرانى

h. *Al-Ittiqān fi ᶜUlūmi'l-Qur'ān* of Jalālu-d-Dīn As-Sayūṭi-
الإتقان في علوم القرآن لجلال الدين السيوطي

i. *Al-Mawḍūᶜāt* of Ibn Jawzī – الموضو عات لابن الجوزى

j. *Al-Futūḥātu'l-Makkiyah* of Muhyi-d-Din Ibn 'Arabi- الفتوحات المكية ليحى الدين

Also, many scholars were quoted in 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's attempt to buttress his discussion and make his point clearer. These scholars are not limited to the field of Islamic Sciences and Arabic Sciences but also scholars in the modern sciences. Some of these scholars quoted or used by him are:

a. Az-Zarqānī al-Māliki (d. 1122 A.H)

b. Ibn Hajar al-Haytami (d. 974 A.H/1566 C.E)

c. Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 A.H/1328 C.E)

d. As-Sakhāwī (d. 902 A.H/1497 C.E)

e. Al-Qurtubi (d. 671 A.H/1273 C.E)

f. Al-Qushayri (d. 465 A.H/1072-73 C.E)

g. Al-Baghawī (d. 516 A.H/1122 C.E)

h. Al-Qistalānī (d. 1517 C.E)

i. Ibn Sinā (d. 1037 C.E)

j. Ibn Rajab al-Hambali (d. 795 A.H/1393 C.E)

k. Al-Farrā' (d. 516 A.H/1122 C.E)

l. Ibn Daqīd al-ᶜid (d. 702 A.H/302 C.E)

m. Al-Qādī Abubakar Ibn ᶜArabi (d. 1240 C.E)

n. Tāju-d-Din as-Subki (d. 771 A.H/1370 C.E)

o. Al-Qādī ᶜIyād (d. 544 A.H/1149 C.E)

p. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 A.H/1350 C.E)

Generally, the books and scholars that proved useful as sources of information for 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Magnum Opus*: *Rūḥul'l-Maᶜānī* are too numerous to count in this study.

### 3.4 'Al-'Alūsī's Approach to *Tafsīr*

The approach of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to the interpretation of the Qur'ān is exclusively unique and different from other *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) because of its combination of the three kinds of *Tafsīr*. This makes his *Tafsīr* work not only to be informative and educative but also a fascinating reference for the students and researchers of both Islamic and Arabic Studies. His approach to *Tafsīr* can be summarized and discussed under the following points:

(1) Introduction of the chapter before exegetical discussion

(2) Establishment of the link between chapters and verses

(3) Grammatical analysis

(4) The Use of *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl*

(5) Use of Qur'ān to explain the Qur'ān

(6) Use of *Sunnah* to explain the Qur'ān

(7) Use of statement of the early predecessors (*As-Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ*) to interpret the Qur'ān

(8) Use of Arabic poem in explaining the Qur'ān

(9) Legal discussion

(10) Use of *Isrā'iliyyāt*

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, in most cases, follows the above listed points, which can be termed as features of his *Tafsīr*, in his attempt to explain the Glorious Qur'ān. This means that not all the verses are explained using this approach as not all verses have reason(s) for their revelation or have legal (*Fiqh*) issues to be discussed or need to be explained using *Judaica* Stories (*Isrā'iliyyāt*), etc. The above listed features are hereby discussed in details as follows:

**(1) Introduction of the Chapter before the Exegetical Discussion**

The first approach of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is the introductory note on the chapter to be discussed before giving the Qur'ānic text and their commentaries. In this introductory message, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī mention the common name of the chapter with proofs and some other names which are not common for the *Sūrah* with evidences where necessary and available. It is under this introduction that he also gives the virtues of the chapter being discussed with evidences from the *Sunnah*. It should, however, be noted that this introductory note is not for all the Qur'ānic chapters [69]

as some have no recorded and authentic virtues. It also gives information about the place of revelation of the chapter as well as the number of verses contained in it according to the views of different Exegetes. For instance, the introduction to *Sūrah ᶜAbasa* (Qur'ān Chapter 80) reads as follows:[41]

> وتسمى سورة الصاخة وسورة السفرة وسميت في غير كتاب سورة الأعمى، وهى مكية بلا خلاف وآياتها اثنتان وأربعون فى الحجازي والكوفى، وإحدى وأربعون فى البصرى وأربعون فى الشامى والمدنى...

**Meaning:**

> It (*Sūratu ᶜAbasa*) is also called *Sūratu-ṣ-Ṣākh-khah* (i.e chapter of the second blowing of the Trumpet on the Day of Resurrection). It is also called *Sūratu-s-Safarah* (i.e chapter of the scribes). And it was named, in more than a book, as *Sūratu'l-Aᶜmā* (i.e chapter of the blind man). It is known to be a *Makkan Sūrah* without any difference among the scholars. It has forty-two verses according to the people of Ḥijāz and Kūfah. While the people of Baṣrah opined that it has forty-one verses and forty verses according to the people of Shām and Madīnah.

Also, in the introductory notes of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on *Sūratu Hūd* (Qur'ān Chapter 11), the virtue of this *Sūrah* is mentioned thus:[42]

> ...وورد فى فضلها ما ورد، فقد أخرج الدارمى، وأبو داود فى مراسيله، والبيهقى فى شعب الإيمان، وغيرهم عن كعب قال: "قال رسول الله –صلى الله عليه وسلم- :اقرأوا هودًا يوم الجمعة" وأخرج الترمذى وحسنه وابن المنذر والحاكم وصححه، والبيهقى في البعث والنشور من طريق عكرمة عن ابن عباس قال: "قال أبو بكر-رضى الله عنه-: يارسول الله قد شبت، قال: شيبتنى هود والواقعة والمرسلات وعم يتساءلون وإذا الشمس كورت" ....وكل ذلك يدل على خطرها وعظم ما اشتملت عليه وأشارت إليه وهو الذى صار سببًا لإسراع الشيب إليه، -صلى الله عليه وسلم- وفسره بعضهم بذكر يوم القيامة وقصص الأمم ويشهد له بعض الآثار....

**Meaning:**

> It has been reported about its (*Sūratu Hūd*) virtue some narrations. (Such as) the narration of ad-Dāramī, Abu Dāwud in his (book of) *Marāsīl*, al-Bayhaqi in his (book of) Shaᶜbi'l-Īmān and others on the authority of Kaᶜb that the Messenger of Allah –ﷺ - said: "Recite (*Sūratu*) Hūd on the day of *Jumuᶜah*" [43]. It has also been narrated by at-Tirmidhi, who declared it to be good, (also narrated by) Ibnu'l-Mundhir, al-Hākim who authenticated it, and al-Bayhaqi in al-Baᶜth and an-Nushūr from the chain of ᶜIkrimah on the authority of (ᶜAbdullahi) bin ᶜAbbās that Abubakr said: Oh Messenger of Allah! You have become old. He (the Prophet) said: "The recitation of (*Sūratu*) *Hūd*, Al-*Wāqiᶜah*, Al-*Mursalāt*, *ᶜAmma Yatasā-'alūn*

(*Naba'*) and *Idhā Shamsu Kuwwirat* (*Kuwwirat*) has made me to become old" … All those (evidences) are pointing to the significance and greatness of what they contain (i.e. Messages) and are addressing. It is this that has caused him (the Prophet) to become old quickly. Some people (among the Scholars) have interpreted this to mean that it is the mentioning of the Day of Judgement and the history of the other Prophets and nations (that made him like that). And there are narrations to support it.

The above quotations are extracts from *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* of 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī to buttress the fact that he does introduce the chapters of the Qur'ān first before further exegeses.

**(2) Establishment of the Link between Chapters and Verses**

It is also remarkable to note that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has distinguished his *Tafsīr* from others through his systematic and careful exposition of the link or connection between the chapters of the Qur'ān as well as verses logically. The following two extracts from his *Tafsīr* will practically and clearly show this as one of his approach to Qur'ānic Exegesis:

(a) At the beginning of his commentaries on Qur'ān Chapter 86 (*Sūratu-ṭ*-Ṭāriq), 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī remarks as follows:

ولم ذكر سبحانه فيما قبلها تكذيب الكفار للقرآن، نبه تعالى شأنه هنا على حقارة الإنسان ثم استطرد جل وعلا منه إلى وصف القرآن ثم أمر سبحانه نبيه –ثلى الله عليه وسلم- بإمهال أولئك المكذبين

**Meaning:**

After Allah had mentioned the denial of the *Kuffār* (disbelievers) in the Qur'ān in the previous chapter, He is now mentioning here (i.e in this *Sūratu-ṭ*-Ṭāriq) the worthless nature of man (because their creation is from water). Then, Allah praised the Qur'ān and commanded His Messenger- Peace be upon him- to neglect and ignore the hairs.

From the above quotation, it can be deduced that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has given a fairly but adequate gist of the messages contained in *Sūratu-ṭ*-Ṭāriq. This means that the introduction is a gate to understanding the main body of the chapter by the readers.

Another example could be found in the commentaries on *Sūrah Fāṭir* (Qur'ān chapter 35) where 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī notes at the beginning of the *Sūrah* thus:

> والمناسبة على ما في البحر، إنه عز وجل لما ذكر فى آخر السورة المتقدمة هلاك المشركين أعداء المؤمنين وإنزالهم منازل العذاب تعين على المؤمنين حمده تعالى وشكره

**Meaning:**

> The connection in line with what is recorded in *al-Baḥr* (between these two chapters), is that when Almighty Allah had mentioned the destruction of the Polytheists, who were the enemies of the believers, in the previous chapter (i.e. chapter 34) and their punishment. He then made His praise and appreciation imperative on the believers.

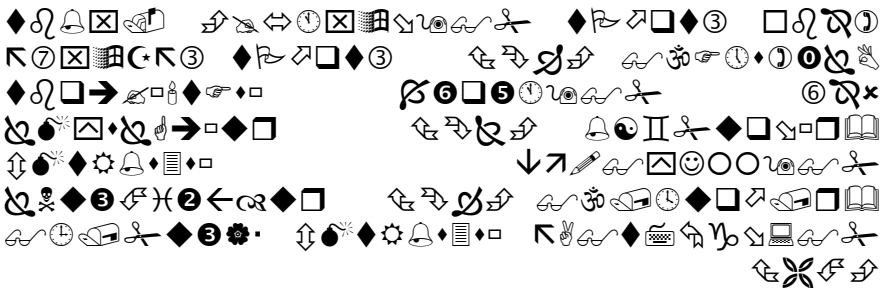
In a nutshell, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is trying to establish the fact that there is unbroken link between a chapter and another. With regards to his effort in linking verses of the Qur'ān together, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has logically connected verses 13 and 14 of *Sūratu'l-Mursalāt* (Qur'ān Chapter 77) with verses 17-20 of *Sūratu-n-Naba'* (Qur'ān Chapter 78). The verses in Chapter 77 (*Sūratu'l-Mursalāt*) read:



**Meaning:**

> And when all the Apostles are called together at a time appointed. For what day has the term (of all this) been set? For the day of Distinction (between the true and false). And what could make you conceive what that Day of Distinction will be?

While the verses in Chapter 78 (*Sūratu-n-Naba'*) say:



**Meaning:**

> Verily, the Day of Distinction (between the true and the false) indeed has its appointed time. The Day when the trumpet (of resurrection) is sounded and you all come forward in multitudes. And when the skies are opened and become (as wide-flung) gates, and when the mountains are made to vanish as if they had been a mirage.

After his presentation of the verses, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says:

ففيها شرح يوم الفصل المجمل ذكره فيما قبلها

**Meaning:**

> In these verses (of *Sūratu-n-Naba'*), there is an explanation on the Day of Distinction that is unclearly stated in the previous verses (of *Sūratu'l-Mursalāt*).

From, the statement of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, it is clear that the verses are logically connected because their meanings are related and connected. Another example of this is also found in his commentary on a verse in *Sūratu'l-ᶜAlaq* which says:



**Meaning:**

> Man has been created from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then says:

> وقيل: خص هذا الطور تذكيرًا له-ﷺ- لما وقع من شرح الصدر قبل النبوة وإخراج العلق منه ليتهيأ تهيئا تاما لما يكون له بعد فكأنه قيل: الذى خلق الإنسان من جنس ما أخرجه من صدرك الشريف ليهيئك بذلك لمثل ما يلقي إليك الآن

**Meaning:**

> And it is said that this is a special reminder to him (the Prophet –ﷺ) for the opening of his chest before the prophethood. And the bringing out of the clot (i.e., thick blood) from it so as to perfectly prepare him for the task ahead. This is just like saying: (He) who Created man from that which has been taken out of your chest in order to prepare you for the likes of what is being revealed to you now.

It can be concluded, in line with this quotation, that verse 2 of *Sūratu'l-ᶜAlaq* is connected to the first verse of *Sūratu'l-Inshirāḥ* and that *al-ᶜAlaq* (the clot) is also referring to what was taken out of the Prophet's chest.

**(3) Grammatical Analysis**

The knowledge of Arabic Language is among the condition to be fulfilled by a competent prospective exegete. This will facilitate his exposition on the Noble Qur'ān. Thus, the principles and rules of Arabic Grammar and Morphology should be possessed by the exegete. By this, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, in his effort to bring out the messages in some verses of the Qur'ān, is very meticulous and keen in using Arabic Grammar and Morphology. For instance, on the meaning of -وحسن مآب- in the verse that says:

وإن له عندنا لزلفى وحسن مأب

**Meaning:**

> ...And indeed, for him is a near access to Us, and good place of (final) return (paradise). Q38:25

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, on the correct meaning of "and good place of (final) return (paradise)", says:[44]

حسن مرجع فى الجنة وهو عطف على "زلفى" وقرأ الحسن وأبى عبلة
"وحُسنُ" بالرفع على أنه مبتدأ خبره محذوف أى له

**Meaning:**

> (The word) *Ḥusna* (means) a good place to return to in paradise. It (the statement) is joined with the previous word "*zulfā*". And al-Ḥassan and Abi ᶜAblah recited it as "*Husnu*" with *rafᶜu* since it is *Mubtada'* (subject of a nominal clause) whose *khabar* (predicate of a nominal clause) is omitted which is "*lahu*" – for him.

Another example is extracted from his discussion and explanation of the verse that says:



**Meaning:**

> O you who believe! Observing *Aṣ-Ṣawm* (the fast) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for these before you, that you may become *Al-Muttaqūn* (the pious). (Q2:183)

On the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says:

والصيام كالصوم مصدر صام وهو لغة الإمساك، ومنه يقال للصمت صوم لأنه
إمساك عن الكلام، قال ابن دريد: كل شئ تمكث حركته فقد صام[45]

**Meaning:**

> And "*Aṣ-Ṣiyām*" i.e., fasting, is like the word "*Aṣ-Ṣawm*" which is the gerund noun of the verb "*Ṣāma*" that literally means abstinence. And this is why silence is referred to as fasting because it is an abstinence from talking. Ibn Durayd said: Anything that stand still or is motionless is fasting.

Another example can also be taken from his commentary on the verse which says:

فلما أنبأهم بأسمائهم...

**Meaning:**

> …And when he had informed them of their names…(Q2:33)

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then says, after quoting the above verse thus:

> عطف على جملة محذوفة والتقدير: فأنبأهم بها (فلما أنبأهم) إلى آخره، وحذفت لفهم المعنى، وإظهار الأسماء فى موقع الإضمار لإظهار كمال العناية بشأنها مع الإشارة إلى أنه عليه السلام أنبأهم بها على وجه التفصيل دون الإجمال.

**Meaning:**

> (This statement is) connected to an omitted sentence which is "He then informed them of it (their names)". (And when he had informed them of their names) -till the end of the verse-. (The sentence) is omitted for it is understood from the meaning. And exposing the names where it is supposed to be concealed for the purpose of showing concern for it and it is also pointing to the fact he (Prophet Ādam) – May Allah's Peace be upon him- had informed them in details and not generally.

In fact, the grammatical analysis cannot all be explored as there are lots of both grammatical and morphological analyses in the *Tafsīr* which can only be explained and analyzed in Arabic Language for proper understanding. Thus, it is a fertile book of research for the grammarians and morphologists to explore.

### 4. The Use of *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl*

Another approach of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to *Tafsīr* in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is the Use of *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl*. The phrase *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is a terminology in the Science of the Qur'ān (ᶜ*Ulūmu'l-Qur'ān*). It comprises of two key words which are *Asbāb* – **أسباب** - and *an–Nuzūl* – **النزول**. The word *Asbāb* is an Arabic word and the plural form of *Sabab* - **سبب** – which can be translated as reason or cause while the word *an-Nuzūl*, as an Arabic word,

literally means descending, going down, descent or coming down. Technically, it is used to denote the cause of revelation of the Glorious Qur'ān. According to Ṣubḥi, it is used for the background information or the circumstances in which a verse or a group of verses or a whole *Sūrah* was revealed. In the opinion of Az-Zarqānī, *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl* refers to the incidents that were recorded during the prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ– which necessitated the revelation of Qur'ānic verses or chapters. It is also being referred to as an occurrence during the time of the Prophet which brought about the revelation of a verse or verses that are explaining the judgement of Allah on the occurrence.[46]

It is apposite to state here that the knowledge of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is very important to the understanding of Qur'ānic messages. Also, it is a knowledge that the Qur'ānic commentators cannot do without for better comprehension and presentation of Allah's messages to the humanities, even though there are divergent opinions on it as a concept. It is because of its significance that majority of the Qur'anic Exegetes, including 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, has included it in their *Tafsīr* work. However, some scholars are of the view that the knowledge of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is not necessary in Qur'ānic Exegesis for the understanding of Allah's messages in the Qur'ān. They also believed that the Qur'ān is self-explanatory.

In a bid to support and buttress the significance and importance of the background of revelation (*asbābu-n-Nuzūl*), al-Wāḥidi (d. 468 A.H./1075C.E.) concludes thus:

لا يمكن معرفة تفسير الآيات دون الوقوف على قصتها وبيان سبب نزولها[47]

**Meaning:**

> It is not possible to have the knowledge of the *Tafsīr* of verses (of the Qur'ān) without knowing the story and explanation of the cause of their revelation.

In his own supportive statement to the significance of background of revelation, Ibn Taymiyyah (d. 728 A.H./1328 C.E.) says:

معرفة سبب النزول يعين على فهم الآية فإن العلم بالسبب يورث العلم بالمسبب

**Meaning:**

> The knowledge of the cause of revelation assists in the understanding of Qur'anic verse. Indeed knowledge of the cause of revelation brings about the knowledge of the effect.

This same opinion, that *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is an indispensable tool in the understanding of the Qur'ān, was shared by Ibn Daqīqi'l-ᶜīd as he says:

بيان سبب النزول طريق قوى فى فهم القرآن

**Meaning:**

> Explanation of the reason for revelation is a strong means of comprehending the meaning of the Qur'ān.

It should be noted that there are series of benefits in the knowledge of the causes of revelation of Qur'ānic verses, among which are:

(1) It affords the exegete with the wisdom behind the legislation of some legal issues and their rulings in Islam.

(2) It assists in knowing the direct and immediate meaning and implication of a verse which can be deduced from the original context of the verse.

(3) It enables the commentator not to deduce wrong meaning from the verse that is being studied.

(4) It assists in specifying the particular area a verse is addressing.

(5) It makes one to know the person who or what happened that led to the cause of revelation of a verse and any other information about such a person so as not to accuse the innocent and free the accused.

(6) It brings out the historical situation, at the time of the Prophet, that is behind the revelation of a verse which makes one to know the particular event or incident the verse is making reference to.

However, the antagonist of the legality of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* base their argument on three reasons as discussed by Yūsuf as follows:[48]

(i) The knowledge of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is nothing but a lie against Allah because the interpreter is interpreting without any revelation to back it up.

(ii) The knowledge of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* takes the same dimension with history.

(iii) The negligence noticed with some scholars in their narrations of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* makes their account about the revelation of the Qur'ān to be null and void.

This negligence of some scholars has been noticed by Al-Wāḥidī among his contemporaries and recorded it thus:[49]

> Negligence in the highest order was noticed with many scholars of my time in their narrations of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl*. These scholars deeply involved in gross violation of narration of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* without minding the threat which Allah makes against anybody who fabricates information about Him.

In contrary to the submission of the antagonists of the legality of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl*, some other scholars have argued in support of it. Some of these scholars are:

(a) As-Sayūṭi in his *Al-ltqān*

(b) Al-Wāḥidī in his *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl*

(c) Aṣ-Ṣābūnī in his *At-Tibyān fi ᶜUlūmi'l-Qur'ān*

(d) Ṣubḥi in his *Mabāḥithu fi ᶜUlūmi'l-Qur'ān*

(e) Mannaᶜ al-Qaṭṭān in his *Mabāḥithu fi ᶜUlumi'l-Qur'ān*

(f) Badmas Lanre Yusuf in his *Sayyid Qutb: A Study of his Tafsīr*

(g) Yusuf Kolawole Jimoh in his unpublished thesis and others.

In our own submission, we share opinion with the protagonists of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* who have also tried to come up with the following facts about its authenticity and acceptability:

(i) It is not all the verses of the Qur'ān that have reasons for their revelation. This is why verses of the Qur'ān are divided into 2; those that were revealed without any reason and this consists of majority of the verses in the Qur'ān while the other

division consists of the verses that were revealed in connection with reasons for their revelation.

(ii) A verse or chapter will be regarded as having reason for its revelation if such is related by a companion of the prophet that the Prophet mentioned it. Thus, it is a condition, according to al-Wāḥidī, that the narrator should witness the event at the time of its occurrence. Al-Wāḥidī says:

لا يحل القول فى أسباب نزول الكتاب إلا بالرواية والسماع ممن شاهدوا التنريل ووقفوا على الأسباب وبحثوا عن علمها وجدّوا فى الطلب[50]

**Meaning:**

> It is not permissible to speak on reason for revelation of the Qur'ān except through narration from those that were present at the time of revelation, know the reasons, make research on its knowledge and struggle in searching for it.

It should, however, be noted that, it is not just any narration but an authentic that has a link to a Companion and not a *Tābiᶜ* who is a follower of a Companion except if its *Sanad* (chain of transmission) is well connected to a Companion who had witnessed the incident. This is deduced from the conversation between Muḥammad bin Sīrīn and ᶜUbaydah bin ᶜAmr when Ibn Sīrīn said thus:

سألت عبيدة عن آية القرآن فقال: اتق الله وقل سدادا، ذهب الذين يعلمون فيما أنزل القرآن

**Meaning:**

> I asked ᶜUbaydah about an 'Āyah of the Qur'ān. He said: Fear Allah and say what is just and true. (Indeed) those that know about the reason for the revelation of the Qur'ān have gone (i.e. died) (referring to the Companions).

Based on the above narration, it should be noted that Ibn Sīrīn was a great scholar among the *Tabiᶜūn*, who was born two years before the end of the Caliphate of ᶜUthmān bin ᶜAffān. He met some companions and other *Tābiᶜūn* from whom he learnt. While ᶜUbaydah bin ᶜAmr as-Salmāni was among the eldest *Tābiᶜūn* of the first grade. He accepted Islam two years before the death of the Prophet but did not meet him till the

demise of the Prophet.[51] Thus, the conversation has established the fact that the knowledge of the reason of the revelation should originally be sourced from the Companions and then may be from their students (*Tābiᶜūn*) as opined by Imām As-Sayūṭī provided the *Tābiᶜ* is among the elders of the *Tābiᶜūn* (like ᶜUbaydah bin ᶜAmr, etc) and it is certain that the narration is from him as well as other narrations from another *Tābiᶜūn* is supporting it. This, according As-Sayūti, is termed as *Mursal* narration.

(iii) The reason for the revelation of a verse can either be; a response to an event or a general situation, a response to a particular question directed to the Prophet or a response to the circumstances or needs of a particular person as in the case of Abu Lahab who abused and cursed the Messenger of Allah then *Sūratu'l-Masad* or *Lahab* (Qur'ān Chapter 111) was revealed in response to his abuse and curse.

(iv) In case of multiple reasons for the revelation of a verse or chapter, preference should be given to the most authentic narration and if the narrations are all authentic then they should be harmonized together if possible otherwise each reason should be treated separately. One of the examples on this is the revelation of *Surātu'l-Iklāṣ* (Qur'ān Chapter 112) which was first revealed as a response to the question posted by the *Mushrikūn* (polytheists) in *Makkah* to the Prophet –ﷺ- before the *Hijrah*. They said, on the authority of 'Ubay bin Kaᶜb, that: "O Muḥammad! Tell us about the lineage of your Lord". Then this *Sūratu'l-Iklāṣ* was revealed.

This same *Sūrah* was again revealed to the Prophet as a response to the people of the Book (*Ahlu'l-Kitāb*) met by the Prophet in *Madīnah* after *Hijrah*. The Jews said: "We are worshipping ᶜUzayr, the Son of God" and the Christian also Said: "we are worshiping *al-Masīḥ* (the Messiah), Jesus Christ, the Son of God". Then this *Sūrah* was revealed.[52]

(v) It is possible to have two or more verses of the Qur'ān having one and the same reason for their revelation. One of the appropriate examples for this is the revelation of *Sūratu āl-ᶜImrān* (Q3): 195, *Sūratu-n-Nisā'i* (Q4): 32 and *Sūratu'l-Ahzāb* (Q33): 35 as a response to the question of Ummu Salamah that: why is it that only men are being referred to by Allāh in the Qur'ān when it comes to the issues of rewards and actions? That is, why are women not mentioned like men when it comes to actions and their rewards? Thus, Allāh revealed the aforementioned verses to affirm the fact that both actions and rewards are meant for men and woman.

However, we disagree a little bit with their (the protagonists) claim that some verses like those on eschatology have no *asbābu-n-Nuzūl*. Our research reveals that *Sūratu-t-Takāthur*, which is addressing the strong belief in the punishment of the grave, was revealed to correct the doubtfulness of the companions on the torment of the grave. 'Al-Imām 'Al-Alūsi has recorded the *Sabābu-n- Nuzūl* of this *Sūrah* to be in the narration of ᶜAli bin Abi Tālib which says:

كنا نشك فى عذاب القبر حتى نزلت "ألهاكم التكاثر" إلى "ثم كلا سوف تعلمون"
في عذاب القبر

**Meaning:**

> We were doubting the punishment of the grave until the revelation of "*Al-Hākumu-t-Tākāthur* (The mutual rivalry diverts you)" up to *"Thumma Kallā Sawfa Taᶜlamūn* (Again nay! You shall come to know)"of the punishment of the grave.

With this, it can be concluded that not all the verses on eschatology are *asbābu*-free. Likewise, we disagree with the submission of Yūsuf Kolawole Jimoh that "the tagged verses as *asbābu*-free ones, therefore cannot be invariably devoid of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl"*. He supported his claim with not only the fact that the verses were revealed as guidance for Prophet Muḥammad which is an effect with the Prophet of Muḥammad (ﷺ) as the cause, but also with the submission of Ṣubḥi who says as quoted by him:

> Certainly, each verse of the Qur'ān must necessarily have S*abābu-n-Nuzūl,* even the events of the past nations whose causes and effects have been buried along with them are not exempted from this phenomenon.[53]

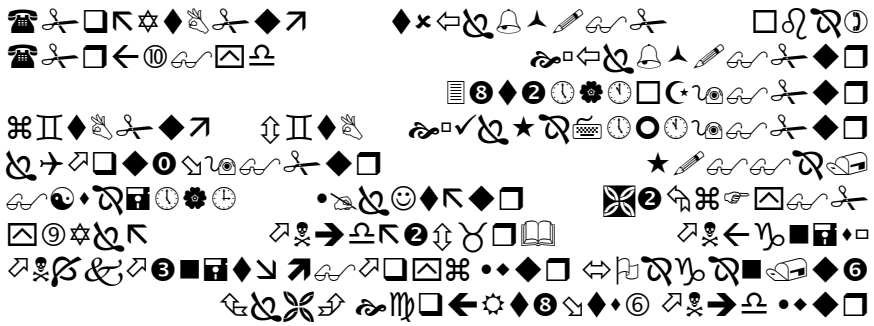
It is on the above quotation that Jimoh submitted that all the verses of the Glorious Qur'ān, without exception, have their relative *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* which cannot be divorced from such verses. In our own opinion, this submission by Jimoh is not only relative as said by him but also less probable (*Marjūḥ*- مرجوح) because of the following reasons:

(a) All the verses, generally, in the Qur'ān were revealed to guide the Prophet-ﷺ - and his *'Ummah*.

(b) *Asbābu-n-Nuzūl* is all about event or incident that happened during the time of the Prophet-ﷺ- which necessitated revelation of Qur'ānic verses.

Thus, it is quite different from just revealing a verse or chapter without any event or incident. This is why all the narrations on *asbābu-n-Nuzūl,* come with the expression, for example, "This verse was revealed after so and so incident or because of so and so event".

After a thorough examination of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*, it is observed that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not only fond of using *asbābu-n-Nuzūl,* but also meticulous in its application whenever he comes across a verse or chapter having reason for its revelation. For instance, on Q2:62 which reads:



**Meaming:**

> Those who believe (in the Qur'ān), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians,, whoever believe in Allah and the Last Day, and does righteous good deed shall their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī related the narration of Salmān al-Fāris as the reason for its revelation so as to bring out the correct meaning of those that really believe and do righteous deeds. ‘Al-Imām ‘Al-‘Alūsī says:

> وفائدة ذكر "الذين ءامنوا" على هذا مع أن الوعيد السابق كان في اليهود لتسكين حمية اليهود بتسوية المؤمنين بهم فى أن كون كل فى دينه (قبل النسخ) يوجب الأجر (وبعده) يوجب الحرمان، كما أن ذكر (الصابئين) للتنبيه على أنهم مع كونهم أبين المذكورين ضلالا يتاب عليهم إذا صح منهم الإيمان والعمل الصالح، فغيرهم بالطريق الأولى وانفهام قبل النسخ من (وعمل صالحا) إذ لا صلاح فى العمل بعده، وهذا هو الموافق لسبب النزول لا سيما على رواية أن سليمان –رضى الله عنه- ذكر للنبى ﷺ- حسن حال الرهبان الذين صحبهم فقال: ماتوا وهم فى النار فأنزل الله تعالى هذه الآية، فقال: "من مات على دين عيسى مات على خير، ومن سمع ولم يؤمن بى فقد هلك" [54]

**Meaning:**

> The benefit of mentioning “**"الذين ءامنوا**(i.e. those that believe) along with the statement of threatening on the Jews is to relieve the fanatic of the Jew by making them equal to the believers on the basis that everyone is on its path which demand for reward (before the abrogation-of such path) and deserves no reward (after the abrogation-of such path by a new path), just as mentioning the *Ṣābi’īn* is drawing attention to the fact that they, even though they are astray, can be forgiven if they possess correct and sound faith and do righteous deeds, (so if they can be pardoned) then others (who are not as astray as them) deserves forgiveness. This understanding is only applicable before the abrogation (of a religion with another). And as for this statement (and do righteous deeds) (that is done) after the abrogation (of such religion). And it is this (interpretation) that is equivalent to the reason for the revelation (of this verse) especially the narration of Salmān—**رضى الله عنه** about the good behaviours of the monks he was living with (before accepting Islam as a religion). He (Salmān) them said: “they died (as disbelievers) and entered Hell”. Thus, Allah revealed this verse. The Prophet then said: “Whoever died on the path of Prophet ‘Isā- **عليه السلام**– before receiving my message, has died on the right path. But, whoever hears and receives my message and does not believe in me has doomed and ruined”.

From the above quotation, it can be deducted that ’al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī has not only supported the use of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl* but also recognized the term –“**تعدد أسباب النزول**”- *Ta*$^{c}$*dudu asbābu-n-Nuzūl* i.e. several reasons for the revelation of a verse or chapter”. He

has only picked the correct and suitable one to his discussion. This is observed and deduced from his following statement as above:

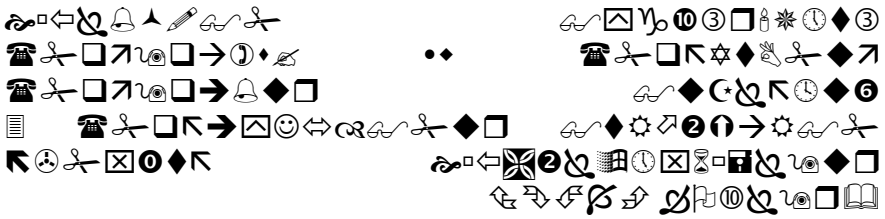
وهذا هو الموافق لسبب النزول لا سيما على رواية أن سلمان ذكر للنبى ﷺ – حسن حال الرهبان ...

**Meaning:**

It is this that is in line with the reason for revelation (of this verse) especially the narration of Salmān that he ones told the Prophet (ﷺ) about the good behavior of the Monks he was accompanying before …

The other narrations on the reasons for the revelation of this verse, have been affirmed and recorded by al-Imām As-Sayūṭi in a way different from the narration brought by 'al-Imām Al-'Alūsī but similar and focusing on the Monks of Salmān al-Fāris.

Another instance of 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's use of *asbābu-n-Nuzūl*, as an approach to *Tafsīr* in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī,* is his explanation on *Sūratu'l-Baqarah* (Qur'an Chapter 2):104 which was correcting the Companions not to use a word that is similar to that of the Jews while addressing the Messenger of Allah and that they should rather use another that is not ambiguous as contained in the following verse:



**Meaning:**

O you who believe! Say not (to the Messenger) *Rāᶜinā* but say *Unzurnā* (make us understand) and hear. And for the disbelievers there is a painful torment. (Q2:104)

The word "*Rāᶜinā"* in the above verse is an Arabic word which means, "be carefully; listen to us and we listen to you". This word is also found in the language of the Jew i.e. Hebrew which means "an insult". So, the Jews used to it to the Prophet ﷺ, with bad intentions. On this, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says:

الرعى حفظ الغير لمصلحته سواء كان الغير عاقلا أولا، وسبب نزول الآية- كما أخرج أبو نعيم فى الدلائل، عن ابن عباس – رضى الله عنه –أن اليهود كانوا

يقولون ذلك سر لرسول الله - ﷺ وهو سب قبيح بلسانهم، فلما سمعوا أصحابه يقولون أعلنوا بها فكانوا يقولون ذلك ويضحكون فيها بينهم، فأنزل الله تعالى هذه الآية، وروى أن سعد بن عبادة – رضى الله عنه –سمعها منهم، فقال: يا أعداء الله عليكم لعنة الله، والذى نفسى بيده لئن سمعتها من رجل منكم يقولها لرسول الله - ﷺ - لأضربن عنقه، قالوا: أولستم تقولونها؟ فنزلت الآية ونهى المؤمنون سدا للباب وقطعا للأ لسنة وابعادا عن المشابهة [55]

**Meaning:**

*Ar-Raᶜyu* (The Pasture) is the act of taking care of someone or something for its benefit. And the reason for the revelation of this verse according to Abu Nuᶜaym in his ad-*Dālailu* on the authority of (ᶜAbdullahi) bin ᶜAbbās is that, the Jews used to utter this statement (*Rāᶜinā*) to the Messenger of Allāh -ﷺ- secretly which is an insult in their language. But, when they heard the companions of the Prophet saying the same (which in Arabic Language means be careful; listen to us and we listen to you), then the Jews said (to themselves): proclaim it (i.e. the statement of insult to the Prophet because it is also in the language of his companions). Thus, they started saying it and laughing among themselves. Then Allāh, the Most-High, revealed this verse. And it was narrated that Saᶜd bin ᶜUbādah heard them saying it and then said: O you enemies of Allāh! May the wrath of Allāh be upon you, I swear by Him in whose hand is my soul that if I hear anyone of you saying it again to the Messenger of Allāh -ﷺ - I will cut off his head. Then they (the Jews) said: Are you not also saying it? Then Allāh revealed the verse to forbid the believers from saying it, close the door of doing it and take them away from imitating (the Jews).

It can be deduced from the above quotation that the companions never condone any form of insult on the Prophet - ﷺ -. Likewise, the *Sabābu-n-Nuzūl* has shown that Allah, the Most-High, wants the Muslim *'Ummah* to be different completely from the people of the Book (i.e. the Jews and the Christians) and any other people in any way be it religious, social, economic or moral. Thus, this verse and its reasons for the revelation can be said to be good evidences against socio-religious and moral imitation of the non-Muslims.

## 5. Use of Qur'ān to Explain the Qur'ān

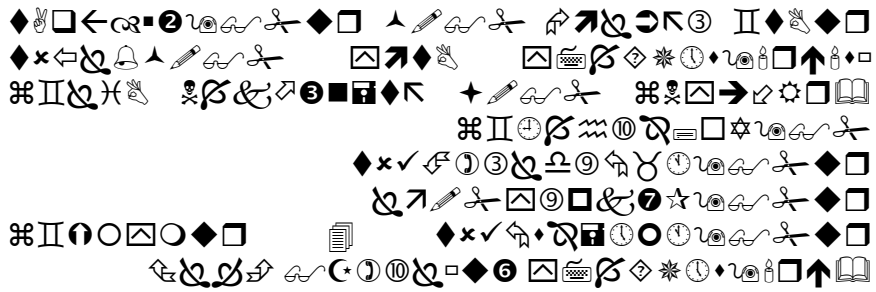
Another remarkable approach of ‘al-Imām Al-‘Alūsī to *Tafsīr* is his use of Qur’ānic verses to interpret another verse in order to bring out Allah’s messages clearly and closer to the reader. He was very meticulous in bringing Qur’ānic verses where there is a link between the verses either from the literal or general meaning. One of the examples in his *Tafsīr* is found while explaining *Sūratu’l-Fātiḥah* (Qur’ān Chapter I): 7 which says:



**Meaning:**

> The way of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy Grace…

He brings another verse from *Sūratu-n-Nisā’i* (Qur’ān Chapter 4):69 to explain the verse further. The verse read thus:

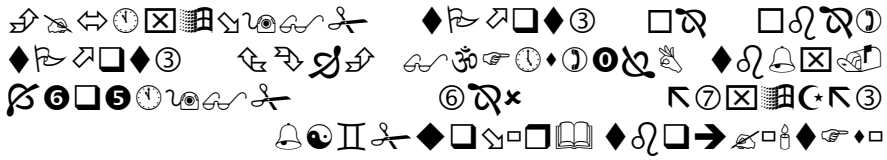


**Meaning:**

> And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger (Muḥammad) then they will be in the company of those on whom Allah has bestowed His Grace, of the Prophets, the *Ṣiddīqūn* (those followers of the Prophet who were first and foremost to believe in them, like Abubakr As-Siddīq), the Martyrs and the righteous. And how excellent these companions are!

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī uses this second verse to summarize the divergent opinions of scholars on the kinds of people on whom Allah has bestowed His favour after he had brought a narration from Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabari which listed this group of people including the Angels.[56]

Another instance is also found in his commentary on *Sūratu-n-Naba’* (Qur’an chapter 78): 17-18 which say:



**Meaning:**

> Indeed the Day of Separation is a fixed time. The Day when trumpet (of resurrection) is sounded and you all come forward in multitudes.

'Al-'Imām Al-'Alūsī comments on the word "*Afwājan"* thus:

> أي أمما كل أمة بإمامها كما قال سبحانه: (يوم نهعو كل أناس بإمامهم) أو زمرًا وجماعات مختلفة الأحوال متباينة الأوضاع حسب أختلاف الأعمال وتباينها [57]

**Meaning:**

> That is (in) nations (and) every nation with its leader as Allāh says: "(And remember) the Day when we shall call together all human beings with their (respective) 'Imām (their Prophets or their records of good and bad deeds …)" or groups and societies in different conditions and structures depending on the levels of their deeds and their differences.

After his above statement which is on using another verse to explain his discussed verses, he then further his interpretation on the said groups in the discussed verse by quoting a narration from Ibn Mardawih to support this "coming out in troops and groups" that there will be ten (10) different groups from among the Muslims according to the Prophet -ﷺ - based on the question asked by Mu$^{c}$ādh bin Jabal about this verse. But, the narration was declared to be fabricated by Ibn Ḥajar as referenced by 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī.

### 6. Use of the *Sunnah* to Explain the Qur'ān

The word *"Sunnah"* as an Arabic word is from the verbal root "*Sanna-* **سنّ**" according to Ibn Manẓūr, it means "the way, the method, the regular habits and nature". Technically, it is used to denote the way Prophet Muḥammad had lived his life. It is also referred to as all the traditions and practices of the Prophet that have become models to be followed by the Muslims.[58] According to Al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Sunnah* is what the Prophet said or

did in continuous manner so that others would follow. It also includes the silent approvals of the Prophet (i.e. *as-Sunnatu-t-Taqrīriyyah*).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has applied *Sunnah* in his effort to interpret the Qur'ānic verses in orders to expatiate and make the message of Allāh in the verse clearer to his readers. An example is extracted from his commentary on the following verse which says:



**Meaning:**

> O you who believe! Observing *As-Sawm* (the fast) is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, that you may become Al-*Muttaqūn* (the pious). (Q2:183)

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi comments on the phrase "لعلكم تتقون" -"that you may become the pious" in the above verse thus:

> أى كى تحذروا المعاصى فإن الصوم يعقم الشهوة التى هى أمها أو يكسوها، فقد أخرج البخارى ومسلم في صحيحيهما: عن عبد الله رضى الله عنه قال: قال لنا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم : "يا معشر الشباب من استطاع منكم الباء فليتزوج فإنه أغض للبصر وأحضن للفرج ومن لم يستطع فعليه بالصوم فإنه له وجاه.

**Meaning:**

> That is, so that you may beware of wrongdoing. Surely, fasting sterilizes or weakens the desire which is the origin (source of all evils and wrongdoing). It has been recorded by Bukhāri; and Muslim in their *Ṣaḥīḥ* books on the authority of Abdullah (bin Mas'ūd). That the messenger of Allah said to us: "Oh young men! Those among you who can support a wife should marry for it restraints eyes (from casting evil glances) and preserves one from immorality; but he who cannot afford it should observe fast for it is a means of controlling the sexual desire.

The above *Ḥadīth* in the quotation above has been used by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to buttress his argument that fasting is capable of reducing not only sexual desire or urge but also other immoralities which originate from self-desire.

Another example on his using of *Sunnah* to explain the verses of the Qur'ān is in his commentary on the verse that reads:

ثم لتسئلن يومئذ عن النعيم

**Meaning:**

> And on that Day you most surely be called to account for the delight (you indulged in, in this world). (Q.102: 8)

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī brings the divergence opinions of the Qur’ānic exegetes on the kind of people being addressed in the above verse as well as on the kinds of delight that shall be accounted for on the day of accountability. He presents the exegetical opinion of al-Ḥassan al-Baṣarī, Maqātal and others that the people who will be asked to account for their boon of life are the disbelievers while ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbās opines that they are the idolaters – *Mushrikūn*.

With regards to the kinds of delight and boon of life to be accounted for, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī quotes some of the companions of the Prophet to have limited the delight to some things without generalizing it. For instance, ᶜAbdullah bin Masᶜūd said: it means: الأمن والصحة “Security and Good Health” while Jābir said it means: ملاذ المأكول والشروب i.e. “the enjoyment of food and drink” and ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib said it means: العافية i.e. “Good Health” and others.[59] It is after these differences that ’al-Imām ’al-’Alūsī concludes thus based on the *Ḥadīth* of Abu Hurayrah:

> والحق عموم الخطاب والنعيم بيد أن المؤمن لايثرب عليه في شئ ناله في الدنيا بل يسأل غير مثرب وإنما يثرب على الكافر كما ورد في حديث رواه الطبرنى عن ابن مسعود، ويدل على عموم الخطاب ما أخرج مسلم وأبو داود والترمذى والنسائى وابن ماجه وآخرون عن أبى هريرة قال: "خرج النبيى صلى الله عليه وسلم ذات يوم فإذا هو بأبى بكر وعمر رضى الله عنه – فقال ما أخرجكما من بيوتكما هذه الساعة؟ قالا: الجوع يا رسول الله، قال: والذي نفسي بيده لأخرجنى الذى أخرجكما فقوموا، فقاموا معه صلى الله عليه وسلم إلى بيت رجل من الأنصار فإذا هو ليس في بيته فلما رأته صلى الله عليه وسلم - المرأة قالت: مرحبًا، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم أبن فلان؟ قالت انطلق يستعذب لنا الماء وإذ جاء الأنصار فنظر إلى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وصاحبيه فقال الحمد لله ما أحد اليوم أكرم أضيافا مني فانطلق فجاء بعذق فيه بسر وتمر فقال: كلوا من هذا، وأخذ المدية

فقال له، رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إياك والحلوب، فذبح لهم فأكلوا من الشاة ومن ذلك العذق وشربوا، فلما شبعوا ورووا قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم لأبى بكر وعمر والذى نفسي بيده لتسألنّ عن هذا النعيم يوم القيامة"

**Meaning:**

> And the truth is to generalize the discussion (to cover both the believers the disbelievers). And (about) *an-Naᶜīm* (the delight of life) on the other hand, surely a believer shall not be blamed or rebuked for whatever he has accumulated and enjoyed from it (i.e. *an-Naᶜīm*) in this world but will be questioned without rebuking. It is the disbeliever however that shall be rebuked as recorded in the *Ḥadīth* of aṭ-*Ṭabarāni* on the authority of Ibn Mas'ūd. The proof for the generalization of this discussion is in the Ḥadīth recorded by Muslim, Abu Dawūd, Tirmidhi, Nisā'i, Ibn Mājah and others on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Prophet came out a day and formed Abubakr and ᶜUmar **رضى الله عنه** and said: "what has brought you out of your homes at this hour? They replied: "Hunger O Allāh's messenger" He Said: "by Him (Allāh) in whose hand my soul is, I too have come out for the same reason for the same reason for which you have come out." He then said to them: "come along!" And he went along with them to a man from the *Anṣār* but they did not find him in his house. The wife of the man saw the Prophet -ﷺ-and said: "You are welcome" then the Prophet said: "where is so and so?" she replied "he had gone to fetch some water for us". In the mean time, the Anṣāri man came and saw the Prophet with his two companions and said: "All praise and thanks belong to Allāh, today there is none superior to me as regards guest". Then he went to bring a part of a bunch of date-fruit have dates, some still green, some partially ripe and some fully ripe and requested them to eat from it. He then took his knife (to slaughter for them a sheep); then the messenger of Allāh said to him: "beware; do not slaughter a milky sheep". So he slaughtered a sheep (prepare the meals from its meat). They ate from the meat and the bunch of dates and drank water. After they had finished eating and drinking to their fill, Allah's Messenger said to Abubakr and ᶜUmar. "By him in whose hand is my soul, you will be asked about this treatment on the day of resurrection. He (Allah) brought you out of your homes with hunger and you are not returning to your homes till you have been blessed with this treatment.

The above *Ḥadīth* has been used by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi to justify his position that the message in this *Sūrah* is general and limited to anybody or group and that the delight is also general which includes eating and drinking to the state of satisfaction. He also try to support this argument further by quoting another to declare whatever has been mentioned by the *Mufassirūn* as part and not whole of the boon of the life. The narration says:

هذا من النعيم الذى تسألون عنه

**Meaning:**

This (the mentioned delight in the Ḥadīth) is part of the boon of life which you shall be questioned about.

He argues further thus with other narrations:

وفي التفسير الكبير الحق أن السؤال يعم المؤمن والكافر عن جميع النعم سواء كان لابد منه أو لا لأن كل ما يهب الله تعالى يجب أن يكون مصروفا إلى طاعته سبحانه لا إلى معصيته عزوجل فيكون السؤال واقعا عن الكل ويؤكده قوله صلى الله عليه وسلم "لاتزول قدما العبد حتى يسأل عن أربع: عن عمره فيم أفناه وعن شبابه فيم أبلاه وعن ماله من أين اكتسبه وفيم أنفق وعن علمه ماذا عمل به" لأن كل نعيم داخل فيما ذكره.

**Meaning:**

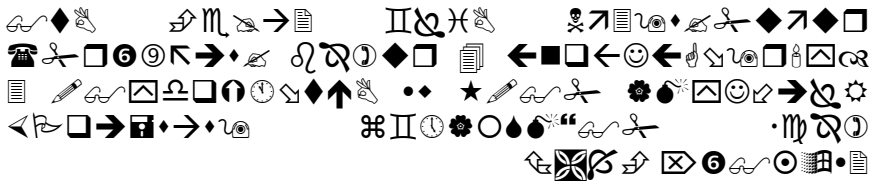
And in the (book of *Tafsīr* known as) *at-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (of ar-Rāzī): the truth is that the question covers both the believer about all kinds of delight either the necessity or not. This is because all what Allah has bestowed (on man in terms of favor) is compulsory to be spending in His cause and not in disobeying Him -The Most Exalted-. Thus, the question entails everything and this can also be supported with the saying of the Prophet that: "the two feet of a servant will not move away from his Lord on the Day of Judgment until he is asked about four things: his life and how he spent it, his youth and how he used it, his wealth, where he has earned it and how he spent it and his knowledge and how he acted upon it". This is because all kinds of delight are inclusive in what the prophet mentioned.

In our opinion, it will be better and meaningful to generalize the discussion, as supported by 'al-Imām 'al-Alūsī, for some reasons as follows:

i. If the message is limited to some groups then other groups will be at liberty to do and undo anything with the favours they had been blessed with by Allah. Thus, the first group will also want to be at liberty by this, there may be nobody to be questioned of anything, which means that the verse is irrelevant. Then, the universality and perfection of the Qur'ān will be questionable.

ii. If the meaning of the word "*an-Naᶜīm*" is limited to either good health, leisure, food, drinks or others then those who do not posses such delight but possess another boon of life different from the limited ones will not be accountable for enjoying the possessed delight.

iii. If the meaning of *an-Naᶜīm* is limited then it will go in contrary to this verse which says:



**Meaning:**

> And He gives you of all that you ask Him; and if you count Allah's favors, you will not be able to number them; most surely man is very unjust, very ungrateful. (Q.14:34)

Based on the above verse, it can be categorically said that the favour and blessing of Allah are countless. Thus, they need not be limited to one or two things. By this, we conclude that both *an-Naᶜīm* and the people to be questioned should be left unlimited as discussed and in support of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

## 7. Use of Statement of the Early Predecessors (*as-Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ*) to interpret the Qur'ān

Another noticeable approach of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is his use of the statement of the early pious predecessor. The word "Early Pious Predecessor" is technically known in Arabic language as "*As-Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ*". It is used to comprise of both the *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions of the Prophet) and the *Tābi'ūn* (Students or followers of the Companions of the Prophet). It is unanimously agreed upon by the *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) that the explanation of the *Ṣaḥābah* on the Qur'ān is part of the sources of *Tafsīr*. In his opinion, Ibn Kathīr, quoted by Bilal Philips, says:

> If we are unable to find a suitable Tafseer in the Qur'ān or in the *Sunnah*, we go to the opinion of the *Saḥābah*. For verily, they knew the Qur'ān better than anyone else due to their knowledge of the circumstances of its revelation, their complete and accurate understanding of it and their righteous deeds.

However, they differed on the explanation of the *Tābi'īn* on the Qur'ān as part of the sources of *Tafsīr*. Some of the *Mufassirūn* said it is acceptable provided the statement is

linked to a companion through a reliable source. With this, the statement of a *Tābiᶜ* should be preferences over personal opinion because they met and learnt from the companions of the Prophet. The second group of the *Mufassirūn* opined that the statement of the *Tabi'ūn* is similar to and among the examples of *Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y* (opinion based *Tafsīr*). Therefore, such statement should be rejected if there is another contrary opinion from another *Tābiᶜ*. But, in the absence of differences among the *Tābi'ūn*, then such statement should be accepted unconditionally and undoubtedly.

In our own opinion, the statement of a *Tābiᶜ* can be used as sources of *Tafsīr*, if the *Tābīᶜ* is a prominent follower of a companion of the Prophet and the narration is through a reliable source. This is because, the *Tābīᶜūn* are inclusive in the best generations mentioned by the Prophet -ﷺ - before his death as contained in the *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of Imran bin Ḥuṣayn, who said that the Messenger of Allāh - ﷺ - said:

خير أمتى قرنى ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم

**Meaning:**

> The best of my *Ummah* (people or community or nation or followers) are those living in my generation, then those coming after them and then those coming after them.

In another narration of ᶜAbdullahi bin Masᶜūd, the Prophet said:

خير الناس قرنى قرنى ثم الذين يلونهم قرنى ثم الذين يلونهم ثم يجئ من بعدهم قوم تسبق شهادتهم أيمانهم وأيمانهم شهادتهم

**Meaning:**

> The best people are those of my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them. Then, there will come people whose witness will precede their Oaths and whose Oaths will precede their witness.

On the meaning of the first "ثم الذين يلونهم" Ibn Ḥajar Al-ᶜAsqalāni says: "They are the *Tābiᶜūn*" while the second one is referring to the followers of the *Tābīᶜūn.* He then said:

واقتضى هذا الحديث أن تكون الصحابة أفضل من التابعين والتابعون أفضل من أتباع التابعين.

**Meaning:**

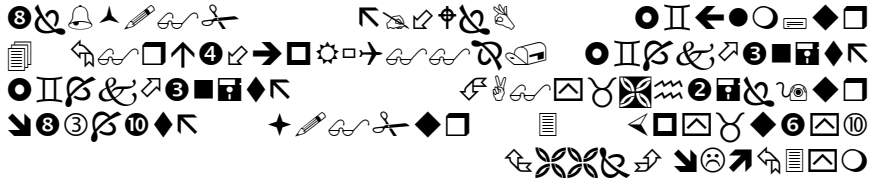
> This *Ḥadīth* justifies that the *Ṣaḥābah* (Companions of the Prophet) are better off than the *Tābiᶜūn* (followers of the companions of the Prophet) and the *Tābiᶜūn* are better off than the *At-Tābiᶜu-t-Tābiᶜīn* (followers of the *Tābiᶜūn*).

Based on the above discussion, the *Tābiᶜūn* are not only virtuous people but also reliable source of knowledge of *Sharīᶜah* in which *Tafsīr* is the major and foundation of it because of its link and connection with the words of Allāh, the Most Gracious. Thus, if a meaning of a Qur'ānic word or verse or chapter is not found in the Qur'ān itself, then it should be found in the sound *Ḥadīth* and if not found then the statement of the companions and if not found then the statement of the *Tābiᶜūn* who were the first grade students of the *Ṣaḥābah*.

It is against the above submission that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has made use of both the statement of the *Ṣaḥābah* and the *Tābiᶜūn* in his efforts to elucidate and expatiate the meaning of Qur'ān. The following are notable examples on both statements:

(a) Statement of the Companions (*'Aqwālu*-ṣ-*Ṣaḥābah*):

On his commentary on the rights of women which are similar to that of their husband as mentioned by Allāh in Q.2:228 that:



**Meaning:**

> And they (women) shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbās to have said thus:

إنى لأحب أن أتزين للمرأة كما أحب أن تتزين المرأة لي، لأن الله تعال يقول (ولهن)

**Meaning:**

> I do like to beautify myself for my wife as I like her to do for me, because Allah the Most High, says: (And they i.e. women, have rights.)

Likewise, on the meaning of those whom Allah has favoured as contained in Q1:7, al-Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes bin ᶜAbbās, according to the narration of Ibn Jarīr aṭ–Ṭabari, to have said:

> المراد بالذين أنعمت عليهم، الأنبياء، والملائكة والشهداء والصديقون ومن أطاع الله تعالى وعبده

**Meaning**:

> The meaning of "those that You (Allah) have favoured" is the Prophets, Angels, Martyrs, Truthful ones and anybody that obeys and worship Allah, the Most High.

Similarly, on the meaning of those who have earned Allah's anger and those who have gone astray as contained in Q1:7, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī quotes bin ᶜAbbās and Ibn Masᶜūd, according to the narration of Ibn Jarīr aṭ–Ṭabari, to have said:

> والمراد بالمغضوب عليهم اليهود وبالضالين النصادرى

**Meaning:**

> The intended meanings of those who have earned Allah's anger are the Jews and those who have gone astray are the Christians

(b) Statement of the followers of the companions (*Aqwālu-t-Tābiᶜīn*):

> On his commentary and exegesis on the verse that says:
>
> 
>
> **Meaning:**
>
> Your wives are as a tilth unto you; so approach your tilth annā shi'tum (Q2:223)

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes one of the students of Ibn ᶜAbbās, Mujāhid to have said that the phrase "*annā Shi'tum*" means "*Kayfa Shi'tum* –**كيف سئتم** i.e., however you will". While Qatādah and Rabīᶜ said it means "**من أين شئتم**" i.e. from whichever side you

will" and another *Tābi*$^{c}$, aḍ-Ḍaḥāk said it means "**متى شئتم** i.e., whenever you will." Likewise, on the intended meaning of the word *al-Ḥikmah*- **الحكمة**- in the verse that reads:



**Meaning:**

> He grants Ḥikmah to whom He pleases; and He to whom Ḥikmah is granted has indeed received a benefit overflowing; but none will grasp the message but men of understanding (Q2: 269)

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī quotes Qatādah and aḍ-Ḍaḥāk to have said that the word "*Ḥikmah*" in the above verse means "**الفقه في القرآن** i.e. The proper understanding of the Qur'ān" while $^{c}$Aṭā was reported to have said that it means "**المعرفة بالله تعالى** i.e. The knowledge about (the oneness of) Allah.

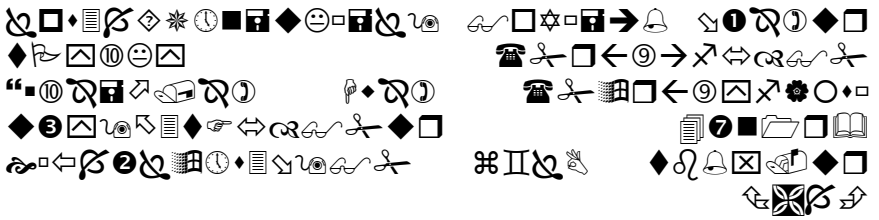
Based on the above analysis and discussion, it has been made clear that 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has made use of the statement of the early pious predecessors in his bid to explain the verse of the Qur'ān in order to bring out the intended meanings and messages of the Qur'ān.

## 8. Use of Arabic Poems in Explaining the Qur'ān

Arabic poem, which is known to the Arabic linguists as "*Ash-Shi*$^{c}$*ru'l- *$^{c}$*Arabi*"- **الشعر العربى**- serves as an indispensable tools in knowing the meaning and usage of words in Arabic language. It is known to be the archives of the Arab History as well as the evidence for what they considered to be right and wrong. Thus, Arabic poetry became a source of defining words of the Qur'ān since the period of the *Ṣaḥābah* (companions of the Prophet) like $^{c}$Abdullah bin $^{c}$Abbās. It is on this note that majority of the *Mufassirūn* (Qur'ānic Exegetes) have included it to be part of the sources of *Tafsīr* and have made use of it in their books of *Tafsīr*.[60]

It is against the above background that 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has used the poem in his approach to *Tafsīr*. He makes references to poems in his effort to explain and buttress the linguistic meaning of a word or the general meaning of a verse. Some extracts of the poems used by him are:

(a) The poem of Ḥassan bin Thābit, the poet of the Messenger of Allah, who was also among his companions. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi quotes this poem while explaining the Arabic letter *–Lām* **لام-** in Q2:34 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> And (remember) when We said to the angels "Prostrate yourselves before Ādam." And they prostrated except Iblīs (satan), he refused and was proud and was one of the believers (disobedient to Allah).

On the above, 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī makes his position known and clear on the issue of prostration that is mentioned in the above verse by the Angels to Prophet Ādam. He explains that the *Sujūd* i.e., prostration in the verse is not in its real meaning because it is only meant for Allah as a form of worship. And that the prostration here was really done for Allah towards the side of Ādam and that the word Ādam either means *Qiblah* or a reason for *Sujūd* or that the word "*Sujūd*" is in its literal meaning which connotes humility and submission. Hence, the letter "*Lām*" in **لآدم** should maintain its original meaning which is "for or before" or that the letter should be given the meaning of "**إلى**" which connotes "towards" or facing as can be buttressed by the poem of Ḥassan bin Thābit which reads:

أليس أول من صلى لقبلتكم # وأعرف الناس بالقرآن والسنن

**Meaning:**

> Is he not the first (person) to pray facing your *Qiblah,*
> And taught people the Qur'ān and *Sunan.*

It can be deduced from the above quoted poem that the point of evidence for 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī is on the word -**لقبلتكم**- which cannot be interpreted as "pray for your *Qiblah*" but rather as "pray facing or towards your *Qiblah*". By this, we are in support of his argument in order to avoid given the right of Allah to His creatures which He dislikes and has prohibited.

(b) Another example for his use of poem is found in his commentary and interpretation on the verse that says:

ثم بعثنكم من بعد موتكم لعلكم تشكرون

**Meaning:**

Then We raised you up after your death, so that you might be grateful

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī explains that some people had interpreted the words "*al-Ba$^{c}$th*" and "*al-Mawtu*" in the above verse to mean "knowledge" and "Ignorance" respectively. This means that the meaning of the verse is: "We have given you knowledge after your ignorance". He then says that the use of life for knowledge and death for ignorance is common in prose and poetry. Then, he quotes the poem of Ibn as-Sayyid al-Batuliyūs which reads:

أخــو ( العلــم حى) خالد بــعـد مــوتــه # وأوصاله تحت التراب رمـيـم
وذو (الجهل ميت) وهو ماش على الثرى # يظن من الأحياء وهو عديم

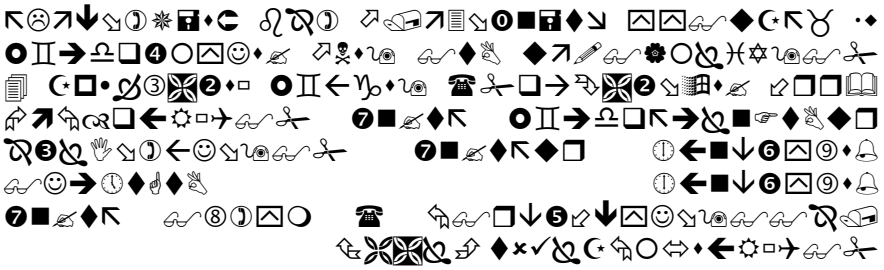
A scholar is (always) alive and lives eternally even after his death while his composition has de-composed beneath the earth.

And an ignoramus is dead even if he is walking on the earth thinking that he is among the living but actually he is not existing.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī digressed to this interpretation after he had explained the verse in its real form which has to do with the people of Prophet Musa whom Allah brought back to live after He had taken their soul. By this, this verse in relation to the above poems has shown not only the significance and importance of knowledge which is similar relatively to life but also the evil of ignorance which relatively similar to death.

## 9. Legal Discussion

Another remarkable approach of 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī to *Tafsīr* is his discussion on jurisprudence-related verses in the Noble Qur'ān. It is apposite to observe that he delves into legal polemics while commenting on verses with jurisprudential implication in order to bring out the proper understanding of the *Fiqh* issues raise in the verse. He does this by giving the opinions of the Islamic jurists and entering absolutely into the jurisdiction of the *Fuqahā'* (The Jurists). Likewise, he does quote relevant authorities not only from the four popular schools of thought but also those that are not popular such as the *Ẓāhiriyyah* and *al-Awzā*$^{c}$. He even, at times, brings the views of the *Imāmiyyah* while discussing *Fiqh* issues on which the *Shī*$^{c}$*ah* sect of Islam has taken a stand. For instance, on his interpretation of the verse that reads:

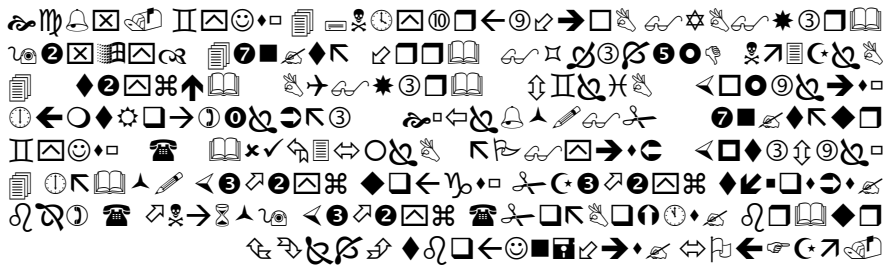


**Meaning:**

> There is no blame on you if you divorce women before consummation or the fixation of their dower; but bestow on them (a suitable gift), the wealthy according to His means, and the poor according to His means; a gift of a reasonable amount is due from those who wish to do the right thing (Q2: 236).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī quotes Imam Mālik to have said that the word "*al-Muḥsinūn*", which literally means "the good doers", in the above verse means "*al-Mutaṭawwi*$^{c}$*ūn*" which means those who wish to do the right thing. It is on this ground that Imām Mālik concluded that the bestowing of gift on the divorce women is a voluntary act while the *Ḥanafi* School of thought opined that it is compulsory and the *Shafi*$^{c}$ School of thought, in one of their opinions, said it is also compulsory with a condition that the divorce should be initiated by the husband.

Another example is found in his interpretation on the verse which is discussing the fasting of a sick person and a traveler who have been excused from fasting by Allah but are asked to make up for the missed days from other days as contained in Q2:184 that reads:



**Meaning:**

> (Observing Fasting) for a fixed number of days; but if any of you is ill or on a journey, the same number (should be made up) from other days. And as for those who can fast with difficulty, they have (a choice either to fast or) to feed a Miskīn (needy person for every day missed). But whoever does good of his own accord, it is better for him.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī notes from the above verse that breaking the fast is a concession of Allah for the sick and traveler. Thus, they are at liberty to either observe *Sawm* (fast) or break it in line with the opinion of the Majority of the scholars. He then presents the juristic polemics on it as follows:

> وهذا الإفطار مشروع على سبيل الرخصة فالمريض والمسافر إن شآ صاما وإن شآ أفطرا كما عليه أكثر الفقهاء، إلا أن الإمام أبا حنيفة ومالكا قالا: الصوم أحب، والشافعى واحمد والأوزعى قالوا: الفطر أحب، ومذهب الظاهرية وجوب الإفطار وأنهم إذا صاما لايصح صومهما لأنه قبل الوقت الذى يقتضيه ظاهر الآية، ونسب ذلك إلى ابن عباس، وابن عمر، وأبى هريرة، وجماعة من الصحابة- وبه قال الإمامية وأطالوا بالاستدلال على ذلك بما رووه عن أهل البيت، واستدل بالآية على جواز القضاء متتابعا ومتفرقا وأنه ليس على الفور خلافا لداود، وعلى أن من أفطر رمضان كله قضى (أياما معدودة) فلو كان تامًا لم يجزه شهر ناقص، أو ناقصا لم يلزمه شهر كامل، خلافا لمن خالف فى الصورتين، واحتج بها أيضا من قال: لافدية مع القضاء...

**Meaning:**

> And this breaking of fast is legal on the basis of concession (*ar-Rukhṣah*). The sick and the traveller are at liberty to either fast or break it according

> to the majority of the Islamic Jurists except Imam Abu Hanifah and Mālik that said: fasting is preferable while Shāfiᶜ, Aḥmad and al-Awzāᶜi said: breaking the fast is preferable. The Ẓāhiri School of thought opined that it is compulsory to break the fast and if they should fast then their fasting becomes invalid because it is being observed before the stipulated time for it according to this verse (Q2:184). This has been attributed to Ibn ᶜAbbās, Ibn ᶜUmar, Abu Hurayrah and some groups among the companions (of the Prophet ﷺ). This is also the position of the *Imāmiyyah* (a *Shiᶜa* group) who prolonged discussion and (their) evidences on this by what are narrated from the *Ahlu'-Bayt*. This verse has also been used for the permissibility of paying back the fasting consecutively or differently and that it is not (compulsory to be observed back) immediately except Dāwud (aẓ-Ẓāhirī, who opposed it). It has also been used to judge that whoever breaks the fast all in *Ramadan* is to pay back (the fixed days). If it is the complete month then fasting an incomplete month will not valid and if it is an incomplete month then fasting the whole month will be invalid except in the case of someone different from these two categories. This verse has also been used by those that said: There should be no combination between *Fidyah* (feeding the needy person) and *al-Qaḍā'* (paying back the missed days).

Based on the above quotation, it is crystal clear that 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has exploited the jurisprudential issues in this verse by bringing forth the opinions of the Islamic jurists not only the four Sunni schools of thought but also the *Ẓāhirī* and al-Awzaᶜī schools of thought as well as that of the *Imāmiyyah* for better comprehension of the Islamic laws contained in the verse.

### 10. Use of *Isrā'iliyyāt*

Another noticeable approach of 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī to *Tafsīr,* is the use and reliance on *Isrā'iliyyāt* as a source of *Tafsīr* of the Noble Qur'ān. The word "*Isrā'iliyyāt*" is not only an Arabic word but also a technical term in the science of *Tafsīr* that is translated to mean *Judaica*. It has to do with narration from the Israelite either Jews or Christians about religious issues and events. The people are being referred to as *Ahlu'l-Kitāb* (People of the Book). Some of these narrations are taking directly from either the Bible or the *Talmud* of the Jews, which is divided into *Mishnah* (the first compendium of Judaism's oral law) and *Gemara* (an elucidation of the *Mishnah*).

In the opinion of Abu Shaybah, *Isrā'iliyyāt* is a knowledge coming from Israelites (*Banī Isrā'īl*), their holy books, which are either the Bible or the *Talmud* of the Jews, and

even their tales and lies.[61] It also refers to the explanations derived from the non-Muslims sources especially from the Jewish tradition but also including other *Ahlu'l-Kitāb* (i.e. Christians) in general.[62]

It is apposite to state here that the use of *Isrā'iliyyāt* t as source of *Tafsīr* was not in operation or application during the life time of the Prophet. It rather started in the era of the companions. However, this does not mean that the companions based their knowledge on these narrations and explanations from the people of the book. They only took from what has relation with stories which are related in *Tawrah* (Old Testament) and *Injīl* (New Testament). *Isrā'iliyyāt* were used very little by the Companions but more by their students i.e., *Tābi*$^{c}$*ūn* and it continued to be used more and more in the latter generation, most especially in this contemporary generation.

**Opinions of the *Mufassirūn* on the Use of *Isrā'iliyyāt***

The use of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in the explanation of the Qur'ān from the view of the western scholars is a controversial issue because of the contradictory reports on it from the Prophet on whether to transmit from the people of the Book or question them for information.[63] In contrary to the submission of the western scholars, the Qur'ānic Exegesis had affirmed and allowed the use of *Isrā'iliyyāt* in *Tafsīr* as the narrations cannot do any harm to the religion because it has been well established and its information well documented. Its permissibility is also based on the condition that the *Mufassir* should verify the authenticity of the narration. The narrations on this issue can be categorized into two divisions as follows:

(a) **Narrations on its non-permissibility**: Some examples of these are:

(i)

> عن أبى هريرة – رضى الله عنه – قال: كان أهل الكتاب يقرءون التوراة بالعبرانية ويفسرونها بالعربية لأهل الإسلام فقال رسول الله ﷺ: لاتصدقوا أهل الكتاب ولاتكذبوهم وقولوا آمنا بالله وما أنزل إلينا الآية.

**Meaning:**

On the authority of Abu Hurayrah – May Allah be please with him- who said: the people of the Book read the *Tawrah* in Hebrew and explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. Then, the Messenger of Allah-ﷺ said: "Do not confirm the people of the Book and do not accuse them of falsehood" But say that: "We believe in Allah and what He has revealed to us.

(ii)

On the authority of Jabir bin ᶜAbdullah who said that ᶜUmar bin al-Khaṭṭāb wrote some part of the *Tawrah* in Arabic and brought it to the Prophet. When he started reading it, the face of the Prophet changed. Then one of the Madinians told ᶜUmar: Shame on you O ᶜUmar! Look at the face of the Messenger of Allah. The Prophet said: "Do not ask the people of the Book about anything, because they will not show you the right path, having already led themselves astray. Otherwise you accuse the truth of falsehood and confirm the wrong. I swear that if Moses was alive among you nothing would be opened to him but to follow me.

(iii)

On the authority of Ibn ᶜAbbās who warned the community of Muhammad ﷺthus: "O community of the Muslims! Why do you ask the people of the Book (*Ahlu'l-Kitāb*) about something while you have the final and undistorted Book (i.e. Qur'ān), which was revealed to the Prophet? He continued "Did Allah not inform you in His Book that the people of the Book have corrupted their book with their own hands? Then he recited Q2:79: "Then woe to those who write the book with their own hands and then say this is from Allah so that they may take for it a small price." He continued, "Does Allah not forbid you the knowledge that comes to you from questioning the people of the Book about what He has sent to you? By Allah, we never saw any of them asking you about what Allah has revealed to you.[64]

The above *Aḥādīth* and others not quoted served as the basis for prohibiting any narration from the *Ahlu'l-Kitāb*.

(b) **Narrations on its permissibility:** Some of these are:

(i)

عن عبد الله بن عمرو- رضى الله عنه– أن النبى - ﷺ - قال: بلّغوا عنى ولوآية، وحدّثوا عن بني إسرائيل ولا حرج، ومن كذب على متعمدًا فليتبوأ مقعده من النار.[65]

**Meaning:**

Convey (my teachings) to the people even if it were a single verse, and relate traditions from the children of *Isrā'īl* (which have been taught to you) for it is not sinful to do so. And whoever tells a lie on me intentionally, will surely take his place in the (Hell) fire.

(ii) Kaᶜb al-Aḥbār said: "I have not seen anybody who is more familiar with the *Tawrah* than Abu Hurayrah among the people who could not read the *Tawrah*".

The above evidences and others not cited have been used to buttress the permissibility of using *Isrā'iliyyāt* as a source of *Tafsīr*. In our own opinion, after a critical study of the evidences from both sides, it can be said that the proofs of the anti-*Isrā'iliyyāt* are not outright prohibiting any narration from the people of the Book and the evidences from the pro-*Isrā'iliyyāt* are not completely permitting narrations from the children of Israel. The narration of Ibn ᶜAbbās warning the Muslim *Ummah* against asking question from Jews and Christians about the Qur'ān should not be understood as an absolute prohibition but as a means of closing the door of excesses in questioning them as well as not leading astray an ignoramus about *Sharīᶜah* through their fallacy and heresy.

This is because, it is on record, according to Adh-Dhahabi, that Ibn ᶜAbbās used to refer to the people of the Book at times for information about what the Qur'ān and the Bible unanimously agreed upon and this is very few in number.[66] An example of this is recorded by aṭ-Ṭabari in his *Tafsīr* book that Ibn ᶜAbbās wrote a letter to Abi'l-Jald (a Jew) asking him of the meaning of *al-Barqu* which is mentioned in Q13:12. Then the man said it means *al-Mā'* i.e., water. However, this narration is viewed to be weak as there is break in the transmission of the *Ḥadīth* (*Ḥadīthun Munqatiᶜ*).[67]

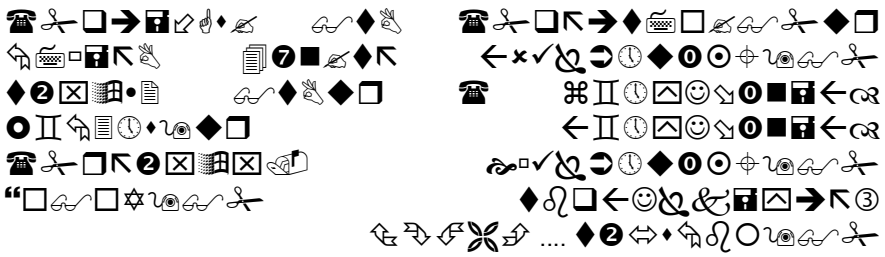
Therefore, there is need to do harmonization of the evidences of the two sides. This is why Ibn Ḥajar Al-ᶜAsqalāni comments thus on the *Ḥadīth* of Abdullah bin ᶜAmr under the phrase "There is no harm – ولاحرج-":

> It should not bother you when you hear strange stories about them (*Banī Isrā'il*) since many of these events have occurred to them. And the word "Relate" indicates that it may be harmless, the Prophet then pointed out that it is not compulsory but permissible when he said: "There is no harm" i.e. no harm in not relating their traditions. It is also said that, this means narrate about them those traditions found in the Qur'ān and authentic tradition of the Prophet. Imām Shafīᶜ was reported to have said: "it is

> known that the Prophet did not tell lies when he said "relate traditions from the children of Israel". Rather, the meaning is to relate the tradition that you know that to be lies and whatever you find to be compliant with your beliefs, then there is no harm narrating those traditions from them. This is in conformity with the statement of the prophet that says: "Do not believe the people of the scripture or disbelieve them". So, it is neither recommended nor prohibited to relate those traditions that are known to be lies or not.[68]

Likewise, in his own effort to do harmonization of these conflicting evidences, Ibn Kathir has categorized *Isrā'iliyyāt* reports into three categories:

1. The narrations that have been confirmed and verified as true through other authentic sources i.e. the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. For instance, the incident between Prophet Musa and the Magicians, the passing over of Prophet Musa and his people on the ocean as well as the drowning of Fir$^{c}$awn (Pharaoh) in the ocean, etc. They are acceptable because they have been authenticated by the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.
2. The narrations that have been confirmed and verified to be false through either the Qur'an or *Sunnah*. In this case, the reports are to be rejected. For instance, the story of Prophet Sulaymān who was declared to have become an apostate i.e. *Kāfir*, but the Qur'ān proved the story to be wrong by affirming the faith of Prophet Sulaymān in Allah as contained in Q2:102 which reads:



**Meaning**:

> They followed what the Satans recited over Sulaymān's kingdom. Sulaymān did not disbelieve but Satans disbelieved, teaching men magic...

3. These narrations which are neither confirmed to be true nor false. This means that, the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* are silent on them. In this case, there is no need of confirming or denying them but they can be related because the Prophet had said:

فلا تصدقوا أهل الكتاب ولا تكذبواهم، وقولوا أمنا بالله ورسله فإن كان باطلا لم تصدقوه وإن كان حقا لم تكذبوه.

**Meaning**:

> Do not believe the people of the Book nor deny them, but say: we believe in Allah and His Apostle. If it is false, do not confirm it and if it is right, do not falsify it.

Based on the above, even though Aḥmad Shakir said most of the *Isrā'iliyyāt* contain no benefit in any religions matter, we can conclude that if the reports from the *Ahlu'l-Kitāb* are authentic and verified either through the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* or the experts in the verification of narrations, then they can be related in order to benefit from their stories and events. But, if the narrations are verified to be false or baseless then they should be rejected and people should be educated on the evil of narrating such stories.

It is against the backdrop that 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī along with some other *Mufassirūn* went ahead in using *Isrā'iliyyāt* to explain certain verse so the Glorious Qur'ān. However, 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī is very meticulous in using these narrations by verifying their authenticity and at times he considers them as irrelevant. On this Yusuf says:

> …. The work of this great Qur'anic commentator whose vehement opposition against stories with *Isra'iliyyat* colouration made it enjoy wider acceptance in the Muslim world.

Among the *Isrā'iliyyāt* mentioned by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Tafsir* is the story of Prophet Sulaymān and his throne as well as the thinking of the Jews about him that he had disbelieved because of his practice of magic (*as-Siḥru*). 'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī said:

> It has been narrated that (Prophet) Sulayman had buried a lot of the knowledge that Allah has blessed him with underneath his throne out of the fear that if the known ones are destroyed then the buried ones will remain. After a while, some hypocrites decided to write some things about magic in a place which is similar (to that of Sulayman) in some areas. Then after the death of Sulayman, people got to know about it and thought that they (i.e., magic) are part of Prophet Sulayman's knowledge.

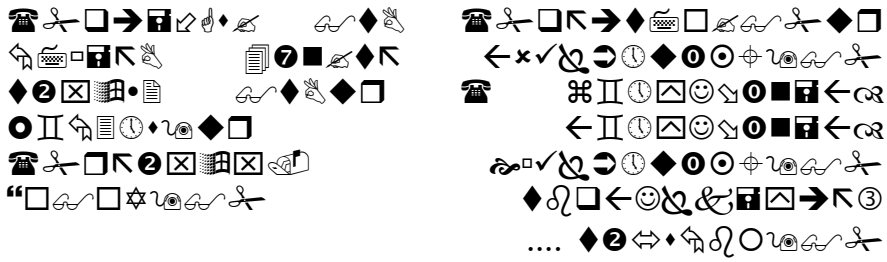
It can be deduced from the above quotation that Prophet Sulayman was being referred to someone who knew about magic. Thus, he was a magician as categorically pronounced by the Jews in another narration brought by 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī thus:

فقد أخرج ابن جرير عن شهربن حوشب قال: قال اليهود: انظروا إلى محمد يخلط الحق بالباطل يذكر سليمان مع الأنبياء، وإنما كان ساحرا يركب الريح

**Meaning:**

> It has been recorded by Ibn Jarīr from Shahr bin Ḥūshab that the Jews said: Look at Muḥammad mixing the truth with falsehood by mentioning Sulayman to be among the Prophets. And truly (Sulaymān) he was just a sorcerer who rides on the air.

The Prophet was then asked about sorcery and Allah revealed Q2:102 to the Prophet to vindicate Prophet Sulayman of the accusation in the above quoted Isrā'iliyyāt. The verse reads:



**Meaning**:

> They followed what the evil ones gave out (falsely) against the power of Solomon; the blasphemers were, not Solomon, but the evil ones, teaching men magic….

From the above quoted verse it can be deduced that the *Isrā'iliyyāt* about the apostasy of Prophet Sulaymān due to his practice of magic, has been confirmed and verified by the Qur'ān to be a false narration. Hence, it should be reflected. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, in his effort of making his approach to exegesis of the Qur'ān to be distinct, has declared this *Isrā'iliyyāt* to be weak as he says after relating it that:

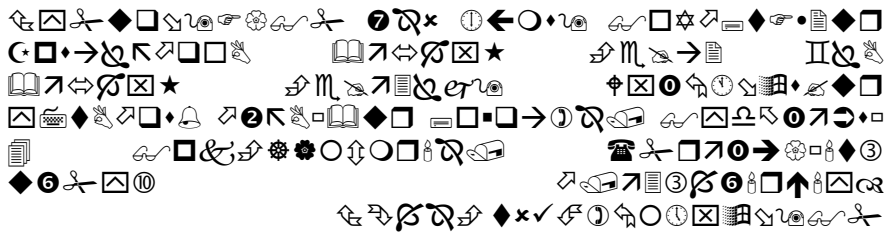
ولايخفى ضعف هذه الرواية

**Meaning:**

> The weakness of this narration is not hidden (i.e. it is obvious that the narration is weak).

From the above statement, it can be deduced that ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī, as said earlier, is very meticulous in citing *Isrā’iliyyāt* in his exegesis of the Qur’ān. His statement above has shown his scholarship in the verification of narrations.

Another example is found also when he is commenting on the kinds of tablets mentioned in Q7:145 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And we ordained laws for Him In the tablets In all matters, both commanding and explaining all things, (and said): "Take and hold these with firmness, and enjoin Thy people to hold fast by the best In the precepts: soon shall I Show you the homes of the wicked,- (How They lie desolate).

On the above verse, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, brings different statements on the exact number of tablets which was given to Prophet Musa. Some of the *Mufassirūn* said ten while some others said seven and others said two. He also brings reports on the kinds of trees used in making the tablets as well as the height. After all the discussion, ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī, remarks as follows:

> ولايخفى أن أمثال هذا يحتاج إلى النقل الصحيح وإلا فالسكوت أولى، إذا ليس فى الآية ما يدل عليه، والمختار عندى أنها من خشب السدر- إن صح السند إلى سلسلة الذهب

**Meaning:**

> It is obvious that the like of these statements need an authentic narration to back them up and in the absence of none, then silence is the best as there is no indication from the verse on it. And the chosen one to me is that the tablets are made from the loitus tree - if the narration is authentic up to the golden narration.

The discussion so far has exposed the approach of ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī, to *Tafsīr* through his use of *Isrā’iliyyāt* which he at times accepts and at times reject as in the case

of the quotations above. It is therefore apposite to state here that his approach generally to *Tafsīr* is not limited to the discussed points but others which can only be known as research continues on his *Tafsīr* book.

### 3.5 *Rūḥu-l- Maᶜāni* as *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*

*At-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī,* as one of the three major kinds of *Tafsīr* in the science of *Tafsīr* (*'Uṣūlu-t-Tafsīr*), can be literally translated as "*Tafsīr* based on indication" or "*Tafsīr* based on Hidden Meanings". It is also known as Allegorical Interpretation. It is a kind of *Tafsīr* that goes beyond the apparent understanding of the Qur'ān to unravel the hidden or inner meaning of the Qur'ānic verses based on divine or spiritual intervention.[69] It is based on indication (*Ishārah*) which is perceptible to some knowledgeable and conscientious persons who are of good behaviours and have full control over their self-desire.[70] According to aṣ-Ṣābūnī, it is an interpretation of the Qur'ān in a way different from its obvious meaning and that it is meant for the pious, devoted, morally and spiritually refined scholar and not just ordinary person. By this, it can be concluded that it can only be done by a few selected and chosen Exegetes who are really specialists in Qur'ānic Exegeses.

It is apposite to mention here that *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* is counted to be under the *Tafsīru-ṣ-Ṣūfī* which scholars have divided into two as follows:[71]

(a) A*t-Tafsīru-s-Sūfī an–Naẓarī –* **التفسيرالصوفي النظري** -: This division is based on mystical interpretation of the Qur'ān through philosophical thoughts and sectarian perspectives. The Qur'ān is used to justify the mystical doctrines and ideas without given priority to the apparent meaning of the Qur'ān. This kind of *Tafsīr* takes the interpretation of the Qur'ān out of the intended aims and objectives of its

revelation to the establishment of mysticism only and nothing else. This is why scholars, like az-Zarqāni in his *Manāhilu'l-ᶜUrfān*, As-Suyūṭī in his *al-Ittiqān*, an-Nasafi in his *al-ᶜAqā'idu-n-Nasafiyyah*, at-Taftāzānī in his commentary on *al-ᶜAqā'idu-n-Nasafiyyah*, aṣ-Ṣābūnī in *at-Tibyān* and others, have declared this kind of *Tafsīr* as *Tafsīru'l-Bātiniyyah al-Mulāḥidah*. This declaration is necessary to differentiate the truth from falsehood.

(b) *At-Tafsīru-ṣ-Ṣūfī al-'Ishārī* –**التفسير الصوفى الإشارى**- This division is the point of discussion which is the interpretation of the Qur'ān beyond its apparent meaning based on some divine guidelines and spiritual intervention. According to az-Zarqāni, it also, at times, combines both the external and internal meaning together.

It is the above divisions that have made the *Mufassirūn* to differ on the legality of *at-Tafsīr al-'Ishārī* into two; its permissibility and non-permissibility. However, a critical study of this shows that those scholars that prohibited it were directly referring to the first division which is the *Tafsīr al-Bāṭin*.[72] Thus, the position of pro *Tafsīr al-Ishārī*'s scholars is the most probable i.e. -**الراجح**- on this issue because of their ability to trace its origin back to some of the companions of the Prophet such as ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbās, Abubakr bin Abi Quhāfah, ᶜUmar bin Al-Khaṭṭab, Abu ᶜUbaydah, ᶜAbdur-Rahmān bin ᶜAwf and others. Also, because of the seconded statements of the companions which are directly or indirectly pointing not only to the existence of *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* but also its permissibility. Some of these statements are:

(a)

عن الحسن مرسلا عن رسول الله -- ﷺ - أنه قال: "لكل آية ظهر وبطن، ولكل حرف حد ولكل حد مطلع"

**Meaning:**

Every verse (of the Qur'ān) has apparent (meaning) and hidden (meaning). And every letter has (its) limit and every limit has (its) vantage point

(b)

وروى الطبرا ني عن ابن مسعود موقوفا: "إن هذا القرآن ليس منه حرف إلا له حد ولكل حد مطلع"[73]

**Meaning:**

Aṭ-Ṭabarānī has recorded on the authority of Ibn Masʿūd who said (by himself) that: surely there is no letter in this Qur'an except it has limit and for every limit there is a lookout point

(c)

عن ابن عباس –رضي الله عته- أنه قال: التفسير على أربعة أنواع : فتفسير لايعذر أحد فى فهمه، وتفسير تعرفه العرب من لغاتها و تفيسر يعلمه الراسخون فى العلم وتفسير لايعلمه الا الله[74]

**Meaning:**

Interpretation (*Tafsīr*) is of four kinds: (1) interpretations no one will be excused for not understanding it. (2) Interpretations that are known to the Arabs through their languages. (3) Interpretations which are known to those grounded in knowledge (4) Interpretations which are known only to Allah, the Exalted.

Based on the above proofs and the verse of the Qur'ān on meditation (*at-Tadabbur*), we are supporting the permissibility of *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*, however, with cautions, as this opportunity can be misused and abused by all and sundry commentators of the Qur'ān who are not specialists in the field. Thus, the following conditions are to be fulfilled by whoever wants to become a *Mufassir* of *al-Ishārī* in order for his interpretations to be acceptable and for him not to go out of the practices of the companions who started this, hence, become a sinner:

(1) The *Mufassir* should have a thorough and proper understanding of the apparent interpretation of the Qur'ān based on tradition. This will afford him the opportunity of knowing whether a statement is contradicting the Qur'ān or *Ḥadīth*. Thus, he will quickly reject and avoid it.

(2) The inner meaning to be derived should not go against the apparent interpretation.

(3) The *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* should not be to derive laws and rulings or theological position.

(4) The *Mufassir* should not claim that the derived meaning is the only intended meaning.

(5) The derived meaning should not contradict any established law or principle in the religion.

(6) There should be a connection between the *Ishārī* meaning and the Qur'ānic text. This is to show how the indicated meaning is arrived at.

(7) The derived meaning should not contradict any rule or principle in Arabic language both grammar and morphology.

(8) The derived meaning should not be of the unseen.

Thus, when the above conditions are fulfilled, then the *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* will be highly welcome and be of benefit in this contemporary society especially in the area of deriving series of lessons from the *Tafsīr* of a verse or chapter. This will go a long way in impacting positively in the lives of the contemporary youths, majority of whom have been influenced by the modern civilization and globalization negatively. It is quite sadden that this aspect of using the Qur'ān to reform the society and individual is neglected by the early *Mufassirūn* until the modern period when the likes of Sayyid Quṭb brought out his *Tafsīr* work. Therefore, if the Qur'ān is believed by the contemporary scholars and commentators who are morally and spiritually refined to be solution to all human problems then this kind of *Tafsīr* (*Ishārī*) should be revived to counter the moral degeneration among the Muslim youths. Also, it is high time we stopped and distinguished between this kind of *Tafsīr* (*at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*) and *Tafsīr-ṣ-Ṣūfī* as well as *Tafsīru'l-Bātinī* that is absolutely contradicting Allah and His Messenger's messages.

Undoubtedly, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* contains some information on the hidden meaning of the Noble Qur'an (*at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*). This made some scholars of *ᶜUlūmu'l-Qur'ān*, such as Qadhi Yasir in his book entitled: "An Introduction to the Sciences of the Qur'ān"

and Az-Zarqānī in his book entitled: "*Manāhilu'l ᶜUrfān fī ᶜUlūmi'l-Qur'ān*", to classify it as one of the books of *Tafsīr* on the hidden meanings of the Qur'an. Qadhi Yasir has gone further in his categorization to name it to be in the category of *Ṣūfi Tafsīr* which according to him falls under *at-Tafsīru' bi'l-Ishārah*.

However, we have observed that this classification by the aforementioned scholars is unjust to the kind of academic works and researches carried out by the author, 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī. Even though it is true that this book has this kind of *Tafsīr*, it is very minute compared to the volume of this work which can be said to be the encyclopedia of *Tafsīr*. Thus, the assertion of Qadhi Yasir that 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī on too many occasions gives bizarre *Sūfī* interpretations to verses of the Qur'ān,[75] is nothing but an exaggeration of the highest order which need to be withdrew if not apologized for. Otherwise, he may need empirical research method to drive home his claims.

Based on our study of this book, it can be concluded in support of the opinion of Adh-Dhahabi[76] that the act of giving the inner or hidden meanings of the Qur'ān was not the major motive of 'al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī. Had it been that his aim was in line with *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah*, he would have given hidden meanings to majority of the verses in the Qur'ān and would have dedicated the whole book for it just like Ibn ᶜArabi in his *Tafsīr*. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, in his exegesis of *Sūratu'l-Fātiḥah*, for instance, does mention little related to *at-Tafsīr al-Ishārī* and he has used eighty-six (86) pages to explain it. Could this be that he forgot or there is no *Ishārah* in this important *Sūrah* of the Qur'ān or that he thought the people have known it? All these excuses are not attainable and acceptable if *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* was his main aim of writing this encyclopedic *Tafsīr*. Likewise, in his discussion of Q2:1-28 which he has divided into four sections, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī does not mention any *Ishārah* of a verse except the last verse (i.e., 28) of the fourth section after

a discussion of more than one hundred and fifty (150) pages. This is nothing but a fact buttressing the point that *Tafsīr al-Ishārī* is a digression after the main discussion.

Besides, his discussions on the hidden meanings of the Qur'ānic verses, in most cases, is to refute the claims and opinions of those that are extreme in their *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* like the *Shīᶜah*, *Sūfī* (*al-Bāṭin*) and the *Muᶜtazilah*. This is why he has given it a special chapter as "*Mim Bābi'l-Ishārah fī'l-Āyah* –**من باب الإشارة فى الآية**- which means "From the Chapter of *Ishārah* in the verse(s)". While in some other cases, his is presenting it as a way of reforming the soul and drawing it closer to Allah, the Most Exalted. It is worthy of stating here that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had expressed his intention not to dabble into discussion on *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* of any verse when he says:

هذا وقد سددنا باب الإشارة فى الآيات لما فى فتحه من التكلف، وقد تركناه لأهله

**Meaning:**

> Indeed, we have closed the door of (giving) inner meaning to the verses of the Qur'an due to the burden inherent in its opening. By this, we have left it for its people.

The above statement of his, has shown his dislike for the act of doing *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī*. However, to our dismay, he returns to this kind of discussion after uttering the above statement. This, perhaps, because of his inability to keep silent on the wrong interpretations of the extremists among the *Sūfīs* (i.e., *al-Bāṭiniyyah*) as he himself refers to them.

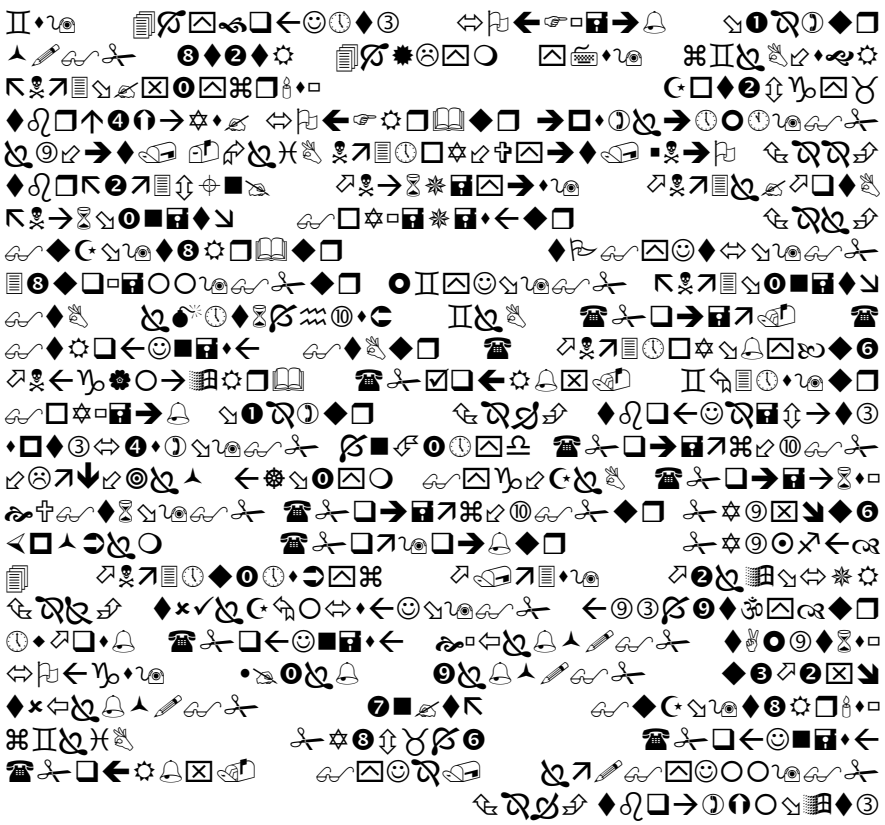
It is against the above backdrop that we want to establish the fact that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not a *Sūfī Tafsīr* as declared by Qadhi Yasir and that its information on the hidden meanings of some verses of the Qur'ān is an added advantage as well as valuable merit to make it fit to be in the three major kinds of *Tafsīr*. Its being in the category of *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* is not disputed but should not be limited to it because of its possession of the features and qualities of other kinds of *Tafsīr*; *at-Tafsīr bir-Ra'y* (*Tafsīr* based on Opinion) and *at-Tafsīr bi'l-Ma'thūr* (*Tafsīr* based on

Transmission). The position of aṣ-Ṣābūnī to have classified it under the three classes of *Tafsīr* can be said to be the most just position on this issue while that of Muhammad Hussein adh-Dhahabi, who categorized it under *at-Tafsīr bir-Ra'y al-Maḥmūd* (i.e. Opinion-Based *Tafsīr* that is Praiseworthy), is very moderate and fair to knowledge and effort of the author of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*.

### 3.6 *'Al-'Alūsī* and *Tafsīr Bi'l-Ishārah*

As established earlier that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has discussed the hidden meaning of some verses of the Qur'ān not as his main focus but digression either for a benefit therein or refutation of such meanings from their claimers. Therefore, the essence of this point is to take some extract of his *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah* for examination and documentation. Some of these are presented below:

After his exegesis on Q2:55-59 which is on what transpires between Prophet Musa and his people and then bestowed his favours on them, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī then gives the hidden meaning. These verses read:



**Meaning:**

And remember ye said: "O Moses! we shall never believe In Thee until we see Allah manifestly," but ye were dazed with thunder and lighting Even As ye looked on. Then we raised you up after your death: ye had the chance to be grateful. And we gave you the shade of clouds and sent down to you Manna and quails, saying: "Eat of the good things we have provided for you:" (But They rebelled); to us They did no harm, but They harmed their own souls. And remember we said: "Enter This town, and eat of the plenty therein As ye wish; but enter the gate with humility, In posture and In words, and we shall forgive you your faults and increase (the portion of) those who do good."But the transgressors changed the word from that which had been given them; so we sent on the transgressors a plague from heaven, for that they infringed (Our command) repeatedly.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī says:

ومن باب الإشارة فى الآيات؛ "وإذا قلتم" لموسى القلب لن نؤمن" الإيمان الحقيقي حتى نصل إلى مقام المشاهدة والعيان –فأخذتكم صاعقة الموت –الذى هو الفناء فى التجلى الذاتى –وأنتم تراقبون أو تشاهدون –(ثم بعثناكم) بالحياة الحقيقية والبقاء بعد الفناء لكى تشكر نعمة التوحيد والوصول بالسلوك فى الله عز وجل. "وظللنا عليكم" غمام تجلى الصفات لكونها حجب الذات المحرقة سبحات وجهه ما انتهى إليه بصره. " وأنزلنا عليكم" من الأحوال والمقامات الذوقية الجامعة بين الحلاوة وإذهاب رذائل أخلاق النفس، كالتوكل والرضا وسلوى الحكم والمعارف والعلوم الحقيقية التى يحشرها عليكم ريح الرحمة، والنفحات الإلهية فى تيه الصفات عنه سلوككم فيها، فتسلون بذلك (السلوى) وتنسون من لذائذ الدنيا كل ما يشتهى "كلوا" أى تناولوا هذه الطيبات التى رزقتموها حسب استعدادكم، وأعطيتموها على ما وعد لكم "وما ظلمونا أى ما نقصوا حقوقنا و صفاتنا باحتجابهم بصفات أنفسهم، ولكن كانوا ناقصين حقوق أنفسهم بحرمانها وخسرانها، وهذا هو الخسران المبين. [77]

**Meaning:**

Among the *Ishārah* (inner meaning) of the verses (is)! "And (remember) when you said" to Musa that is the heart "We shall never believe" (have) the real faith until we are able to reach the state of observance and vision. Then you were seized with the fear of death which shows the annihilation in the distinct essence while you are watching or witnessing (it). (Then we raised you up) to the real existence and continuance after the annihilation in order for you to appreciate the blessing of *Tawḥīd* (Oneness of Allāh) and the rapture through the spiritual journey in Allah-the Most Exalted and Mighty –"And we shaded you" by manifested qualities with which you were concealed to the level of what the eye can see. "And we revealed unto you" the spiritual states and stations that combines the sweetness (of faith) and the removal of animalistic qualities of the soul. (Examples of these) like Reliance on Allah, satisfaction, wisdom, gnosis and the knowledge of the realities which the fragrance of (His) *Raḥmah* (Mercy) and the divine inspiration brought to you in your spiritual journey. Then, you were consoled with it to the extent of forgetting the worldly pressures and its components. "Eat" that is, take the lawful things which you were provided with and given based on the

> promise. “And they did not wrong Us” that is, they did not reduce or lessen our rights and qualities for blocking away themselves with their human qualities. But, they cheated themselves by deprivation and loss. And this indeed is the glaring loss.

The above statements of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī has shown the fact that the inner meaning of the Qur’ān is aimed at reforming the soul of man to know and appreciate the essence and existence of his creator which will lead to having a cordial relation with his Lord. It is this that will bring about intimacy between Allah and a Slave and thereafter lead to the concept of *al-Wilāyah* (Sainthood). It should however be noted that this kind of discussion and meaning can only come from a spiritually refined teacher who understand the position of heart, soul and mind in the journey of life to the hereafter. By this, this kind of *Tafsīr al-Ishārī* can be utilized in instilling moral values into the contemporary youths spiritually. If this can be achieved, then mankind will be able to discharge his duties and responsibilities not only to Allāh but also to himself, his society and other people.

Another example of this is also found in his commentary on *Sūratu’l-Ghāfir*. After his exegesis on the whole *Sūrah*, which he does for almost seventy (70) pages, he then gives the *Ishārah* of some verse in just one page. He says:

> ومن باب الإشارة فى الآيات: على ما أشار إليه بعض السادات "حم" إشارة إلى ما أفيض على قلب محمد -ﷺ - من الرحمن فإن الحاء والميم من وسط الإسمين الكريمين، وفى ذلك أيضا سرلا يجوز كشفه، ولما صدرت السورة بما أشار إلى الرحمة وأنها وصف المدعو إليه، وهو الله عزوجل ما يدل على عظم الرحمة وسبقها، وفى ذلك من بشارة المدعو ما فيه. "الذين يحملون العرش ومن حوله يسبحون بحمد ربهم ويؤمنون به ويستغفرون للذين آمنوا" إلى آخره، فيه إشارة إلى شرف الإيمان وجلالة قدر المؤمنين وإلى أنه ينبغى للمؤنين من بنى آدم أن يستغفر بعضهم لبعض، وفى ذلك أيضا من تأكيد الدلالة على عظم رحمة الله عزوجل ما لايخفى. "فادعوا الله مخلصين له الدين" بأن يكون غير مشوب بشئ من مقاصد الدنيا والآخرة "يلقى الروح من أمره على من يشاء من عبادة" قيل: فى إطلاق الروح إشارة ويلقى على العارفين، وروح الدراية ويلقى على المؤمنين الناسكين "لينذر يوم التلاق" قيل التلاقى مع الله تعالى ولا وجود لغيره تعالى وهو مقام الفناء المشار إليه بقوله سبحانه: "يوم هم بارزون" من قبور وجودهم لايخفى على الله منهم شئ لمن الملك اليوم لله الواحد القهار" إذ ليس فى الدار غير ديار اليوم تجزى كل نفس "من التجلى" بما كسبت" فى بذل الوجود للمعبود "لا ظلم اليوم" فتنال كل نفس من التجلى بقدر بذلها من الوجود لا أقل من ذلك.

**Meaning:**

> And among the *Ishārah* (inner meaning) in some of the verses (in this *Sūratu'l–Ghāfir*): In line with what some of the elders have indicated (is that) "*Ḥā Mīm"* is indicating what was poured into the heart of Muḥammad - ﷺ- by (Allāh) the Most Beneficent as indeed the (two) letter *Ḥā* and *Mīn* are (found) at the middle of both honourable names (i.e. ar-Raḥmān- **الرحمن** and Muḥammad **-محمد**). In that also is a secret which is not permissible to be exposed. And when the *Sūrah* (chapter i.e *Sūratu'l–Ghāfir*) came out with an indication to the mercy that it is surely the quality of the One being called and the caller. Then, mention after the other qualities of the One being called, who is Allāh, what is pointing to the greatness of the mercy and its precedence (over any other quality). And in that is a glad tiding for the invited. "Those who bear the throne (of Allāh) and those around it glorify the praises of their lord, and believe in Him, and ask forgiveness for those who believe (in the Oneness of Allāh)"-till the end of the verse. There is an indication in the verse on the virtue of faith and the greatness of the status of the believers. It (the verse) is also indicating the fact that it is incumbent on the believers among the children of Ādam to be seeking forgiveness for one another (from Allāh. In this also is an emphasis on the greatness of Allāh's mercy that is not hidden. "So, call you Allāh by purifying your religious deeds for Him sincerely "by not mixing them up with both worldly and hereafter gains. He sends the inspiration by His commands to whomever He wills among His slaves". It is said that the use of inspiration is an indication to (many things among which are) the inspiration of Prophethood which is being sent to the prophets; the inspiration of Prophethood of saint which is to learnt about Allāh; and the inspiration of knowledge which is given to the upright believers "to warn against the Day of Mutual Meeting (i.e, the Day of Judgment)". It is said that (to warn of the Day of meeting with Allāh and will be no existence for anybody except Him, the Most High. And this is the station of annihilation that is being referred to in the sayings of Allāh thus: "The Day when they will (all) come out" from the grave of their existence, "nothing will be hidden from Allah; whose is the kingdom this Day? It only belongs to Allah, the One, the Irresistible. When there will be no abode except the abodes of that day to be given to every soul from the Mighty (of Allāh) as a result of what it has earned in the cause of struggling for the one worthy of being worship. There will not be cheating on this Day. Thus, every soul shall be rewarded from the Mighty (of Allāh) accordingly and will not be lessening than that.

The above *Tafsīru'l-Ishārī* from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is also showing the significance of the soul in human reformation. These two quotations have affirmed the fact that *at-Tafsīru'-l'Ishārī* is meant for a conscious and reformed scholar morally and spiritually in order to ensure its compliance with the laid down rules and its avoidance of whims and caprices in the interpretation.

### 3.7 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Mystical Exegesis

First of all, the word "*Mysticism"* is known in Arabic as "*at-Taṣawwuf"* or "*al-Madh-habu'l-Bāṭinī*". It is synonymous to the word "*Sufism" in* Arabic Language,[78] which is the most widely used term for the Islamic Mysticism. In the opinion of William Chittick, the word "Mysticism" has no corresponding word in the pre-modern Islamic Language. Unlike the word "*Sufism"* which has the advantage of being derived from Arabic and pertaining specifically to Islam. Also, the modern usage of the word Mysticism has everything to do with the history of the Christian Tradition even though there are basic differences in the outlook of Mysticism between Christianity and Islam. Thus, Sufism is much more pervasive in the Islamic tradition than the word "Mysticism". This is because, the majority of the practices in Sufism in the Islamic world cannot be placed in the same level with those of the mysticism as decoded by the West in the contemporary world. By this, the word "Sufism" will be preferably used in this study as it is the most commonly used term.

Originally, the word "Sufism*"* or "*Ṣūfī*" is not in any way rooted in both the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Thus, the word or term has been and remained controversial since it first came to be used in the Islamic history in the second Islamic century equivalent to the eighth Christian century. But, it started to play a major role in the Islamic history about the sixth Islamic century. Its roles in the Islamic activities and practices made the scholars to trace its origin to the following sources.

(a) *Ṣūf* -**صوف**:- This means a wool which is an indication that *Ṣūfī* is someone who wears wool clothing to show their denunciation of this world and its luxuries.[79] This, according to Chittick, simply suggests that some early Muslims had an ascetic tendency. However, this is not to be linked to the Prophet as he has not emphasized the wearing of woolen clothing.

(b) *Ahlu-ṣ-Ṣuffah* – أهل الصفة:- That is the people of *Ṣuffah* i.e. special status. They were the people who migrated to Madīnah and not having residence and means of sustenance. So, they have to reside in the northern side of the Mosque.

(c) *Ṣaff*- صف : This refers, technically, to the people of the first row in front of Allāh.

The above points and others are suggested as the origin of *Sufism*. However, these claims are baseless as *Sufism* could not be really derived from all these words according to the rules and regulations of the Arabic Language. Thus, there are no evidences in these claims. With this, it has got rooted in Islam as a totality of mystical practices to allow its adherents among the Muslims attain Divine Knowledge (i.e. *Maᶜārif* – Gnosis) and love through direct experience of Allāh's existence and essence. It is apposite to state here that despite the fact that *Sufism* is traceless, it has strived to remain within the realm of the orthodox beliefs as a means of purifying the minds of those who want to be purified and have a spiritual connection with Allāh through asceticism and spiritualism as practiced in the first generation by the companions of the Prophet -ﷺ-.

Thereafter, it developed into an order -*Ṭarīqah* – with philosophical ideas and thoughts as a result of its new followers who were philosophers and theologians. Gradually, preference was been given to philosophical thinking over the *Sharīᶜah* ruling and judgement to the extent of applying personal ideas and philosophy in the Exegesis of the Qur'ān. This led to the compilation and introduction of *Ṣūfī* interpretation of the Glorious Qur'ān. These interpretations are necessary to be categorized into two as discussed under *at-Tafsīru'l-Ishārī;* If the interpretation is done properly in line with *Sharīᶜah* basis and guidelines then it will be regarded as permissible, acceptable and praiseworthy. But, if it ascribes ambiguous statements, ideas and thoughts which cannot be buttressed by the Qur'ān, *Sunnah* or the sayings of the companions, then, it becomes impermissible, unacceptable and blameworthy. It may even become *Kufr*-disbelief - when

they are absolutely in contrary to clear statements of Allāh and His Messenger. Some of these ambiguous and even disbelief thoughts and ideologies are: Illuminist philosophy (**اشراق**), *al-Ḥulūl* and *Waḥdatu'l-Wujūd* among others.

Thus, some *Mufassirūn*, including 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, have declared the second category in the above discussion to be the interpretation of the *Bāṭiniyyah* group who are not only the extremists in the *Ṣūfī* circle but also the infidels. Hence, this *Tafsīr* of theirs is known as *at-Tafsīru'l-Bāṭinī*. This kind of interpretation is a vague speculations and an opinion without foundations as well as an intuitive deductions. It is the likes of these interpretations that some Qur'ānic Exegetes such as az-Zarkashi[80], al-Wāhidī, az-Zarqāni, Sirāju-d-Dīn al-Baqīllani as quoted by As-Suyūṭi and 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī among others. For instance, Usmani quoted al-Wāhidī to have said: Whoever believes in this *Tafsīr* would become an apostate". While az-Zarkashi said: "This type of *Tafsīr* is not considered as *Tafsīr"*. In his own submission, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says:

> وأما كلام السادة الصوفية فى القرآن فهو من باب الإشارات إلى دقائق تنكشف على الظواهر المرادة وذلك من كمال الإيمان ومحضى العرفان لأنهم اعتقدوا أن الظاهر غير مراد أصلا وإنما المراد الباطن فقط إذ ذاك اعتقاد الباطنية الملاحدة توصلوا به إلى نفى الشريعة بالكلية، وحاشى سادتنا من ذلك كيف وقد حضوا على حفظ التفسير الظاهر وقالوا: لابد منه أولاً إذ لايطمع فى الوصول إلى الباطن قبل إحكام الظاهر، ومن ادعى فهم أسرار القرآن قبل إحكام التفسير الظاهر فهو كمن ادعى البلوغ إلى صدرالبيت قبل أن يجاوز الباب.

**Meaning:**

> And as for the deliberation from the *Sūfī* leaders in connection to the *Qur'ān,* it is in fact pointing to the deep (meanings) disclose (to them) based on the apparent meaning they read in it. And that is from the perfection of their faith and unadulterated knowledge. It is not because they believe that the apparent meanings should be ignored basically for the hidden or intuitive meanings only as that is the belief of the *Bāṭiniyyah* (group), the infidels who have adopted it (the hidden meanings only) to negate the *Sharīᶜah* (Islamic Law) in totality. Our Mystics are exonerated from this and how could it have been (like that) when they have urged (people) and insisted on learning the apparent meaning of the *Qur'ān.* They said its knowledge is to be first adopted as nobody can deduce the inner meanings without understanding the apparent meaning. And whoever claims to know the hidden meaning of the *Qur'ān without* his understanding of the apparent meaning is like someone claiming to have entered the house before getting to the door.

Based on the above quotation, some points can be deduced as the positions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the issue of *Ṣūfī* Interpretation of Glorious Qur'ān. These points are not limited to the following:

(a) 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's respect and honour for the elders among the *Sūfī* group. This is indicated in his use of the word "*as-Sādah-* **السادة**" and "*Sādatanā* – **سادتنا**."

(b) 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's confirmation and affirmation of the permissibility of *Ṣūfī* interpretation of the Qur'ān but with the condition that it should be after the explanation of the apparent meaning. And not that the inner meaning should be the main focus which is also the position of majority of the *Mufassirūn.*

(c) 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's ability to draw a line of demarcation between Sufism and *Bāṭiniyyah* group.

(d) 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's establishment of the fact that the heretic meanings come from the *Bāṭiniyyah* group and not the *Sūfī* group. However, in our study of his *Tafsīr,* it can be said that this position of his should not be generalized on all the *Sūfīs* as some among them did go extreme in their attempt to bring out the inner meaning and even at times go out of the exegesis of the Qur'ān to philosophical thinking like that of Ibn ᶜArabī. These kinds of people are many in the contemporary society among the *Sūfī* group. It can be said that, perhaps, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is referring, here, to those of his scholars and their like such as Khalīd an-Naqushabandi*;* who were well learned in *Sharīᶜah,* God conscious and upholders of the *Sunnah*. It may also be those among them who did not interpret the Qur'ān in contrary to the apparent meaning intentionally according to or in support of their creed or wishes.

The above position of ours is most probable as 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī himself did refute some of the *Sūfīs* intuitive deductions from verses of the Qur'ān. Some extracts of

these will be presented on some verses of the Qur'ān that have been interpreted by the *Sūfīs* against their apparent meanings. These Qur'ānic verses are:

(a) Allāh says: يقول الله تعالى:



**Meaning**:

And worship your Lord until there comes to the certainty (Q15:99)

(b) Allāh says: يقول الله تعالى



**Meaning:**

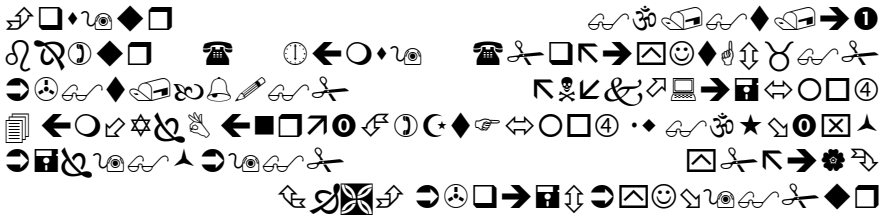
Among the believers are men who have been true to their Covenant with Allāh of them some have completed their vow (to the extreme), and some (still) wait: but they have never changed (Their determination) in the least. (Q33:23).

This discussion also involves verses 9, 13 and 21 of this same *Sūrah*.

(c) Allāh says: يقول الله تعالى



(d)



**Meaning:**

> When Our Clear Signs are rehearsed to them, Thou wilt notice a denial on the faces of the Unbelievers! They nearly attack with violence those who rehearse Our Signs to them. Say, "Shall I Tell you of something (far) worse than these Signs? it is the Fire (of Hell)! Allah has promised it to the Unbelievers! And evil is that destination!" O men! here is a parable set forth! Listen to it! Those, on whom, besides Allah, ye call, cannot create (Even) a fly, if they all met together for the purpose! and if the fly should snatch away anything from them, They would have no power to release it from the fly. Feeble are those who petition and those whom They petition!

Each of the above verses shall be studied in line with the comment of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on them as a response to the *Ṣūfī* interpretation of these Qur'ānic verses:

**1. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Comment on Mystical Exegesis of Q15:99**

In the apparent exegesis of Q15:99, the word "*al-Yaqīn*" is explained to mean "death" according to the interpretation of ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜUmar, Al-Ḥassan, Qatādah and others. It is referred to as death because it is the only thing that is certain with all the living creatures. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī also brings another interpretation of the *Mufassirūn* that this word "*al-Yaqīn*" means the victory which Allah has promised the Prophet -ﷺ- over the disbelievers.

Thereafter, 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī presents the mystical interpretation of the *Ṣūfīs*. They interpreted the word "*al-Yaqīn*" in this verse to mean vision (*al-Kashf*) and testimony (*as-Shuhūd*). It is after this that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī then says:

> وأياما كان فليس المراد به ما زعمه بعض الملحدين مما يسمونه بالكشف والشهود، وقالوا: إن العبد متى حصل له ذلك سقط عنه التكليف بالعبادة وهى الدين وخرجوا من ربعة الإسلام وجماعة المسلمين

**Meaning:**

> And whatever be the discussion (of the *Sūfīs* on this), the meaning is not what some apostates (Mystics) intended *as-Kashf* (vision) and *ash-Shuhūd (*witnessing*)*. They (the infidels) said: Verily! When a servant attains these (two), then he is no more responsible for doing any worship which is

the religion (itself). (Indeed) they have gone out of the fold of Islam and the Muslim community.

It can be deduced from the above comment of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī that he does not accept any extraneous interpretation of the *Sūfīs* which is against the Qur'ān, *Sunnah*, the fundamental principles of Islam and even human reasoning. How can someone be freed from any form of worship till his demise. Likewise, there is no record showing the fact that the companions attained such a level of being exempted from either *Ṣalāh* or *Zakāh* or *Ḥājj* till the end of their best generation. Despite their certification of being pleased with by Allah and their entrance into *al-Jannah* (Paradise), they still worshipped Him. Thus, this kind of interpretation is not only absurd but also offensive.

**2. 'Al-Imām 'Al-Alūsī's Comment on Mystical Exegesis of Q33:9, 13, 21 and 23**

In the chapter of *Al-Ishārah* on some verses in *Sūratu'l-Ahzāb,* 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents the statement of Ibn Arabi Muḥyi-d-Dīn who has used the verse nine of this *sūrah* to divide the saints into different kinds. This verse says:



**Meaning:**

O you who believe! Remember the Grace of Allah, (bestowed) on you, when there came down on you hosts (to overwhelm you): but we sent against them a hurricane and forces that ye saw not: but Allah sees (clearly) all that you do.

Then 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī says:

ومن غريب ما رأيت أن الشيخ محيي الدين قدس الله سره قسم الأولياء إلى أقسام وجعل منهم قسما يقال لهم اليثربيون وقال: هم قوم من الأولياء لامقام لهم كما لسائر الأولياء، وجعل قول المنافقين: "يا أهل يثرب لا مقام لكم" إشارة إلى ذلك، وكم قول غريب لهذا الشيخ غفر الله له. "لقد كان لكم في رسول الله أسوة حسنة لمن كان يرجو الله واليوم الآخر وذكرالله كثيرًا" لأنه أكمل الخلق على الإطلاق

وأحظى الناس بإشراق أنوار أخلاقه عليه الذين يرجون الله تعالى واليوم الآخر ويذكرونه عزوجل كثيرًا لصقالة قلوبهم وقوة استعدادها لإشراق الأنوار وظهور الأثار. "من المؤمنين رجال" أى رجال كاملون" وقول بعضهم: أى متصرفون فى الموجودات تصرف الذكور فى الإناث كلام بشع تنقبض منه ككشير من كلام المتصوفة قلوب المقتفين للسلف الصالح.

**Meaning:**

Among the strange thing is what I found in *Shaykh* Muḥyi-d-Dīn, May Allah Sanctify his secret- who has classified the saints into divisions. He made among them a division he called *Yathribiyyūn*. He said: they are people without status just like the people of other saints. He has used the statement of the hypocrites, which says "O people of Yathrib! There is no stand for you", as an indication to this. How many strange (statements have been said) by this *Shaykh*. "Indeed in the Messenger of Allāh you have a good example to follow for him who hope for (the meeting with) Allah and the last day and remembers Allah much ''. This is because he is the most perfect of all the creatures. And the most fortunate people with the blessing of his illuminated characters are those hoping to meet Allah, the most High, and the Last Day and remember Allah much for the purification of their hearts and their strong preparation for the illumination of the lights and rising of the traces. "Among the believers''. That is, the complete men. Some of them (*Sūfīs*) said this means: Those that will be acting freely among the creatures as men do on the women. (This is) An offensive statement like many other mystical statements that make the heart of those that followed the pious predecessor, become depressed and dejected.

In the above quotation, it is clear that the mystical interpretation of Ibn ᶜArabi has downgraded the companions of the Prophet-ﷺ - whom he referred to as *Yathribiyyūn* as well as other pious predecessors of the best generations and now raising in high esteem the mystics. Likewise, when the people of the best generation could not do the way they liked when they were alive in the Qur'anic generation, how can those after them do the way they like? A ludicrous action and statement that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī does not condone in his *Ṭafsīr*. This is one of the reasons for setting aside a chapter called ''*Bābu'l-Ishārah*'' in this *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* in order to expose the likes of this fallacy and heresy.

### 3. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Comment on Mystical Exegesis of Q22:72-73

After the explanation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the apparent meaning of these verses which is on the displeasure of the disbelievers and the deniers of the truth whenever they are told the truth, he presents their *Ishārah* as follows:

"وإذا تتلى عليهم آياتنا بينات تعرف فى وجوه الذين كفروا المنكر" الآية، فيه إشارة إلى ذم المتصوفة الذين إذا سمعوا الآيات الرادة عليهم ظهر عليهم التهجم والبسور وهم في زماننا كثيرون فإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون، وفى قوله تعالى: إن الذين تدعون من دون الله لن يخلقوا ذبابا" إلخ، إشارة إلى ذم الغالين فى أولياء الله تعالى حيث يستغيثون بهم في الشدة غافلين عن الله تعالى وينذرون لهم النذور والعقلاء منهم يقولون: إنهم وسائلنا إلى الله تعالى، و إنما ننذر لله عز و جل و نجعل ثوابه للولي، ولا يخفى أنهم فى دعواهم الأولى أشبه الناسو بعبدة الأصنام القائلين إنما نعبدهم ليقربنونا إلى الله زلفى، ودعواهم الثانية لابأس بها لو لم يطلبوا منهم شفاء مريضهم أو رد غائبهم أو نحو ذلك، والظاهر من حالهم الطلب، ويرشد إلى ذلك أنه لو قيل: انذروا لله تعالى واجعلوا ثوابه لوالديكم فإنهم أحوج من أولئك الأولياء لم يفعلوا، ورأيت كثيرا منهم يسجد على أعتاب حجر قبور الأولياء، ومنهم من يثبت التصرف لهم جميعا فى قبورهم لكنهم متفاوتون فيه حسب تفاوت مراتبهم، والعلماء منهم يحصرون التصرف فى القبور فى أربعة أو خمسة وإذا طولبوا بالدليل قالوا: ثبت ذلك بالكشف، قاتلهم الله تعالى ما أجهلهم وأكثر افترائهم، ومنهم من يزعم أنهم يخرجون من القبور ويتشكلون بأشكال مختلفة وعلماؤهم يقولون: إنما تظهر أرواحهم متشكلة وتطوف حيث شاءت وربما تشكلت بصورة أسد أو غزال أو نحوه، وكل ذلك باطل لا أصل له فى الكتاب والسنة وكلام سلف الأمة، وقد أفسد هؤلاء على الناس دينهم وصاروا ضحكة لأهل الأديان المنسوخة من اليهود والنصارى، وكذا لأهل النحل والدهرية، نسأل الله تعالى العفو والعافية.

**Meaning:**

"And when our clear verses are recited to them you will notice a denial on the faces of the disbelievers!" There is an indication in this verse on the scolding of the *Ṣūfīs* who show aggression and frowness whenever they hear the verses (of the Qur'ān) refuting their claims. They (these kinds of people) are many in our time. Indeed! To Allah we belong and to Him is our return. And in the statement of Allah, the most High (which is) ''Very! Those on whom you call besides Allah cannot create (even) a fly…''. There is an indication on scolding the extremists with regards to the saints by seeking for their help in (the time of) adversity. (They are) mindless people about Allah and vow for them. The Sensible ones among them say: They (the saints) are our means of getting to Allah, the Most High. We are only vowing for Allah and making its reward for the saints. It is not hidden that their first claim (seeking for their help as means of getting to Allāh) is most similar to the people worshipping the idols and say: we are only worshipping them to bring us near to Allah. And their second claim (of vowing for Allah and give them the reward) is not bad if they do not request them to cure their sick, return their absent person or the like of that. And it is clear in (this) condition of theirs that they are making request. The proof of this is that if they are told to vow on Allah and donate the reward for their parents who are highly in need of it than those saints. They will not do (it). And I have seen many of them prostrating on the stones of the grave of the saints. Among them (the *Ṣūfīs*) are those that affirm all their dispositions and conduct (for the saint) in their graves, however, they are of different levels in this regards. The scholars among them have classified this (worship in graves of the saints) into four or five and whenever there are are asked for the proof they said: it is being established by *al-Kashfu* (vision). May Allah fight them all for their ignorance and fabrication. Among them are those claiming that these saints (after their demise) do come out of their graves and appear in different forms. The scholars among them point that it is the souls or

> Spirits of the saints that appear in different form and float around wherever they like. And perhaps, they may show up in form of lion or gazelle and others, (it should be noted here that) all these (afore discussed points) are falsehood and baseless according to the Qur'ān, *Sunnah* and the statement of the pious predecessor of this *Ummah*. These (kinds of) people have corrupt and polluted the religion for the people. So, they become a laughing stock to other religions that have been abrogated among the Jews and the Christians as well as among the people of theology and the free-thinkers. We ask Allāh to pardon (us) and give us sound health.

The above quotation has shown clearly that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not a dogmatic follower of any idea. This is why despite his *Ṣūfī* affiliation to *an-Naqushabandiyyah*, he has not left any heretic idea and creed of the *Ṣūfīs* unexposed during his discussion of any Qur'ānic verse that is related to it either through its apparent meanings or hidden meanings.

### 3.8 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Shiᶜites Exegesis

The word "*Shiᶜites*" is used to denote the adherents of *Shiᶜah* sect of Islam.[81] It is written in Arabic Language as "**شيعة**- *Shīᶜah*" to mean follower , according to Ferguson. It is used technically, in a short form, to denote the followers of ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib, his households and his descendents. According to Ash-Shahrastānī, this word connotes those who believe in the demise of the Prophet-ﷺ -. It is apposite to note here that the word "*Shīᶜah* or *Shiᶜa* or Shi'sm" is used to refer to the group as a sect in Islam by different people while the word *Shi'īte* or *Shiite''* is used to refer to its adherent.

This sect originated, according to the Western scholars, as a political group or movement from the controversies over leadership position of the Muslim *Ummah* after the death of Prophet Muḥammad-ﷺ-[82]. Some other scholars of History disagree with this opinion and opine that the name came into existence towards the last period of Uthmān's regime.[83] Thereafter, it expanded during the regime of ᶜAli and became known after the assassination of ᶜAli, which led to the seizure of power absolutely by Muᶜāwiyah bin Abi

Sufyān, and some people started calling themselves by this word as name. Their belief was that ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib, who was not only the cousin but also the son-in-law of the Prophet, was the rightful successor of the Prophet even though he gave his support for his three predecessors without any ill-feeling towards them. It later became a religious movement or sect, with different theological doctrines, after the martyrdom of al-Ḥusayn bin ʾAli bin Abi Ṭālib in a traumatic event at Karbala on Muḥarram 10th , 61 A.H./October 10th , 680 C.E.

The above incident of *Karbala* gave the *Shiᶜāh* sect more strength and power to be separated from other Muslims. On this, Philip K. Hitti says: ‘‘The blood of Ḥusayn even more than that of his father (ᶜAli) proved to be the seed of the *Shi'īte* Church’’. In his own submission, A. Raḥīm concludes thus:

> Indeed *Shi'ism* was re-born on the tenth of Muharram. Karbala's tragic scene gave the *Shiᶜas*: a battle-cry for unity, organization and revenge. The first ten days of Muharram gave them the national days for cementation. The mausoleum of Ḥusain at Karbala provided them with a national and religious sanctuary. These national institutions drew nearer together the supporters of Ali's family in a common platform. From this time they had one cause, to averse the death of Ḥusain and restore Ali's family to its legitimate position in the *Khilāfat*.

Since then, the Shi'ites came up with their own understanding of the Glorious Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth* and *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) by having their own separate books of *Tafsīr*, *Ḥadīth* and *Fiqh*. They did this, despite their divisions into groups and denomination, to buttress and support their politico-theological doctrines and claims, which they could not easily proved from the apparent meanings of the Glorious Qur'ān except through *Ta'wīl* based on their personal opinion. One of their theological doctrines, which make them to be distinct from any other Islamic sects, is their belief in the Noble Qur'ān under which they said that the present Qur'ān is not complete due to the omission of some verses and chapters such as *Sūratu'l Wilāyah* according to Mirza Ḥusayn bin

Muḥammad aṭ-Ṭabarī as quoted by Muḥību-d-Dīn al-Khaṭīb. Their complete doctrine about the Noble Qur'ān is well stated by al-Isfarāyinī in his following statement:

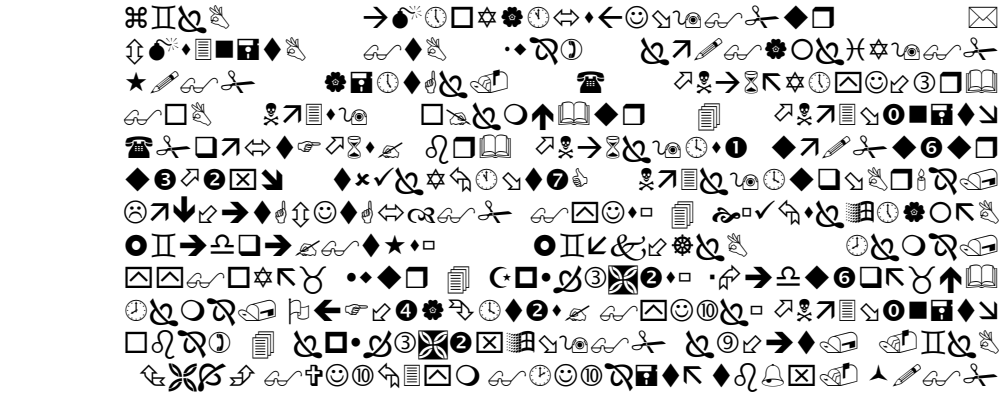
> واعلم أن جميع من ذكرناهم من فرق الإمامية متفقون على تكفير الصحابة، ويدعون أن القرآن قد غُيرّ عما كان ووقع فيه الزيادة والنقصان من قبل الصحابة، ويدعون أنه قد كان فيه النص على إمامة علي فأسقطه الصحابة منه، ويزعمون أنه لا إعتماد على القرآن الآن ولا على شئ من الأخبار المروية عن المصطفى – ويزعمون أنه لا اعتماد على الشريعة التى في أيدى المسلمين، وينتظرون إماما يسمونه (المهدى) يخرج و يعلمهم الشريعة، وليسوا على شيء من الدين ...

**Meaning:**

> (You are to) know that all those mentioned among the *Imāmiyah* group agree on the disbelief of the companions (of the Prophet-ﷺ). They claim that the Qur'ān has been distorted and changed different from how it was (before). Addition and omission have been done to it by the companions. They claim it contained (before the change) a text (as proof) on the Imamship of ᶜAli, then the companions removed it from it (the Qur'ān). They (also) claim that the current Qur'ān is not reliable as well as the traditions narrated from al-Musṭafā (Prophet Muḥammad)- ﷺ-. They (also) claim that the *Sharīᶜah* with the Muslim (*Ummah*) is not reliable. They are rather expecting an Imām named al-Mahdī that will emerge to teach them the *Sharīᶜah*. These people are not on anything (Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth*, consensus of the companions etc.,) in the religion…

Undoubtedly, the above thoughts and positions of the Shi'ites on the Glorious Qur'ān brought about the idea of having their own different *Tafsīr* of the Qur'ān which is absolutely in contrary to the *Tafsīr* works of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah* and other Islamic sects. The following verses of the Qur'ān which the Shi'ites have interpreted in a way different from the apparent meanings of the verses shall be studied in line with position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* on their interpretations:

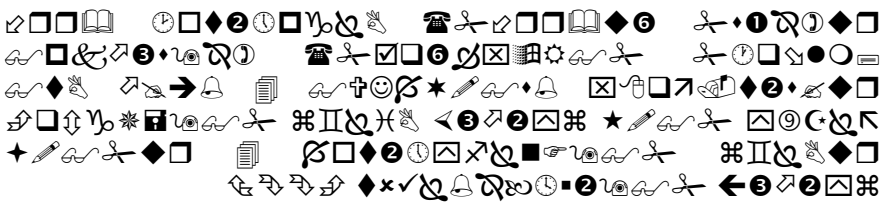
(a) Allah says: Q4:24



**Meaning:**

Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: Thus hath Allah ordained (Prohibitions) against you: except for these, all others are lawful, provided ye seek (them In marriage) with gifts from your property,- desiring chastity, not lust, seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) As prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, agree mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise.

(b) Allāh says: Q62:11



**Meaning:**

But when they see some bargain or some amusement, they disperse headlong to it, and leave Thee standing. Say: "The (blessing) from the presence of Allah is better than any amusement or bargain! And Allah is the best to provide (for all needs)."

## 1. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī’s Comment on Shi’ites Exegesis of Q4:24

This verse is also known as the verse of *Mutᶜah* used by the Shi’ites for the legality of temporary marriage between a man and a woman. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī explains that the *Imāmiyah* among the Shīᶜah group has used a version of the Qur’ānic recitation of ’Ubay bin Kaᶜab, ᶜAbdullahi bin ᶜAbbās and ᶜAbdullahi bin Masᶜūd which contain an additional phrase thus:

فما استمتعتم به منهن (إلى أجل مسمى)

**Meaning:**

So, with those of whom you have enjoyed sexual relations (for a certain period)

The phrase in the above quotation is the additional statement from the *Qirā’āt* (recitations) of the companions mentioned above. But, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī declares these narrations from these Companions as ‘‘*Qirā’atun Shādh-dhatun’’* i.e. an irregular recitation. It is quite important to state here that the attempt of the Shiite to use these companions and their reported recitations as proofs for their Qur’ānic Exegesis is amazing.

This is because, these companions among others have been declared by them to be disbelievers. How then reasonable it is to use disbelievers' statements as evidences in their legal opinion? Likewise, they believe that the companions have changed the Qur'ān. Then, why are they using these people's Qur'ān, if their recitation is taken to be authentic, in buttressing their view?

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī presents his exegesis on this verse of *Mutᶜah*, according to the Shiites, in which his position on the Shiites exegesis of the verse is also made known with other supportive evidences. He says:

> ولانزاع عندنا فى أنها أحلت ثم حرمت وذكر القاضي عياض فى ذلك كلاما طويلا، والصواب المختار أن التحريم والإباحة كانا مرتين وكانت حلالا قبل يوم خيبر، ثم حرمت يوم خيبر، ثم أبيحت يوم فتح مكة، وهو يوم أوطاس لاتصالهما، ثم حرمت يومئذ بعد ثلاث تحريما مؤبدا إلى يوم القيامة، واستمر التحريم، ولايجوز أن يقال: إن الإباحة مختصة بما قبل خيبر، والتحريم يوم خيبر للتأبيد وإن الذى كان يوم الفتح مجرد توكيد التحريم من غير تقدم إباحة يوم الفتح، إن الأحاديث الصحيحة تأبى وفي صحيح مسلم ما فيه مقنع.

**Meaning:**

> There is no controversy on this in our school that it (*Nikāḥu-l-Mutᶜah*) was initially permitted and was later prohibited. It has been discussed extensively by al-Qādī ᶜIyād. The correct position is that both the prohibition and permissibility happened twice. It was permitted before the (battle of) day of *Khaybar*, then prohibited on the day of *Khaybar* and then permitted on the day of the conquest of Makkah. It was latter forbidden three days after that day eternally and it continues (that way). Thus, it will not be permissible to say that, the permissibility is limited to the day before *Khaybar* and the prohibition on the day of *Khaybar* is forever while that of the day of the conquest of Makkah was nothing but an emphatic prohibition, without mentioning the fact that it was earlier permissible on the day of conquest (of Makkah). There are authentic narrations (of the Prophet) against this. And there are satisfactory proofs in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim.*

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī further explains that the verse is not a proof for the Shi'ite on the legality of *Nikāḥu'l-Mutᶜah* as another restriction has been placed by Allah on the extent at which relationship should reach. This is contained in this same verse in relation to the previous verse (i.e. verse 23) where Allah has forbidden marriage with some women as listed in the verse and thereafter permits marriage with others with the conditions that it should be chaste and not illegal. The sentence in the verse reads:

وأحل لكم ما وراء ذلكم أن تبتغوا بأموالكم محصنين غير مسافحين.

**Meaning:**

> All others are lawful, provided you seek in marriage with *Mahr* from your wealth, desiring chastity, not committing illegal sexual intercourse.

After the above portion of verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī remarks thus:

> وفى الآية إشارة إلى النهى عن كون القصد مجرد قضاء الشهوة وصُب الماء واستفراغ أوعية المني فبطلت المتعة بهذا القيد لأن مقصود المتمتع ليس إلا ذاك دون التأهل والإستيلاد وحماية الذمار والعرض ولذا تجد المتمتع بها فى كل شهر تحت صاحب، وفى كل سنة بحجر ملاعب.

**Meaning:**

> In this verse is an indication negating the motive of merely satisfying the sexual urge and emptying the sperm bank (without legitimate aim). Thus, *al-Mutᶜah* (Temporary marriage) becomes invalid with this restriction. This is because the sole aim of someone who engages in *al-Mutᶜah* is nothing but that (satisfaction of sexual urge, release of water and emptying the sperm bank) and not to form (his own) family, impregnate a woman, protect the family lineage and honour. And this is why the woman in *Mutᶜah* is seen with different person every month and every year she is in (different) playmate's room.

Thereafter, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī tries to debunk the argument of the Shiite that the woman in temporary marriage is likened to a slave woman the Qur'ān regards as "those the right hands possess "**وما ملكت أيمانهم"** and compared to a wife who has the rights and privileges of benefitting from the necessities of marriage such as inheritance, maintenance, divorce, waiting period etc. This argument of the Shiites is not only baseless but also far from the truth either based on revelation or reason. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī finally concludes his refutation on this Shi'ite exegesis by saying:

> وبالجملة الإستدلال بهذه الآية على حل المتعة ليس بشئ، كما لا يخفى، ولاخلاف الآن بين الأئمة وعلماء الأمصار-إلا الشيعة-فى عدم جوازها.

**Meaning:**

> Generally, the use of this verse as a proof for the permissibility of *al-Mutᶜah* is nothing and baseless as it is not hidden (to us after the discussion so far). And there is no divergence of opinions on it now among the Islamic Juristic and Scholars at ever cities, except the Shi'ite, with regards to it non permissibility.

It is obvious from the discussion so far that the Shi'ites exegesis on the verse being studied is personal-option based and this is why 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī does not spare this idea without exposing its weakness, fallacy and heresy.

**2. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Comment on the Shi'ite Exegesis of Q62:11.**



**Meaning**:

> But when They see some bargain or some amusement, They disperse headlong to it, and leave Thee standing. say: "The (blessing) from the presence of Allah is better than any amusement or bargain! And Allah is the best to provide (for all needs)."

This verse has been used by the Shi'ites to defame and damage the personalities and honours of the companions of the Prophet -ﷺ - whom Allah has confirmed and affirmed that He has completed His favour upon, pleased with them and they are pleased with Him as well as He has granted them His paradise. Thus, what could have made the Shi'ites to commit defamation of characters and honours against them? On this attitude of some of the companions on the day of *Jumuᶜah*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents the statement of the Shi'ites and his own refutation on it after he had explained the verse in details including its legal discussion. He says:

> وطعن الشيعة لهذه الآية الصحابة رضى الله عنهم-بأنهم آثروا دنياهم على آخرتهم حيث انفضوا إلى اللهو والتجارة ورغبوا عن الصلاة التى هى عماد الدين وأفضل كثير من العبادات لا سيما مع رسول الله -ﷺ- وروى أن ذلك قد وقع مرارا منهم، وفيه إن كبار الصحابة كأبى بكر، وعمر، وسائر العشرة المبشرة لم ينفضوا، والقصة كانت فى أوائل زمن الهجرة، ولم يكن أكثر القوم تام التحلى بحلية آداب الشريعة بعد، وكان قد أصاب أهل المدينة جوع وغلاء سعر فخاف أولئك المنفضون اشتداد الأمر عليهم بشراء غيرهم ما يقتات به لو لم ينفضوا، ولذا لم يتوعد هم الله تعالى على ذلك بالنار أو نحوها بل قصارى ما فعل سبحانه أنه عاتبهم وعظهم ونصحهم، ورواية أن ذلك وقع منهم مرارا إن أريد بها رواية البيهقي فى شعب الإيمان عن مقاتل بن حيان أنه قال: بلغنى-والله تعالى أعلم-أنهم فعلوا ذلك ثلاث مرات، فمثل ذلك لا يلتفت إليه ولا يعول عند المحدثين عليه، وإن أريد بها غيرها فليبين ولتثبت صحته، وأنّى ذلك؟ وبالجملة الطعن بجميع الصحابة لهذه القصة التى كانت من بعضهم فى أوائل أمرهم وقد عقبها منهم عبادات لا تحصى سفه ظاهر وجهل وافر.[84]

**Meaning:**

> The Shi'ites defamed the (personalities of the) companions using this verse as a proof. This is because (according to the Shi'ites), they (the companions) preferred this worldly life of theirs to their hereafter by dispersing to merchandise and amusement. They abandoned *as-Ṣalāh* (Prayer) which is the pillar of the religion and the best of all *ᶜIbādāt* (acts of worship) especially with the messenger of Allah-ﷺ. They (the Shi'ites) reported a narration that the companions did this many times with the exemption of Abubakr, 'Umar, and the ten companions who were promised *al-Jannah* (Paradise). This incident took place at the beginning of *Hijrah* period when majority of the people have not been acquitted with good ethics of the *Sharīᶜah*. And in that period, the people of Madīnah were afflicted with hunger and inflation of prices. By this, those that dispersed feared their hardship and what they will eat if they do not go. The ephemera of this action made Allah not to threaten them with either Hell-fire or other punitive measures. Rather, He (Allāh) corrected, admonished and adviced them. And with regards to the narration on the frequency of the action (from the companions), if it is the report of al-Bayhaqi in his *Shaᶜbu'l-Īmān* on the authority of Muqātil bin Ḥayyān, who said that: "It has reached me, Allah knows best –that they did that three times". This kind of narration is not to be considered and elevated (at all) according to the experts in (the field of) *Ḥadīth*. And if it is other narrations then they (the Shites) need to clarify, verify and authenticate it. And where is that (evidence)? Generally, defamation of all the companions because of this incident from some of them at the initial stage of their Islam, after which many of them had done numerous good deeds, is an obvious stupidity and abundant ignorance.

Based on the above quotation from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, it can be deduced that he has convincingly refuted the claims of the Shi'ites on the personalities of the companions. By this, his positions and stands on the exegeses of the Shi'ites have been made known clearly to his readers.

### 3.9 'Al-'Alūsī's Stand on Muᶜtazilites Exegesis

The word "Mu'tazilites" is the English word of the Arabic "*Muᶜtazilah*- معتزلة - which is translated literally to mean those who withdraw or stand apart. It is formed from the Arabic verbal root of "ᶜ*azala*- عزل which means to isolate, separate and set aside.[85] It later became a term to be used for an Islamic school of theology that emerged in the second Islamic century equivalent to the eighth century of the Christian era. The origin of the name is disputed among the Muslim theologians. Thus, the following origins are suggested for this name:

a. Withdrawal of Wāṣil bin ᶜAṭā' al-Ghazāl from the knowledge circle of his teacher, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, because of a religious doctrinal dispute on the Islam of someone, who has committed a grievous sin. This incident has been recorded by Ash-Shahrastānī as follows:

> دخل رجل على الإمام الحسن وسأله قائلا له: يا إمام الدين، ظهر فى زماننا جماعة يكفّرون أصحاب الكبيرة، وهم طوائف من الخوارج، وجماعة أخرى يرجئون أصحاب الكبائر، ويقولون تضر مع الإيمان معصية، كما لا تنفع مع الكفر طاعة، فكيف تحكم لنا أن نعتقد فى ذلك؟. وقبل أن يجيب الإمام-أجاب واصل بن عطاء قائلا: "أنا لا أقول صاحب الكبيرة مؤمن مطلق، ولا كافر مطلق، بل هو فى منزلة بين المنزلتين" ثم قال: "أن الإيمان عبارة عن خصال خير إذا ما اجتمعت سمى المرء مؤمنا, وهو اسم مدح، والفاسق لم يستجمع خصال الخير، ولا استحق اسم المدح، فلا يسمى مؤمنا، وليس هو بكافر مطلقا – أيضا – لأنّ الشهادة وسائر أعمال الخير موجودة فيه لا وجه لإنكارها، لكنّه إذا خرج من الدنيا على كبيرة من غير توبة، فهو من أهل النار خالد فيها، إذ ليس فى الآخرة إلا فريقان، فريق فى الجنة، وفريق في السعير، لكنّه يخفف عنه العذاب وتكون دركته فوق دركة الكفار".

**Meaning:**

> A man entered unto al-Imām al-Ḥasan and asked him thus: Oh Religious leader! A group of people have appeared in the society today declaring the committers of major sins as disbelievers. They are part of the Khawārij. And (there is) another group which suspend the judgment on the committers of grievous sins. They said: "the act of disobedience does not affect the faith (by any way) just as obedience (to Allāh) has no benefit along with disbelief. How will you judge this for us to have a decision? However, before the Imām (al-Ḥasan) answered, Wāṣil answered by saying: "I will not say that the committer of major sin is a believer or a disbeliever but he is in between the two position". Then he said: "Indeed, faith is a word that encompasses all the good traits which when present (in a person) the person has become a believer. (By this) this is a praiseworthy attribute. And a *Fāsiq* (rebel, immoral person etc) does not possess these good traits and does not deserve this praiseworthy attribute. Therefore, he is neither a believer nor a disbeliever. This is because the statement of testimony and other good deeds are present in him which there is no reason for denying them. But if he died on major sin without any repentance, then he is among the immate of Hell-fire to be therein forever as there is no other abode than the two abodes; a group of people in paradise and the other group in Hell-fire. However, his own punishment shall be lessening than that of disbeliever".

It was after this incident that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī then said: "Wāṣil has dissented from us." Thereafter, Wāṣil and his followers were called "*al-Muᶜtazilah*- The Dissenters or Secessionists". This event was in the second Islamic century.

b. The statement made by Qatādah bin Du$^{c}$āmah as-Sadūsī on $^{c}$Amr bin ‘Ubayd who also withdraw from the gathering of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī shortly after the dissent of Wāṣil. The incident was recorded by Ibn Khallikān under the biography of Qatādah thus:

> أنه دخل مرة مسجد البصرة فإذا بعمرو بن عبيد ونفر معه قد اعتزلوا من حلقة الحسن البصرى، وحلّقوا،وا رتفعت أصواتهم، فأمّهم، وهو يظن أنهم حلقة الحسن. فلما صارمعهم، عرف أنها ليست هى، فقال: إنما هؤلاء المعتزلة !ثم قام عنهم. فمذ يومئذ سموا المعتزلة.

**Meaning:**

> Verily! He (Qatādah) once entered the mosque of Baṣrah when he met $^{c}$Amr bin $^{c}$Ubayd and a group of people with him who have dissented from the gathering of al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri to form their own gathering. They were raising their voices; hence, he went to them thinking that it is the circle of al-Ḥasan. When he got to them, he discovered that it is not the circle (of al-Ḥasan). He then said: “These are the dissenters – *al-Mu$^{c}$tazilah*-. Thereafter, he left them. And since then the group has been called *al-Mu$^{c}$tazilah*.

It is based on this above incident that some writers have concluded that *al-Mu$^{c}$tazilah* as a sect was established by both Wāṣil and $^{c}$Amr who withdraw and isolated themselves from their teacher; al-Ḥasan al-Baṣri. It also took place in the second Islamic century.

c. The separation of some people who were the supporters of $^{c}$Ali bin Abi Ṭālib and his son, al-Ḥasan bin $^{c}$Ali. When al-Ḥasan abdicated the *Khilāfah* in favour of Mu$^{c}$āwiyah bin Abi Sufyān then his supporters dissented from the people and got isolated themselves in their mosques for *$^{c}$Ibādāt* (acts of worship). Thus, they started calling themselves by this name – *al-Mu$^{c}$tazilah*, according to al-Kawthari as quoted and referenced by Hājī.

d. The group of people that dissented both the party of $^{c}$Ali and Mu$^{c}$āwiyyah for the purpose of keeping themselves safe from the tribulations of the period.

These above two (c and d) points are relevant but are not common as the origin of the *Mu$^{c}$tazilah* and could not be linked to this sect. It is obvious from the incidents that

their aims perhaps were not to create a new faction but to avoid participation in the battle between Muslims and to avoid shedding the blood of Muslims. This people were different from the group claiming to be the supporters of ᶜAli and his household which later led to Shi'ism from this same people. But in the case of *Muᶜtazilah*, it was not the same people of the first generation that started it in the second generation. Thus, the connection between the first generation and second generation on the establishment of *Muᶜtazilah* is not convincing as they were in different places; Madīnah and Baṣrah respectively.

Therefore, the most probable view is the fact that Wāṣil bin ᶜAṭā and ᶜAmr bin 'Ubayd were the authentic source and origin of *al-Muᶜtazilah* as an Islamic sect with different doctrines other than that of the Muslim *Ummah* just like the Shi'ites. This position of Wāṣil that was in between the opinion of both Murijites and Kharijites, which is *al-Manzilatu bayna'l-Manzilatayn*, later became the foremost theological doctrines of the *Muᶜtazilah* among others. Among these is the doctrine of createdness of the Qur'ān i.e., *Khalqu'l-Qur'ān*- خلق القرآن - which shall be discussed in the chapter four of this study. By this, they came up with another idea that can assist them in driving home their theological doctrines. This idea is that the injunctions of Allah are to be subjected to rational thoughts and reason, which has been making them to be applying reasoning and rational thought in their interpretations of the Qur'ānic verses at the expense of the apparent meanings based on narrations and other acquired knowledge of *Sharīᶜah* as the sources of *Tafsīr*.

This rational thought and reason made them to be called "The Rationalists". Their other names which their opponents named them or called themselves are:

i. *Al-Jahmiyyah* – الجهمية- They were called by this name in reference to Jahmiyah sect which is affiliated to Jahm bin Ṣafwān from whom they took some of their theological doctrines such as Negation of the visibility of Allāh (الرؤية), createdness

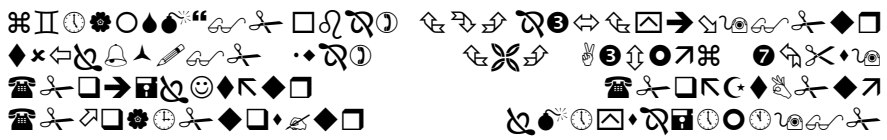
of the Qur'ān (خلق القرآن) and Negation of Allah's Attributes (نفى صفات الله). By this, they are also called *al-Mu$^{c}$aṭṭalah* –المعطلة-.[86]

ii. *Al-Qadriyyah*- القدرية- They were referred to as al-*Qadriyyah* because of their statement that man has ability and control in totality on their actions.[87] Thus they affirm that man is the one that creates his own actions by himself and not Allah in order to make Allah a just being on His creatures.[88]

iii. *Aṣ-ḥābu'l-$^{c}$Adl wa-t-Tawḥīd*- أصحاب العدل والتوحيد- This is the official name they accepted to be calling themselves as the two words; $^{c}$*Adl* (Justice) and *Tawḥīd* (Unity) are parts of their fundamental doctrines. Thus they are being referred to also as *al-$^{c}$Adliyyatu wa'l-Muwaḥḥidah* -العدلية والموحدة-[89]

Besides, one of their *Tafsīr* books that is widely known is "*al-Kash-shāf $^{c}$an Ḥaqā'iqi Ghawāmidi-t-Tanzīl wa $^{c}$Uyūni'l-Aqāwīl fī Wujūhi-t-Ta'wīl*" and popularly known by the name of the author as "*Tafsīru-z-Zamakhsharī*". The author has made use of the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth* to explain the verses of the Qur'án. However, in most cases he made use of this mastery of the Arabic language to interpret the Qur'ān at times to maintain and sustain the ideas and thoughts as well as doctrines of his sect -*Mu$^{c}$tazilah*- and at times to bring out apparent meaning of any discussed verse. As expected of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, he does not overlook any argument of az-Zamakhsharī in his *Tafsīr* on their doctrines except that he refutes it in line with the mainstream creed, even though, he quotes and benefits from his mastery of Arabic languages. The following Qur'ānic verses will be examined in line with the exegesis of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites and the position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on them:

a. Allāh says in Q.103 : 1-3 يقول الله تعالى:





**Meaning:**

By (the Token of) time (through the ages), Verily man is In loss. Except such As have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) In the mutual teaching of truth, and of patience and constancy.

b. Allah says in Q2:7: يقول الله تعالى:



**Meaning:**

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).

c. Allah says in Q43:3 يقول الله تعالى:



**1. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī’s Stand on Muᶜtazilites Exegesis of Q 103:1-3**

The *Sūrah* completely has been used, according to ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, by some Muᶜtazilites to support one of their doctrines that the committer of a grievous sin will dwell forever in Hell-fire, because, only those that are exempted from the destruction and lose of the *ᶜAṣr* (time) are: the believers, the good doers, those enjoin the truth and are patient in the period of calamity. It is apposite to state here that this claim by ’al-’Imam ’al-’Alūsī, that the Muᶜtazilites have used this verse as proof on whoever commits grievous sin, is not found in the *Tafsīru’l-Kash-Shāf* of az-Zamakhsharī while discussing this *Sūrah*. Perhaps, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī is referring to their other *Tafsīr* books or other books. This is because, he himself has said it is some of the Muᶜtazilites and he has not mentioned any book or author or scholar as reference. However, on this ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī presents his refutation thus:

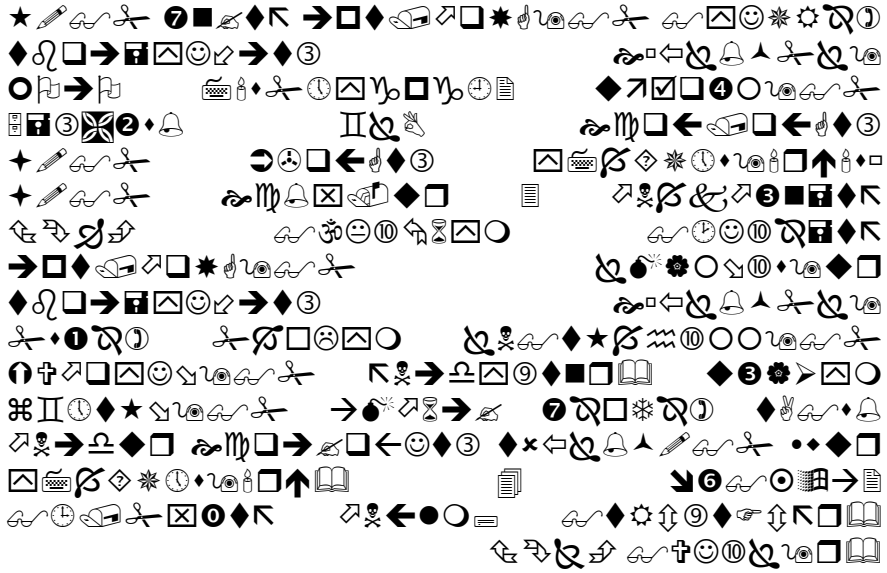
وأجيب عنه بأنه لا دلالة فى ذلك على أكثر من كون غير المستثنى فى خسر، وأما على كونه مخلدًا فى النار فلا، كيف والخسرعام فهو إما جالخلود إن مات كافرا

وإما بالدخول فى النّار إن مات عاصيًا ولم يغفر وإما بفوت الدرجات العاليات إن غفر، وهو جواب حسن.[90]

**Meaning:**

> In response to this, there is no proof in this on the basis that there is exemption for anybody from the *Khusr* (loss, destruction etc). With regards to his dwelling forever in Hell-fire, it is not correct. How will it be so when the word "*al-Khusr*" is general to everybody (i.e. not limited to anybody). It is either to be (in Hell-fire) forever if he dies as a *Kāfir* (disbeliever) or to enter it (Hell-fire for a while) if he dies as a sinner who is not forgiven or to miss higher levels (in paradise) if forgiven. This is a good response.

Based on the above quotation, it is obvious that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has debunked the Muᶜtazilites argument on the dwelling of a major sinner in Hell-fire forever. We also support this stand of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī that it is possible for the sinner to have been pardoned by Allah if he has sought for Allah's forgiveness before death as promised by Allah and He will never break His promise. Allah says: (Q4:17-18).



**Meaning:**

> Allah Accept the repentance of those who do evil In ignorance and repent soon afterwards; to them will Allah turn In mercy: for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom. Of no effect is the repentance of those who continue to do evil, until death faces one of them, and He says, "Now have I repented indeed;" nor of those who die rejecting faith: for them have we prepared a punishment Most grievous.

The above verse will be meaningless if Allah still punishes someone He has forgiven. Thus, the verses are evidences on the fact that there is no punishment for

whomever Allah has forgiven after seeking for it and that punishment is not only uncertain for those seekers of forgiveness at the point of death but also those that die as disbelievers as their abode is in Hell-fire forever.

**2. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī’s Stand on Mu’tazilites Exegesis of Q2:7**

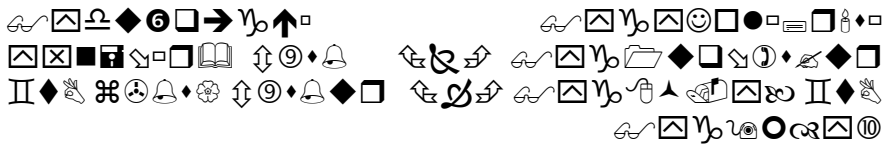
On this verse ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī presents the exegesis of the Muᶜtazilites on the seal of the hearts of the disbelievers by Allah. The Muᶜtazilites argued that it is the *Shayṭān* that sealed up the hearts of man which is against the apparrent meaning of the verse. They changed the subject of the verb “*Khatama*” from Allah to *Shayṭān* because they felt it is obscene for Allah to parent His creatures from accepting His messages. And that it will be unjust for Him to prevent someone from accepting the truth and later punish the person. By this, they concluded as stated by ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, that Allah has no right to inflict painful torment on such a person.[91]

The above discussion of the Muᶜtazilates has been refuted by ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī by affirming the flaws of this sect that this is not the first error they will be making. He argues further that the Muᶜtazilites have fallen from the stage of believing in the Qur’ānic text to the stage of seeking for *Fitnah* (trials, disbeliefs etc.) through their misinterpretation of the Glorious Qur’ān. He explains also that their argument on the uncreatedness of man’s action by Allah is weaker than the cobwebs. Their basis is that if the actions of man are created by Allah then he will not reproach them or discipline them. This to them, means that man is the creator of his action and not Allah. This is why they shall be responsible for their actions. However, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī refutes this by saying that this statement of theirs is more worst than anything else because it is as if they are establishing the fact that Allah is the one who has given man the sharp sword to cut himself by creating in him the will and power to create his own action, after knowing certainly that the sword can cut.

By the above discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the indirect meaning of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites assertion that man is the creator of his action, he has affirmed that the Mu$^{c}$tazilites are the one affiliation injustice to Allah by this utterance of theirs. He concludes his refutation by asking a rhetorical question thus:[92]

> Is there any problem in Allah being the creator of man's actions and punishing him on that for wisdoms and benefits known to him alone?

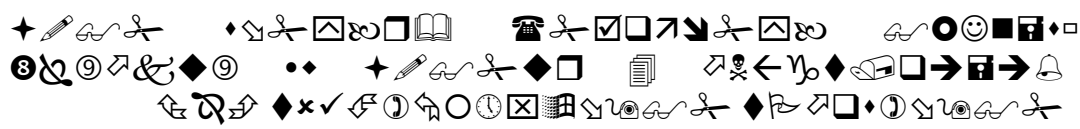
It can, thus be concluded, based on 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion, that Allah is the one that seals the hearts of those that have refused to accept the truth after Allah has explained to the hearts all the bad and good things as contained in Q 91:8-10 which say:



**Meaning:**

> And its Enlightenment As to its wrong and its right;- Truly He succeeds that purifies it. And He fails that corrupts it!

Thus, our conclusion, after a critical study of the discussion, is in support of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's stand and that the act of sealing the heart is not predestined but a consequence of man's freedom of choice as also mention in Q61:5 thus:



**Meaning:**

> Then when they went wrong, Allah let their hearts go wrong, for Allah guides not those who are rebellious transgressors.

### 3. 'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's Stand on the Mu$^{c}$tazilites Exegesis of Q.43:3

One of the evidence of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites on the createdness of the Qur'ān is this verse. So, it has been interpreted to buttress this doctrine of theirs. This issue shall be discussed in details under chapter four of this study. They have interpreted the word "*Ja$^{c}$alnāhu*- جعلناه" in the verse which means (we have made it), to mean *Khalaqnāhu* -خلقناه which means (we have created it). According to *Az-Zamakhshari*, the word "*Ja$^{c}$ala*" is a

transitive verb that takes two objects and it either means to make something or cause it to become another or means -*Khalaqa* – خلق i.e., to create or fashion something, which is also a transitive verb but takes an object only.[93] Based on this, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says:

> واستدل بالآية على أن القرآن مخلوق وأطالوا الكلام فى ذلك وأجيب إن دل على المخلوقية فلا يدل على أكثر من مخلوقية الكلام اللفظى ولانزاع فيها.

**Meaning:**

> This verse (Q43:3) has been used as an evidence on the createdness of the Qur'ān and has been discussed at length but my response is if (the word – *Jaᶜala*) is implying the creation (of things), it does not indicate the creation of the verbal speech (of the Qur'ān). There is no controversy in it.

It can be deducted from the above quotation that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī does not support the createdness of the Qur'ān. This is why he is speaking against it as shall be discussed later in the next chapter.

### 3:10 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī and Verification of *Aḥādīth*

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has made his *Tafsīr* work distinguishable from others through his systematic and careful verification of *Aḥādīth* (Prophetic Traditions) before arriving at his conclusion on issues. He does this at times by making use of his own knowledge of science of *Ḥadīth* as can be seen in his verification of *Isrā'iliyyāt* and at times by referring to other experts in the science of *Ḥadīth* who are more versed in it than him.

In his effort to verify the authenticity of a *Ḥadīth*, he has referred to Ibn Jawzī in his book entitled: "*al-Mawḍūᶜāt*" to declare the *Ḥadīth* of Asmā'u bint ᶜUmaysh on the rising again of the sun after it has already set in the same day because of ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib, as a fabricated *Ḥadīth*. This *Ḥadīth* reads thus:

> فقد روى عن أسماء بنت عميس أن النبي ﷺ- كان يوحى إليه ورأسه فى حجر علي كرم الله تعالى وجهه فلم يصل العصر حتى غربت الشمس فقال رسول اللهﷺ- صليت يا علي؟ قال: لا، فقال رسول الله ﷺ اللهم إنه كان فى طاعتك وطاعة رسولك فاردد عليه الشمس. قالت: فرأيتها غربت ثم رأيتها طلعت بعدما غربت

ووقعت على الأرض وذلك بالصهباء فى خيبر، وهذا الخبر فى صحته خلاف فقد ذكره ابن الجوزى فى الموضوعات، وقال: إنه موضوع بلا شك وفى سنده أحمد بن داود وهو متروك الحديث كذاب كما قاله الدراقطني، وقال ابن حبان: كان يضع الحديث، وقال ابن الجوزى: قد روى هذا الحديث ابن شاهين فذكره ثم قال: وهذا حديث باطل...[94]

**Meaning:**

Verily! It has been narrated on the authority of Asmā' bint 'Umays that the Prophet ﷺ was once receiving revelation while his head was on the lap of ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib- may Allah honoured his face-, hence, he did not observe ᶜ*Asr* prayer until the sunset. Then the Prophet said: "Have you prayed O you ᶜAli? Ali said: "No" Then the Prophet said: O Allāh! Indeed (he did not pray) because he was at your service and at the service of your messenger. Therefore, bring out the sun for him back (in order for him to observe his ᶜ*Asr* prayer at the normal time)". The narrator (Asma') said: I saw the sun when it was setting (in the first time) then I saw it (again) rising after it has set and I fell down on the ground. And this took place at the Khaybar. (It should however be noted that) the authenticity of this narration is disputed. It has been mentioned by Ibn al-Jawzī in his *al-Mawdūᶜāt* that the *Ḥadīth* undoubtedly is fabricated because in its chain of transmission is Ahmad bin Dāwud, whose *Ḥadīth* is abandoned as well as a liar according to Ad-Darāquṭnī. (Another scholar) Ibn Ḥibbān said: He (Aḥmad bin Dāwud) used to fabricate *Ḥadīth* and Ibn Al-Jawzi said. This *Ḥadīth* has also been reported by Ibn Shāhīn who then said that it is a faulty narration….

From the above quotation, it can be deduced that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has relied on the previous experts in the science of *Ḥadīth*, for his verification of *Aḥādith* to be used in his *Tafsīr* before taking a position on an issue.

It is also noted that at times he does his verification of *Ḥadīth* based on his own knowledge of science of *Ḥadīth* without making reference to any author. For instance, in his discussion on *at-Tawassul* (Intercession), he has verified some of the *Aḥādīth* that are being used as proof using his own expertise in this field. He says:

وما يذكره بعض العامة من قوله - ﷺ - إذا كانت لكم إلى الله تعالى حاجة فاسألوا الله تعالى بجاهي فإن جاهي عند الله تعالى عظيم لم يروه أحد من أهل العلم ولاهو شئ فى كتب الحديث وما رواه القشيرى عن معروف الكرخى قدس سره أنه قال لتلامذته: "إن كانت لكم إلى الله تعالى حاجة فأقسموا عليه بى فإنى الواسطة بينكم وبينه جل جلاله الآن لايوجد له سند يعول عليه عند المحدثين وأما ما رواه ابن ماحه عن أبي سعيد الخدري عن النبي- صلى الله عليه وسلم- فى دعاء الخارج إلى الصلاة: " اللهمّ إني أسألك بحق السائلين عليك وبحق ممشاى هذا فإني لم أخرج أشرًا ولا بطرًا ولا رياء ولاسمعة ولكن خرجت اتقاء سخطك وابتغاء مرضاتك أن تنقذني من النار وأن تدخلني الجنة" ففى سنده العوفى وفيه ضعف

**Meaning:**

> And what has been mentioned by the general populace to be part of the statement of the Prophet ﷺ that he said: "when you have a need to be presented to Allah for fulfilment then ask Allah by my status as indeed my status before Allah is great". This has not been narrated by anybody among the scholars and it is nothing to reckon with in the books of *Ḥadīth*. With regards to what al-Qushayri has reported on the authority of Maᶜruf al-Karkhi-May his secret be sanctified- that he informed his students that (the Prophet ﷺ said:) "If there is a need to be presented before Allāh (for Him to fulfill) then vow by me (i.e. status) on Him. Verily! I am an intermediary between you and Him- Exalted is His Majesty- now". There is no chain of transmission for it to be reckoned with by the scholars of *Ḥadīth*. And in the case of the narration of Ibn Mājah on the authority of Abu Saᶜid al-Khudrī that part of the prayer for someone going out for *as-Ṣalāh* from the Prophet ﷺ- is: "O Allāh! I beseech you by the right of the demanders on you and by the right of my walking (to the mosque) that I have not come out for evil or for arrogance or for show off or for fame. But, I have come out fearing your wrath and hoping for your pleasure to paradise". In the chain of transmission of this (*Ḥadīth*) is (a narrator by name) al-ᶜAwfī, who is weak.

Another example of this also is found in his explanation on how Hārūt and Mārūt (the two angels) taught their magic to mankind and the devil. Thereafter he presents evidence showing the fact that people and devil do go to them for this. He says with regards to the narration thus:

> وأما ما أخرجه ابن حرير وابن أبى حاتم والحاكم وصححه والبيهقى فى سننه، عن عائشة- صلى الله عليه وسلم- أنها قالت: قدمت على امرأة من أهل دومة الجندل تبتغى رسول الله - ﷺ- بعد موته تسأله عن شئ دخلت فيه من أمر السحر ولم تعمل به قالت: كان لى زوج غاب عفى فدخلت على عجوز فشكوت إليها فقالت: إن فعلت ما آمرك أجعله يأتيك، فلما كان الليل جاءتني بكلبين أسودين فركبت أحد هما وركبت الآخر فلم يكن كشئ حتى وقفنا ببابل، فإذا أنا برجلين معلقين بأرجلهما، فقالا: ماجاء بك؟ فقلت: أتعلم السحر، فقالا: إنما نحن فتنة فلا تكفري وارجعي، فأبيت وقلت: لا، قالا: فاذهبي إلى ذلك التنور فبولي به إلى أن قالت: فذهبت فبلت فيه، فرأيت فارسا مقنعا بحديد خرج مني حتى ذهب إلى السماء وغاب عني حتى ما أراه، فجئتهما وذكرت لهما فقالا: صدقت، ذلك إيمانك خرج منك، اذهبي فلن تريدي شيئا إلا كان... [95]

**Meaning:**

> And by the narration of Ibn Jarīr, Ibn Abi Ḥātim, al-Ḥākim- who authenticated it and al-Bayhaqī in his Sunan on the authority of ᶜAishah- May Allah be pleased with her – that she said: "A woman came to me from the people of Dūmatu'l-Jundul asking for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ- after his demise. She came to ask him about something she involved in with regards to Magīc, but did not apply it. She said: "I have a husband that has left me. Then I complaint to a woman about it who said: "If you can do what I will command you, then he will come back to you". Then at night the woman came with two black dogs which she rode on one and I rode on the other. After a short period, we reached Babylon where I met two men chained together with their legs. They said: "what has brought

> you (to us)". Then I said: "To learn about magic" they then replied. "we are only for trial, so don't disbelieve and ( you should) return (to your place)". Then, I refused and said: "No". They said: "Go and urinate into that oven, then, I did it and I saw an iron man coming out from me and went into the heaven until I could not see it again. Thereafter, I came to them (the two men) and told them (everything I saw). Then, they said: "you are right! That is your faith that has gone out from you. You can be going now as you will never wish for anything except you get it…….

After this quotation, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī then display his expertise in the science of *Ḥadīth* on the verification of the above *Ḥadīth*. He says:

> الخبر بطوله، فهو ونظائره- مما ذكره المفسرون من القصص فى هذا الباب – مما لا يعول عليه ذوو الألباب، والإقدام على تكذيب مثل هذه الامرآة الدوجندية أولى من اتهام العقل من قبول هذه الحكاية التى لم يصح فيها شئ عن رسول رب البرية -ﷺ- وياليت كتب الإسلام لم تشتمل على هذه الخرافات التى لا يصدقها العاقل ولوكانت أضغاث أحلام.[96]

**Meaning:**

> This long narration and its likes, among the stories that have been mentioned by the Qur'ānic Exegetes on this issue (i.e., learning of magic) which cannot be accepted by the sensible ones. The boldness and courage to belie the likes of this al-Dūjandiyah woman is better than charging the brain with the acceptance of this Tale that is not authentic from the messenger of the Lord of mankind ﷺ. And how better would it have been if the Islamic books do not contain all these fabulous stories which no sensible man will accept their authenticity and even if they are false dreams.

'Al-Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then concludes that these inauthentic narrations cannot be used to support the permissibility of learning magic (*Siḥr*-سحر). Thus, it is not permissible to learn it. Similarly, he, at times, abstains from given verdict on the authenticity of a *Ḥadīth*, perhaps, because of his uncertainty on it or he has no information from the previous scholars on it or having conflicting authentic *aḥādīth.* This attitude has shown him to be a scholar without self desire and as well a God conscious scholar who has taken knowledge to be a trust. An example of this is found in his discussion and exegesis on the meaning of "سيماهم فى وجوههم من أثر السجود - their mark (i.e., of their faith) is on their faces" Q48:29. He quotes various narrations in which some said it is an inner light that will illuminate out on their faces but can only be seen and noticed by the believers alone. Some others said it means a good looking face or humility and submissions of the

believers. And that it may not necessarily be a mark on the face and it may be in this life and the hereafter. Some said it is the whiteness of the face or light on the face in both lives. At the end of all these narrations from different recorders of *Ḥadīth* such as al-Bukhārī in his *at-Tārīkhu'l-Kabīr*, al-Bayhaqī in his *Sunan*, aṭ-Ṭabarānī in his *al-Awsat* and *aṣ-Ṣaghīr*, Ibn Jarīr aṭ-Ṭabarī in his *Ṭafsīr* and others,[97]'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī say:

وإذا صح الحديث فهو مذهبي[98]

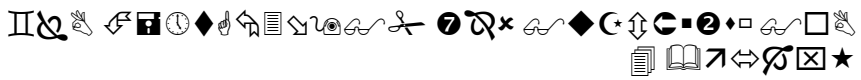
**Meaning:**

> Whenever a *Ḥadīth* is authentic (on an issue) then that is my position or stand

It can be concluded that 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī is a scholar of *Ḥadīth*, at his level, per excellence.

### 3.11 'Al-'Alūsī and Verses with the Scientific Connotation.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, whose cardinal objective is the amplification of the Qur'ānic messages not only to the Muslims but also to the generality of mankind, is noted to have discussed and explained some verses with scientific connotations in the Glorious Qur'ān. His belief, perhaps, is that the Glorious Qur'ān has left nothing untouched in all aspects of human life as confirmed in Q.6:38 thus:



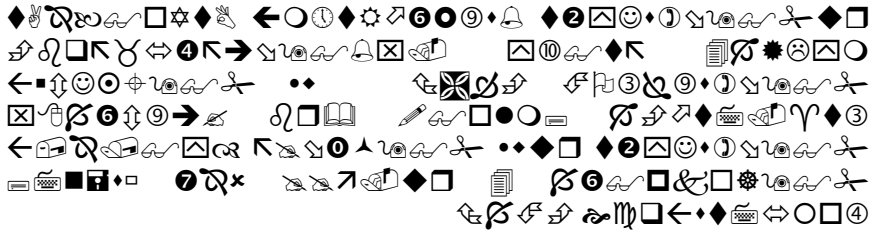
We have neglected nothing in the Book

This study shall discuss some Qur'anic verses on physical and biological sciences-related issue in the light of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's exegeses.

#### 3.11.1 Qur'anic Verses on Physical Sciences

In his comment on Qur'ān 36:38-40 which reads:





**Meaning:**

> And the sun runs His course for a period determined for him: that is the Decree of (Him), the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing. And the Moon,- we have measured for Her mansions (to traverse) till she returns like the old (and withered) lower part of a date-stalk. It is not permitted to the sun to catch up the moon, nor can the night outstrip the Day: Each (Just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to Law).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī explains and affirms that really the sun is moving from a place i.e., the *Mashriq* (east) to another place i.e., *Maghrib* (west) and from a time to that which has been determined for it. Thus, it will not outreach the set limit and time for it to rise from the East and set in the West until when the movement shall be changed from the East to the West and from the West to the East. [99]

Furthermore, Imam Ḥaramayni is quoted by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to have said that there are differences in the rising and setting of the sun which brings about alternation of the day and the night in different places. At times, it may be rising in some places while setting in other places. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī concludes that, this means that the sun is not stable as it sets because the rising depends on the setting. However, if it is motionless, then it will affect its rising and setting in some other places. It is based on these verses that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī also concludes that the sun is rotating within its orbits and does not go beyond its orbit. It is the same verses that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī used to explain the movement of the moon which covers some distances in the Zodiac region for nothing less than twenty-seven and two third (2/3) days according to the Indians. However, the two-third was not counted by the Astrologers because it is more than half, while, According to the Arabs, it covers twenty-eighty days in a month because of the differences in its appearance during the summer season and the winter period. He later concludes by saying that the moon traverses

all the distances for three hundred and sixty-four days unlike the sun which finishes its own movement in three hundred and sixty-five days to make a year.[100]

Besides, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī discusses the contents and activities of each *Manzil,* i.e., abode of the moon. He declares that there are twenty-eight *Manāzil* for the movement of the moon. It is under this discussion that he explains the attitude of man with regards to the coming down of rain that it is due to the falling down of a star from those *Manāzil.* He says:

> إن قول الإنسان: مطرنا فنوء كذا، إن أراد به أن النوء نزل بالماء فهو كفر حلال دمه إن لم يتب كما نص عليه الشافعى وغيره، وفى الروضة: من اعتقد أن النوء يمطر حقيقة كفر وصار مرتدا وإن أراد به أن النوء سبب ينزل الله تعالى به الماء حسبما علم وقدر فهو ليس بكفر بل مباح لكن قال ابن عبد البر: هو وإن كان مباحا كفر بنعمة الله تعالى وجهل بلطيف حكمته. [101]

**Meaning:**

> Surely, the statement of mankind that it has rained because of so and so star; if it is with the intention that, it is the star that gives rain, then it is disbelief and anybody who says it is also a disbeliever. His blood is lawful to be spilled if he doesn't repent based on the opinion of Imam Shāfiʿi and others. Similarly, it is said in (the book of) *ar-Rawḍah* that whoever intends that it is a star that brings rain surely has disbelieved and has become an apostate. However, if the intention is that the star is just a means by which Allāh sends down rains depending on His knowledge and power, then it is not disbelief but a permissible action. Ibn Abdul-Barr, however, said: Even if it is permissible, it is still an ungrateful act to the favour of Allah as well as ignorance of His wisdom.

He supported his argument with a narration recorded by al-Bukhārī and Muslim that reads:

> عن زيد بن خالد الجهنى أن النبي - ﷺ - قال إثر سماء: "هل تدرون ما قال ربكم؟ قالوا: الله تعالى ورسوله أعلم، قال: قال: أصبح من عبادي مؤمن بي وكافر، فأما من قال مطرنا بفضل الله تعالى ورحمته فذلك مؤمن بى كافر بالكوكب، وأما من قال مطرنا بنوء كذا فهو كافر بى مؤمن بالكوكب. [102]

**Meaning:**

> On the authority of Zayd bin Khalid that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: Do you know what your Lord has said?: They replied: "Allah and His Messenger know best". Then the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah says: "Some of my slaves wake up as believers and disbelievers. Whoever says rain has been sent down for us by the grace and mercy of Allah, is a believer in Me and disbeliever in the star. But, whoever says we have been given rain because of so and so star has disbelieved in Me and believed in the star.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, after a long discussion, established that neither the sun will

appear in the time of the moon and nor the moon in the time of the sun.

### 3.11.2 Qur'ānic Verses on Biological Sciences

It is also to the credit of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī that he indulges in the discussions on biological sciences which are mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān. For instance, he uses Q.86:5-7 to discuss the basis for the formation of man. The verses read:



**Meaning:**

Now let man but think from what He is created! He is created from a drop emitted- Proceeding from between the backbone and the ribs:

In his discussion, he presents two opinions of the scholars on the source of the water referred to in the verses as the origin of man as follows: [103]

(a) This is the opinion of Sufyān and Qatādah that this gushing water is coming out from between the backbone of a man and the chest or ribs of a woman. This means that the water is from two different sources; the backbone of a man and the ribs of a woman.

(b) This second opinion is that of aI-Ḥasan al-Baṣri which says that the water originates from between the backbone of both man and woman as well as from the ribs of both of them.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī is in support of the second opinion which he says is in contrast with the apparent meaning of the verse. The verses are obviously referring to the water that gushes out from between the spinal cord and the ribs of man and woman after which they will mix together in the womb of the woman to form a zygote.[104] He further explains that it is the brain that produces the semen (*al-Maniyyu*) with the assistance of other parts of the body; the spinal cord and the ribs. Also, it is the testis which is known as the sperm vessel (*'Awʿiyyatu'l-Maniyyah* – أوعية المني), that will house the water after

its production by the brain through the support of the spinal cord and the ribs. He then refutes the argument that sperm if formed from the remnant of digestion i.e., food as well as other parts of the body so as to bring about resemblance between the fetus and the parents. However, he concludes that this is not to say the other parts of the body have no role to play in it. But, these two parts of the body as well as the director of the body (brain) have the major role to play.

It is of importance to mention here that the refutation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the formation of sperm from the remnants of digested food is not to be taken in contrary or negation of the usefulness of this digested food in the nurturing and production of a healthy spermatozoa and ovum, but in contrary to the notion of some people that this brings about resemblance between the child and the parents which is against the tradition of the Prophet that says:

عَنْ ثَوْبَانَ مَوْلى رسول الله (ﷺ)قال كُنْتُ قَائِمًا عِنْدَ رَسُولِ الله - ﷺ -فَجَاءَ حِبْرٌ مِنْ أَحْبَارِ اليَهُودِ ... قَالَ: جِئْتُ أَسْأَلُكَ عَنْ الوَلَدِ، قالَ: (ماءُ الرَّجُلِ أَبْيَضُ، وَمَاءُ المرْأَةِ أصفر، فإذا اجتمعا فعلا منِيّ الرَّجُلِ مني المرأة أذكرا بإذن الله، وإذا علا مني المرأة مني الرجل آنَثَا بِإِذْنِ اللهِ) قَالَ اليَهُودِيُّ: لقَدْ صَدَقْتَ. رواه مسلم.[105]

**Meaning:**

> On the authority of Thawbān, the slave of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who said: I was standing with the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) when a scholar among the Jewish scholars came and said: I have come to question you about (resemblance of) the child. The Prophet ﷺ said: "The ejaculation fluid of man is white while that of woman is yellow. Whenever they come together and the fluid of man dominates the fluid of woman then the child would be male by the grace of Allāh. And when the fluid of woman dominates that of the man then the child would be a female by the grace of Allah. The Jew said: you have spoken the truth. (Reported by Muslim).

From the above *Ḥadīth,* it is clear that the creation of a child is from the mixture of the man's water (sperm) and the woman's water (ovum). Also, the resemblance of a child to any of the parent depends on the water dominating another and not the remnants of digested food or the coming of the water from all parts of the body.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

## THEOLOGICAL STUDIES IN *RŪḤU'L-MAᶜĀNĪ* OF 'AL-'IMĀM 'AL-'ALŪSĪ

### 4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, an effort will be made to study critically the theological discussions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Magnum Opus*: *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*. The discussion does not only comprise all the articles of faith in Islam which are not debatable but also some other theological issues that are debatable among the Muslim theologians such as Anthropomorphism, Createdness of the Qur'ān, Visibility of Allah on the Day of Judgment, *At-Tawassul*, The return of Prophet ᶜĪsā and the Finality of Prophethood.

### 4.1 Theology: Its Evolution and Relation with *Tafsīr*

Theology is a theme as well as one of the Islamic Sciences through which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has displayed his vast erudition in his Massive Commentary on the Glorious Qur'ān. Thus, he was described as an Ottoman Theologian[1] because of his theological discussions which cut across virtually all the major Islamic Sects; *Shīᶜah*, *Muᶜtazilah*, *'Ashāᶜirah* and *Ahlu*-s-*Sunnah* as well as *Ṣūfiyyah* which is an order, as a result of his in-depth knowledge in various branches of religious sects as mentioned by his grandson, Maḥmūd Shukrī.[2] 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's multifarious theological dispositions made it difficult for scholars and writers after him, to affiliate him to a particular sect or *Madh-hab* (school of thought). Nafi remarks:

> By the time of his death, the Alusis were becoming firmly established as a recognized *Ulama* family, members of which would continue to play important roles in the intellectual and political life of Iraq and the Arab *Mashriq*. The grand Alusi, as Abu al-Thanaī al-Alūsī was known, however, was and still is, a controversial Muslim Scholar whose intellectual genealogy and leanings seem to be difficult to categorize and too contradictory to pin down.[3]

In another submission, he is being observed thus:

> His legacy is disputed and controversial, and his relationship both to Sufism and the rising *Salafiyya* movement is interesting for not being mutually exclusive, at least not in his case.[4]

Based on the above, it is apposite to observe here that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī could not have absolutely leaned to all the schools of thought theologically. It is against this backdrop that this study needs to explain the meaning of theology, its evolution and relation with *Tafsīr* (Qur'anic Exegesis).

**Definition of Theology**

The word theology is a term that is sometimes and commonly used to denote the Arabic word "*ᶜAqīdah* - عقيدة" which can linguistically mean Creed[5], Dogma, Doctrine of faith and Ideology[6]. It is, however, further used, basically as a science through which religious beliefs about God are being studied and learnt by the adherents of the religious Community[7]. By this, it was then being used by the Muslims to be a Science through which Islamic Creed (al-*ᶜAqīdatu'l-Islamiyyah*) can be properly understood and preserved against misconceptions, interpolations[8], doubts and denials[9]. This is why, in Islam, it is officially referred to as *ᶜIlmu'l-Kalām*[10] – Islamic Theology – which is synonymous with *ᶜIlmu'l-ᶜAqā'id*[11] and according to Ahmed, it is known as *ᶜIlmu-t-Tawḥīd*[12] while ash-Shahrastānī called it as *ᶜIlmu 'Uṣūli-d-Dīn* (Science of Fundamentals of Religion).

In his own submission, Ash-Shaharastānī views theology as a branch of knowledge that deals with the existence of Allah, His essence and attributes; the nature of the Prophets, their revelations, missions, instructions and distinctions. According to Ahmed, it is a branch of knowledge that studies various beliefs in Islam and delves into the origin and development of theological Schools. It is a discipline that brings discursive arguments to the service of religious creeds and doctrines in order to provide a place for reflection and meditation, for the main aim of explaining and defending the content of faith in

Islam[13]. It is also viewed as an area of Islamic learning that looks into the pros and cons arguments on any disputed matter of creed[14].

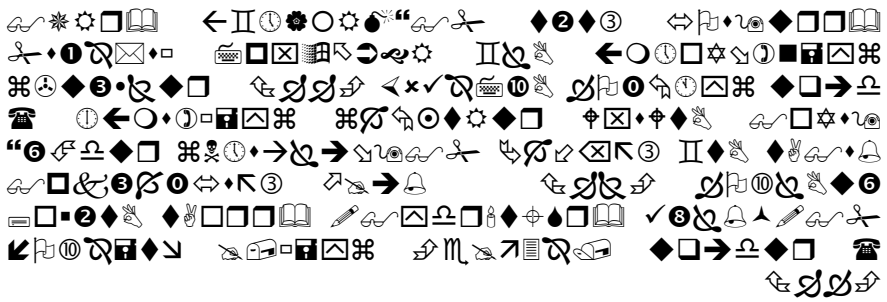
Based on the above definitions, it can be concluded that generally, Islamic Theology has to do with the presentation and explanation of the fundamental articles of Islamic faith as well as other related doctrines to each of the articles for the purpose of avoiding misconceptions, contradictions and deceptions in the defense of the religion and particularly the individual sect.

**Its Evolution**

In the Islamic history, it has not been recorded that the Prophet and his companions involved in a theological discussion during the prophetic era [15]. However, they engaged in teachings that could bring about increase in their faith through Qur'ānic revelations and the explanation and guidance of the Prophet. This is why the word "*ᶜAqīdah*" does not appear in both the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*[16] unlike the word "*Ǐmān*- Faith" which appears not less than forty-five (45) times [17] in the Glorious Qur'ān only. Hence, there is no agreement among the Muslim theologians on the exact date of emergence of theological discussions in Islam that is popularly known as Islamic Theology. The disagreements on the origin and evolution of Islamic theology by both the early and modern Islamic and Western scholars have been identified to be up to eight different opinions. However, they can be summed up into five points as follow:

1. The Qur'ān as the origin of the emergence of Islamic Theology. According to Amin, the series of refutations made by the Glorious Qur'ān of the false principles and ideals held by the Pagans and other religions during the time of the Prophet opened the door for Islamic Theology[18]. This view is also shared by some Western Scholars; Gardet and Anawati as well as a Contemporary Nigerian Scholar A.F.

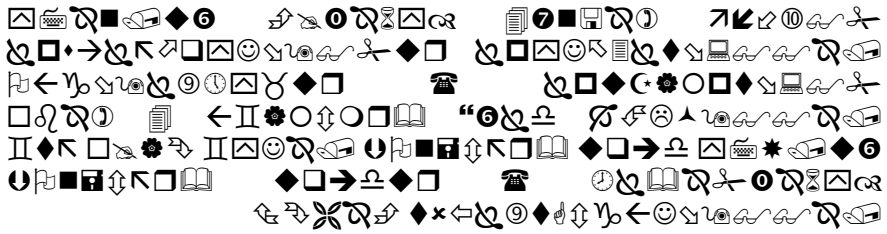
Ahmed. Some Qur'ānic verses are cited to buttress this as the origin of Islamic Theology. These include Q36:77-79 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> Doth not man see that it is we who created Him from sperm? Yet Behold! He (stands forth) as an open adversary!And He makes comparisons for us, and forgets His own (origin and) creation: He says, "Who can give life to (dry) bones and decomposed ones (at that)?Say, "He will give them life who created them for the first time! For He is Well-versed In every kind of creation!

Another verse cited by Ahmed to drive home his submission is Q16:125 which is on *daᶜwah* methodology. The verse says:



**Meaning:**

> Invite (all) to the way of Thy Lord with wisdom and good preaching; and argue withthem in waysthat are best and Most gracious: for Thy knoweth best, who have strayed from His path, and who receive guidance

It is after these Qur'ānic references that Ahmed then says:

> Of course Muslim theologians pursued this Qur'ānic injunctions and examples by going into debate with the opponents of Islam, widening the range of their defense whenever the antagonists widened the range of the attack. Eventually, this led to the emergence and development of speculative theology of Islam known as *ᶜIlmu'l-Kalām*.

The upholders of this view go further to establish their claim that some companions like ᶜAbdullahi bin ᶜAbbas applied rational methods in their interpretations of the Qur'ānic verses, an act that assisted in the establishment of Islamic theology through the process of their *Ijtihād* and *Ra'y* (personal opinion).

2. The emergence of *Khawārij* and other sects from the battle of *Ṣiffīn* in the reign of Caliph ᶜAli [19]. This battle, which was as a result of disagreement on who was really entitled to succeed the Prophet again after his demise and the death of the first three Successors – Abubakr, ᶜUmar and ᶜUthmān, broke out between Caliph ᶜAli and Muᶜāwiyah as well as their supporters in the year 37 A.H./657 C.E. and lasted for almost Seventy-seven (77) days. It was through this encounter that a large number of Caliph ᶜAli's supporters withdrew from him and separated from the Muslim *Ummah* because of the arbitration panel set up to settle the dispute [20]. Thus, they became the first to proclaim the first theological discourse in Islamic history which is "*Lā Ḥuḵmu illā lillāh*" [21]. This assertion of the *Khawārij* means "Judgment belongs only to Allah" which was from their understanding of the Glorious Qur'ān such as Q6:57 and Q12:40, 67. Thus, theological sect began [22]. This opinion is also shared by Gardet in his single-authored article on *Ilmu'l-Kalām*.

3. The Emergence of *Muᶜtazilah* sect in the second A.H./eighth C.E. century. This sect was founded by Wāṣil bin ᶜAṭā' and later joined by ᶜAmr bin ᶜUbayd in the city of Baṣra. This group was known for its rational argument on creedal issues 2[3]. Thus, it was credited with the origin of theological discussion in Islam according to Gordon D. Newby in his Concise Encyclopedia of Islam[24].

4. Muslims' contact with as well as the influence of the Greek Philosophy and Sciences on the Islamic World. This was as a result of the importation of Hellenic works into the Muslim environment through the art of translating these works into Arabic Language in the eighth and ninth century during the Islamic Golden Era of Abbasid Dynasty [25]. This led to the introduction of foreign culture into the Muslim Community which brought about collision between the two independent cultures

and later led to the development of schools of Muslim theologians to defend the divine fundamental beliefs of Islam against their opponents who were philosophers. This they did, using the techniques of Logic and Philosophy which were the weapons of their opponents. By this contact and influence, the Muslim *Ummah* was divided into two; (i) The Traditionalists, who believed that the Islamic Culture is self-sufficient and does not need anything from the foreign culture, and (ii) The Rationalists, who believed that benefits can be derived from other cultures and that the Islamic culture is not all self-sufficient. Thus, the application of the branches of Hellenic thoughts in Muslim creeds began and led to scholastic theological debates[26].

5. The influence of Christians, Jews, Atheists, Persians and Indians on the Islamic theology [27]. This took place in the Abbasid period of Islam when Islam witnessed more converts from Christianity, Judaism, Atheism, Persia as well as India through the Arabs mixing with other nations. Thus, there was the need to defend the Islamic faith against the Christians, Jews and Philosophers' condemnations through the use of logic (*al-Manṭiq*) and philosophy (*al-Falsafah*)[28].

After a critical study of the aforementioned views of both early and modern Islamic Studies Scholars, it can be submitted that Islamic theological discussion and debate came into existence after the demise of the Prophet and specifically, during the Caliphate of ᶜAli bin Abi Ṭālib in the battle of *Ṣiffīn* and camel, through the first Islamic sect- *Khawārij*. This can be supported by the incident of their desertion and the dialogue or debate of ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbas with them in order to win their hearts back to the mainstream of Islam which yielded positive as many of them returned and abandoned the sect[29]. It later metamorphosed, through the effort of the Muᶜtazilites, into what is known today as *ᶜIlmu'l-Kalām* (Islamic Theology) to connote *al-ᶜAqīdatu'l-Islāmiyyah*.

These efforts of the Muᶜtazilites include their contact and study of the Greek philosophy and logic to engage in philosophical argument with the non-Muslims opponents using Qur'ānic verses, *Ḥadīth* and dialectics along with their rationalistic approach which yielded positive against the Christians, Jews and Philosophers, whom they had close contact with and read their polemical works[30]. Some of these Muslim personalities in the sect were: a Christian convert by name Sūsān, Maᶜbad al-Juhanī, Jahm bin Ṣafwān, Wāṣil bin ᶜAṭā', Gaylan al-Dimashqi and Ahmad bin Manūs among others[31].

It is apposite to refute here that Qur'ānic injunctions did not in any way lead to the emergence of Islamic Theology as against the assertion of Amin and Ahmed that Qur'ānic verses are the origin of Islamic Theology. The Qur'ānic verses were rather used as supporting evidences in theological discussions. It does not sound logical to say that Allah is debating theological issues with mankind through His Prophet as Islamic theology is all about theological debates with the sole aim of winning the opponent. The Qur'ān only establishes the right beliefs through explanation and clarification of ambiguities without enforcing the beliefs on anybody to accept except those that accept them convincingly.

Likewise, the interpretation of the Qur'ān by the Companions through their application of rational methods is not an evidence to establish the emergence of Islamic theology as opined by Gardet and Anawati. This assertion does not hold water at all as the companions interpreted the Qur'ān based on either their knowledge and understanding from the Prophet or their other companions who heard it from the Prophet or their knowledge of Arabic Language or Arabic poems. Added to this, they did not interpret to argue or debate with anybody but to explain to whomever asked for it.

Based on the attitudes of using Qur'ānic verses as proofs by different sects in theological discussions, some *Mufassirūn* have delved into the explanation on theology-related verses of the Qur'ān in order to refute any interpretation or application of

theological verses to suit sectarian doctrines in contrary to the obvious creed in both the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*[32]. This situation gave rise to another kind of *Tafsīr* known as *at-Tafsīru'l-Kalāmī* (Theology based *Tafsīr*). Among the Qur'ānic Exegetes who have incorporated theological discussions into the *Tafsīr* works is 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, an Arab Ottoman Theologian of mid-19th century.

### 4.2 The First Article – Belief in Allah

Belief in Allah is the fundamental concept on which Islam is based. It is technically known in English Language as "Islamic Monotheism" and in Arabic Language as "*at-Tawḥīd* – التوحيد". Linguistically, the word *Tawḥīd* is from the verbal root "*Wahhada* - وحّد" which means to unify or unite[33]. According to Ibn Fāris, it means "*Infirād* - انفراد"[34] which means loneness or isolation or solitude. It also means to make something one in its essence without similarity[35]. Thus, if it is used along with the word "Allah", then it will be "*Wahhadallāh* – وحّد الله" which means to make Allah One or to profess or proclaim the Unity of Allah. It denotes to realize and maintain the Unity of Allah in all ramifications.

Technically, it implies the Unification of Allah in worship[36] along with being solely in His Essence, Attributes and Actions [37]. According to Al-Jazā'irī, it means:

> نفى الكفء والمثل عن ذات الله تعالى، وصفاته وأفعاله ونفى الشريك فى ربوبيته وعبادته عز وجل[38]

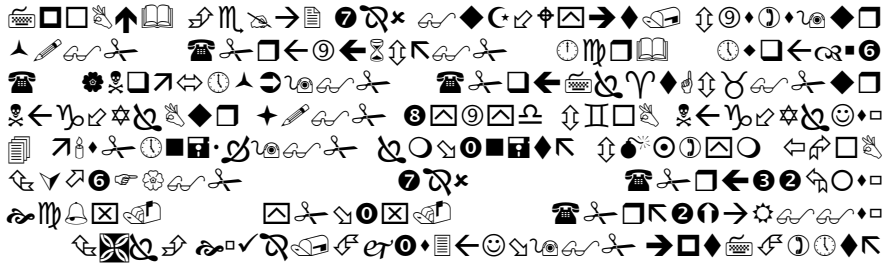
**Meaning:**

> The denial of equality and similarity against the essence of Allah the Most High, His attributes, His actions and negating any partner from Him in His Lordship, and in His worship, the Exalted the Mighty.

In his own submission, al-'Afghānī views it as the belief and testification that Allah is one in His essence, attributes, Lordship, divinity and worship as He shares nothing with anybody in all these peculiarities [39]. By this, the existence of Allah is confirmed and affirmed with certainty, His possession of certain attributes which are

pointing and showing His existence, essence and perfection is certainly established, His ability and capability to do some actions that other beings can never do is obviously affirmed and His absolute right of being the only one who deserves to be worshipped is equally established. This creed is basically expressed in the Muslim's Statement of Testimony (*Kalimatu-sh-Shahādah*– كلمة الشهادة) which reads thus: "أشهد أن لاإله إلاالله - I testify that there is no one worthy of being worshipped except Allah".

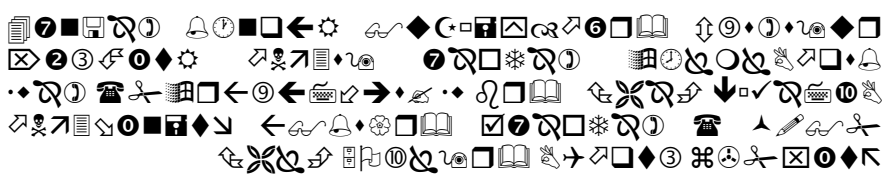
The above assertion is the meeting point of the message of all the Prophets and messengers as well as their first disseminated message to their different nations without which all other actions are efforts in futility. This has been expressed by Allah in many verses of the Glorious Qur'ān. For instance, Q16:36 generalises this message for all the messengers thus:



**Meaning:**

For We assuredly sent amongst every people an apostle, (with the Command), (saying) Serve Allah, and eschew Evil and of the people were some whom Allah guided, and some on whom Error became inevitably (established). So travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who denied (the truth).

In *Sūratu'l-Hūd*, Allah has mentioned the specific statements of each of these Prophets such as Prophet Nūh who said as contained in verses 25-26 of this *Sūrah* thus:



**Meaning:**

We sent Noah to His people (with a mission): "I have come to you with a Clear Warning: "That ye serve none but Allah. Verily I do fear for you the penalty of a grievous Day."

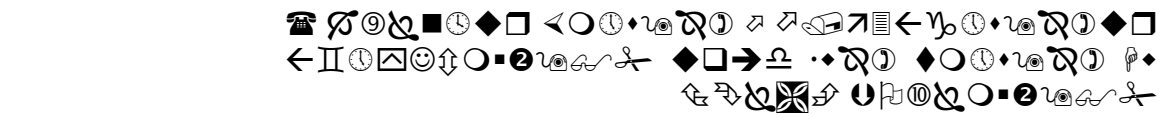
Prophet Hūd said to his people of ᶜ*Ād*, as contained in verse 50 of this *Sūrah* that:



**Meaning:**

> To the 'Ad people (We sent) Hud, one of their own brethren. He said: "O My people! Worship Allah. Ye have no other god but Him. (Your other gods) ye do nothing but invent!

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was also asked by Allah to say the same statement to his people of Makkah as contained in Q2:163 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> And your Allah is one Allah. There is no god but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

He has also confirmed this in one of his traditions showing the significance of this first pillar of the Islamic faith as the foundation of all Islamic creeds and actions.

> عن أبي عبد الرحمن عبد الله بن عمر بن الخطاب – رضى الله عنهما- قال: سمعت النبي –ﷺ- يقول: "بني الإسلام على خمس: شهادة أن لاإله إلا الله وأن محمدا رسول الله، وإقام الصلاة، وإيتاء الزكاة وحج البيت، وصوم رمضان"[40]

**Meaning:**

> On the authority of Abu ᶜAbdu-r-Rahman, ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜUmar bin al-Khaṭṭāb – May Allah be pleased with both of them – who said: I heard the Prophet -ﷺ- saying: "(The religion of) Islam is built on five (pillars): Testification that there is none worthy of being worshipped except Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger, establishment of *Ṣalāh*, giving of *Zakāh*, performance of *Ḥajj* and observance of Fasting. (Recorded by al-Bukhāri).

In the narration of Muslim, the word *Tawḥīd* is clearly used as thus:

> عن ابن عمر، عن النبي ﷺ - قال: "بني الإسلام على خمسة : على أن يوحّد الله، وإقام الصلاة، وإيتاء الزكاة، وصيام رمضان والحج "فقال رجل: الحج وصيام رمضان؟ قال: لا صيام رمضان والحج. هكذا سمعته من رسول الله – ﷺ[41]

**Meaning:**

> On the authority of Ibn ᶜUmar from the Prophet ﷺ who said: "Islam is built on five (pillars): To unify Allah, establish *Ṣalāh*, give *Zakāh*, observe *Ramadan* and perform *Ḥajj*". Then a man said: (Is it) to perform

> *Ḥajj* and observe *Ramadan*? He (Ibn ᶜUmar) said: No, to observe *Ramadan* and perform *Ḥajj*. That is how I heard it from the Messenger of Allah -ﷺ-

It can, thus, be concluded based on the aforementioned points that the first article of the Islamic faith, which is Belief in Allah, includes the following for perfect and absolute belief in this foundational article of faith: (i) The Existence of Allah (ii) The Essence of Allah (iii) The Divine Attributes of Allah (iv) The Divine Lordship of Allah and (v) The Worship of Allah. These points shall be discussed vividly in line with the exegeses of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the verses related to each of them.

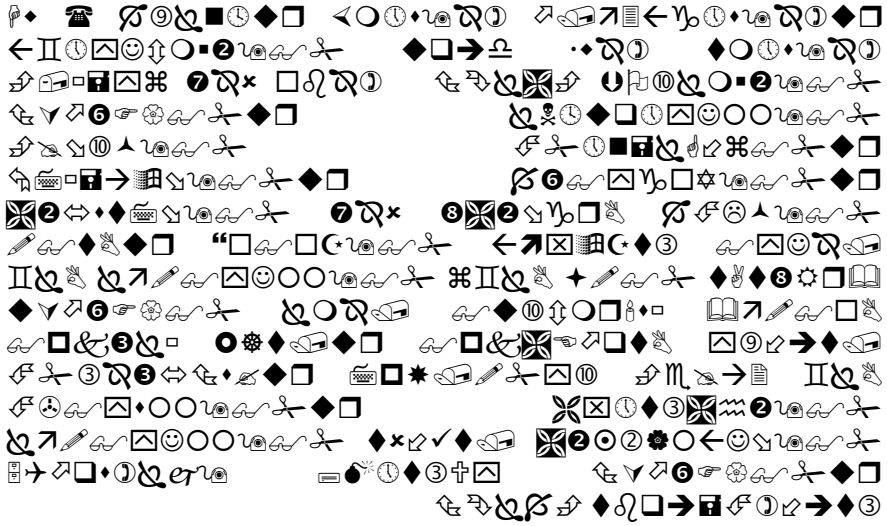
### 4.2.1 Existence of Allah

The existence of the world and what it contains is a proof for the existence of a super-natural being, which is behind their creation. The presence of a design depicts the presence of a designer who made the design. It is against this background that majority of human beings over the ages have believed and are still with their belief in the existence (*Wujūd* - وجود) of a creator behind the creation of the things – seen and unseen, concrete and abstract – in existence. This is why some of the Muslim theologians such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina defined God as the absolute existence [42] which cannot be compared to the existence of all other entities. Thus, the existence of the entities which are contingents bring about the necessity of a determinant who is the Necessary being – *Wājibu'l-Wujūd*, i.e., واجب الوجوب- for the creation of the contingent entities or beings.

This can also be understood from the meaning of the word Creator which, according to Hornby,[43] is a person who has made or invented a particular thing which had not been in existence before, such as the world. Therefore, it will be meaningless and contradictory to call someone who has not invented a new thing or idea as the creator of such. This means that new entity, which is technically known as "*al-Ḥadīth* – الحديث" by the theologians, cannot be existing without a cause. Thus, the quality of inventing what

has not been in existence before is among the Uniqueness of Allah, who is the First Being to have brought into existence what had never been in existence and thus becomes a sample and model for others.

It can therefore be concluded that the existence of the Necessary Being who is also the Determinant (i.e., Allah) was highly necessary since without His existence, the existence of the possible existence i.e. the *Ḥadīth* will remain in its state of *ᶜadam* (non-existence). Thus, Allah originates from pure existence that is independent of any existing entity, which is a pointer to the fact that the reality of Allah's existence cannot be absolutely comprehended. This impossibility makes it necessary to be appreciating Him in the study of different entities He has created as contained in many verses of the Noble Qur'ān such as Q2:163-164 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And your Allah is one Allah. There is no god but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; In the alternation of the night and the day; In the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind; In the rain which Allah Sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; In the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; In the change of the winds, and the clouds which They Trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth;- (Here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise.

The above quoted verses shall be explained for further understanding on the existence of Allah according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's view under the sub-topic assigned for it.

### 4.2.2. Essence of Allah

This is technically known as *Dhātullāh* – ذات الله. The word 'essence' literally means an ultimate nature of a thing. It can also be said that it is the inherent and unchanging nature of a thing or an intrinsic or indispensable properties that serve to characterize or identify something. It is also termed as what is contained in something that is not common to anything else[44].

Philosophically, essence is the attribute or set of attributes that make an entity or substance what it is fundamentally, and what it has by necessity and without which it loses its identity.[45] By this, the phrase "Essence of God" is a theological term that is used to refer to God's personal characteristics which brings out his uniqueness and identify Him from other beings. It should be noted here that the essence of Allah makes Him the Supreme Being. It is on His essence that His existence depends. This essence of His cannot be completely defined but can only be described to the level which man can comprehend. The foremost of the unique characteristics that bring out the uniqueness of God is His proper name which is known *as Ismū-dh-Dhāt*. The word "Allah" is the proper name of God which nobody, among His creatures can bear except by adding another word "ᶜ*Abdu*" that stands for "The servant of" this proper name (Allah).

It is on this *Ismu-dh-Dhāt* that all other attributes of God rely. This is because it is the root without which the branches cannot survive. Thus, His attributive names originate from His main essence- *Ismū-dh-Dhāt*-. It is on this note that the difference between the essence and the attributes of God is established as essence can be without attributes but attributes can never be without the essence (*Dhāt*). By this, it can be concluded that the attributes are giving further information and explanation on the completeness, absoluteness and perfection of God, the Almighty. This point shall be explained further in

the commentary of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī on this point using the verses of the Glorious Qur’ān on the essence of God such as Q1:1-2 which says:



**Meaning:**

> In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds

### 4.2.3 Attributes of Allah

This is technically known as *Tawḥīdu’l-ʾAsmā’i wa-ṣ-Ṣiffāt* -توحيد الأسماء الصفات-. As discussed earlier under the essence of Allah that Allah possesses some attributes with which He describes Himself to mankind. These attributes do not in any way resemble the attributes of others even though they can be associated with men but without comparison in their perfection. Thus, it does befit any of the creatures to be described with these attributes in the same way Allah has described Himself or His Prophet has described Him. On this, Al-Athari says:

> This (belief in Allah’s Names and Attributes) means to believe with certainty that Allah has the most beautiful names and the most sublime attributes; to Him are ascribed all the attributes of perfection , and He is above all faults and shortcomings, and that this applies uniquely to Him[46]

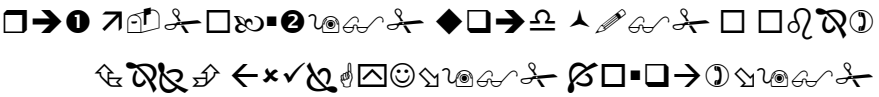
These attributes are at times referred to as attributive names –*ʾAsmā’u-ṣ-Ṣiffāt*-أسماء الصفات-. This is because they serve in most cases as attribute to the *Ismū-dh-Dhāt* of God i.e., Allah. For instance in Q3:2



**Meaning:**

> Allah! There is no deity except Him, the Ever-Living, theSustainer of existence.

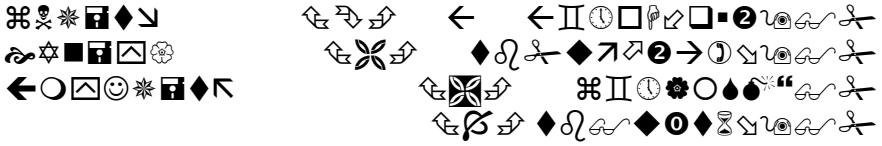
Also, in Q51:58, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

Verily, Allah is the All-provider, owner of power, the most strong.

Similarly, the attributes cannot stand alone and if they do, it will be understood that they are qualifying the essence of God. For instance, Q55:1-4 says



**Meaning:**

The Most Gracious Allah! He has taught (mankind) the Qur'an. (by His mercy) He has created man. He has taught Him eloquent speech

Based on the above discussion, it can be said that the attributive names are dependent on the *Ismū-dh-Dhāt* while the *Ismū-dh-Dhāt* is independent on the attributive names. However, it should be noted that they are not identical with the essence of Allah but they are inhere eternally in Him and in addition to His essence.[47] It is apposite to state here that this assertion of non-identical of the attributes with the essence of Allah is a debatable topic among the Muslim theologians which has brought about various theological schools in the early period of Islam.[48] Likewise, there are divergent opinions on verses of the Qur'ān that describe Allah with some human qualities such as face, hand etc. These verses are called anthropomorphic verses. Some of these early theologian schools are the *Muᶜtazilites* who deny any attribute in the essence of Allah;[49] the *Ashᶜarites* who affirm the attributes for Allah and that they are not identical with His essence;[50] *Karramites* who are also known as *Mujassimah* (Corporealists) because they attribute body (*Jismu*) to God[51]. Others are *Mushabbihah* (Anthropomorphists) who do not interpret verses on anthropomorphism as well as the exponents of *Taᶜṭīl* who give metaphorical interpretations of the verses of attributes.

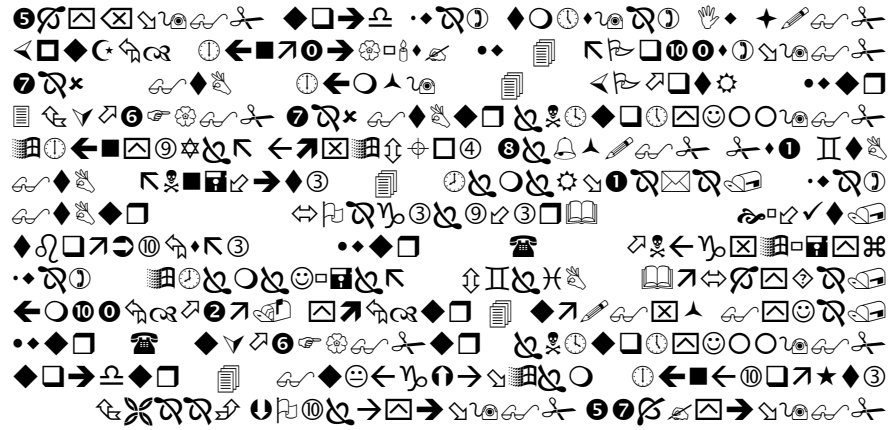
This shall be discussed in details according to the exegesis of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the verses related to this discussion. The verses include Q7:180 which say:



**Meaning:**

The Most Beautiful Names belong to Allah. So call on Him by them; but shun such men as use profanity In His Names: for what they do, they will soon be requited.

Also Q2:255 says:



**Meaning:**

Allah. there is no god but He,-the living, the Self-subsisting, Eternal. no slumber can seize Him nor sleep. His are all things In the heavens and on earth. who is there can intercede In His presence except As He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. nor shall They compass aught of His knowledge except As He willeth. His Throne doth extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue In guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory).

Also, Q2:20 says:



**Meaning:**

The lightning all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (Helps) them they walk therein, and when the darkness grows on them,

> they stand still and if Allah willed, He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for Allah hath power over all thing.

### 4.2.4 Lordship of Allah

It is technically known as *Tawḥīdu-r-Rubūbiyyah*- توحيد الربوبية –. This is the belief that Allah is the only Lord, Who sustains everything without being assisted by any being. He is the Sovereign and Controller of all things which includes the non-existent (*al-Maᶜdūm*-المعدوم), the necessarily existent (*al-Mawjūdu'l-Wājib*-الموجود الواجب) and the contingent existent (*al-Mawjūdu'l-Mumkin*). He is the Disposer of all affairs the way He wills. According to Al-thari, it means:

> He Alone is the Creator, the controller of the Universe who disposes of its affairs; He is the Creator of mankind, the one who grants them provision, the Giver of the life and death. It also means believing in the Will and Decree of Allah and in His essential oneness. It may be summed up as the Oneness of Allah in His actions.[52]

In his submission, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah views it as:

> فهو رب كل شيء وخالقه والقادرعليه لايخرج شيء عن ربوبيته وكل من فى السماوات والأرض عبد له فى قبضته وقهره[53]

**Meaning:**

> (This means) He is the (*Rabb*) Lord, Master and Cherisher of everything, its Creator and the All-Powerful Who nothing goes out of His Lordship. And everything in the heavens and the earth is His servant under His authority and sovereignty.

It is also viewed by Ibn Taymiyyah as:

> أنه لا خالق إلا الله، فلا يستقل شيء سواه بإحداث أمرمن الأمور، بل ماشاء كان وما لم يشأ لم يكن[54]

**Meaning:**

> (To believe) that verily there is no creator except Allah. And nothing is independent in doing anything except Him. Whatever He wishes shall be and whatever He does not wish shall never be.

Based on the above definitions from the Muslim theologians, it can therefore be concluded that the Lordship of Allah is all about His unique actions among His creatures; man, animals, plants and others. It should however be noted that His Lordship on mankind can be categorized into two as His general Lordship on all whether believers or

disbelievers, Obedient or disobedient, righteous or unrighteous for their provisions, protections, etc., and His special Lordship on His true servants among the believers in Him for special guidance, protections, provisions etc.[55] These actions of Allah include, but not limited to the following:

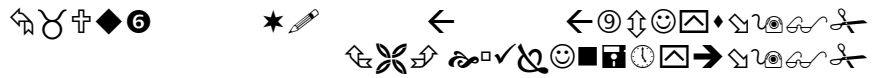
i. Ability to Create from nothing.

ii. Provision of Sustenance for all His Creatures.

iii. Life and death are from Him alone.

iv. The control of affairs the way He wills

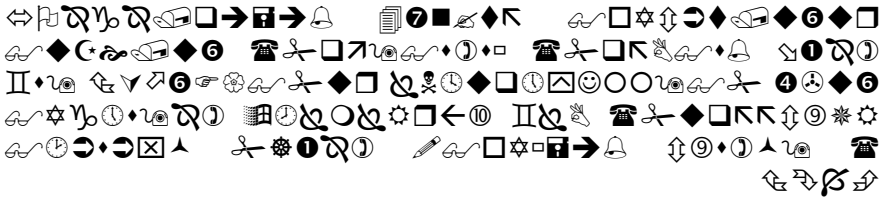
Among the verses to be exegetically studied on this Lordship of Allah, in line with 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's interpretation is Q1:2 which says:



**Meaning:**

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds;

Also, Q18:14 which says:



**Meaning :**

We gave strength to their hearts: Behold, They got up and said: "Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and of the earth: never we call upon any god other than Him: if we did, we should indeed have an enormity

### 4.2.5 Worship of Allah

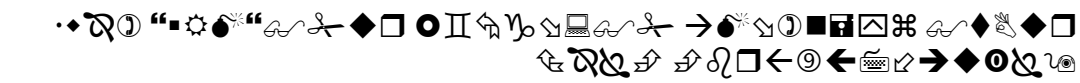
This is known technically as *Tawḥīdu'l-'Ulūhiyyah*- توحيد الألوهية. It is also known as unity of worship (*Tawḥīdu'l-ᶜIbādah* – توحيد العبادة).[56] This is because the word *al-'Ulūhiyyah* means *al-ᶜIbādah* according to Ibn Manẓūr in his *Lisānu'l-ᶜArab*.[57] It is also known as unity of Human actions for Allah (*Tawḥīdullah bi 'Afᶜālu'l-ᶜIbād* – توحيد الله بأفعال العباد).[58] This is because, man is to perform these actions as a duty to Allah without

associating any partner with Him in them. It may be viewed as the opposite of *Tawḥīdu-r-Rubūbiyyah* in which Allah is the One carrying out some actions as His duties for mankind regardless of obedience or submissiveness of mankind to Him. According to Al-Athari, it means:

> Believing with certainty that Allah is the one True God and there is no god except Him. Everything that is worshipped apart from Him is false, and He is the only one to be worshipped, submitted to, and obeyed absolutely… it is the beginning and the end of religion, the inside and the outside. It is the first and last call of the Messengers, and that is why the Messengers were sent, the Books were revealed, the swords of *Jihād* were unsheathed and the distinction was made between believers and disbelievers, between the people of Paradise and the people of Hell.[59]

The human actions that are to be directed to Allah alone, include not only *aṣ-Ṣalāh* (Prayer), *az-Zakāh* (Alms Giving), *aṣ-Ṣawm* (Fasting), *al-Ḥajj* (Pilgrimage) and *ad-Du$^{c}$ā'* (Supplication) but also *al-Isti$^{c}$ānah* (Seeking assistance), *an-Nadhr* (Vowing) and *al-Isti$^{c}$ādhah* (Seeking protection) among the obvious actions. These also include the inward actions which are actions of the heart but are Allah's rights such as *at-Tawakkul* (Reliance on Allah), *ar-Rajā'* (Hope), *al-Khawf* (Fear), al-*Mahabbah* (Love) and others.

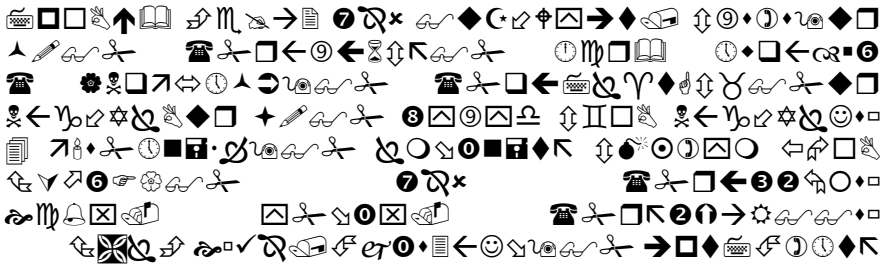
It is for this kind of *Tawḥīd* that Allah has created mankind as contained in Q51:56 thus:



**Meaning:**

> And I (Allah) created not the Jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).

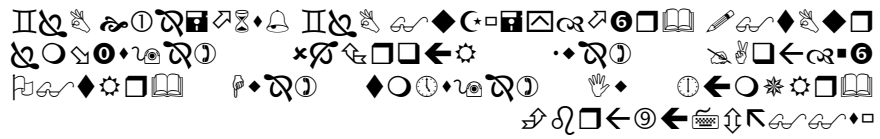
It is the only covenant between the Creator and His creatures. It is for it that Allah sent prophets and messengers as contained in Q16:36 which says:



**Meaning:**

> For We assuredly sent amongst every people an apostle, (with the Command), (Saying) Serve Allah, and eschew Evil and of the people were some whom Allah guided, and some on whom Error became inevitably (established). so travel through the earth, and see what was the end of those who denied (the truth).

Also, in Q21:25 Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> Not an apostle did Wesend before thee without this inspiration sent by Usto him: that there is no god but I; Therefore worship and serve Me.

It is the reason for the division among mankind into different sects, parts and denominations. It is the main and central focus of *Kalimatu-sh-Shahādah* i.e., *Lā Ilāha illa llāhu* – لا إله إلا الله, which means[60] لامعبود بحق إلا الله– "there is none worthy of being worshipped except Allah, the One and Only without partner or associate".[61] Among the verses to be examined, apart from those quoted earlier above, in line with 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's interpretation is Q1:5 which says



**Meaning:**

> Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek.

In conclusion on the belief in Allah as the first article of Islamic faith, as well as in summary of all the discussions under it, it is important to refer to the statement of ibn Taymiyyah as quoted by Dāru'l-Qāsim in her book on *Tawḥīd* thus:

> The *Tawḥīd* which all Messengers sent for is indeed composed of confirmation of Godship for Allah alone by bearing witness that there is no God but Allah and worship none but Him and trust in Him, and do not hate but for the sake of Him, and do not perform any deed but for the sake of Him. And *Tawḥīd* does not imply merely the Oneness of Allah in His Lordship.[62]

### 4.2.6 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in Allah

This point shall be discussed based on the five points earlier discussed generally as the component of belief in Allah; Existence of Allah, Essence of Allah, Attributes of Allah, Lordship of Allah and Worship of Allah. They are discussed as follows:

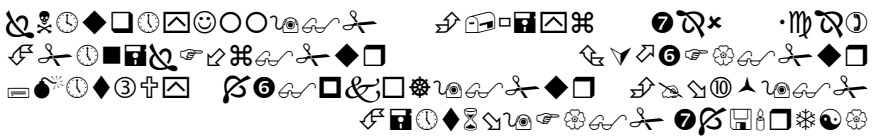
**1. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī and the Existence of Allah**

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī believes along with other Muslim theologians that undoubtedly, the existence of other things proves the existence of the Maker, Initiator and Creator of such things. This is made clear in his commentary on Q2:163-164 where he discusses the necessarily existence which is termed as *Wājibu’l-Wujūd* – واجب الوجود-, to be the existence of Allah that is independent of other existence because His existence is compulsory and necessary for the existence of others. This means that without Him nothing can be in existence.[63] He explains further that, all existing things do not possess existence before their existence. By this, they have no independent being because they may or not exist for their existence is not necessary. They are just created from the will, power and knowledge of the Creator, Who may create them if He wills and may not if He wills. This means that the existence of other things depends on the existence of the Supreme Being, Allah, Who is independent of them as discussed in the commentary of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī’s commentary on Q112:2.

Thus, if He willed they would not have been in existence. It should however be noted that being dependable beings does not mean that they are sharing in the independence Being of Allah, the Supreme, because their existence is not compulsory. This kind of existence is termed by ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī as *Wujūdu-l-Mumkin.* Also, the bringing out of other things into existence by Allah, the Supreme, need neither associate nor partner. The complex nature of the existing things shows that there must not be two or more supreme beings behind their existence. Otherwise, there will be chaos and pandemonium. This will be so because they cannot all desire the existence of something in

the same time, same way and same place. If they do, it means the opinions of one of them has prevailed, hence, he is superior to others. Thus, the inferior being(s) will count the existence as enforcement by the superior's desire.

Based on the above, it can be said that there are co-sharer in Allah's entity, attributes and actions which is not possible according to reason and revelation as well as available facts in the administration of the Universe since the beginning till the present period. Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī refers to Allah as-متعال عن مقابلة غيره - which means, transcendent above being compare with other beings. In his commentary also on Q3:190 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Verily, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī affirms that the three things mention in this verse are proofs for the unity of Allah, perfection of His knowledge, power and ability. They are also pointing to the fact that the existence of a Maker and Creator is necessary (*Wājib*) i.e., compulsory as their creation is highly perfect and extremely accurate showing the existence of Allah.

From the fore-going discussions, it can be concluded that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is among the Muslim theologians who believe in the existence of Allah using the creatures of Allah as the means of confirming and affirming the existence of Allah through meditation. Thus, he is in line with *the Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāllih* (the Early Pious Predecessors).

**2. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī and the Essence of Allah (*Dhātullāh*)**

The essence of God will be well understood through His *Ismu-dh-Dhāt* (Proper Name) which is "Allah". On this, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī agrees, in his discussion on the

word “Allah”, with other theologians such as Al-Ghazālī, Ar-Rāzī, etc., who were of the view that it is an Arabic word as well as a proper noun that is specifically meant for the essence of Allah. Also, it is neither a derivative noun nor an attribute but a proper noun which makes it impossible for mankind to bear. Had it been an attribute or a derivative noun, nothing would have prevented mankind from bearing it. Likewise, it is a unique name for the Creator on which all other attributes depend and every mind is directed towards.

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī makes it clear that it is the proper and non-derivative nature of this name that makes *Kalimatu-sh-Shahādah* (Statement of Testimony) denotes the absolute Unity of God which cannot be achieved through His other names or attributes. For instance, it will incorrect and unacceptable for a non-Muslim to become a Muslim by uttering “*Lā ilāha illa-r-Rahmān*” (i.e., There is none worthy of being worshipped except the Merciful). This is because being merciful can be found in other creatures. He thus represents the opinion of some other theologians as follows:

(i) Those that were of the view that the word “Allah” has origin. According to ‘Al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, two origins were identified; “*Ilāhun-* إله” as contained in *aṣ-Ṣihāḥ*[64] and “*al-’Ilāh-* الإله” as contained in *al-Kash-Shāf*.[65] He then debunks this view with the explanation of Ibn Malik,[66] who said that “Allah” is among the proper nouns which “ال” is affiliated to their composition. And that the word “*al-Ilāh*” is not its origin because the two differ in word and meaning i.e., morphologically, as the word “Allah” is special to Him, the Most High, both in *Jāhiliyyah* and Islamic period while the word “*al-’Ilāh*” is a name for everything that is being worshipped. However, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī disagrees with Ibn Malik on the meaning given to “*al-’Ilāh*” at the end of his discussion thus:

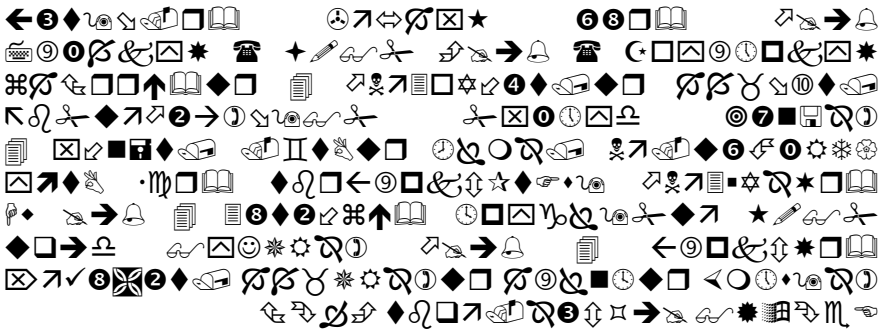
وأنا أقول : لابأس به لولا قوله إن الإله اسم لكل معبود، فقد بالغ البلقيني في رده وادعى أنه لايقع إلا على المعبود بالحق جل شأنه ومن أطلقه على غيره حكم الله بكفره وأرسل الرسل بدعائه وكان نظير إطلاق النصارى الله على عيسى[67].

**Meaning:**

I say: it (the discussion of Ibn Malik) is good except his assertion that "*al-Ilāh*" is a name for everything that is being worshipped. Al-Balqini has indeed refuted this statement by saying it (the word *al-Ilāh*) is used only for the deserved being to be worshipped (Allah), Exalted be His. And whoever uses it for others besides Him has been judged to be disbeliever. Thus He has sent Messengers to invite and guide him (to the right path). And this is similar to the Christian's usage of the word Allah for (Prophet) Isa.

He has also supported his position, that "*al-Ilāh*" is used solely for Allah, with the statement of As-Sayyid As-Sanad and Al-ᶜAllāmah As-Saᶜd. Thus, it could be concluded that it is only meant for Allah alone as it has been used in the Glorious Qur'ān more than one hundred places. However, it is apposite to state here that the word "*al-Ilāh*" or "*Ilāhun*" is lesser in weight compare to the word "Allah". Though, they both have similar characteristics of ᶜ*Ubūdiyyah* (i.e., servitude), *Ilāhun* or *al-'Ilāh* can be:

a. Pluralised as *'Ālihah* which has been used thirty-four (34) times in the Noble Qur'ān While the word "Allah" cannot be pluralized. For instance, Q6:19 says:



**Meaning:**

Can you verily bear witness that besides Allah there are other lilah (gods)? Say: I bear no (such) witness! Say: But in truth He (Allah) is the only one Ilah (God). And truly I am innocent of what you join in worship with Him.

b. Affiliated with the creatures as used in Q114:3 thus: "*'Ilahu-n-Nas*" (i.e., The God of Mankind). While the word "Allah" cannot be used with any creature, it stands independently.

c. Traced etymologically in various ways, according to 'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī while the word "Allah" cannot be traced etymologically, based on the submission of the majority of the Muslim theologians.

d. Falsely used for the acclaimed god(s) by their worshippers as used in the Glorious Qur'ān and that is why it is being pluralized.

Thus, it can be submitted that the word "Allah" is nothing but a proper name signifying the essence of Allah and is not meant for anything else except Him. This shows His Originality as the First and the Last Who nothing exists before and after Him. Should the name "Allah" has origin, the general implication is that the original name had been existing before Him which is absolutely incorrect and unacceptable either based on reason or revelation.

(ii) The opinion of al-Balakhi which states that the word "Allah" is not an Arabic word but a Hebrew or Syriac word (عبراني أو سرياني) that is being Arabicized from the word "*Lāhā*- لاها" which means "The Powerful Person". In another source not cited by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī views it that it is from the Aramaic word "*Elaha*" which is derived by contraction from "*El*" and *Elohim*"[68] while in the Hebrew and Syriac word "*Lāhā*", there is elision of elongation letter and the incorporation of "ال" to form "Allah". 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī contends this view by saying:

> لا دليل عليه فلا يصار إليه، واستعمال اليهود والنصارى لايقوم دليلا اذ احتمال توافق اللغات قائم مع أن قولهم تألّه وألّه يأباه على أن التصرف فيه كما قيل بحذف المدة وإدخال (أل) عليه وجعله بهذه الصفة دليل على أنه لم يكن علمًا فى غير العربية إذ اشترطوا فى منع الصرف للعجمة كون الأعجمى علما فى اللغة الأعجمية والتصرف مضعف لها، فهذا الزعم ساقط عن درجة الاعتبار لايساعده عقل ولا نقل، والذى عليه أكابر المعتبرين كالشافعي ومحمد بن الحسن والأشعري وغالب أصحابه والخطابي وإمام الحرمين والغزالي والفخر الرازي وأكثر

الأصوليين والفقهاء، ونقل عن اختيار الخليل وسيبويه والمازني وابن كيسان أنه عربي وعلم من أصله لذاته تعالى المخصوصة. أما أنه عربي فلا يكاد يحتاج إلى برهان[69].

**Meaning:**

There is no proof on it (being a Hebrew or Syriac word) and so it cannot be like that. Jews and Christians' usage of the word (i.e. Allah) can never be an evidence as the possibility of concordance in languages along with the saying of theirs that "*Ta'Allaha*" and "*Allaha*", rejects it because of the conjugation therein which is by omitting the elongation (letter) and introducing "ال" (i.e., definite article "the"). This given description is a proof that it was never a proper noun in the non-Arabic language. Proper noun has been made a condition for a non-Arabic word not to change as conjugation makes it weak. Thus, this contention is degraded from being considered as it cannot be supported by either reason or revelation. The opinion share by most of the regarded scholars, like Ash-Shafi$^{c}$i, Muḥammad bin al-Ḥasan, Al-Ash$^{c}$ari and most of his students, al-Khaṭṭabi, Imām Ḥaramayn, al-Ghazālī, Fakhru-d-Dīn ar-Rāzī, Majority of the theologians (*al-'Uṣūliyyīn*) and the Jurists as well as a narration on the choice of al-Khalīl, Sibawayh, al-Māzini and Ibn Kīsān, is that it is basically an Arabic and proper noun meant only for His essence. With regards to its being an Arabic word, there is no need of proof on it (as it clear).

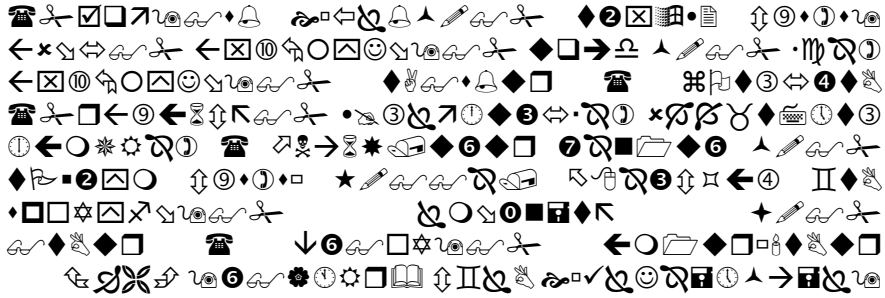
Based on the above, should anyone raises that the word "Allah" is the same as "God" in English Language as it is also used by the other religions and the non-Arabic speakers, it will be said that: **Firstly**, it is the same if both the linguistic and contextual usage of the word "God" refers to the Supreme Being, Who deserves to be worshipped from eternity to eternity. **Secondly**, it is not the same if it depicts lesser being in essence and significance to the Supreme Being both linguistically and contextually. For instance, the majority of the later Christians believe in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit to be one God[70] as a core tenet of their faith.[71] This is a Trinitarian belief of God which is against the Unitarian belief of the Muslims about the understanding of Allah, the Supreme. In the Glorious Qur'ān, Allah Says in Q5:73 thus:



**Meaning:**

> They do blaspheme who say: Allah is one of three In a Trinity: for there is no god except one Allah. if They desist not from their word (of blasphemy), Verily a grievous penalty will befall the blasphemers among them.

Likewise,[72] there is the example of apotheosis (i.e., divinization or deifination) of Jesus Christ which is also against the Unitarian concept of God in Islam. In the Glorious Qur'ān, Allah says in Q5:72 thus:



**Meaning:**

> They do blaspheme who say: "(Allah) is Christ the son of Mary." but said Christ: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, My Lord and your Lord." Whoever joins other gods with Allah, Allah will forbid Him the garden, and the Fire will be His abode. There will for the wrong-doers be no one to help.

In case anyone also argues that the non-Muslims in the Arab world refer to their God as "Allah" in Arabic language, it will be said that it is a malapropism i.e., misused of word just like putting the right peg in the wrong hole. Anything that does not deserve to be an object of worship from eternity to eternity and does not possess unique attributes by necessity or does share those attributes with others, does not qualify to be named Allah. For instances, the Arab Christians proclaim their Trinitarian belief in Arabic thus:

| **English Language** | **Arabic Language** | **Transliteration** |
|---|---|---|
| (i) God the Father | الله الأب | *Allāhu'l-'Ab* |
| (ii) God the Son | الله الابن | *Allāhu'l-'Ibn* |
| (iii) God the Holy spirt | الله الروح القدس | *Allāhu-r-Rūḥu'l-Qudus* |

This is also discussed by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī who presents the Christian's view on trinity thus: [73]

> أن النصارى يلزمهم بواسطة دعوى الاتحاد القول بالولادة والمولودية فيمن يعتقدونه إلها وذلك على ما تضمنته كتبهم أنهم يقولون: الأب هو الأقنوم الأول من الثالوث والإبن هو الثانى الصادر منه صدورا أزليا مساويا بالأزلية له وروح القدوس هو الثالث الصادر عنهما كذالك والطبيعة الإلهية واحدة وهي لكل من الثلاثة وكل منها متحد معها ومع ذلك هم ثلاثة جواهر لاجوهر واحد فالأب ليس هو الأب وروح القدس ليس ومع ذاهم إله واحد إذ لهم لاهوت واحد وطبيعة واحدة وجوهر واحد وكل منهم متحد مع اللاهوت وإن كان بينهم تمايز. والأول هو الوجود الواجب الجوهرى والثانى هو العقل الجوهرى ويقال له العلم والثالث هو الإدارة الجوهرية ويقال لها المحبة فالله ثلاثة أقانيم جوهرية.

**Meaning:**

> It becomes imperative for the Christians, through their claim, to unify their concept of parturition (*al-Wilādah)* and being born (*al-Mawlūdiyyah)* in the one they ideologically or dogmatically believed to be God as contained in their books that: "The Father is the first divine person in trinity and the Son is the second that originates from him eternally equivalent to his own eternity while the Holy Spirit is the third (in trinity) that emanates from both (the Father and the Son). The nature of being God is same and equal for each of them and each of them is united with it (this nature of being God). With this, they are three entities and not one. God the Father is not God the Son and God the Son is not God the Father. God the Holy Spirit is neither God the Father nor God the Son and both are not God the Holy Spirit. With that, they are one God as they have the same nature and being. All of them are united as God even though; they are truly distinct from one another. The first is the necessary being person and the second is the body sense that is also known as the knowledge while the third is the body administration that is also known as the Love. Thus, Allah is three divine persons.

At the end of the discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī concludes that the validity of their claim, that three distinct persons are one, is not only baseless but also unsatisfactory. And that, their logical explanation in driving this dogma home is far away from the true understanding in one million times.

From the above discussions, it can be deduced that the word "Allah" has been used for three distinct persons because of the use of definite article which connotes three "gods" with different descriptions that cannot be termed as qualities or attributes for a single being. However, it is believed and has been taken as a doctrine in the Christendom that the three "persons" are truly distinct from one another in their relation to one another

but share common substance and nature (i.e., *communio substance*) [74]. Thus, God is three consubstantial persons. It can therefore be submitted that this belief is not in conformity with the contextual meaning of the word "Allah" which is a proper noun. Hence, the word "Allah" should not be used in this regard by anybody as a loanword.

(iii) The opinion that the word "Allah" can be traced etymologically as a derivative name from different words like.

i. *alaha* –اَلَه- to deify and become a deity

ii. *aliha*– اَلِهَ- to be confused, worried and perplexed

iii. *walaha*/waliha- وَلَهَ/وَلَه- to be confused, distracted and sad

iv. *laha*- لاه- to be exalted or invisible to the eye

v. It can also be from – ألَه الفصيل إذا ولع بأمه -i.e., when a young camel is inclined to its mother. Then, it is used for the worshippers when they are also inclined to their Lord with humility at the time of adversity.

vi. It is also be from –*alaha*- which means *fazi*$^{c}$*a* i.e., to be afraid of, terrified by and frightened by.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī refutes the entire aforementioned points one after the other from grammatical point of view and he concludes as thus:

ولعلك لاتعبأ بذلك هنا فالشأن عجيب[75]

> And perhaps, you will count that insignificant here. In fact the discussion is surprising.

To appreciate the speciality in the word "Allah" showing the essence of the Supreme Being behind the creation and control of the universe and what it entails, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents some peculiar characteristics of it which cannot be found in other names and attributes of God. These are:

(i) If the letter *alif* (i.e *Hamzah*) is deleted from the word "Allah", it will remain *lillahi* -لله- which is still referring to the Supreme Being- God-. For example, Q2:284 says:



**Meaning:**

To Allah belong all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth

Also, Q48: 7 says:



**Meaning:**

And to" Allah belong the hosts of the heavens and the earth. And Allah is Ever all-Mighty, All-Wise.

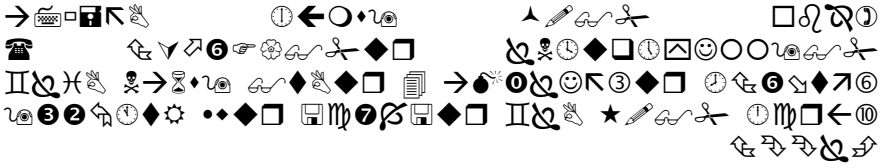
(ii) Also, if the letter *Lām* is removed from what remains after the deletion of *Hamzah* (i.e *lillahi* – لله it will remain *lahu*-له which is still referring to Allah that He has full possession of everything. For instance, Q6: 13 reads:



**Meaning:**

To Him belongeth all that dwelleth (or lurketh) in the night and the Day for He is the one who heareth and knoweth all things".

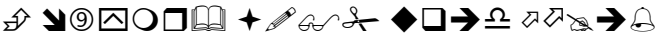
Also, Q9:116 say:



**Meaning:**

Verily, Allah! To him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, He gives life and He causes death.

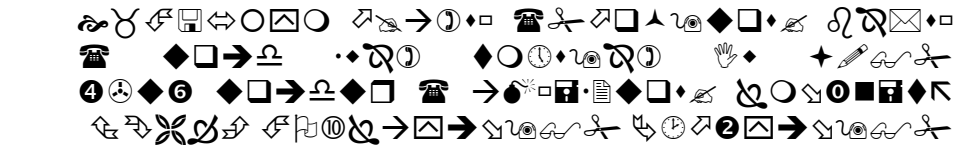
(iii) Again, if letter *Lām* is obliterated from the leftover after removing *Hamzah* and *Lam*, it will be left with *al-Hāu* that carries "*Domma*" from the word "*Huwa* - هو," which is also referring to God, the Almighty. For example, Ql12: 1 says:



**Meaning:**

Say: He is Allah, the one and Only;

Also, Q9:129 reads



**Meaning:**

But if they turn away, say: "(Allah) sufficeth Me: there is no god but He: on Him is My trust, - He the Lord of the Throne (of Glory) Supreme"!

From the above discussion of 'al-'Imam 'al-'Alūsī, it can be deduced that each of the Arabic letters that form the word "Allah" has an independent meaning to show the uniqueness of the name "Allah" from other names and qualities. After a long discussion on the Essence of Allah - *Ismu-dh-Dhāt* -, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī concludes that:

فالذى أرتضيه لا عن تقليد أن هذا الإسم الأعظم موضوع للذات الجامعة لسائر الصفات[76]

**Meaning:**

The one preferable to me-not based on dogmatism-is that this great name (Allah) is a topic on the Essence of God that embraces all other attributes.

Based on the above discussions, it is obviously clear that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has followed the path of the *Salafu-ṣ-Ṣālih* in affirming the essence of God as part of the belief of a Muslim in Allah.

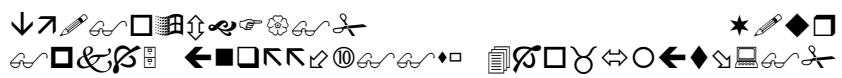
### 3. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī and Attributes of Allah

With regards to the attributes of Allah (*Ṣiffātullāh*), 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, like Fakhru-d-Dīn Ar-Rāzī[77] and al-Ghazālī, [78] has been influenced by the Ashᶜarite theological view, which he studied with his father and cousin[79] along with the

understanding of *Salaf* as he himself often mentions in his theological discussion. This, however, should not be taken as an attempt to exonerate him from flaws in this discussion.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī observes that Allah possesses some attributive names with which He describes Himself to mankind. These attributive names are not identical with the attributes of other beings, even though they can be associated with mankind but without comparison in their perfection. Though they are regarded as names, in the real sense they describe the *'Ismu-dh-Dhāt*, i.e., Essence of the Supreme Being (Allah). According to al-Ghazālī as quoted by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, the word *"'Al-'Asmā"* in Q7:180, which affirms that Allah has the most beautiful names means the composed words that are pointing to different meaning. They are given to Allah by Himself, His Prophet and the Consensus (*Ijmā*$^{c}$) of the *Ummah* while *Qiyās* (analogical deduction) is exempted from being among the sources of getting the attributive names of Allah.

He argues further that authentic *Sunnah* (*As-Sunnatu-ṣ-Ṣahīhah*) as well as good *Sunnah* (*As-Sunnatu'l-Ḥassanah*) should be used when sourcing for Allah's attributive names while the weak *Ḥadīth* should be avoided. Should anyone, based on this view of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, argues that a weak narration is ascribed to the Prophet while *al-Qiyās* is a personal effort of an individual, especially a *Mujtahid*, thus, conclude that Allah's name in a weak *Ḥadīth* can be used, it will be said thus: Allah's names are to be used for supplication which is an act of worship (*Ibādah*); and which cannot be established except by a definite proof. Also, Allah is Most Exalted and Magnificent than to be called with doubtful names. Therefore the doubtless names in the Qur'ān and authentic *Sunnah* are sufficient enough for supplication instead of the ambiguous ones. Certainty of knowledge is only needed to be applied as well as avoidance of self-desire in order not to fall victim of those mentions in Q7:180 which reads:



﴿ وَلِلَّهِ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ فَادْعُوهُ بِهَا وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ ۚ سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾

**Meaning:**

> And (all) the most beautiful names belong to Allah, so call on Him by them and leave the company of those who use profanity in His names. They will be requited for what they used to do.

Commenting on the above verse,[80] 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī establishes, in line with the *Ḥadīth* of Abu Hurayrah, that Allah has ninety-nine names as contained in *Ṣaḥiḥu'l-Bukhārī* that:

إن لله تسعة وتسعين اسمًا-مائة إلا واحدا – من أحصاها دخل الجنة[81]

**Meaning:**

> Verily, Allah has ninety-nine names one hundred but one-whoever preserves them will enter paradise.

However, he contends that His names are uncountable. That is, not limited to ninety-nine (99) as the *Ḥadīth* is only confirming the reward for whoever memorises them, believes and acts accordingly with them. This argument of his is first supported by him with the *Ḥadīth* recorded by al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Ḥibbān, Aḥmad, aṭ-Ṭabarānī and others[82] thus:

> عن عبدالله بن مسعود قال: قال رسول الله- ﷺ - من أصابه هم أو حزن فليقل: اللهم إني عبدك وابن عبدك وابن أمتك ناصبتي في يدك ماض في حكمك عدل في فضاؤك أسألك بكل اسم هو لك سميت به نفسك أوأنزلته فى كتابك أو علمته أحدًا من خلقك أو استأثرت به فى علم الغيب عندك أن تجعل القرآن ربيع قلبي ونور صدري وذهاب همي وجلاء حزني.

**Meaning:**

> On the authority of ᶜAbdullahi bin Masᶜud that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Whoever is afflicted with any worry or sadness should say: O Allah! I am your slave, the son of your slave. My forelock is in Your Hand. Your judgment of me is inescapable. Your trial of me is just. I am invoking You by all the names that You call Yourself, that You have taught anyone in Your Creation, that You have mentioned in Your Book, or that You have kept unknown. Let the Qur'ān be the delight of my heart, the light of my chest, the remover of my sadness and the pacifier of my worries.

He then gives the general agreement– *Ittifaqu'l-ᶜUlamā'*- of the scholars on this as recorded by an-Nawawī that the ninety-nine mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* is for whoever memorises them to enter paradise which does not negate the possession of other names by

Allah. Meanwhile, the *Ḥadīth* of Tirmidhi that enlisted the ninety-nine names of Allahhas been studied by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī critically and thus points out that: it is not found in most narrations except in Tirmidhi; there are some other narrations which differ with it in the list of some names, hence, there is doubt in the names therein.

**Types of Allah's Attributes**

In defense and establishment of the Divine attributive names of Allah, unlike the Mu$^{c}$tazilities who denied the ascription of *Ṣiffāt* (Attributes) to Allah's essence, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī supports the Ash$^{c}$arites and others theologians in maintaining the attributes inherent in Him (i.e., His Essence) and in addition to His essence as it befits Him. Thus, he identifies different types of Allah's attributes which include among others: *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-dh-Dhātiyyah* (Essential Attributes) and *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-s-Salbiyyah* (Negative Attributes). Others are *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-th-Thubūtiyyah* (Constant Attributes) and *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu'l-'Iḍāfiyyah* (Subsidiary Attributes). They are discussed by him in details as follows:

**1. Essential Attributes - *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-dh-Dhātiyyah* -**

Among them all, the most important are the essential attributes of Allah, (*Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-dh-Dhātiyyah*) which are also known, according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, as *Aṣ-Ṣiffātu-n-Nafsiyyah*. They are attributes that make Allah to be distinct from others as they are inherent in Him and in addition to His essence and not in His existence. They are not identical with Allah's Essence in contrary to the Mu$^{c}$tazilites who held that they are identical with His Essence. For instance, the Mu$^{c}$tazilites hold the view that Allah is Knowing (*$^{c}$Ālim*-عالم), Powerful (*Qādir*- قادر), Seeing (*Baṣīr*-بصير), etc., but these attributes are same with the essence of Allah as neither can they be separated from Him nor can He be separated from them. This is why one of the Mu$^{c}$tazilities scholars – Abul-Hudhayl al-$^{c}$Allāf- says, as quoted in *Al-'Ibānah*[83] thus:

إن علم الله هو الله

**Meaning :**

Surely, the knowledge of Allah is Allah Himself.

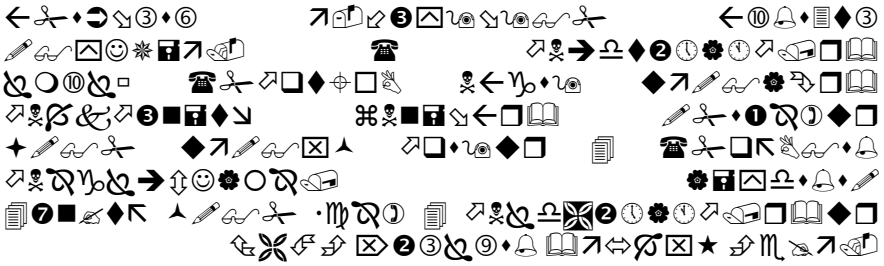
The above assertion is necessary according to them in order to avoid "plurality of eternals" as explained[84] by Mir-Valiuddin. However, it is apposite to state here that this belief is against the textual study of the Qur'ān in which Allah is not only, for example, ascribing knowledge to Himself as contained in Q35:255, Q4:166, Q10:39 and Q41:47 but also calling Himself the all-Knowing in not less than one hundred and forty (140) places in the Qur'ān. It will be absurd and superfluous not to ascribe this essential attribute to Allah in addition to His essence as it befits Him in His Majesty. This is why; He is regarded as the Absolute, Unique, Incomparable and Supreme Being.

Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī identifies seven (7) basic and essential attributes of Allah as follows; Knowledge (*al-ᶜIlm*), Will *(al-'Irādah*), Power (*al-Qudrah*), Speech (*al-Kalām*), Hearing (*as-Samᶜ*), Seeing (*al-Basar*) and Life (*al-Ḥayāh*). All these attributes are outputs of His beneficence, benevolence and compassion (*Raḥmāh*) which makes Him as *ar-Raḥmān* (the Most Compassionate, Beneficent and Benevolent). If not so, He will not be living as His existence brings other thing into existence; He will know nothing about the creatures (*Mawjūdāt*- موجودات); He will not be controlling the creatures for orderliness; there will not be guidance from Him through His speech; the complain of the creatures will not be heard by Him and their actions will not be put to check.

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that the attribute of life, as argued by 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsi, is a prerequisite for other attributes as they all rely on it for their existence and is free from being ascribed to anything other than the Essence of Allah. This is why He, Allah, is known as *al-Ḥayyu* - الحي- (The Ever-Living), Who had been living before the existence of anything and shall continue to exist when nothing shall be in existence.

Similarly, this attribute of life for Allah is different from that of other beings just like describing Allah with power or knowledge which can be attained by His creatures even though their power and knowledge are quite different from that of Allah as His is perfect. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi explains further that the word "*al-Ḥayyu*" is used for anything that is perfect in itself. Thus, it is for Allah, Who is perfect in His conditions and descriptions without any defect in His nature, essential attributes, negative attributes and subsidiary attributes.

Furthermore, the attribute of being powerful *Qadīr*, -قدير- as part of His essential attributes, shows that Allah is the one Who has power to do and undo anything He wills and nothing has power over Him. This is clearly stated in many verses of the Qur'ān such as Q2: 20 which says:



**Meaning:**

The lightning all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (Helps) them ,they walk therein, and when the darkness grows on them, they stand still .And if Allah willed, He could take away their faculty of hearing and seeing; for Allah hath power over all things.

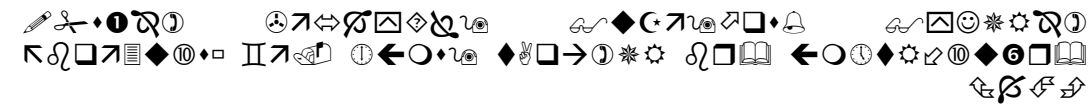
From the above verse, it can be deduced that Allah possesses the power to do anything He wills. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī expatiates on the meaning of "all things– كل شئ" by explaining what the word "*shay'in*- شئ" connotes. On this he says:

والشئ لغة مايصح أن يعلم ويخبر عنه كما نص عليه سيبويه، وهو شامل للمعدوم والموجود الواجب والممكن[85]

**Meaning:**

The word '*ash- shay'un'* literally means something that needs to be known and give information about it as declared by Sibawayh. It comprises the non-existent, the necessary existent and contingent existent.

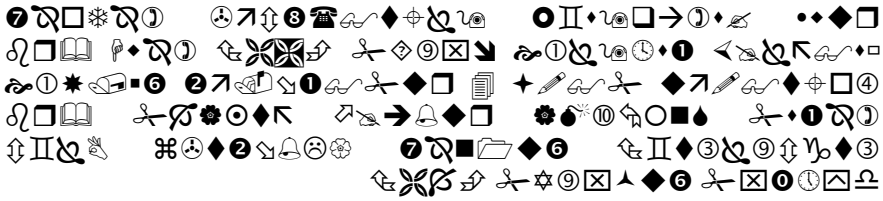
Based on the above quotation, it can be concluded that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi is of the opinion that the essential attribute of Allah of being powerful is not limited like that of man or other entities. Rather, His power cuts across not only what is existing really and not in existence but also the imagination of man as contained in his discussion and commentary on Q16:40 and Q18:23-24 respectively. These verses say:



**Meaning:**

> Verily, our word to a thing when We intend it to be, is only that We say to it: "Be" and it is.

And the other verse reads



**Meaning:**

> And never say of anything, "I shall do such and such thing tomorrow". Except (with the saying) "If Allah wills" And remember your Lord when you forget and say: perhaps my Lord will guide me closer than this to the right path.

In support of the above discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, it can be submitted that these attributes are challenges to the rationalists (i.e., the Mu$^{c}$tazilites) to re-examine their position on the attributes of Allah. It is, however, apposite for this re-examination to be preceded by a theological question: Can any being that does not possess the seven identified essential attributes be regarded as God, the Supreme Being?

## 2. Negative Attributes - *Aṣ-Ṣiffatu-s-Salbiyyah*-

In the case of Negative attributes (*as-Siffatu-s-Salbiyyah*), they are not ascribed and affiliated to Allah, Who is devoid of any deficiency. They are used to exonerate the essence of God from all weaknesses, defects and inperfections.[86] They are best described other beings and to purify Allah from being comparable to His creatures in any way,

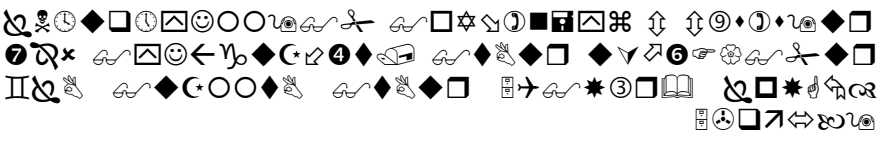
condition and description. Through these attributes, Allah is exonerated from any weakness, shortcoming, error and imperfection. Example of these is contained in Q2:255 where Allah is exonerated from slumber and sleep. That is, Allah never slumber let alone sleep which are deficiencies in mankind particularly and all the living creatures generally. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then observes after his discussion on this that:

> وفيها تأكيد لكونه تعالى حيا قيوما لأن النوم آفة تنافي دوام الحياة وبقاءها وصفاته تعالى قديمة لازوال لها ولأن من يعتريه النوم والغلبة لايكون واجب الوجود دائمة ولا عالما مستمر العلم ولاحافظ قوي الحفظ[87]

**Meaning:**

> There is an emphasis in the verse that He, the Exalted, is an Ever-Living, Everlasting. This is because sleep is a deficiency against (His) immortality. His attributes, the Exalted, are ancients that will never vanish. And indeed whoever is afflicted with sleep and defeat can never become a Necessary Being *–Wājibu'l-Wujūd-* (Creator) eternally; a knowledgeable with endless knowledge and a Strong Protector.

Some other examples can be found in Q19:64 which negate forgetfulness and foolishness in the attributes of Allah because of His all-encompassing knowledge and kingdom. In Q20: 52, Allah is exonerated from committing errors, mistakes and going astray. Another very important attribute to be taken away from the essence of Allah is fatigue, tiredness and weariness. He was never tired after the creation of the creatures in six days let alone taking a rest after their creation as contained in Q50:38 which reads:



**Meaning:**

> We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in six days, nor did any sense of weariness touch us. And indeed We created the heaven and the earth all between them in six Days and nothing of fatigue touched us.

Commenting on the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī observes that the use of "*Tanwīn*-Nunation"[88] on the word "*Lugūb*" which means "fatigue or tiredness or weakness" is to belittle or degrade it. That is, no fatigue even smaller than an atom befalls

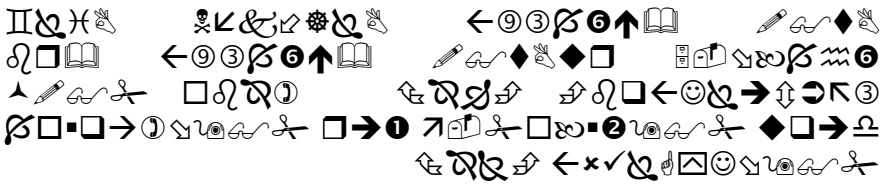
Allah. It is apposite to state here that the negative attribute in this verse is one of the cogent features that distinct the concept of God in Islam from other religions either revealed or not. Thus, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī says on this:

> وهذا كما قال قتادة وغيره رد على جهلة اليهود زعموا أنه تعالى شأنه بدأ خلق العالم يوم الأحد وفرغ منه يوم الجمعة واستراح يوم السبت واستلقى على العرش سبحانه وتعالى عما يقولون علوا كبيرًا[89]

**Meaning:**

> This, as said by Qatādah and others, is refuting the claim of the ignorant Jews that He, Exalted be His affairs, started the creation of the universe on Sunday and finished it on Friday. He then took a rest on Saturday and reclines on His Throne. Glorified and Exalted is He above what (the false) they say about Him.

Another example is His ability and perfection of not being in need of any provision or sustenance as this is a sign of disability and weakness. Should Allah be in need of food and drink, this will make Him to be weak and powerless whenever they are yet to be available. Thus, this will automatically negates His essential attribute of being powerful. Also, should He eat and drink at the expected time then it will be normal for Him to visit the toilet as well as behave abnormally or irrationally in the absence of them. All these are human defects and deficiencies that do not befit His Majesty. The Glorious Qur'ān says:



**Meaning:**

> I seek not any provision from them nor do I ask that they should feed Me. Verily, Allah is the All-Provider, owner of power, the Most strong. (Q51:57-58).

On the above verses, 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsi comments that whoever seeks provision and sustenance becomes disable and powerless. This is why, He has qualified and described Himself with those three strong qualities, All-Provider, Owner of Power and the Most Strong. This is also confirmed in another verse which says:

قل أغير الله أتخذ وليا فاطر السماوات والأرض وهو يطعم ولا يطعم

**Meaning:**

> Say: Shall I take as a *Wali* (Helper, Protector, Lord or God) any other than Allah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth? And it is He Who feeds but He is not fed…

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī comments that this means He does not eat not to talk of seeking provision or being provided for as these belittle His Majesty. By this, 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsi is also in line with the early pious predecessors on the agreement of not ascribing any defect to His existence and essence as He is a Perfect Being.

**3. Constant Attributes - *Aṣ-Ṣiffatu-th-Thubūtiyyah* -**

With regards to these attributes (*aṣ-Ṣiffatu-th-Thubūtiyyah*) they are attributes that are with Allah in His essence to describe His Majesty. They are exclusive attributes for Allah as they distinguish between Him and His creatures. They are in no way similar to the attributes of human beings as His own involves sovereignty, eternity and infinity. This is why these attributes are also referred to as, according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, *aṣ-Ṣiffatu'l-Jalāliyyah* (Attributes of Majesty) or aṣ-*Ṣiffātu'l-Kamāliyyah* (Attributes of Perfection) or *Ṣiffatu'l-Ikrām* (Attributes of Honour). These include not only the following:

i. *Al-Wāḥid* - الواحد- The One

ii. *Al-Aḥad* - الأحد- The One and Only

iii. *Aṣ-Ṣamad* - الصمد - The Self –Sufficient, who all the creatures go to for their needs and wants.

iv. *Al-Malik* - الملك - The Absolute Ruler on everything, who is never downgraded and does whatever He wills

v. *Al-Jabbar* - الجبار- The Compeller, Who compels His creatures to do His Wills, Who cannot be competed with and not questioned for any reason

vi. *Al-ᶜAzīz* -العزيز- The Victorious, Who is not Comparable

vii. *As-Salām* - السلام- The Peace, who is the Source of peace and the possessor of peace

**4. Subsidiary Attributes - *Aṣ-Ṣiffatu'l-'Iḍāfiyyah-***

The subsidiary attributes (*aṣ-Ṣiffatu'l-'Iḍāfiyyah*) are the attributes that are derived from different actions and works of Allah which include His act of creation, duties to His slaves and others that affect His creatures directly or indirectly. These attributes, according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, are also referred to as *aṣ-Ṣiffātu'l-Fi$^{c}$liyyah* (Attributes of Actions). They can be divided into two based on his discussion as those that can be ascribed to Him and those that cannot be affiliated to Him because of the fact that they show defect in His essence and can turn Him to an ordinary being instead of His Supreme Being. This means that it is not from all His actions that are mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān will His names be derived. For instance, in 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsi commentary on Q2:15 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Allah mocks at them and gives them increase in their wrong-doing to wander blindly.

'Al-'Imām 'Al'-Alūsi says:

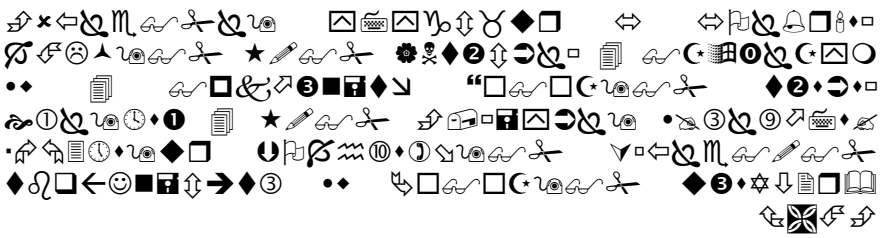
> حمل أهل الحديث وطائفة من أهل التأويل الاستهزاء منه تعالى على حقيقته وإن لم يكن المستهزئ من أسمائه سبحانه، وقالوا: إنه التحقير على وجه من شأنه أن من اطلع عليه يتعجب منه ويضحك ولا استحالة فى وقوع ذلك منه عن شأنه ومنعه من قياس الغائب على الشاهد، وذهب أكثر الناس إلى أنه لايوصف به جل وعلا حقيقة لما فيه من تقرير المستهزأ به على الجهل الذى فيه، ومقتضي الحكمة و الرحمة أن يريه الصواب فإن كان عنده أنه ليس متصفا بالمستهزأ به فهو لعب لايليق بكبريائه تعالى[90].

**Meaning:**

> The people of *Ḥadīth* and a group among the people of *Ta'wīl* have taken the meaning of *al-Istihzā'* (mockery) from Him (Allah) in it real sense even though *al-Mustahzi'* (The Mocker) is not part of His names- Glory to Him- They said it indeed belittles His status as whoever sees Him (while mocking) will be marveled at Him as well as laughing at Him (i.e making jest of Him). And there is no impossibility in the occurrence of this from Him. However, analogically it is not possible. The majority are of the opinion that it should not be used to qualify Him, Exalted and Mighty be His, in the real sense because of its affirmation of the ignorance of the mocker. What is reasonable is to see Him doing the right

> thing. And even if He has done this, he should not be qualified with being mocked as it is nothing but a play which does not befit His Majesty and Glory.

Another example of this is also found in his commentary on Q3:54 where Allah is described as the Best of those who plot. 'Al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī establishes and affirms this as part of the actions of Allah but not as part of His names. It is against this submission of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī that it will be stated as a position on this kind of theological issues that whichever action Allah has ascribed to Himself to have performed should be retained for Him as it comes. However, it should not be turned to his name except if it is similar in meaning to any of His attributes such as in Q30: 30 which describes Allah as the Creator when it says:



**Meaning:**

> So set you your face towards the religion HIanif Allah's Fitrah with which He has created mankind…

Based on the above, Allah can be described as *Fāṭir* -فاطر- The Creator or The Originator, which He has even called Himself by it as contained in Q6:14 and Q35:1. But, if the meaning of the action brings about deficiency or defect then His name should not be derived from it as He is Exalted above any imperfection.

Furthermore, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has classified these names and attributes of Allah into some other divisions apart from the afore-discussed classifications. He has divided them into four also as follows:

i. The names and attributes that are not to be ascribed to any other beings except Him. The examples of this division are two among other names. These are: Allah

– الله and *Ar-Raḥmān*-الرحمن-. This is because they are special to Him and others depend on them.

ii. The names and attributes that are permissible to be ascribed to other beings apart from Him. These include among others: *Ar-Raḥim*-الرحيم– and *Al-Karīm*- الكريم

iii. The names and attributes that can stand alone without joining them with other names of Allah. This, perhaps, because of having complete and positive meaning and connotation. Majority of the attributive names of Allah falls in this classification.

iv. The names and attributes that are not permissible to be mentioned alone except with other names that will enhance the meaning and perfect their usage. This, perhaps, because of having negative connotations which do not portray Allah perfectly. According to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, examples of this division are *al-Mumīt* – المميت and *aḍ-Ḍārr* -الضار. Thus, Allah is not expected to be called upon by saying: *Ya Mumīt* – يا مميت or *Ya Ḍārr*-يا ضار-. Rather, the other meaning of these names should be mentioned first as in *Ya Muḥyi Ya Mumīt* –يا محي يا مميت and *Ya Nāfi*$^{c}$ *Ya Dārr* – يا نافع ياضار

In conclusion of the discuss on the attributes of God, all the afore-discussed points are clear proofs from the *Magnum Opus* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to confirm and establish the existence and essence of Allah, which are not the same but depend on each other, through His proper name (*Ismu-dh-Dhāt*) and attributive names (*Asmā'u –ṣ-Ṣiffāt*). With all these and other explanations and discussions, it can therefore be concluded that, Allah's essence is still incomprehensible and unfathomable absolutely as well as transcendental.

**4. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī and the Lordship of Allah**

He has also affirmed and confirmed the Lordship (*Rubūbiyyah* - ربوبية) of Allah in his exegesis on Q1:2 which says



**Meaning:**

All praise and thanks be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

On this, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi observes that the word "*Rabbu*" is a verbal noun initially that means "*al-Tarbiyah*" i.e.,[91] education or refinement or upbringing or nurturing. According to him, it means the bringing up of something little by little till it reaches the stage of perfection and completeness. It is being used to connote the following:

i. *Al-Khāliq* – The Creator

ii. *As-Sayyid* – The Master or the Leader

iii. *Al-Malik* – The Possessor of authority

iv. *Al-Mun$^{c}$im* – The Benefactor or the Sustainer or The Cherisher

v. *Al-Muṣliḥ* – The Peacemaker or The carrier

vi. *Al-Ma$^{c}$būd* – The Adored or The One being worshipped

However, the common meaning for it is the caring, cherishing and sustaining something by nurturing it from the begging till its end. This is why some *Mufassirūn* opined that it should only be used for Allah in a definite form as this show His perfection of action, power and knowledge. He says on this as follows:

> وبالجملة آثار تربيته تعالى واضحة المنارساطعة الأنوار فسبحانه من رب لايضاهى ومنان لايحصى كرمه ولا يتناهى ونحن فى تيار بحر جوده سابحون وعن إقامة مراسم شكره قاصرون، وما أحسن قول بعض العارفين إنه تعالى يملك عبادًا غيرك وأنت ليس لك رب سواه ثم إنك تتساهل فى خدمته والقيام فى وظائف طاعته كأن لك ربا بل أربابا غيره وهو سبحانه يعتني بتربيتك حتى كأنه لاعبد له سواك فسبحانه ما أتم تربيته وأعظم رحمته[92].

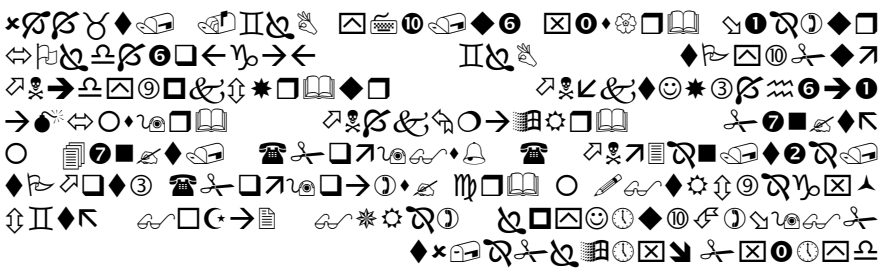
**Meaning:**

> Generally, the traces of His upbringing and nurturing (the creatures) are quietly clear like the standing light and the brightness of the lights. Glorified and Exalted is He as the incomparable Lord, the Benefactor Whose kindness and generosity are countless and infinity. We (mankind and other creatures) swim in the ocean of His kindness but negligent of being grateful to Him. And what a good statement of some of the learned that surely! Allah possesses other servants apart from you but you have no *Rabb* (Lord, Sustainer, Cherisher, Protector, Master, Provider etc.) other

than Him. Then, with this, you are negligent of your service to Him and in discharging your duties unto Him as if you have other *Rabb* or *Arbab* (the plural of *Rabb* i.e., Lord, Master, Cherisher, Sustainer etc., ). And He, Glorified is He, is always after your caring and sustenance as if He has no other slave except you. Glorified be His, for His perfect upbringing and mercy (On you).

It is obviously clear from the above quotation that, Allah is the Lord of everything He has created by looking after their lives and welfare. Likewise, He is not concerned about their gratitude to Him before He does His actions and duties as Lord to them. This is why, He called Himself as "The Lord of the Worlds –رب العالمين" to be aware of their affairs, control their affairs, over see what they do and listen to their complaints. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsi then observes that the word "*Ar-Rabb*-الرب" as the name of Allah is all encompassing of other names except His names as "Allah" and "Ar-Rahman". This is because the word "Allah" is His essence while the word "Ar-Rahman" encompasses the Lordship of Allah without Him being the Most Merciful He will not be looking after the affairs of His creatures nor sustaining them nor delivering their provision to them with justice.

Furthermore, He observes that the word "*Rabb*" is the first of His names that was heard by mankind on the Day He was asking them about His Oneness in Lordship, Worship and Attributes as contained in Q7: 172 which says:



**Meaning:**

When Thy Lord drew forth from the Children of Adam - from their loins - their descendants, and made them testify concerning themselves) Saying): "Am I not your Lord (Who cherishes and sustains you)?"- They said: "Yea !We do testify!" Thislest ye should say on the Day of Judgment: "Of this we were never mindful:"

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī finally observes that the word “*Rabb*” depicts Allah as the Supreme Being, who deserves to be worshipped (*al-’Ulūhiyyah*) and called upon by this name because of being the closest Being to man in taking care of everything about their lives.

It can therefore be concluded that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī has established in the cause of his exegesis the importance of the belief in Allah in His Lordship (*Tawḥīdu-r-Rubūbiyyah*) in the life of a Muslim as it is the basis upon which all other divisions of *Tawḥīd* are based. Failure in it will render others useless and the perfection of it without others is fruitless. This is because; *Tawḥīdu-r-Rubūbiyyah* is the light bearer to guide to the *ʾUlūhiyyah* of Allah as being the “*Rabb*” makes Him to deserve being worshipped alone as ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī has also explained under his discussion of Q18:14.

**5. ‘Al-‘Imām ’al-’Alūsī and the Worship of Allah**

He has also affirmed and confirmed the worship (*’Ulūhiyyah*- ألوهية) of Allah in his exegesis of Q1:5



**Meaning:**

You (Alone) we worship and You (Alone) we ask for help.

After his grammatical analysis of the word “*Iyyāka*- إياك " ’al-’Imām ’al’-Alūsī observes as follows:

والعبادة أعلى مراتب الخضوع ولايجوز شرعا ولاعقلا فعلها إلا الله تعالى لأنه المستحق لذلك لكونه موليا لأعظم النعم من الحياة والوجود وتوابعهما ولذلك يحرم السجود لغيره سبحانه لأن وضع أشرف الأعضاء على أهون الأشياء وهو التراب وموطئ الأقدام والنعال غاية الخضوع[93]

**Meaning:**

*Al-ᶜIbādah* (worship) is the highest level of submissiveness thus, it is not permissible, by revelation or reason, to be done except for Allah, the Exalted. This is because; He is the most being who deserves it for being the Master or Lord in charge of the greatest of all favours of living and existence and what they entail. And that is why it is forbidden to prostrate for other than Him, Glorified be His, because, putting the most precious part of the body on the lowest thing which is the sand, a stepping place for the heels and shoes, is the highest submissiveness.

Based on the above, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi has affirmed the prostration of man on the earth surface to be the highest way of obedience and submission to Allah as well as the greatness of the being who is being prostrated for. He further explains that the word "ᶜ*Ibādah*" can be used to connote different meanings as follows.

i. *Aṭ-Ṭāᶜah* - الطاعة- which means obedience as used in Q36:60 where Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> Did I not enjoin on you, O ye Children of Adam, that ye should not worship Satan; for that He was to you an enemy avowed-?

The above verse means that "They should not Obey *Shayṭān''*

ii. *Ad-Duᶜā'* –الدعاء which means supplication as used in Q40:60 where Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> And your Lord says: "Call on Me: I will answer your (Prayer): but those who are too arrogant to serve me will surely find themselves In Hell - In humiliation"!

The word ᶜ*Ibādah* in the above is referring to supplication or invocation in line with the opening sentence of the verse.

iii. *At-Tawḥīd*-التوحيد which means the unification of Allah or Oneness of Allah in His Lordship, Worship and Names and Attributes. It is used to connote this meaning in Q51:56 which says:



**Meaning:**

> I have only created jinns and men, that they may serve Me.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī goes further to expatiate on the levels of ᶜ*Ibādah* with regards to the worshippers. The highest of it is to worship Allah because He deserves it

and no other beings except Him. This is known as al-ᶜ*Ubūdah* (servitude). The middle level is to worship Him for Him to accept it or to honour Him and it is known as *al-*ᶜ*Ubūdiyyah*. The least level is the level of worshipping Allah for the interest in getting His reward or being afraid of His punishment. At the end of his discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī differentiates between *al-*ᶜ*Ibādah* and *al-Isti*ᶜ*ānah* in line with this verse. He opines that al-*Isti*ᶜ*ānah* (seeking assistance) is not among those things to use in moving closer to Allah as ᶜ*Ibadah* is more general than *Isti*ᶜ*ānah*. Therefore, *Isti*ᶜ*ānah* is not, in itself, al-ᶜ*Ibādah* (*'Ulūhiyyah*). It is rather under *Rubūbiyyah* as it can originate from a disbeliver.

However, this submission of his may be understood as seeking assistant generally and not in terms of invocation or supplication unto Allah for assistance or anything which he, himself, has established to be part of worship when he is discussing the various meaning of *al-*ᶜ*Ibādah* as used in the Glorious Qur'ān. If it is assistance on what only Allah can do regardless of the efforts and means then it should be sought from Him alone and nobody else and this can only be done through invocation. This is termed as "seeking help in a spiritual and metaphysical way". But if it is what humanbeings can do then it is exempted from *al-*ᶜ*Ibādah*. This kind of assistance is termed as "seeking help under physical laws".

In furtherance of his explanation on *al-*ᶜ*Ibādah*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi affirms that calling for help on the removal of any hardship is an act that only Allah can do, thus, it is an act of ᶜ*Ibādah* that should be directed towards Allah otherwise it will become an act of *Shirk* (Polytheism- associating partner with Allah). This is based on Q16:54 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Then, when He has removed the harm from you, behold! Some of you associate others in worship with their Lord (Allah).

After his exegesis on the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi narrates his encounter with one of the acclaimed *Shuyūkh* (scholars) when he was young. He says:

> وفى الأية ما يدل على أن صنيع أكثر العوام اليوم من الجؤار إلى غيره تعالى ممن لايملك لهم بل ولالنفسه نفعا ولاضرا عند إصابة الضرلهم وإعراضهم عن دعائه تعالى عند ذلك بالكلية سفه عظيم وضلال جديد لكنه أشد من الضلال القديم، ومما تقشعر منه الجلود وتصعر له الخدود الكفرة أصحاب الأخدود فضلا عن المؤمنين اليوم الموعود أن بعض المتشيخين قال لي وأنا صغير: إياك ثم إياك أن تستغيث بالله تعالى إذا خطب دهاك فإن الله تعالى لايعجل فى إغاثتك ولايهمه سوء حالتك وعليك بالاستغاثة بالأولياء السالفين فإنهم يعجلون فى تفريج كربك ويهمهم سوء ما حال بك، فمج ذلك سمعي وهمي دمعي وسألت الله تعالى أن يعصمنى والمسلمين من أمثال هذا الضلال المبين ولكثير من المتشيخين اليوم كلمات مثل ذلك.[94]

**Meaning:**

> There is (an evidence) in the verse pointing to the fact that the action of many people presently is directed to other than Allah, who doesn't possess any benefit or harm for them and even for himself, at the time of hardship. And the keeping away from invoking Him, the Most High, in the same time is a great shame and a new astray that is more than the previous misguidance. Among what will makes the skins to shiver and turn away the disbelieved faces in disclaim, are the people of the Ditch in addition to the believers on the promised Day. There are some acclaimed elders who told me while I was young that: Beware! Beware!! Of asking for Allah's help when you are afflicted. Surely, Allah will not quickly come to your aid as He has no concern for your bad condition. Therefore, you should call for the aid of the saints among the predecessors. They (the saints) are indeed in haste to dispel your worries and they are concerned about your bad condition. This brought out tears in me and I asked Allah to save me and the general Muslims from this kind of obvious misguidance. This kind of statements is many in the present society from these elders.

From the above quotation, it can be deduced that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not only aware but also accepts the fact that calling for help for removal of distress should be directed to Allah as the only one that deserves it as an act of *ᶜIbādah*. The failure of which will lead to *shirk* (polytheism) and inturn lead to Hell fire. It should, however, be noted that 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsī, with this position of his, is not against sainthood but the apotheosis of the saint which is against the Islamic Monotheism (*at-Tawḥīd*) as he documented that someone accused him of denying the concept of sainthood when he corrected the person not to call on the dead. This was mentioned under his exegesis on Q39:45 which says:

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**Meaning:**

> When Allah, the one and only, is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not In the Hereafter are filled with disgust and horror; but when (gods) other than He are mentioned, Behold, They are filled with joy!

'Al-'Imām 'Al'-Alūsi says:

> وقد قلت يوما لرجل يستغيث فى شدة ببعض الأموات وينادي يافلان أعثني فقلت له: قل ياالله فقد قال سبحانه" :إذا سألك عبادي عني فإني قريب أجيب دعوة الداع إذا دعان" (2/186). فغضب وبلغني أنه قال : فلان منكر على الأولياء وسمعت عن بعضهم أنه قال: الولى أسرع إجابة من الله عزوجل وهذا من الكفر كان نسأل الله تعالى أن يعصمنا من الزيغ والطغيان[95]

**Meaning:**

> And truly, I told a man one day when he was calling on the dead for help in his hardship by saying: O so and so! Come and help me. Then, I told him: say: "O Allah!". Surely, He has said: And when my slaves ask you concerning Me, then (tell them), I am indeed near, I respond to the invocations of the supplicant when he calls on Me" (Q2:186). Then, the man got angry and it reached me that he said: "So and so is denying the saints". And I heard from some of them that he also said: "The saint is faster in answering the supplication than Allah, the Most Exalted. This (action and statement) is part of disbelief. I ask Allah to protect and guide us against deviation and oppression.

With the above discussion on the first article of faith in Islam and the exegeses of 'al-'Imām 'al'-Alūsi on the verses related to it, it can be concluded that he is an upholder of the right creed about Allah in accordance with the Glorious Qur'ān and *Aḥādīth* of the Prophet as well as the pious predecessors. In this first article, he can be judged not only as an *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* scholar but also a *Salafi*.

### 4.3 The Second Article- Belief in the Angels

The belief in the Angels is technically known in Arabic Language as " *'Al-'Īmānu bi'l-Malā'ikah* – الإيمان بالملائكة". The keywords in the statement are "*Īmān*" and "*Malā'ikah*". The word faith or belief (*Īmān*) is known and has been explained briefly earlier, hence, there is need to explain the word *Malā'ikah* (Angels).

Linguistically, the word *Malā'ikah*" is a Arabic word as well as the plural form of "*Malak*" which can be translated as Angels and Angel respectively.[96] It is formed from the word, according to Ibn Manẓūr, *al-Alūkah*" – الألوكة" which means "*ar-Risālah* –الرسالة"[97] in Arabic language and in English language it means; message or mission.[98] It was later pronounced as "*Mala'aku*-ملأك" before it changed to "*Malaku*-ملك" then "*Malā'iku* –ملائك" and finally "*Malā'ikah*-ملائكة". According to another source,[99] the word "*Malaku*" means "messenger", "envoy", "superintendent" and "powerful one". Literally, it means descent from a high place.

Technically, its meaning varies in terms of expression from the Muslim theologians. According to Ibn Ḥajar Al-ᶜAsqalāni, who recorded that majority of the Muslim theologians define the Angels as:

أجسام لطيفة أعطيت قدرة على التشكل بأشكال مختلفة ومسكنها فى السماوات[100].

**Meaning:**

> (They are) bodies of lights that have the power to appear in various forms of existence and live in the heavens.

In another definition, they are kinds of creatures that reside in the heaven. They are put in charge of the affairs of other creatures, and are created from light for Allah's worship and to carry out His laws and orders. They have the ability to move and traverse rapidly and penetrate other worlds other than their own worlds. They never eat or drink or sleep or disobey Allah. They have no free will and only do what Allah commands them to do without error of addition or omission. They are messengers of Allah and not His helpers or partners or shareholders in the affairs of the creatures. They are neither male nor female. They are very respectful, submissive and obedient. Their creation precedes that of man and the Jinn. They outnumber other creatures including man and Jinn. They are creatures with wings and free of negative qualities with special mode of creation

different from that of man and Jinn. The following verses among others are in support of the aforementioned statements:

(a) In Q21:26-27, Allah says with regards to their respect and obedience

(b) In Q35:2, Allah says with regards to their wings.

(c) In Q66:6, Allah says with regards to their obedience and submissiveness

(d) In Q51:24-27, Allah says with regards to their abstinence from food and drink

The Prophet -ﷺ – was reported to have said on the authority of ᶜĀishah – that:

> خلقت الملائكة من نور وخلق الجان من مارج من نار وخلق آدم مما وصف لكم[101]

**Meaning:**

> The Angels are created from light, just as the Jinn are located from smokeless fire and mankind is created from what you have been told about.

With regards to the statement "Belief in the Angels", it means to believe with certainty that the angels are existing, slaves and messenger of Allah, tangible entities and not metaphorical entities without physical appearance or existence[102] and not stars (*an-Nujūm*).[103] Also, to believe in the way they have been described by Allah and have functions performing for Him when they are ordered. Ibn ᶜAbbās was reported to have said, as quoted by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, that:

> هم الملائكة، وكلهم الله- تعالى -بأمور عرفهم العمل بها والوقوف عليها، بعضهم لبني آدم يحفظون ويكتبون، وبعضهم وكلوا بالأمطار والنبات والخسف والمسخ والرياح والسحاب[104].

**Meaning:**

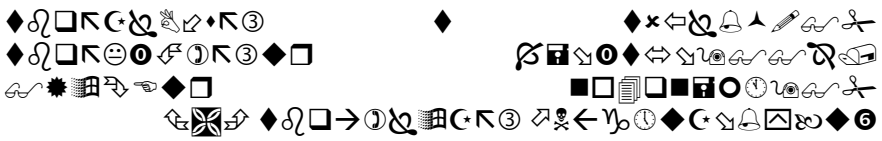
> They are angles whom Allah put in charge of some affairs. They were made to know some works and stand by them. Some of them are in charge of the affairs of the children of Adam to preserve and document (their actions). Some are in charge of rain, plants, sinking (of the earth) metempsychosis, wind and cloud

Apart from the aforementioned duties and work, they have others that cannot be discussed here. It is on this note that the exegesis of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsi on angel related

verses, is very important and essential to be viewed here. This is contained in the next point.

### 4.3.1 ’Al-’Imām ’Al’-Alūsi Commentary on the Verses of Belief in the Angels

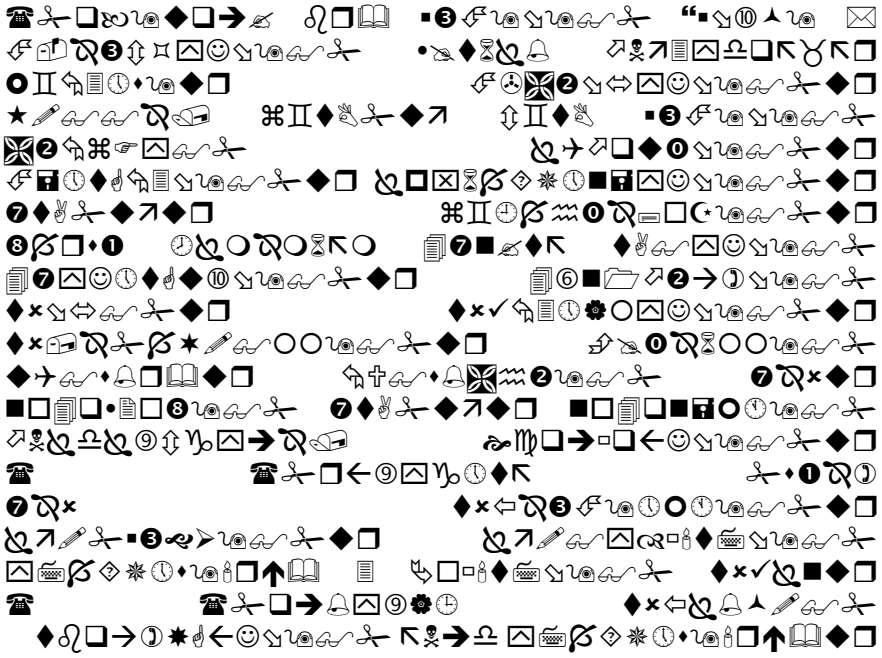
In his commentary on Q2:3 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Who believe In the Unseen, are steadfastIn prayer, and spend out of what we have provided for them;

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī has affirmed and confirmed the belief in the angels as part of the faith expected from a Muslim in Islam, after his explanation on the meaning and component of *Īmān* (faith) and *Ghayb* (the unseen). Similarly, while explaining Q2:177



**Meaning:**

> It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards east or West; but it is righteousness- to believe In Allah and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast In prayer, and practice regular charity; tofulfil the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient, In pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah, fearing.

He also affirms the existence of the angels and belief in them as follows:

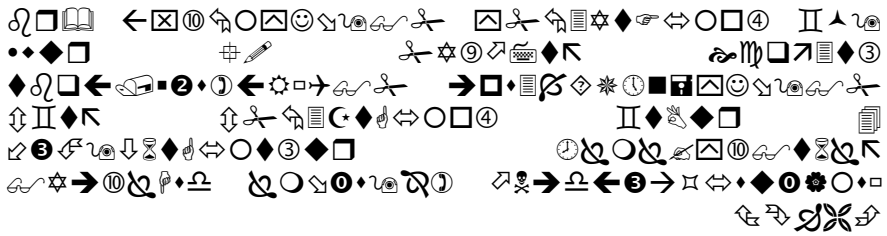
"والملائكة "أى وآمن بهم وصدق بأنهم عباد مكرمون لايوصفون بذكور ولا انوثة ومنهم المتوسطون بينه تعالى وبين أنبيائه عليهم الصلاة والسلام بإلقاء الوحي وإنزال الكتب[105].

**Meaning:**

> "And the Angels". This means to believe in them truly that they are honoured servants (of Allah). They are not to be classified as masculine or feminine. Among them are the intermediaries between Him, the Most High, and His Prophets, May the peace and blessing of Allah be upon them, for inspirational messages and revelation of books.

In another verse, Q2:285, he establishes their infallibility, purification, submissiveness and adherence to the dictates of Allah. He is also of the opinion, according to Q2:98, that the angels should not be hated let alone taken them as enemies as it can bring about Allah's enmity and consequently leads to disbelief. Similarly, he explains further that an attempt to disbelieve in the angels lead to incomplete faith and even disbelief which the person may not regain his faith back until his affirmation of the belief in the angels.

Moreover, his exegesis on Q4: 172 have revealed that the angels should not be taken as objects of worship not to talk of human being as mentioned in the verse thus:



**Meaning:**

> Christ disdaineth nor to serve and worship Allah, nor do the angels, those nearest to Allah: those who disdain His worship and are arrogant,-He will gather them all together unto Himself to (answer).

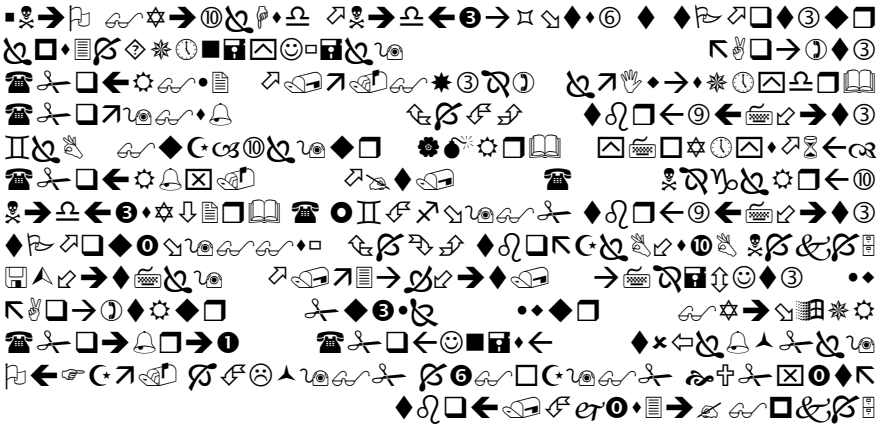
'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī remarks as follows on this verse:

> وأجيب بأن سوق الآية وإن كان ردا على النصارى لكنه أدمج فيه الرد على عبدة الملائكة المشاركين لهم في رفع بعض المخلوقين عن مرتبة العبودية إلى درجة المعبودية ، وادعاءانتسابهم إلى الله تعالى بما هو من شوائب الألوهية، وخص (المقربون) لأنهم كانوا يعبدونهم دون غيرهم[106].

**Meaning:**

> I say that the import of this verse, even if it is refuting the claim of the Christians (on worshipping ʿIsa -Jesus) it has also been embedded in it the refutation against the worshippers of the Angels, who have taken them (angels) from the level of servitude to the stage of being worshipped and their claim of giving to God what is part of worship. The word "The honoured" has been specified because they were worshipping the angels among others.

He furthers his explanation that the angels will deny being idolised or worshipped when Allah asks them on the Day of Judgement as contained in *Sūratu Saba'* (Q34): 40-42 which says:



**Meaning:**

> One Day He will gather them all together, and say to the angels, "Was it you that these men used to worship?" They will say, "Glory to Thee! Our (tie) is with Thee - As Protector - not with them. Nay, but They worshipped the Jinns: Most of them believedIn them." So on that Day no power shall They have over Each other, for profit or harm: and we shall say to the wrong-doers, "Taste ye the penalty of the Fire,- the which ye were wont to deny!"

The Angels will outright denounce the acclaimed godhead by saying, according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, that they adored *Shayāṭin* who deceived them with the pictures of the Jinn and called it for them the honoured angels. So, they can be worshipped. And surely they (the Polytheists) believed in the deceit of the devils by worshipping the Jinn and not the angels. It will be made clear to them on the Day of Judgment that the angels have no ability to benefit or harm anybody on this Day and they will be told to have their taste of punishment in Hell-fire.

Besides, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, has also affirmed that the angels are worshippers of Allah day and night. They do not feel arrogance in His worship not to talk of being tired

or weak. They are not negligent of His worship for any moment. They do glorify Him all the time despite their other duties and do not associate partner with Him as contained in his exegesis on *Sūratu'l-'Aᶜrāf* (Q7): 206.

In furtherance of the position on the belief in the angels, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has also affirmed that the Angels have functions and duties to be performed as assigned by Allah to whomever He wills among them. Some are incharge of monitoring the sayings and actions of man whom he refers to as *al-Kirāmu'l-Kātibīn* – الكرام الكاتين- and another as *Malā'ikatum Hafazah* – ملائكة حفظة. This is discussed in his exegesis on Q 13:11 and Q82:11 -12. He identified others in charge of different duties such as those in charge of the affairs of the Hell-fire some of whom are known as *az-Zabāniyah* (Angles of Punishment – ملائكة العذاب, those in charge of wind, rain, taking of the souls and others.

In a nutshell, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, has shown his adherence to the creed of the early Muslims (*Salaf*) through his exegesis of Qur'ānic verse related to belief in the angels. He also refutes those that hold unto the belief that the angels are *an-Nujūm* (the stars).

### 4.4 The Third Article- Belief in the Books

The belief in the Books is technically known in Arabic language as "*al-Īmānu bi'l-Kutub*-الإيمان بالكتب". The word "*Kutub*" is the plural of "*Kitāb*" which literally means "letter" or "message" or "book" or "compilation" etc.[107] Technically, it is referring to the messages of Allah in form of book or that are compiled together in books and revealed by Him to His Messengers for the guidance of mankind.

Therefore, the statement "belief in the Books- *al-Īmān bi'l -Kutub*" according to the theologians means:

> To believe with firm conviction that Allah revealed to His Messengers prohibitions, promises and warnings and what Allah wants from His Creation and they contained guidance and light.[108]

According to ᶜAql, it means:

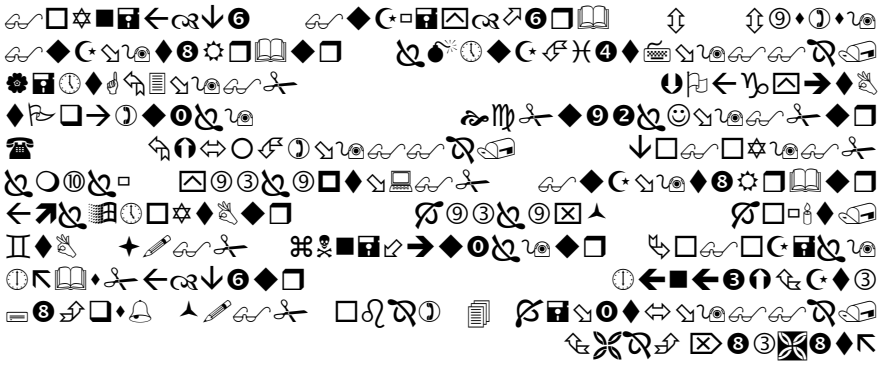
> هوالتصديق بأن الله كتب أنزلهاعلى رسله وأن هذه الكتب فيها الحق والهدى للناس في الدارين[109]

Meaning:

> It is a (belief with) conviction that Allah possesses Books which He revealed to His Messengers and that these Books contain the truth and guidance for mankind in this life and the hereafter.

It is viewed by Al-ᶜUthaymin as the belief that Allah revealed for each of His Messengers a book for the guidance of mankind and as an evidence for the (good) doers that the messengers should teach and purify them.[110] There are many evidences in the Glorious Qur'ān buttressing the fact that Allah has revealed Books along with His Messengers, such as

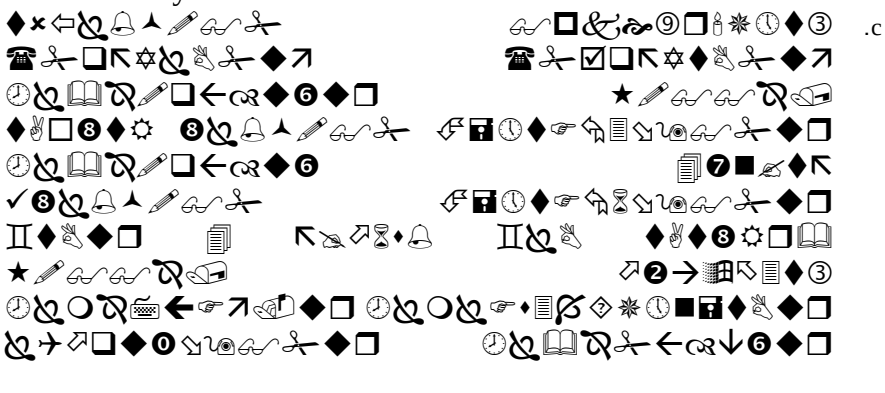
a. Q57:25 which says:

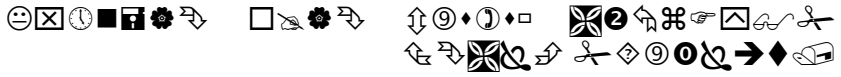


**Meaning:**

> We sent aforetime Our apostles with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the balance (of right and wrong), that men may stand forth In justice; and we sent down iron, In which is (material for) mighty war, As well As many benefits for mankind, that Allah may test who it is that will help, Unseen, Him and His apostles: for Allah is full of strength, Exalted In might (and able to enforce His Will).

b. Q4:136 which says





**Meaning:**

> O ye who believe! believe In Allah and His Messenger, and the Scripture which He hath sent to His Messenger and the Scripture which He sent to those before (him). Any who denieth Allah, His angels, His books, His Messenger., and the Day of Judgment, hath gone far, far astray.

This belief also includes believing not only in those whose names are mentioned by Allah in the Noble Qur'ān but also others that are not mentioned in the Qur'ān.[111]They are all the speech of Allah and their numbers are only known to Him. The prominent ones among them are five as follows:

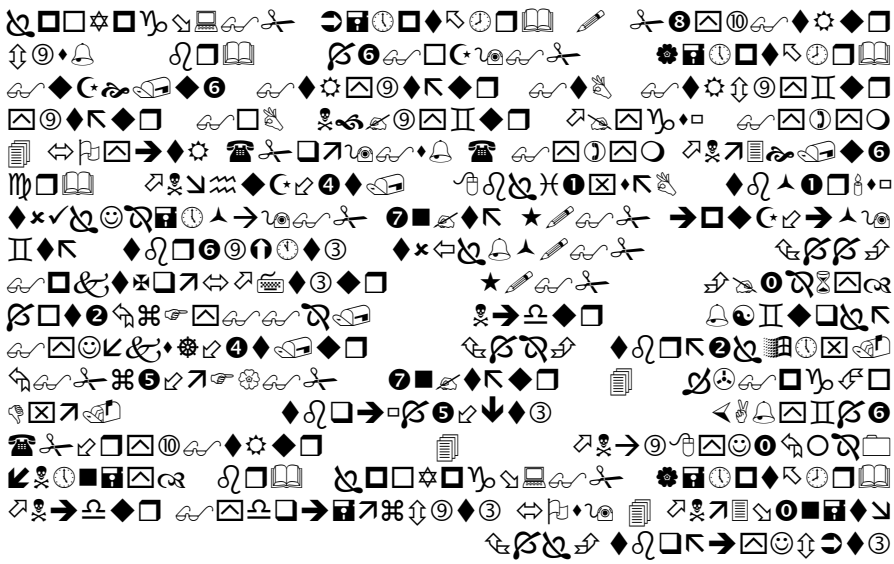
i. *Ṣuḥuf* i.e., scriptures or scrolls (the book) which was revealed to Prophet Ibrahim as contained in *Sūratu'l-Aᶜlā* (Q87): 18-19



**Meaning:**

> AndThis is In the Books of the earliest (Revelation),-The Books of Abraham and Moses.

ii. *At-Tawrāh* i.e., Hebrew *Torah* which is also understood as "The Law". It was reveled to Prophet Mūsa (Moses).[112] This is contained in *Sūratu'l-Mā'idah* (Q5):44-46



**Meaning:**

> It was we who revealed the law (to Moses): therein was guidance and light. by its standard have been judged the Jews, by the prophets who bowed (as In Islam) to Allah.s will, by the rabbis and the doctors of law: for to them was entrusted the protection of Allah.s Book, and They were witnesses thereto: Therefore fear not men, but fear me, and sell not My Signs for a miserable price. ifany do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, They are (no better than) Unbelievers. We ordained therein for them: "Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal." but if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for Himself. And if any fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah hath revealed, they are (no better than) wrong-doers. And In their footsteps we sent Jesus the son of Mary, confirming the law that had come before him: we sent Him the Gospel: therein was guidance and light, and confirmation of the law that had come before him: a guidance and an admonition to those who fear Allah.

iii. *Az-Zabūrah* i.e., the psalms which was revealed to Prophet Dāwud (David). It is now part of the Old Testament in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. This is contained in *Sūratu-n-Nisā'i* (Q4):163 and *Sūratu'l-Anbiyā'* (Q21):105

iv. *Al-Injīl* i.e., the Gospel which was revealed to Prophet ᶜIsa (Jesus). It is the New Testament in the Hebrew and Christian scripture. It is mentioned in the Glorious Qur'ān twelve times such as in *Sᵘratu'l-Ḥadīd* (Q57):27

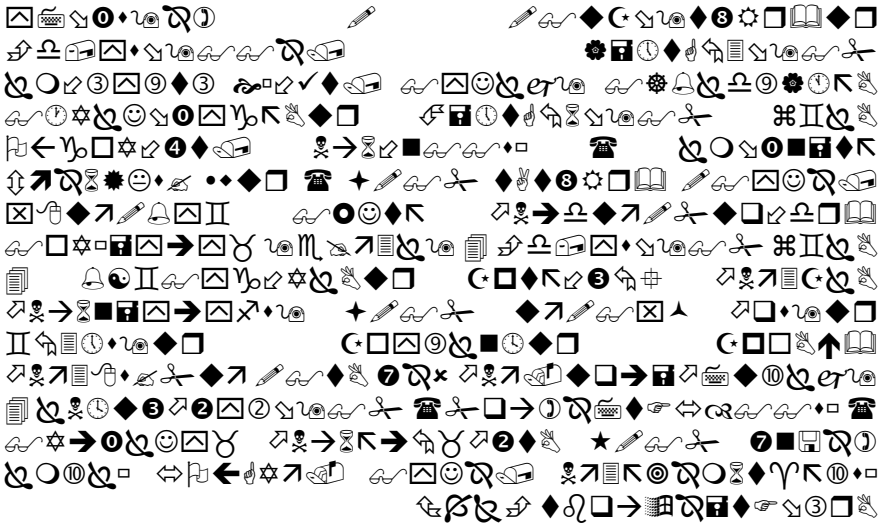
v. Al- Qur'ān which was revealed to Prophet Muhammad as the last Book of Allah to contain all the messages and divine judgments which were in the previous Books. Its all-encompassing nature makes it to abrogate all the preceding Books and Allah has taken up the responsibility of preserving it from being distorted like the previous Books.[113] This is mentioned in many verses of the Qur'ān such as *Sūratu'l–Ḥijr* (Q15):9 which says:



**Meaning:**

> We have, without doubt, sent down the Message; and we willAssuredly guard it (from corruption).

*Sūratu'l-Mā'idah* (Q5):48 which says

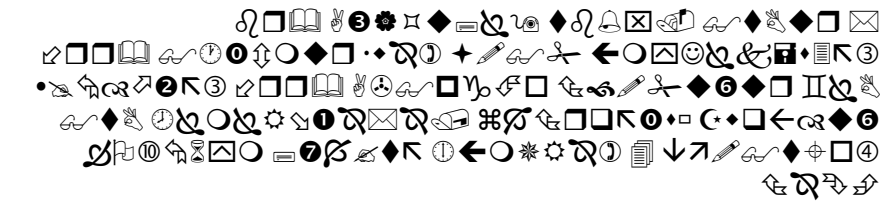


**Meaning:**

> To Thee we sent the Scripture In truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it, and guarding itIn safety: so judge between them by what Allah hath revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging from the truth that hath come to thee. to Each among you have we prescribed a law and an open way. if Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (his plan is) to test you In what He hath given you: so strive As In a race In all virtues. the goal of you all is to Allah. it is He that will Show you the truth of the matters In which ye dispute;

Based on the above, it is very important for every Muslim to believe in all the Books and not to believe in parts and disbelieve in parts as this indeed is an act of disbelief. According to Al-Munajid, belief in the Books implies four things: [114]

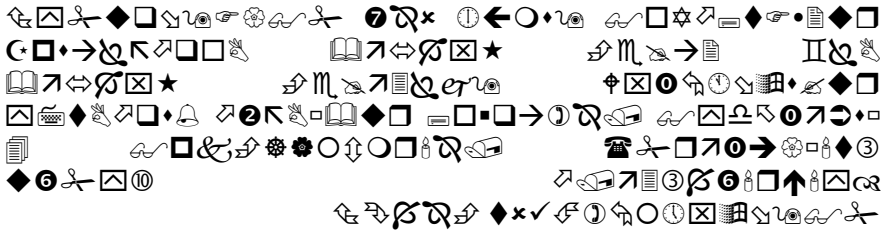
a. To have firm belief that all of them were from Allah which were either heard from Him behind the veil without any intermediary among the angels or through the intermediary of the angles or through written by Allah's Hand as contained in Q42:51



**Meaning:**

> It is not fitting for a man that Allah should speak to Him except by inspiration, or from behind a veil, or by the sending of aMessenger to reveal, with Allah's permission, what Allah wills: for He is Most High, Most wise.

And in Q7:145, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> And we ordained laws for Him In the tablets In all matters, both commanding and explaining all things, (and said): "Take and hold these with firmness, and enjoin Thy people to hold fast by the best In the precepts: soon shall I Show you the homes of the wicked,- (How They lie desolate)."

b. To believe in the Books that Allah has mentioned by name

c. To believe in whatever is true of what they said such as what is said in the Qur'ān and whatever has not been distorted in the previous Book.

d. To believe that the Qur'ān was revealed to serve as a witness over the previous Books and to confirm them as contained in Q5: 48.

### 4.4.1 Al-Imām al-Alūsī Interpretation of the verse on the Belief in the Books

In his commentary on Q2:3 which is on those that believe in what Allah has revealed to Prophet Muhammad and the other prophets before him, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī identifies the Glorious Qur'ān as the revelation of Prophet Muhammad and *at-Tawrah* as the revelation of Prophet Mūsa also *al-Injīl* as the revelation of Prophet ᶜIsa. He has not mentioned other revelations specifically (i.e., the *Zabūr* and *Ṣuḥuf*) as expected of him because they are parts of the revelations revealed before the Prophethood of Muhammad-ﷺ-. This, perhaps, because of forgetfulness or being less prominent among the five prominent revealed Books mentioned in the Qur'ān.

However, while interpreting Q2:177 he has affirmed the obligation of believing in all the Divine revealed Books and that believing in the Glorious Qur'ān implies believing in all previous revealed Books because it is revealed to confirm and witness what they

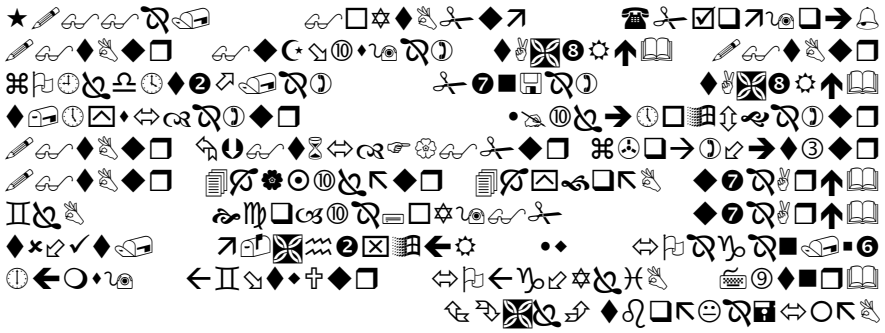
have said. It is under this verse that he has brought his own definition of *'al-'Īmānu bi'l Kutub* (Belief in the Books). He says:

> والإيمان بالكتب أن يؤمن بأنها كلام الرب جل شأنه منزهة عن الحدوث منزلة على ذويها ظاهرة لديهم حسبما اقتضته الحكمة من اللغات[115].

**Meaning:**

> (The meaning of) Belief in the Books is to believe that all the Books are the speech of the Lord (Allah). Exalted be His affairs. They are free from being invented revelations. They were revelad obviously to their possessors (the prophets) according to the knowledge requirement by their people.

He explains further in Q2:136 where he has identified the *Ṣuḥuf* (the scriptures or scrolls), which was revealed not only to Prophet Ibrahim but also to Isma$^{c}$il, Ishāq Ya$^{c}$qūb and the Asbāt as a Divine Book even though it was really sent to Ibrahim but also affiliated to others to follow in their worship. The verse reads:



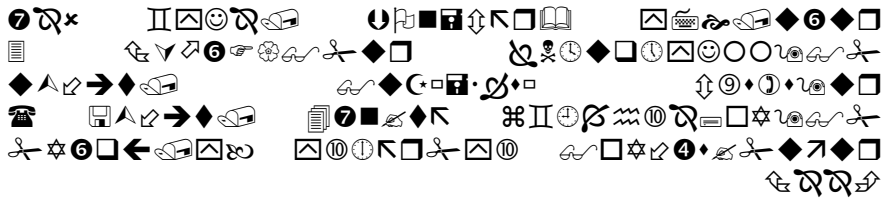
**Meaning:**

> Say ye: "We believe In Allah, and the Revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: we make no difference between one and another of them: and we bow to Allah (in Islam)."

From the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī observes that the Glorious Qur'ān is put forward before other not because of being the first to be revealed but because of the belief in it which is automatically the belief in other revealed Books as it has come to bear witness to the true messages in them and correct the distortions committed there in the hand of the people. He later concludes that belief in all is mandatory and nobody should separate between them by believing in some and disbelieving in some. And whoever disbelieves in the Books has disbelieved in all as he discussed under his exegeses of

Q4:136. He also identifies, in line with *Sūratu'l Aᶜla* (Q87):19, that Prophet Mūsa was also given *aṣ–Ṣuḥuf* of ten pages just like Prophet Ibrahim before the revelation of *Tawrah* to him.

With regards to *az-Zabūrah*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī explains that it is the revelation given to Prophet Dāwud (David) and it is the major reason for honouring him and being among the preferred prophets. He is not honoured because of his kingdom or power. This he expatiates while he is interpreting *Sūratu'l-'Isrā* (Q17):55 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And it is your Lord that knoweth best all beings that areIn the heavens and on earth: we did bestow on some prophets more (and other) gifts than on others: and we gave to David (the gift of) the Psalms.

He further elaborates, with references to narrations, that *az-Zabūr* contained the Glorification and Praise of Allah as well as commandments and prohibitions.

It can thus be concluded that the interpretation 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on verses related to belief in the Books is in line with the belief of the *Salaf* of this *Ummah*. Thus, his *Salafiyyah* tendency is still affirmed and confirmed.

### 4.5 The Fourth Article -Belief in the Messenger

The belief in the Messengers is technically known in Arabic language as "*al-'Īmānu bi-r-Rusul*–الإيمان بالرسل". The keyword in this statement is "*ar-Rusul*" which is the plural of the word "*Ar-Rasūl*". This article of faith is also known as "*al-Īmānu bi'l 'Anbiyā'i wa-r-Rusul*- الإيمان بالأنبياء والرسل"[116] i.e., belief in the prophets and messengers. By this, there are two keywords in this article of faith. The first is *ar-Rusul* and the second is *al-'Anbiyā'* which is the plural of the word "*an-Nabiyy*".

Linguistically, the word *ar-Rasūl* is derived from a verbal root "*al-Irsāl*–الإرسال" which means, according to Ibn Manẓūr, "*at-Tawjih* –التوجيه"[117] which can be translated as "sending"[118]. By this, it literally means *al-Mursal* i.e., the Messenger or Apostle while the word *an-Nabiyy* is formed from the word "*an-Naba'* " which means "*al-Khabar*"[119] i.e., news or information. It is also said that it is formed from the word "*an-Nabāwah*- النباوة" or "*an-Nabwah*-النبوة" which means something that is high above the surface of the earth.[120] By this, it literally means "the Prophet".

Technically, their definitions vary among the scholars. The most common definition for the two words and which differentiate them from each is that the word "*Rasūl*" means a person who is being inspired with new law and commanded to disseminate it while the word "*Nabiyy*" means a person who is being inspired but not commanded to disseminate it.[121] Based on this meaning, it means all the messengers are prophets but not all the prophets are messengers. This is because; both receive revelation with the exemption of dissemination which is limited to the messengers. Al-Fawzān added to this difference thus:

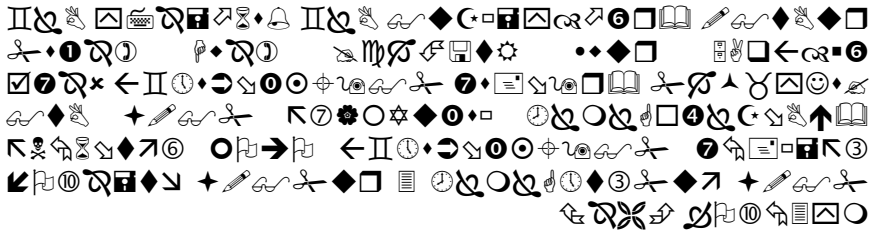
> وكل من النبي والرسول يوحى إليه, لكن النبي قد يبعث فى قوم مؤمنين بشرائع سابقة كأنبياء بني إسرائيل يأمرون بشريعة التوراة, وقد يوحى إلى أحدهم وحي خاص فى قضية معينة, وأما الرسل فإنهم يبعثون فى قوم كفار يدعونهم إلى التوحيد الله وعبادته, فهم يرسلون إلى مخالفين فكذبهم بعضهم[122].

**Meaning:**

> Both the prophet and the messenger receive revelation (from Allah), but the prophet may be sent to a believing nation with the previous laws just like the prophets of the children of Israel who were commanding (people) in line with the laws of *Tawrah*. It is possible to reveal, to a prophet among others, a special revelation for specific incident. The messengers are sent to a disbelieving nation for the purpose of calling them to the Oneness and worship of Allah (alone). They (the messengers) are hence sent to the antagonists (of Islamic Monotheism and sole worship of Allah). Thus, they are rejected and belied by some of their people.

From the above quotation, it can be said further that the differences in both the prophet and the messenger include the nation they were sent to as well as the kind of message to deliver to the inhabitants either the previous messages, in most cases, for the

messengers.[123] Therefore, the fact remains that both receive revelation and are sent by Allah, only that, their mission differs in terms of the audience and currency of the messages which some scholars hold not to be a condition,[104] however, in most cases, it is a condition. This submission can be supported by Q22:52



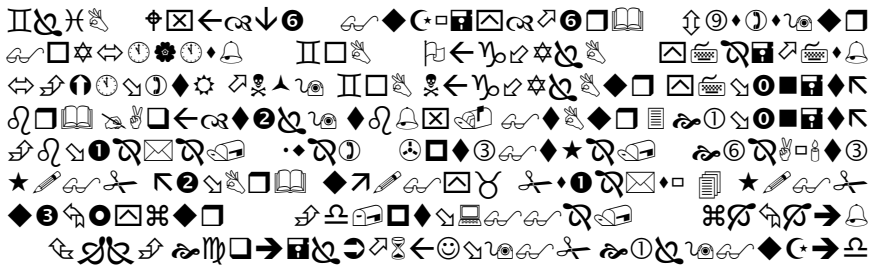
**Meaning:**

> Never did we send an apostle or a prophet before thee, But, when He framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into His desire: but Allah will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and Allah will confirm (and establish) His Signs: for Allah is full of knowledge and Wisdom:

With regards to the "Belief in the Prophets and Messengers", it means:

> To believe with firm conviction that Allah sent to His slaves messengers and bringers of glad tidings and warnings, callers to the true religion, to guide mankind and to bring them forth from darkness into light[125]

This belief also includes believing in their messages to be true and in the known among them by names as contained in the Glorious Qur'ān as well as the unknown among them by names[126] as mentioned by Allah in Q40:78 thus:



**Meaning:**

> We did aforetime send apostles before thee: of them there are some whose story we have related to thee, and some whose story we have not related to thee. It was not (possible) for any apostle to bring a Sign except by the leave ofAllah .But when the command ofAllah issued, the matter was decided in truth and justice, and there perished, there and then those who stood on falsehoods.

Similarly, it includes believing that they did convey and discharge to their nations what Allah sent them with in terms of messages and other duties; denouncing all that are

being worshipped except Allah as part of their message127 and in whatever information Allah has presented about them in the Glorious Qur'ān and also the Prophet ﷺ has mentioned in his traditions.[128] Likewise, it includes believing in the prophethood and messengership of Muhammad as last but the best of all and in the message brought by him as seal of all messages that all the previous messages of the previous prophets and messengers.[129] They are not to be adored as gods but as honoured servants of Allah.[130]

Therefore, belief in their totality, which is only known to Allah and not in parts, is compulsory as denying one out of all is to deny all.[131] Thus, the faith of such Muslim is not authentic and will not be counted among the believers.[132]

### 4.5.1 Al-Imām Al-'Alūsi's Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the Messengers

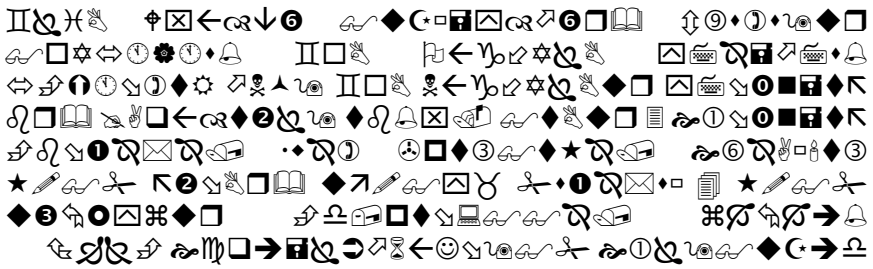
'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, in his attempt to elucidate on the meaning of Q22:52, has established that there is difference between prophethood and messengership in line with the verse contextually and grammatically. He says:

> وعطف (نبي) على (رسول) يدل على المغايرة بينهما وهو الشائع, ويدل على المغايرة أيضا ما روى أنه-ﷺ- سئل عن الأنبياء فقال: مائة ألف وأربع وعشرون ألفا, قيل: فكم الرسول منهم؟ قال: ثلاثمائة وثلاثة عشر جما غفيرا, وقد أخرج ذلك- كما قال السيوطى- أحمد وابن راهويه فى مسنديهما من حديث أبى أمامة وأخرجه ابن حبان فى صحيحه, والحاكم فى مستدركه من حديث أبى ذر. وزعم ابن الجوزى أنه موضوع وليس كذالك,... وجاء فى رواية: الرسل ثلاثمائة وخمسة عشر[133].

**Meaning:**

> The conjunction of the word (*Nabiyy*-Prophet) with the word (*Rasūl*-Messenger) points to the disparity between the two (words) and is well known (among the people or scholars). The difference is also supported with the narration that the Prophet was asked about (the total number of) the prophets (of Allah). Then, he said: (they are) "One hundred and twenty-four thousand". They said (to him again): How many are the messengers among them? He said: "they are three hundred and thirteen in number". This *Ḥadīth* has been recorded, according to As-Sayuti, by Aḥmad and Ibn Rāhawayh in their *Musnad* from the *Ḥadīth* of Abi 'Umāmah. It is also recorded by Ibn Hibbān in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* and al-Ḥākim in his *Mustadrak* from the *Ḥadīth* of Abu Dhar. However, Ibn Jawzi thought the *Ḥadīth* is fabricated but it is not… In another narration, the messengers are three hundred and fifteen.

It is based on the above narration of Abu Dhar from the Prophet that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī argues against some scholars who were of the opinion that the total number of Allah’s prophets is only know to Allah and even the Prophet did not know it. This argument is based on Q40:78 which says:



**Meaning:**

> We did aforetime send apostles before thee: of them there are some whose story we have related to thee, and some whose story we have not related to thee. It was not (possible) for any apostle to bring a Sign except by the leave of Allah. But when the command of Allah issued, the matter was decided in truth and justice, and there perished, there and then those who stood on falsehoods.

In his long discussion, ’Al-Imām ’Al-Alūsī declares that saying the Prophet did not know the total number of the prophets of Allah, is not only an enormous ignorance but also a great disappointment. He argues further by bringing a narration from ᶜAli bin ’Abi Ṭālib and ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbās as recorded by aṭ-Ṭabarānī that Allah raised a Habashi servant as a prophet and he is among those not mentioned to the prophet in terms of their stories, situations and other information. The question is, if the prophet did not know them, then how would these companions have known this? Thus, he concludes that the verse (Q40:78) does not mean that he was not aware of their numbers and names as the verse was informing about past action that was not done and which is possible to have been done there after but which there is no revelation to that effect. Therefore, there is no proof in the verse that the prophet did not know their numbers as the *Ḥadīth* has shown that he knew it.

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī has also differentiated between the Prophet and the Messenger, while explaining Q22:52, by giving various definitions and then makes his

position known thereafter. He is of the view that the word "Prophet" is the basis and more general than the word "Messenger". Among the definition he gives before his own conclusion are contained in the following quotation from him:

> واختلفوا هنا فى تفسير كل منهما فقيل : الرسول ذكر حر بعثه تعالى بشرع جديد يدعوا الناس إليه والنبي يعمه ومن بعثه لتقرير شرع سابق كأنبياء بني إسرائيل الذين كانوا بين موسى وعيسى عليهم السلام , وقيل : الرسول ذكر حر بعثه الله تعالى إلى قوم بشرع جديد بالنسبة إليهم وإن لم يكن جديدا فى نفسه كإسماعيل عليه السلام إذا بعث لجرهم أولا, والنبي يعمه ومن بعث بشرع غير جديد كذلك, وقيل: الرسول ذكر حر له تبليغ فى الجملة وإن كان بيانا وتفصيلا لشرع سابق والنبي من أوحى إليه ول يؤمر بتبليغ أصلا أو أعم منه ومن الرسول, وقيل: الرسول من الأنبياء من جمع إلى المعجزة كتابا منزلا عليه والنبي غير الرسول من لاكتاب له, وقيل: الرسول من له كتاب أو نسخ فى الجملة والنبي من لا كتاب له ولا نسخ, وقيل: الرسول من يأتيه الملك عليهم السلام بالوحي يقظة والنبي يقال له ولمن يوحى إليه فى المنام لا غير, وهذا أغرب الأقوال ويقتضى أن بعض الأنبياء عليه السلام لم يوح إليه إلا مناما وهو بعيد ومثله لا يقال بالرأي[134]

**Meaning:**

> They differ on the meaning of these two words. It is said that: "The Messenger is a free male human being who is raised with a new law and calling people to it while the prophet entails that and whoever is raised to affirm the previous law like the prophets of the children of Israel those who came between (Prophet) Musa and ʿĪsā, May the peace of Allah be upon them." And some said: "The Messenger is a free male human being who is being sent by Allah to a nation with new law that is peculiar to them and even if it is not a new law in itself like prophet Ismāʿīl, May Allah's peace be upon him, when he was raised to their neighbor first while the prophet entails this and whoever is raised with a law but not new." And some said: "The Messenger is a free male human being who is to propagate generally even if it is the explanation or clarification of the previous law while the prophet is he who receives revelation but is not ordered to propagate initially or more general than this and the Messenger." And some said: "The Messenger among the prophets is he who combines miraculous works with a revealed Book to him while the prophet who is not a messenger is he who has no revealed Book". And some said: "the messenger is he who has a revealed Book or a copy generally while the Prophet is he who has no Book and copy." And some said: "the Messenger is the one whom the Angel, May Allah's peace be upon them, comes to with revelation when he is awakening while the Prophet is said to be that and whoever receives revelation in the dream and nothing else." This last definition is the most strange of all the definitions as it implies that there is among the Prophets the one who receives revelation only in the dream. This is far from the truth and the like of this issue is not to be discussed with mere opinion.

It is deducible from the above quotation, that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has given six different opinions on the disparity between the Messenger and the Prophet with his effort to nullify the last definition. After this, he comes up with his own conclusion by

harmonizing all the definitions and gives a principle for better understanding of the issue. He first of all clarifies the ambiguity of the dissemination of Allah's message by saying:

> وأنت تعلم ان المشهور أن النبي فى عرف الشرع أعم من الرسول فإنه من أوحى إليه سواء أمر بالتبليغ أم لا والرسول من أوحى إليه وأمر بالتبليغ[135]

**Meaning:**

> You should be aware that the well-known (thing) is that the prophet, in the usage of *Shari*$^{c}$*ah*, is more general than the messenger. Indeed, the prophet is he who receives revelation whether he is commanded to disseminate or not while the Messenger is he who receives revelation and he is ordered to disseminate (compulsory).

Thereafter, he postulates that comparison (*Al-Muqabalah*- المقابلة) becomes necessary to resolve this issue but not in terms of dissemination or sending as this may lead to the removal of the Messenger from this verse (Q22:52), if it is attached to sending (*al-Irsāl*- الإرسال) . That is, when the word "*Nabiyy*" is mentioned without sending then it means "Prophet" who is not ordered which implies that "*Rasūl*" is not expected to be in the verse. But when it is attached to sending then it means Messenger which implies that the verse is correct and relevant. It is better for the comparison to be based on the message or currency of the message. It is against this that he gives his own definition as:

> أن يراد بالرسل من بعث بشرع جديد وبالنبي من بعث لتقرير شرع من قبله, أو يراد بالرسول من بعث بكتاب وبالنبي من بعث بغير كتاب أو يراد نحو ذلك مما يحصل به المقابلة مع تعلق الإرسال بهما[126]

**Meaning:**

> The Messenger should be viewed as whoever is raised with new law and the prophet should be viewed as whoever is raised with the previous law. Also, the messenger can be viewed as whoever is raised with a revealed book while the prophet is viewed as whoever is raised without a revealed book. Or (they should be) viewed in other ways that will be about comparison between the two along with the fact of being sent for both.

Besides, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī furthers his discussion on the belief in the Messengers and Prophets by affirming their infallibility, purity and honorary. He makes these clear in his exposition on Q2:177 which discusses the meaning of righteousness to be faith (belief) in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets and then

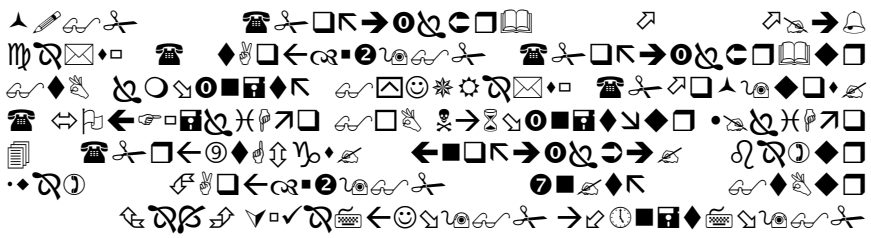
other good deeds. In his explanation on the belief in the Prophets as contained in this verse, he says:

> أي جميعهم من غير تفرقة بين أحد منهم كما فعل أهل الكتابيين والإيمان بهم أن يصدق بأنهم معصومون مطهرون وأنهم أشرف الناس حسبا ونسبا وأن ليس فيهم وصية ولاعيب منفر, ويعتقد أن سيدهم وخاتمهم محمد - ﷺ - وأن شريعته ناسخة لجميع الشرائع والتمسك بها لازم لجميع المكلفين إلى يوم القيامة[137]

**Meaning:**

> That is (to believe in) all of them without differentiating between anyone of them as the two people of the Books did. And (the meaning of) belief in them is (to believe) with conviction that they are purified impeccable as well as the most honourable among mankind. They have no stigma or fault. It also include to affirm that their leader and seal (i.e. last) is Muhammad (ﷺ) and that his *Sharīᶜah* (code or ways of life) has abrogated all the previous *Sharīᶜah* (rules and laws) and that holding unto in (his *Shariᶜah*) is compulsory on the people charged with responsibilities (matured people) till the Day of Standing.

The above statement of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has summed up all the component of belief in the Prophets and Messengers according to the pious processors. He furthers by saying that Prophet Muhammad has delivered the messages of Allah completely without adding to the messages as mentioned in Q24:54 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Say: "Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger. But if ye turn away, He is only responsible for the duty placed on Him and ye for that placed on you if ye obey him, ye shall be on right guidance. The Messenger's duty is only to preach the Clear (Message)

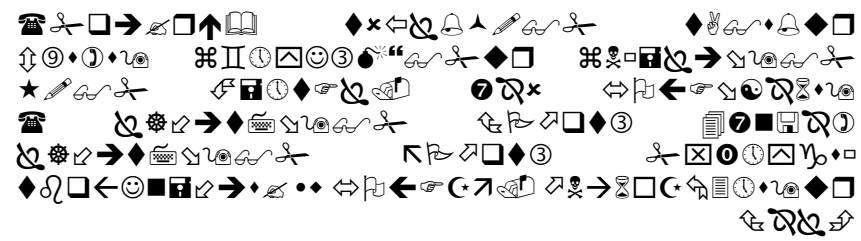
More so, the belief of not separating between the Prophets and messengers is also affirmed by him in his exegesis on Q2: 285. Likewise, he affirms that the best of all the prophets and messengers are the *'Ūlu'l-Azm* (the people of determination) among the Messengers. He bases this on the fact that they were specifically mentioned by Allah among other Prophets on the day when Allah was taking their covenants. He also identifies them to be five in number, just like other scholars as a result of their truthfulness

and trustworthiness in their dissemination of Allah's messages as well as their patience and perseverance in the face of challenges while discharging their heavenly duties in the society.

In summary, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has interpreted the related verses to the belief in the Prophets and Messengers in line with the belief of the *Salaf*. He has also contributed to ascertain the total number of the Prophets and resolved the differences between the Prophet and the Messenger.

### 4.6 The Fifth Article - Belief in the Last Day

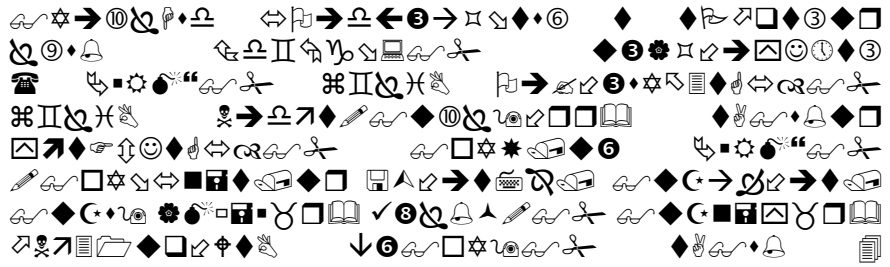
This article of faith is technically known as "*al-'Īmām bi'l-Yawmi'l-Ākhir*- الإيمان باليوم الآخر". The major keyword is "*al-Yawmu'l-Ākhir*" which means "the Last Day". It is referring to the Day of Judgement (*Yawmu'l-Qiyāmah*- يوم القيامة). [138] It has some other names specifically for the believers as well as some for the disbelievers according to some Qur'ānic verses.[139] For instance, it is generally known as "*Yawmu'l-Ba$^{c}$th*- يوم البعث which means "the Day of Resurrection as contained in Q30:56 which says:



**Meaning:**

> But those endued 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 - ye were not aware"!

Likewise, it is generally known as the Day of Gathering – (يوم الحشر-) *Yawmu'l-Ḥashr* as contained in Q6:128 which says:

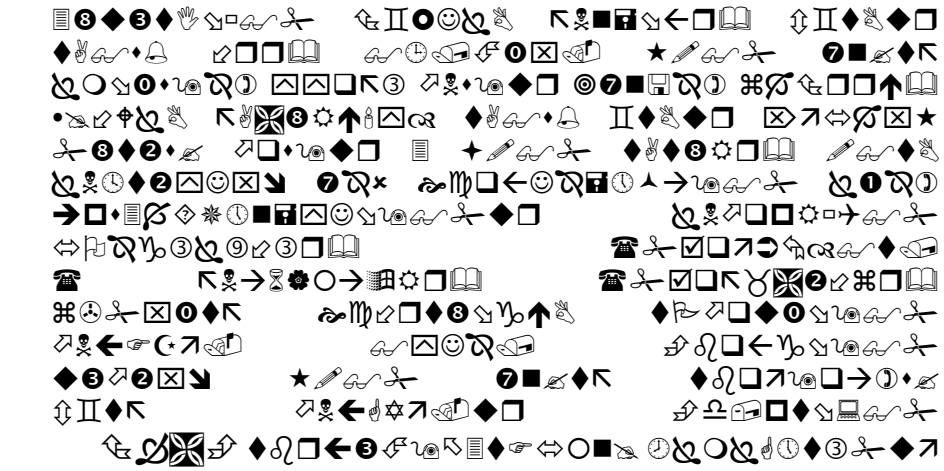




**Meaning:**

> One Day will He gather them all together, (and say): "O ye assembly of Jinns! Much (toll) did ye take of men." their friends amongst men will say: "Our Lord! We made profit from Each other: but (alas!) we reached Our term - which Thou Didst appoint for us." He will say: "The Fire be your dwelling-place: you will dwell therein forever, except As Allah willeth." for Thy Lord is full of wisdom and knowledge.

With regards to its special names for the disbelievers, it is called "*Yawmu-ᶜAdhābi'l-Hūni* - يوم عذاب الهون" which means the Day of Torment of Degradation as contained in Q6:93 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Who can be more wicked than one who inventeth a lie against Allah, or saith, "I have received inspiration," when He hath received none, or (again) who saith, "I can reveal the like of what Allah hath revealed"? If Thou couldst but see How the wicked (do fare) In the flood of confusion at death! - The angels stretch forth their hands, (saying),"Yield up your souls: This Day shall ye receive your reward,- a penalty of shame, for that ye used to Tell lies against Allah , and scornfully to reject of His signs"!

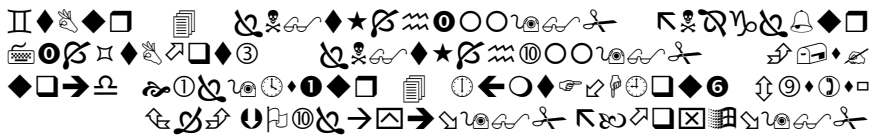
Also, it is known as the Day of Distress (*Yawmun ᶜAsīr*- يوم عسير) as contained in Q74:9-10 which says:



Meaning:

> That will be- that Day - a Day of Distress-, Far from easy for those without Faith.

In the case of its special names for the believers it is called the Day of Mercy (*Yawmu-r-Raḥmah* - يوم الرحمة) according to Q40:9 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And preserve them from (all) ills; and any whom Thou dost preserve from ills that day,- on them wilt Thou have bestowed Mercy indeed: and that will be truly (for them) the highest Achievement."

Likewise, it is known as the Day of Good Recompense (*Yawmu'l-Jazā'i'l-Jamīl-* يوم الجزاء الجميل) according to Q23:111 which says:



**Meaning:**

> I have rewarded them This Day for their patience and constancy: They are indeed the ones that have achieved Bliss"...

This day is another special period in the history of man as the period in the womb, this life and in the grave. It begins from the time of coming out of the grave to the time of entering the Paradise for the believers or entering the Hell-Fire for the disbelievers and then to an infinity time of living in both abodes[140]. It is referred to as "Last Day" and not "Last Night" because there will be night after it and because this the last day of this world and there will be no other day after it.[141]

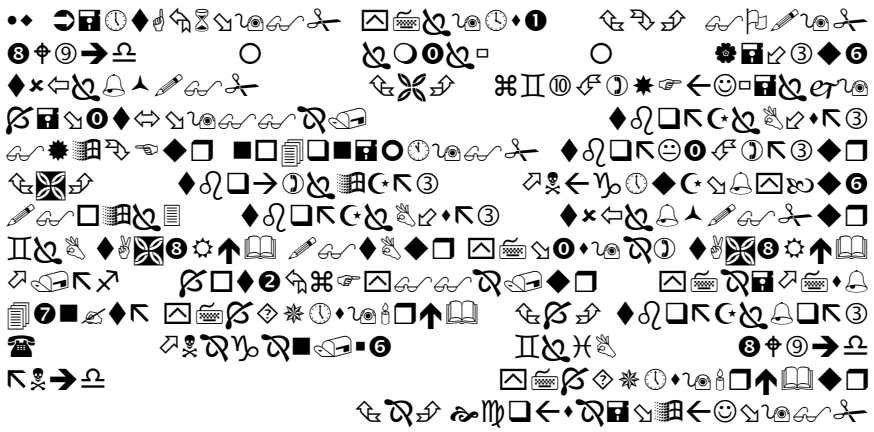
With regards to the belief in the last Day, it means, according to Al-Atharī,:

> Believe sincerely and completely with full conviction in the Day of Ressurection and in all that Allah has told us in His Book and that His Messenger has told us about what will happen after death and until the time when the people of paradise will enter paradise and the people of Hell will enter Hell.[142]

Based on the above quotation, it means that it includes firm belief with conviction in the events in the grave in terms of questioning, punishment and enjoyment, resurrection from the grave, movement to the assembly ground, passing through bridge (*aṣ-Ṣirat-* الصراط), under which there is Hell-Fire and other descriptions from the Prophet ﷺ, scaling

of deeds, reality of Paradise and Hell-Fire and the intercession of the Prophet (ﷺ). The reason for their inclusion in the belief in the Last Day is that they are part of what the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet have stated that they will occur between death and entrance into either Paradise or Hell-Fire. Similarly, it also includes collection and reading of the individual book of records, and accountability as well as other issues related to the unseen.

The above explanation therefore implies that belief in the Last Day is nothing but a strong and firm faith in the unseen (*Al-Ghayb*) which is part of the cornerstones of piety and success as mentioned by Allah in the Glorious Qur'ān. Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> A.L.M. This is the Book; In it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah. Who believe In the Unseen, are steadfast In prayer, and spend out of what we have provided for them; And who believe In the Revelation sent to thee, and sent before Thy time, and (in their hearts) have the assurance of the Hereafter. They are on (true) guidance, from their Lord, and it is these who will prosper.

This is known by the theologians as "ᶜ*Ilmu'l-Ghayb*" which means the knowledge of the unseen"[143] but, it is technically known by the modern writers and theologians as "Islamic Eschatology"[144]. It should also be noted that this belief includes belief in the signs of the Hour, both major and minor. This is because; they are the end of the present world.

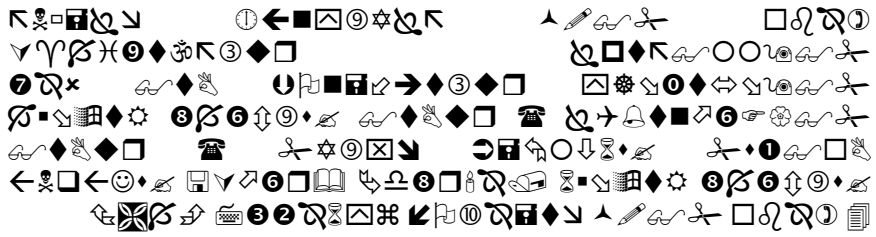
### 4.6.1 ’Al-Imām ’Al-Alūsī’s Interpretation of the Verses on the Belief in the Last Day

After his grammatical analysis on the origin of the word “*Al-Ghayb*” which is mentioned in Q2:3, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī gives the meaning of *al-Ghayb* as things that cannot be felt or imagined and there are some that have no proof pointing to their reality except Allah alone such as the knowledge of destiny while some have evidences on their reality such as Allah and His attributes. He further explains that technically, it includes all belief the Prophet has given information about in the *Ḥadīth* of Jubril which are; Allah, the Angels, the Books, the Last Day and others. He also affirms that belief in the prophethood and messengership of Muhammad is part of the unseen for the generation that does not see him – ﷺ -.

In his explanation on Q2:4 which is discussing the belief in the Last Day which is also known as the Hereafter, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī views the word “*Al-Ākhirah*” in the verse to mean either the Last Abode or the Resurrection after death. He explains further that Allah has used the word Certainty (*al-’Īqān*-الإيقان) with the Day of Resurrection or the Last Day and not with the word Belief (*al-Īmān*) because of the numerous strange thinhgs that are associated with it. This is because the word certainty has included belief but the word belief does not include certainty. The verse is a proof on the reality of the Last Day against the faith of the Jews who disbelieved in the punishment of the Last Day and physical resurrection but believed in the spiritual resurrection and spiritual enjoyment. This is why they said they shall not be burnt by fire except for a few days. ’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī then says that the Jews were ignorant of the last Day or Resurrection (*al-Ākhirah*) their thought was just a hollow imagination. Thus, they have no certainty of thought and knowledge. This, perhaps, is

the reason for associating certainty with the belief in the Resurrection and not just ordinary belief.

On the commencement of the Last Day, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī also affirms like other Muslim theologians in line with the Glorious Qur'ān and traditions of the Prophet that the date and time are only known to Allah Alone. This is part of the knowledge of the unseen that are known to Him Alone and the Muslims are expected to believe in it. This is discussed while interpreting *Sūratu'l-Luqmān* (Q31): 34 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Verily the knowledge of the Hour is with Allah (alone). it is He who Sends down rain, and He who knows what is In the wombs nor does anyone know what it is that He will earn on the morrow: nor does anyone know In what land He is to die. Verily with Allah is full knowledge and He is acquainted (with all things).

Furthermore he affirms that the word "*As-Sāᶜah-* الساعة" is another name of the Last Day which will take place suddenly after the occurrences of its signs among which some had occurred before the demise of the Prophet, such as the splitting of the moon (*Inshiqāqu'l-Qamar* – انشقاق اقمر) that happened to the Prophet and the smoke (*ad-Dukhān-* الدخان) that happened to the people of Makkah, in order to draw their attention to the fact that the Hereafter, the Hour and the Last Day has drawn near. He explains this in his exegesis on *Sūratu Muḥammad* (Q47):18 which read:



**Meaning:**

> Do they then only wait for the Hour, - that it should come on them of a sudden? But already have come some tokens thereof, and when it (actually) is on them, how can they benefit then by their admonition?

Based on the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has divided, like other Muslim theologians, the signs of the Last Day (*Ashrāṭu-s-Sāᶜah-* أشراط الساعة) into two apart from those two mentioned above, as follows:[145]

*i.* *Ashrāṭu-s-Sāᶜah Al-Muḍayyaqah*–أشراط الساعة المضيقة( the close or limited signs of the hour)

ii. *Ashrāṭu-s-Sāᶜah Ghayru'l- Muḍayyaqah* – أشراط الساعة غير المضيقة (the unlimited signs of the Hour).

On the first division, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī explains it to be those signs that will occur closer to the last hour and that this life will not exist again after their appearances except for few time. He has mentioned five as examples out of the ten mentioned by the Prophet in the *Ḥadīth* recorded by Imām Muslim on the authority of Hudhayfah bin Asyad Al-Ghifārī [146]. The five mentioned by him are[147]:

(i) The emergence (*khurūj* -خروج) of Al-Mahdi according to the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* while the *Shīᶜah* belief that he will return (*Ar-Rujᶜah*-الرجعة) and not emerge.

(ii) The descent (*Nuzūl*-نزول) of Prophet ᶜĪsā

(iii) The emergence (*khurūj* -خروج) or appearance (*Zuhur*-ظهور) of the pseudo-Messiah (*Al-Masiḥu-d-Dajjal*-المسيح الدجال).

(iv) The rising of the sun (*Ṭulūᶜu-sh-Shams*-طلوع الشمس) from West.

(v) The emergence of the Beast (*Khurūju-d-Dābah*-خروج الدابة)

**Other signs not mentioned by him include:**

(vi) The emergence of Ya'juj and Ma'juj-Gog and Magog (*Khurūj Ya'jūj wa Ma'juj*- خروج يأجوج ومأجوج ).

(vii) The smoke (*Ad-Dukhān*-الدخان ) that will overwhelm everybody from the sky as indicated by Allah in *Sūratu*-d-*Dukhān* (Q44): 10-11

(viii) The raising of the Qur'ān from the surface of the earth to the heaven as contained in the *Ḥadīth* recorded by Ibn Majāh.

(ix) The destruction of the *Kaᶜbah* as indicated by the Prophet in the *Ḥadīth* recorded by Bukhārī and Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah.

(x) The emergency of a great fire that will gather everybody as mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* recorded by Muslim on the authority of Hudhayfah bin Asyad al-Ghifārī. This will be the last sign.

The above listed signs are regarded as the major signs of the Hour (Al-*ᶜAlamātu'l-Kubrā*- العلامات الكبرى)[148].

In the case of the second division, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī explains that it covers the majority of the signs which other Muslim theologians referred to as the minor signs[149] or medial signs[150]. Those mentioned by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī are: bare footed and despicable people becoming leaders; competition in building tall houses; prevalence of backbiting, *Ribā* (Usury and interest) and alcoholic drinks; holding the rich in high esteem; small number of the righteous and multitude of the evil doers; competition in building mosques and making them as pathways; Bad neighbourliness; breaking of the ties of kinship; little knowledge will prevail; referring issues to those who are not qualified; the lowest people being the most successful in this life and others too numerous to mention in this study.

In furtherance of this discussion, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents the arguments of those theologians that have tried to fix a particular time limit for the existence of this world and has debunked their views on two bases; firstly by declaring their supportive proof from the tradition of the Prophet as not only weak but also disliked or denied *Ḥadīth* (*Ḥadīthun Munkarun*); and secondly by calculation to which he explains that the remaining period is estimated to be twenty-two years but has lapsed even before his ('al-

'Imām 'al-'Alūsī) period and till then nothing has happened among the major signs. He later concludes thus:

> فالحق أنه لايعلم ما بقى من مدة الدنيا إلا الله عزوجل وأنه وإن طال أقصر قصير وما متاع الحياة الدنيا إلا قليل، وكذا فيما أرى مبدأ خلقها لايعلمه إلا الله تعالى وما يذكرونه فى المبدأ لوصح فإنما هو فى مبدأ خلق الخليقة آدم عليه السلام لامبدأ خلق السماء والأرض والجبال ونحوها ..... وأنت تعلم أن متل ذلك ممالا ينبغى لعاقل أن يعول عليه أويلتفت إليه والحزم الجزم بأنه لا يعلم ذلك إلا اللطيف الخبير .
> 151

**Meaning:**

> The truth is that nobody knows the period of this life except Allah-the Great and Exalted. And even if the most shorten becomes prolonged, the enjoyment of this life is nothing but small. The same thing goes for the beginning of its creations, in my view, nobody knows (the period) except Allah, the Exalted. And with regards to up cried mentioned for the beginning (of the creatures), if it is authentic then it will be for the creation of Adam-May peace be upon him –and not for the creation of the heaven, the mountains and the likes … it should be known to you that the sense should not consider or pay attention to. The resolution is to be convince that nobody knows that except (Allah) the Most kind, the Well-Acquainted.

In addition, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has also affirmed his belief in other unseen events that will take place as part of the Last Day while explaining related verses, but they cannot all be explained in this study. Some of these affirmations include the blowing of the trumpet twice; one for the death of everything except whom Allah wills and the second for the resurrection from their graves waiting for judgement as contained and discussed by him in *Sūratu-z-Zumar* (Q39):68. In verse 69 of this same *Sūrah*, he affirms his faith in the Assembly Land (الأرض المحشر) which will be put in place by changing the present land into it. Thereafter, ability (*al-Ḥisāb*-الحساب), scale of good deeds and bad deeds, and the truth as well as justice in judgement, while the verses 71-72 of the same *Sūrah* is interpreted by him to establish the reality of Hell-fire and the certainty of entrying it by the disbelievers the arrogant. Similarly, the verse 73 is used to establishing the reality of paradise and the certainty of its entry by the believers.

On the punishment in the grave, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has used, like some other *Muffasirīn*, *Sūratu Ghāfir* (Q40): 45-46 which discusses the punishment of Fir$^{c}$an and his

people with fire before the judgment in the Hereafters to establish the reality and certainty of life after death as well as punishment in the grave. He says:

> ففي الآية دليل ظاهر على بقاء النفس وعذاب البرزخ لأنه تعالى بعد أن ذكر ذلك العرض قال جل شأنه: "ويوم تقوم الساعة أدخلوا آل فرعون أشد العذاب" وهو ظاهرفي المغايرة فيتعين كون ذلك فى البرزخ[152]

**Meaning:**

> There is a clear proof in this verse on the existence of life after death and (the reality of) punishment or torment in the grave. This is because, Allah has mentioned after that exposure (of theirs) that: And on the Day when the Hour will be established, (it will be said to the Angels) take Fir$^{c}$awn's people to enter the severest torment" which is or clear indicator of disparity (between this and that torment). Then, it is incumbent to designate that (first torment) to be in the grave.

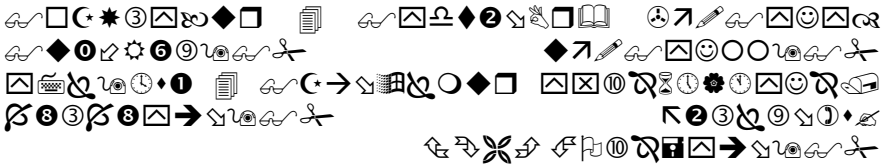
In conclusion, all the discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on the belief in the Last Day cannot be studied here. It is, however, obvious in the afore-discussed points under the belief in the last hour that 'al-Imām'al-Alūsī is a believer in the Day of Judgment according to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* as well as the understanding of the *Salaf* (pious predecessors) of this *Ummah*. He has also contributed his own efforts in refuting erroneous views and opinions that are in contrary to the Qur'ān and authentic *Ḥadīth*.

### 4.7 The Sixth Articles-Belief in *Al-Qadār*

This article of faith is technically known as "*al-'Īmān bi'l-Qaḍār* – الإيمان بالقدر". The major keyword in this statement is "*al-Qaḍār*" which is literally translated in English Languages as "destiny or predestination"[153]. There is a word that goes along with *al-Qaḍār* without which its meaning cannot be understood properly. The word is "*al-Qaḍā*" which is literally translated in English Language as "Judgement or decision"[154]. Thus, both form another word as "*al-Qaḍā*' *wa'l-Qadar*" i.e., "the Judgment and the Destiny".

Linguistically,[155] the word *Qaḍā'* is from the verbal root " *Qaḍā* -قضى" which means to judge". It may also mean to decide on an affair or to be done with an affair and complete it. It has been used in the Glorious Qur'ān thus:





**Meaning:**

> Then He completed and finished their creation as seven heavens in two Days. (Q41:12).

In the case of the word "*Qadār*", it is from the verbal root "*Qadara*" which means to decree or ordain or decide something[156]. According to Ibn Ḥajar Al-ᶜAsqalānī, it is a verbal noun which means to possess the proper measures of something.[157]

In his own view, Ibn Manẓūr says:

القدر القضاء الموفق: يقال: قدرالإله كذا تقديرًا وإذا وافق الشئ الشئ[158]

**Meaning:**

> *Al-Qadār* means the appropriate judgment. It is said: "The Lord has decreed this appropriately when something is in conformity with another thing.

In conclusion of the linguistic meaning of both *Qaḍā' wa'l- Qadar*, Ibn Manẓūr observes that they are inseparable words which one cannot do without the other as *al-Qadar* is the root and foundation while *al-Qaḍā'* is the branch.

Technically,[159] *Qaḍā'u* means the perpetual will and wish of Allah that is associated with something according to how such a thing is which cannot be removed or taken away from it. It is also view as the eternal judgment of Allah on the existence or non-existence of something. While *al-Qadar* means the bringing in to existence of something by Allah in a special way at a specific time and place. It is also the eternal proportion which Allah has assigned to everything and had been written in the preserved tablet (*al-Lawḥu'l-Maḥfūẓ*) before the creation of such thing[160]. The coming into existence of something proceeded by the knowledge and will of Allah, the All-Knowing. It is also the judgment of Allah on the partial occurrence of something that is from the whole judgment in details but in a particular way. It is apposite to state here that this issue is one of the secrets and privacies of Allah that are special to Him; He does not

expose it to anyone including His Messenger and honourable Angels as well He has prevented the reasoning of man from imagining and comprehending it.

Since the two words are correlative, there is need to define them together as a word. According to An-Nawawī, they are eternal decree of Allah which He is aware, by his knowledge, of their occurrences at their fixed times place and specific description as He has judged or decided[161]. In his own submission, al-Jazā'ir views them as the will of Allah to bring things into existence in a specific and in conformity with His will, decision and Intention[162]. It should, however be noted that the words are at-times used synonymously. With regards to the belief in *al-Qada' wal-Qadar*, it means, according to al-Ḥumaydī:

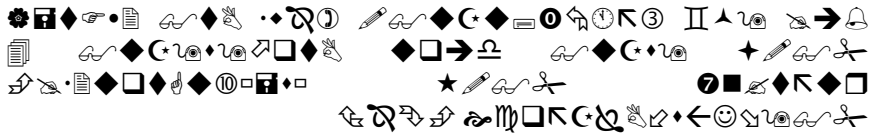
أن يؤمن الرجل بالقدر خيره وشره حلوه ومره وأن يعلم أن ما أصابه لم يكن ليخطئه وأن ما أخطأه لم يكن ليصيبه وآن ذلك كله من الله[163]

**Meaning:**

It is for a man to believe in the decree; good and bad; sweet and bitter. And that whatever befalls him is not going to miss him and whatever misses him is no going to befall and to be aware that all that are of Allah

It is also all about the firm attestation with conviction that every decree including actions, statements, events and incidents have been written prior to the creation and Allah has assigned for each of them proper and appropriate measures to bring them into reality.[164] It is also about the faith that everything occurs with His decision and will; and that it is His wish that will come to reality and not the wish of Man as whatever He wills shall be and whatever He doesn't will shall never be.[165] The obligation of believing in it is based on the Glorious Qur'ān and traditions of the Prophet among which are:

i. In *Sūratu-t-Tawbah* (Q9) : 51, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

Say: "Nothing will happen to us except what Allah has decreed for us: He is our protector": and on Allah let the believers put their trust.

ii. In *Sūratu'l-'Insān* (Q76): 30, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> But ye will not, except As Allah wills; for Allahis full of knowledge and wisdom

iii. In *Sūratu'l-Ḥadīd* (Q57): 22, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded in a Decree before we bring it into existence: that is truly easy for Allah.

iv. In the tradition of the Prophet -ﷺ -:

> عن ربعي بن حراش عن على قال: قال رسول الله -ﷺ- لا يؤمن عبد حتى يؤمن بأربع يشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وأني محمد رسول الله بعثني بالحق ويؤمن بالموت وبالبعث بعد الموت ويؤمن بالقدر[166]

**Meaning:**

> From Rabiʿī bin Harash on the authority of Ali bin Abi Talib that the Messenger of Allah-ﷺ- said: A servant will not believe until he affirms his faith in four things: to bear witness that there is none worthy of being worship except Allah, and bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah who is sent with the truth and to affirm his faith in death and the Life after death and in the Divine decree.

It is apposite to state here that there are four stages or levels in affirming and confirming the belief in the Destiny[167]. These are, in summary, stated below:

i. To affirm the faith in the fact Allah is well aware of everything before it occurrence, because, He is eternally knowledgeable and His knowledge encompasses everything according to Q22:70.



**Meaning:**

> Knowest Thou not that Allah knows all that is in heaven and on earth? Indeed it is all In a Record, and that is easy for Allah.

ii. To believe firmly that Allah has prerecorded everything before the creation of everything and has preserved it in the preserved tablet as contained in *Sūratu'l-Ḥadīd* (Q.57):22



**Meaning:**

No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded In a Decree before we bring it into existence: that is truly easy for Allah.

iii. To believe that everything occurs by the wish of Allah and His power. There is nothing that will come to reality except what He wills as stated in *Sūratū'l-'Insān* (Q: 76):30.



**Meaning:**

But ye will not, except As Allah wills; for Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom.

iv. To believe that Allah is the creator of everything including the deeds of man as contained in *Sūratu'l-Zumar* (Q39):62.



**Meaning:**

Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the guardian and disposer of all affairs.

In conclusion, it should be noted that all the decrees of Allah are good in respect to Allah as everything He created is good even if it is regarded as evil by man because of their limited knowledge and understanding. But, Allah has reasons for doing everything He does.

### 4.7.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's Interpretation of the Verses on the Believe in *Al-Qadar*

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī is observed to have firm faith in the fact that everything is not only decreed by Allah but also prerecorded and fore-ordained. He explains this under his exegesis on *Sūratu’l-Qamar* (Q54):49, which says:



**Meaning:**

Verily, all things have we created in proportion and measure.

On the above verse, he explains further that everything has been written before its occurrence in the preserved tablet and that the word al-*Qadar* is compared with *Al-Qaḍā* in meaning. That is, things happen with Allah’s judgment and decision for best reason known to Him. He refutes the views of the *Qadarites* who says everything is not by decree and that man has free will in it. This means that they denied the reality of *Al-Qadar* and charged man to be responsible for their actions. He presents some traditions to drive home his argument in refuting the *Qadarites*. One of these is given thus:[168]

منها ما أخرجه أحمد وأبو داود والطبرانى عن ابن عمر أن رسول اللهﷺ- قال لكل أمة مجوس ومجوس أمتى الذين يقولون لاقدر إن مرضوا فلا تعودوهم وإن ماتوا فلا تشهدوهم[169]

**Meaning:**

Among the evidence is what is recorded by Aḥmad, Abu Dāwud and Ṭabarảnỉ on the authority of Ibn ᶜUmar that the Messenge of Allah-ﷺ – May Allah’s Peace and Blessing be upon him- said: ‘Every nation has it own *Majūs* (Zoroastrian). The Zoroastrian in my *Ummah* are those that deny the decree of Allah ( *Al-Qadar*). If they sicked, do not visit them and if they died, do not witness them (their *Janazah*).

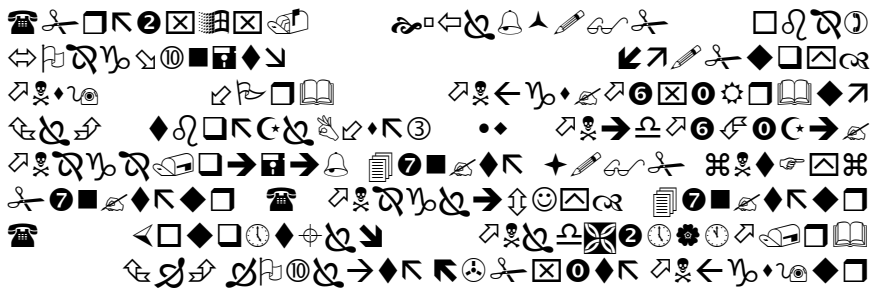
Based on the above narration and afore-discussed point ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī has maintained the position of the *Salaf* on the fore ordainment of Allah’s Decree on affairs before they occur in contrary to the *Qadarites*.

Furthermore, his explanation on *Sūratu’l-Ḥajj* (Q22):70 has shown that he affirms the first and second stage of believing in the Decree of Allah which are Allah’s knowledge precedes every action and the preordainment of everything in the preserved tablet. This explanation is in line with the understanding of the *Salaf*. Likewise, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī

has used *Sūratu'l-Furqān* (Q25):2 to establish the belief in *Al-Qadar* which is the fact that nothing takes place in the heaven and the earth without His will and wish with proper measures and equality in the decree according to His decision. He explains that Allah decrees and ordains things that suit the nature of each of the creatures for the reasons best known to Him. Similarly this verse has been used to refute the free-will idea of the Mu'tazilites and other upholders of the same creed as well as some people- whose identify is not mentioned by him who believed that the creator of good deed is different from the creator of bad or evil deed which is in contrary to the declaration of Allah being the sole Creator of everything.

In his commentary on *Sūratu'l-Faṭir* (Q35):3, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has refuted the issue of human beings as the creator of their deeds and actions, which is the belief and doctrine of the Mu'tazilites, who deny the power of Allah and his intervention in the actions of man through His judgment and decree (*Al-Qaḍā' wa' l-Qadar*). He thereafter affirms the position of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* on the issue by saying: "لاخالق إلا الله تعالى - There is no other creator except Allah."

On the predestination and free will of man that is supported by the Mu'tazilites, the doctrine of *al- Iktisāb or al-Kasb* (Acquisition) that is propounded and accepted by the Ash$^{c}$arites and the creation of man's actions by Allah which is supported by the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī quotes *Sūratu'l-Baqarah* (Q2): 6-7 to elucidate these points with a view to refuting the refutable and accepting the acceptable. These verses read:



**Meaning:**

> As to those who reject Faith, it is the same to them whether Thou warn them or do not warn them; they will not believe .Allahhath set a seal on their hearts and on their hearing, and on their eyes is a veil; great is the penalty they (incur).

With regards to the doctrine of free will of man in choosing which action to be done between good and bad, the Mu$^{c}$tazilites believe that it is through it that the Divine justice of Allah can be established. And it is by it that the concept of reward and punishment will be meaningful. They organized that it will not be right and just for Allah to predestine for man not to accept the truth (i.e., to be a disbeliever) and still punish him. This is an immoral and indecent act which cannot emanate from Him, the Exalted.[170]Thus; it is believed in the Mu'tazilites' school that the above quoted verse should be interpreted in another way to mean that *Shayṭan* is the sealer of the hearts and not Allah. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī refutes this by observing that there is the influence of Divine knowledge of Allah on human actions which is also followed by the will of Allah and then followed by the predestination which are all associated with the freedom of man in choosing the actions to be carried out. Thus, preparation has been given to man on every action as contained in Q91:8 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And its Enlightenment as to its wrong and its right.

Therefore, it now depends on the preparedness of man to bring out either good or bad actions. It is on this that man shall be blamed. He, however, explains on the basis for blaming man as a result of his preparedness which is technically termed as *al-Iktisāb or al-Kasb* (The Acquisition). On this acquisition, which is the position held by the Ash$^{c}$arites in resolving this conflict of predestination and free-will; it means the occurrence of a thing or event due to derived power. By this, the Ash$^{c}$arites believe that Allah is the Creator (*al-Khāliq*) while man is the Acquisitor (*al-Muktasib*). On this 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī reflects on it by saying:

وأما ما ذكره المفسرون من أن إسناد الختم إليه تعالى باعتبار الخلق فمسلم لا كلام لنا فيه، وأما أن الذم باعتبار كون ذلك مسببا عما كسبه الكفار الخ، فنقول فيه: إن أرادوا بالكسب ماشاع عند الأشاعرة من مقارنة الفعل لقدرة العبد من غير تأثير لها فيه أصلا وإنما المؤثر هو الله تعالى فهو مع مخالفته لمعنى الكسب[171]

**Meaning:**

With regards to what the *Mufassirūn* said by affiliating the sealing of the heart to Allah, the Exalted as the creator, is accepted and there is nothing to say about it. But, with regards to the blame as a result of what the disbeliever have acquired, our response is if the intended meaning of *al-Kasb* (Acquisition) is the common meaning given to it by the Ashᶜarites which is the occurrence of man's action due to his power without any (external) influence in it, then (it is wrong) as Allah is the influential (being) in it. Despite this difference, it is still regarded as acquisition.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī continues his refutation by saying thus:

وإن أرادوا بالكسب فعل العبد استقلالا ما يريده هو وإن لم يرده الله تعالى فهذا مذهب المعتزلة وفيه الخروج عمّا درج عليه سلف الأمة و اقتحام ورطات الضلال وسلوك مهامه الوبال... وإن أرادوا به تحصيل العبد بقدرته الحادثة حسب استعداده الأزلي المؤثرة لامستقلا بل بإذن الله تعالى ما تعلقت به من الأفعال الإختيارية مشيئته التابعة لمشيئة الله تعالى على ما أشرنا إليه فنعمت الإرادة و حبذا السلوك فى هذه الجادة، وسيأتي إن شاء الله تعالى بسطها وإقامة الأدلة على صحتها وإماطة الأذى عن طريقها إلا أن أشاعرتنا اليوم لايشعرون وأنّهم ليحسبون أنّهم يحسنون صنعا ولبئس ما كانوا يصنعون[172]

**Meaning:**

And if the acquisition is used to connote the independent action of man as he wished even if Allah does not wish it, then this is the doctrine of the Muᶜtazilites. This is nothing but a deviation from the path of the *Salaf* of the *Ummah* and treading into the dilemma of misguidance as well as the path with bad consequences… And if it (acquisition) is used to denote the achievement of a slave, through his derived power according to his influenced eternal preparedness and not independently but by the permission of Allah, in his free-will that follows that of Allah as we have explained, then it is a good will and intention. What a nice path! Its full explanation with evidences on its authenticity will soon be done as well as the removal of evil and harm from its path. It is only that the contemporary Ashᶜarites do not think that way but they think they are doing the right thing and how evil or bad is what they do!

This has shown his position with regards to the controversy on predestination and free-will even though this issue remains complex and difficult to comprehend. It will be said, in conclusion that it is better to hold unto it according to the early Muslims as explained by the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* of the Prophet by referring everything back to Allah,

the Omnipotent, the All-Wise. This is in support of the position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī which is a path to rest of mind and obedience to Allah.

### 4.8 Anthropomorphism and 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's View

The word "Anthropomorphism" is an ancient Greek philosophy as well as part of the Christian theology that was introduced into the Islamic theology[173] in the early period of Abbasid Dynasty by the extreme attributists among the theologians and philosophers[174]. It is known in Arabic language as "*at-Tashbīh*"[175] or "*at-Tajsīm*"[176]. In Islamic theology, it is also known as the same as "*Tashbīh* or *Tajsīm".*[177]

Linguistically, the word "*Tashbīh*" is the verbal noun of the word *Shabbaha*-شبه which means[178] to "liken something to another or to compare something to another" or "to make something similar to another in description[179] while ibn Ḥazm observes that it is to compare something with another in some part of its qualities and attributes[180]. It is viewed by Ibn Manẓūr as synonymous with "*Tamthīl*"[181]. It is, perhaps, because of this likening or comparison or similitude that made the theologians to choose the word "anthropomorphism" as the English equivalent due to its meaning which is "the beliefs or ideas of treating gods, animals or objects as if they have human attributes"[182].

Technically, anthropomorphism is all about ascribing the qualities and attributes of human beings to the Essence of Allah through comparison (*Tashbīh*). It is also viewed as ascribing or comparing the attributes of Allah to that of human beings among those attributes (*Ṣiffāt*) that are meant for Allah alone. It is on this note that the theologians divided *at-Tashbīh* (Anthropomorphism) into two: *Tashbīhu'l-Makhlūq bi'l-Khāliq* and *Tashbīhu'l- Khāliq bi'l-Makhlūq* [183].

With regards to the first division which is *Tashbīhu'l-Makhlūq bi'l-Khāliq*, it means ascribing or establishing the qualities, attributes and rights which are meant only for Allah, for the creatures in a way that shows the creatures possessing such quality. This

division includes the right of being worshipped, the actions of His Lordship such as provision, controlling etc., calling on other than Him among other rights, actions and attributes[184].

In the case of the second division which is *Tashbīhu'l-Khāliq bi'l-Makhlūq*, it means comparing or likening the attributes, which Allah has described Himself with in the Qur'ān or the Prophet has described Him with in the *Aḥādīth*, to the same attributes of human beings in a way that it is being equated with that of man. This includes comparing and equating the possession of lands by Allah to that of man; His face to that of man; His eyes to that of man; His sitting or reclining to that of man and others among those attributes that have been affirmed by the Glorious Qur'ān to have been possessed by Allah[185].

The first people to come up with this idea and belief are Hishām bin Al-Ḥakam Ar-Rāfiḍī, Hishām Al-Jawālīkī Ar-Rāfiḍi and the followers of the Karamites[186]. This issue has caused the emergence of some other idealists in addition to the existing ones before its introduction in the early period of the Abbasid Dynasty. Among these are the anthropomorphists, who were the initiators of this idea and were of the opinion that these attributes of living, hearing, seeing, speaking, possession of hands, face and others should be taken in their literal sense along with comparison to the creature (man). This is why they are known as "al-*Mushabbihūn* -the Anthropromorphists" or "*al-Mujassimūn*-The Corporealists".[187]

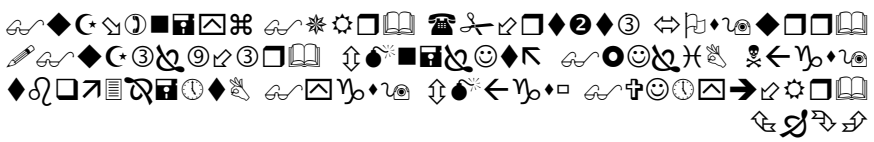
Another set of people in this discussion are the exponent of *Taᶜṭīl,* who divested Allah of all attributes and applied metaphorical interpretation of the anthropomorphic verses[188]. The Muᶜtazilites and Ashᶜarites are other major parties in the discussion. In the case of the Muᶜtazilities, they denied any resemblance between Allah and His creature (man) by interpreting the verses metaphorically. While the Ashᶜarites took the middle

course position by affirming the anthropomorphic description of Allah as contained in the Qur'ān and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ with the condition of not comparing them with that of the created beings and not asking how they are[189].

### 4.8.1 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's View

On the controversy on anthropomorphic verses in the Glorious Qur'ān, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has contributed his own efforts to the discussion by maintaining a compromising position of not only the Ash$^{c}$arites but also the *Salaf* as mentioned by Him. He has affirmed the anthropomorphic description of Allah as pronounced by the Qur'ān and the *Aḥādīth* without making *Tashbīh* (comparison) or *Ta$^{c}$ṭīl* (negation of the attributes) or *Tamthīl* (Similitude or likeness). The following anthropomorphic verses explain 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's position on some of these attributes:

(1) In *Sūratu-Yāsīn* (Q36):71 where Allah has attributed hands to Himself. The verse reads:



**Meaning:**

> See they not that it is we who have created for them - among the things which Our hands have fashioned-cattle, which are under their dominion?-

In his commentary on the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī' has refuted the opinion of the exponents of *Ta$^{c}$ṭīl* who interpreted the word "*al-Aydī-* الأيدى" metaphorically as "*al-Qudrah –*القدرة*"* which means (two) power(s) instead of (two) hands. They did this to negate the attribution of part of the body to Him because He is not a body. Some of them even said it means the Angels who are being commanded to act the way Allah wants them to act with regards to the creation. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī' says after this discussion thus:

أنه أمر عجيب وصنع غريب وليس بذاك ... ولايخفى ما فيه. [190]

**Meaning:**

Verily! This interpretation is amazing and strange. It is not like that (as interpreted) …and (the weakness) therein is not hidden.

Thereafter, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī affirms and presents his own opinion basing it on the view of the early pious predecessors (*Salaf*) as he says:

وأنت تعلم أن الآية من المتشابه عند السلف وهم لا يجعلون اليد مضافة إليه تعالى بمعنى القدرة أفردت- كيد الله فوق أيديهم- أوثنيت-كخلقت بيدى أو جمعت كماهنا –بل يثبتون اليد له عزوجل كما أثبتها لنفسه مع التنزيه الناطق به قوله سبحانه: "ليس كمثله شئ"، وارتضاه كثير ممن وفقه الله تعالى، ولاأرى الطاعنين عليهم إلا جهلة

**Meaning:**

It should be known to you that this verse is among the *Mutashābih* (not entirely clear) to the *Salaf*. They (the *Salaf*) do not make the attributive hand to Him (Allah) to mean *Al-Qudrah* (The Power) either singularly just as (mentioned in the verse that says) "The Hand of Allah is over their hands" – or pairs -just as (the verses that says) "I created with my two Hands" or in plural form, as in the case (of this verse) here-. They rather affirm the Hand for Allah, the Exalted, as He affirmed it for Himself along with the exoneration that is spoken of when He says: "There is nothing like Him*"*. Many people among the guided by Allah are contended on this and I have not seen anybody criticizing them (the *Salaf*) except the ignoramous.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī' expatiates further on his choice of this position of the *Salaf* by making references to many traditions of the Prophet, in which the Prophet affirmed the Hands for Allah, while commenting on *Sūratu Ṣād* (Q38):75 which says:



**Meaning:**

(Allah)) said: "O Iblis! What prevents Thee from prostrating Thyself to one whom I have created with My hands? art Thou haughty? or art Thou one of the high (and mighty) ones?"

After refuting the Mu$^{c}$tazilites metaphorical interpretation of the word "hands" in the verse as *al-Qudrah* (The Power) and *an-Ni$^{c}$mah* (The Blessing), 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī then says again:

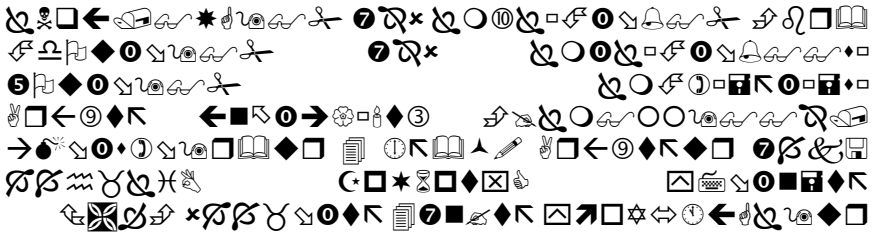
والسلف يقولون: اليد مفردة وغير مفردة ثابتة لله عزوجل على المعنى اللائق به سبحانه ولايقولون فى مثل هذا الموضع: إنها بمعنى القدرة أو النعمة. [191]

**Meaning:**

> The *Salaf* say: The Hand both single and double are well established for Allah, the Exalted, the way it befits Him, the Glorified. And they do not say in the likes of this spot that it means power or blessing.

In conclusion, his view on this is very clear and straight forward as he is supporting the position of the *Salaf* who are exonerating Allah from possessing body organs and the properties of the body but do not negate the attributes for Him as He affirmed it for Himself without asking how it is or likening it to that of the creature. This is also discussed under his interpretation of *Sūratu'l-Fatḥ* (Q48):10.[192]

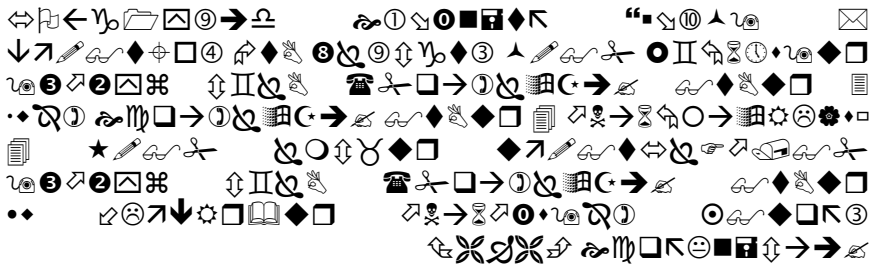
(ii) In the case of anthropomorphic verses on some parts of the body such as the face (*Al-Wajh*-الوجه), the side (*Al-Janb* -الجنب) and the eye (*Al-ᶜAyn*-العين) which Allah has affirmed and attributed to Himself as contained in *Sūratu-ṭ-Tāhā* (Q20):39 for the Eye which say:



**Meaning:**

> 'Throw (the child) into the chest, and throw (the chest) into the river: the river will cast Him up on the bank, and He will be taken up by one who is an enemy to me and an enemy to him': but I cast (the garment of) love over Thee from Me: and (this) In order that Thou mayest be reared under Mine eye.

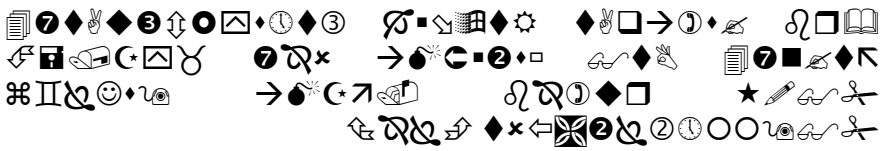
And in *Sūratu'l-Baqarah* (Q2):272 on the face of Allah, which says:



**Meaning:**

> It is not required of Thee (o Messenger., to set them on the right path, but Allah sets on the right path whom He pleaseth. whatever of good ye give benefits your own souls, and ye shall only do so seeking the "Face" of Allah. whatever good ye give, shall be rendered back to you, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly.

And in *Sūratu-z-Zumar* (Q39): 56 on the possession of side by Allah. It says:



**Meaning:**

> Lest the soul should (then) say: 'Ah! woe is me!- In that I neglected (my duty) towards Allah, and was but among those who mocked!'-

In his commentary on the above verses, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has followed the path of *Taᶜwīl* (interpretation figuratively) to preclude *Tashbīh* and at times in another verses of Qur'ān he makes *Tafwīd* –التفويض (consigning the meaning to Allah). He does this by relying on some of the *Salaf* if not all such as Ibn ᶜAbbas, Ibn ᶜUmar, Hafṣah, Mujāhid, Saᶜīd bin Jubayr and others, particularly on the meaning *Janbullah* –حنب الله which they said it means; *Ṭāᶜatullah* –طاعة الله (Obedience to Allah) or *Dhikrullah*-ذكر الله (Remembrance of Allah) or *Thawābullah* –ثواب الله (Reward of Allah) etc,. And at the end, he says:

> وبالجملة لا يمكن إبقاء الكلام على حقيقته لتنزهه عزوجل من الجنب بالمعنى الحقيقي ولم أقف على عد أحد من السلف إياه من الصفات السمعية ولا أعول على ما فى المواقف، وعلى فرض العد كلامهم فيها شهير وكلهم مجمعون على التنزيه وسبحان من ليس كمثله شئ وهو السميع البصير. [193]

**Meaning:**

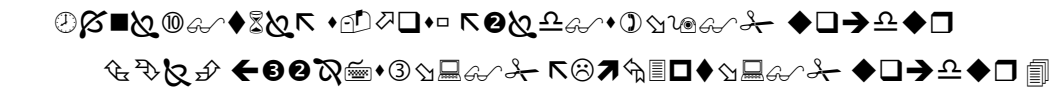
> Generally, it is not possible to leave the meaning on its *Ḥaqiqī* (literal) meaning in order to exonerate Him, the Exalted, from the literal meaning. I have not come across anyone among the *Salaf* counting this *(al-Janb)* as part of the attributes of Allah that is heard among them. I will not support what is in (the book of) *al-Mawāqif* and the obligation of counting their statements (giving it the literal meaning) as the famous. (To me) all the statements are trying to exonerate Allah (Transcendentalism), Glorified be He, whom there is nothing comparable to Him and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

He does the same while commenting on the verse of the face of Allah,-cited above –where he observes that the word "*Wajhullah*-وجه الله" has been interpreted by many people among the *Salaf* as the essence of Allah (*Dhātullah* –ذات الله) figuratively.

Thereafter, he makes, along with the *Salaf, Tafwīḍ* (consignment) of the real meaning all in the name of *at-Tanzīh* (the Transcendentalism).

The above position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has made some authors and scholars to label him as part of the *Mufawwiḍah* while some declare him to be Ash$^{c}$arite. However, this is far from justice to knowledge and scholarship as his figurative interpretation (*Ta$^{c}$wīl*) and consignment (*Tafwīd*) are not based on personal opinion but on the statements of the *Salaf,* even if not all of them. Likewise, he takes the position not out of negligent or self-desire but out of fear of not falling victim of *Tashbīh* or *Tamthīl* or *Ta$^{c}$ṭīl* and not to contradict the verse that declares Allah to be uncomparable to His creatures. This should not be counted as a flaw from the $^{c}$*Aqīdah* point of view and it should not be used to take him out of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* group or *Salafiyyah.* Otherwise, this will lead to labeling those *Salaf*, on whom he relies in his position, as *Mufawwiḍah* and *Mu$^{c}$aṭṭilah*, which is impossible.

(iii) In *Sūratu'l-'An$^{c}$ām* (Q6): 18, the elevation (*Al-Fawqiyyah*- الفوقية) which connotes Allah's supremacy and superiority, has been established for Allah above His creatures. The verse reads:



**Meaning:**

> He is the irresistible, (watching) from above over His worshippers;
> and He is the Wise, acquainted with all things.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has discussed, in details, the attribute of elevation (*Aṣ-Ṣiffatu'l-Fawqiyyah*-الصفة الفوقية) with references to many traditions and declaring it as the position of the *Salaf.* He also refutes the scholars, who interpreted the word "*Fawq* – فوق" to mean " the best" that the interpretation is against the human reasoning as there are verses on this *Khayriyyah* (goodness) of Allah above His creatures separately. He says:

وأنت تعلم أن مذهب السلف إثبات الفوقية لله تعالى كما نص عليه الإمام الطحاوي وغيره واستدلوا لذلك بنحو ألف دليل [194]

**Meaning:**

And you should be aware that (part of the creed of) the *Salaf* is to affirm the Supremacy (*al-Fawqiyyah*) for Allah, the Exalted as declared by 'al-'Imām aṭ-Ṭaḥāwī and others. They have supported this with up to one thousand proofs.

**(iv)** On the Divine Attribute of *'Istiwā'* which has been established for Allah in *Sūratu-ṭ-Ṭāhā* (Q20):5 which says:



**Meaning:**

(Allah) Most gracious is firmly established on the Throne (of authority).

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī is observed to have been inconsistent in his position on the *Istiwā* (Rising) of Allah over his throne. In his commentary on the above verse, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī presents different views of the scholars on the meaning of *'Al-'Istiwā'*. The views can be categories into three; those that interpreted it figuratively *(at-Ta'wīl*), those that consign the meaning to Allah after exonerating Allah from *Tashbīh and Tajsīm;* and those that affirm it for Allah without *Tashbīh, Ta$^{c}$wīl* and *Tajsīm.* It is interesting to note here that each of the views has supporters among the *Salaf*. This makes him to look into the etymological meaning of the word. He presents two meanings: *al-Istiqrār*-الإستقرار (Stability) and *al-Istīlā'*-الإستيلاء (taking possession of something), after which he goes along with ar-Rāzī in refuting and rejecting the meaning of *Istiwā'* as '*Istiqrār.* He shows his support for *Istīlā'* as the only alternative meaning of '*Istiwā'* but with the condition of figurative interpretation (*Ta'wīl*) and consignment (*Tafwīḍ*). He later concludes to take a position on this issue, after refuting those that attributed properties of the body to Allah, thus:

وأنا أميل إلى التأويل وعدم القول بالظواهرمع نفى اللوازم فى بعض ما ينسب إلى الله تعالى [195]

**Meaning:**

> I am subscribing to the figurative interpretation (*at-Ta'wīl*) and avoidance of saying anything on the obvious (apparent) meaning along with negating all the necessary things (to be negated) among those things they are attributing to Allah, the Exalted.

In his another book entitled *"Gharā'ibu'l-Ightirāb"*, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is discovered to have made another statement on the issue of *al-'Istiwā'* of Allah which is on "*Ithbātu'l-'Istiwā' lillahi* –إثبات الاستواء لله" i.e., affirming the attribute of *'Istiwā'* for Allah without any figurative interpretation (*Taᶜwīl*) or *Tashbīh* (Assimilation) or *Taᶜṭīl* (Negation). He says:

> الإستواء معلوم المعنى ووجه نسبته إلى الحق تعالى المجامع للتنزيه مجهول، لأن الصفات تنسب إلى كل ذات بما يليق بتلك الذات، وذات الحق ليس كمثله شئ فنسبة الصفات المتشابهة إليه تعالى ليست كنسبتها إلى غيره عزوجل، لأن كنه ذات الحق ليس من مدركات العقول لتكون صفته من مدركاتها[196].

**Meaning:**

> The meaning of *'al-'Istiwā'* is known but how to attribute it to the Truth (Allah), the all-encompassing of transcendentalism, is unknown. This is because, attributes are affiliated to every being the way it suit such essence (being). And the essence of the Truth (Allah) is not likened to anything. Thus, the way to affiliate attributes to Him will be different from others. This is because, His essence as the Truth (Allah) is not comprehensible talkless of comprehending His attributes.

The above statement of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, shows his inconsistent position, according to some scholars, on the issue as he is upholding *Taᶜwīl* in his *Tafsīr* while *Ithbāt* in another book of his. This, perhaps, is because of his exposure to more information on it as he finished writing his *Tafsīr* in the 1267 A.H after fifteen years while the writing of "*Gharā'bu'l-Ightirāb"* was completed in the year 1270A.H-three years after the completion of his *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as well as after his journey to Istanbūl and his meeting and discussions with Istanbūl scholars, especially *Shayku'l-Islam*, Aḥmad ᶜArif Ḥikmat, who benefited from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī as he also benefited from him. Thus, this may not be regarded as inconsistence (*al-Iḍtirāb* - الإضطراب) in contrary to the view of al-Bukhārī, but shifting of ground. To sum up his position on the issue, *Nafi* quoted him to have said:

> You should also be informed that many people regarded the attributes (of God), such as His ascendance (to the throne), hand, foot, descent to the lower heaven, laugh, wonder and the likes, as unexplainable issues. The Salafis' doctrine, and *Al-Ashᶜari,* God bless his soul, is among their notables, states in his *al-Ibānah* that although they are all affirmed attributes they lay beyond (the capacity of) reason; we are required to believe in them but not to conceive of God in terms of man's attributes in order not to put reason in opposition to reason.[197]

This above quotation has testified to his *Salafi* tendency in theological issue. However, it does not mean that he is flawless or infallible as discussed earlier.

### 4.9 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī and Some Other Theological Issues

The discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on theological issue is very wide as no theology-related verses is left unexplained even if it is going to be done in brief. Apart from the major fundamental issues in Islamic creed that have been discussed earlier, there are some other vital topics in theology that he has also discussed. It is on this note that this point shall be focusing on some of them as follows:

1. The Createdness of the Qur'ān - خلق القرآن
2. The Visibility of Allah - رؤية الله
3. *At-Tawassul* (Intercession) - التوسل
4. The Return of Prophet ᶜIsā - عودة نبي عيسى
5. The Finality of Prophet hood - ختم النبوة

#### 4.9.1 His view on the Createdness of the Qur'ān

As discussed under the attributes of Allah that *al-Kalām* (Speech) is among the essential attributes of Allah which are not identical but in addition to His essence. This means that He is *al-Mutakallim* (the Speech maker or Speaker) from whom speech originates and whose speech is not the same as He, Himself (essence) but adding more understanding to His essence. Thus, whatever speech or talk comes from anybody is ascribed to that personality and when it is out; it is heard by others, known and preserved by them as well there is the possibility of being read.

On the above basis, the speech of Allah to mankind, as guidance through His Messengers, who heard it from Him either directly or through intermediary (Angel), is from Him. This revelation to the messengers is the same but perhaps with additional information on the previous one and in different wording for a new messenger. Thus, the revelation to Prophet Musa which is known as *Tawrah;* Prophet ᶜIsā known as *Injīl;* Prophet Dawūd known as *Zabūrah*; Prophet Ibrahim known as *Ṣuḥuf* and Prophet Muhammad known as Qur'ān, are all *Kalāmullah*- The Speech of Allah[198]. This speech of Allah will never come to an end as He speaks the way He wills to whom He wills at different time. He will not cease to speak as it is this speech that will bring everything to an end and bring it back to another life.

One is struck by the assertion of the rationalists (Muᶜtazikites) on al-Qur'ān, the word of Allah. They asserted that it is created- *Makhlūq*- i.e., it is among the creatures of Allah.[199] The createdness of the Qur'ān, as a theological doctrine under the Muᶜtazilities concept of *Tawḥīd* and ᶜ*Adl* (Justice),[200] became necessary in the sect to establish the Unity of God in His essence and attributes by negating for Him all qualities, and most especially, the attribute of speech (*Kalām*) which then inspired this philosophical discussion of whether the Glorious Qur'ān is created or not?. This dogma started in the second century A.H. equivalent to eighth century C.E. as a mere discussion[201] but later resulted into calamity, victimization and terrorism for the opponent of Muᶜtazilites, who were majorly the *Muḥaddithūn* (Traditionists) in the early third century A.H./nineth century C.E. [202]

The Abbasid Caliph, al-Mā'mun, adopted this doctrinal position as a policy of the dynasty and declared it publicly for the masses in 212 A.H. / 827 C.E. He later, after six years of declaration, enforced it on the populace through questioning, especially, the scholars of *Ḥadīth* in the year 218 A.H./ 833 C.E.[203] which became known in the Islamic

history as *al-Miḥnah*[204] (The Inquisition or Affliction). The Muᶜtazilities position on the Qur'ān can be summed as follows:[205]

(a) The Qur'ān is literal

(b) The Qur'ān is not co-eternal, with Allah's essence

(c) The Qur'ān is an entity (*Shay'un*) different from Allah

(d) The Qur'ān is created, invented and originated both orally and written.

(e) The Qur'ān is not from Allah

(f) The Qur'ān is among the acts or actions of Allah.

Besides, in the *Ashᶜarī-Matūrīdī*, who were the upholders of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*'s doctrines theological doctrines, the Qur'ān is believed to be:[206] Allah's speech both literally and contextually; it is from Allah-the Most High, without asking how, it is eternal; it is pre-existent; uncreated, uninvented and has no origin in time or brought into existence; it is subsisting in the essence of Allah without separation or division. The *Salafiyyah* movement supported the Ashᶜarī-Matūrīdī's position but they (the *Salafiyyah*) go further to disagree with them (Ashᶜarites and Matūrīdites) in dividing Allah's speech (*Kalāmullah*) into psychological or spiritual speech (*al-Kalām an-Nafsī*) and oral or verbal speech (*al-Kalām al-Lafẓī*).[207] Thus, the Ash'ari-Maturidi sects intended with their assertion that "The Qur'ān is uncreated", the first division of *al-Kalām (an-Nafs)* while they believed that the recitation of the Qur'ān (*al-Lafẓī*) is created as it comes from the creatures.[208] The *Sūfī*'s opinion on this is not only in contrary to the Muᶜtazilite's stand but also in consonance directly with the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* by viewing the question, according to Henry Corbin, as artificial and wrongly framed[209]. While Shaykh Abdul'l-Qadir al-Jilāni explains that the word of Allah is not created.[210]

From the foregoing view points, it can be concluded that the assertions on the theological status of the Qur'ān are five (5) in totalities in summary from the theological schools:

(i) Al-Qur'ān is created – القرآن مخلوق

(ii) Al-Qur'ān, the Speech of Allah is uncreated – القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق

(iii) Al-Qur'ān is uncreated –referring to psychological speech
القرآن غير مخلوق- آي الكلام النفسى غير مخلوق

(iv) Al-Qur'ān, is created-referring to utterances of the Qur'ān
القرآن مخلوق- آي الكلام اللفظي مخلوق

(v) Al-Qur'ān is uncreated- referring to the speech of Allah in totalities – in letters and meaning
القرآن غير مخلوق، لفظه ومعناه

Thus, after a critical study of the issue, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, by virtue of his mammoth commentary, in his contributions to this discussion, has rejected the Mu$^{c}$tazilite's as well as other's position of the createdness of the Qur'ān and supported as well as advocated the adherent to the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah's* view of the Qur'ān as an uncreated Allah's speech that is recited with the tongue; heard with the ears; preserved in the hearts and written in *Maṣāḥif*.[211] Then, he refutes the use of Q43:3 as a proof for the createdness of the Qur'ān on the basis that, the word "*Ja$^{c}$ala"* which means "*Ṣayyara"* –i.e., to make or turn into – is a transitive verb that takes two objects but when it means "to create", it will only take an object. Thus, the word "*Ja$^{c}$ala"* in the below verses mean to make and not to create as it has two objects:



**Meaning:**

> Ha-Mim by the Book that makes things clear, we have made it a Qur'ān in Arabic, that ye may be able to understand (and learn wisdom).Q43:1-3

The above quoted verses can be analyzed grammatically in support of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī exposition thus: the subject (*Fāᶜil*) of the verb (*Fiᶜl*) "made-*Jaᶜala"* is We (*Naḥnu*-that is written in the Arabic version of the verse as *Nā* because it is *Ḍamīru Muttasil*-Pronoun) while the first object of the same verb is "it" referring to the Book and the second object is "Qur'ān" and the word "Arabic" is an adjective qualifying the second object.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then establishes another point based on the above verses on the uncreatedness of the utterances of the Qur'ān (*al-Kalām al-Lafẓī*) which differentiate the Ashᶜarī-Maturidi's theology among the *Ahlus-s-Sunnah* from the *Salafi* theology. He says:

> واستدل بالآية على أن القرآن مخلوق وأطالوا الكلام فى ذلك، وأجيب بأنه إن دل على المخلوقية فلا يدل على أكثر من مخلوقية الكلام اللفظى ولانزاع فيها [212]

**Meaning:**

> This verse (Q43:3) has been used as an evidence on the createdness of the Qur'ān. This has been discussed at length but my response is if (the word -*Jaᶜala*-) is implying the creation (of things), then it does not indicate the creation of verbal speech (of the Qur'ān). And there is no controversy in it.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī then presents one of the evidences of the *Ḥanābilah* who contended against the Muᶜtazilites on this issues. It is this *Ḥanābilah's* view that the proponents of *Salafi* theology uphold. Despite 'al-Imām 'al-'Alūsī's background and affiliation to *Ḥanafī-Ashᶜari* schools of thought, he still upholds the *Ḥambali's* view which currently is the *Salafi's* view on the createdness of the Qur'ān.

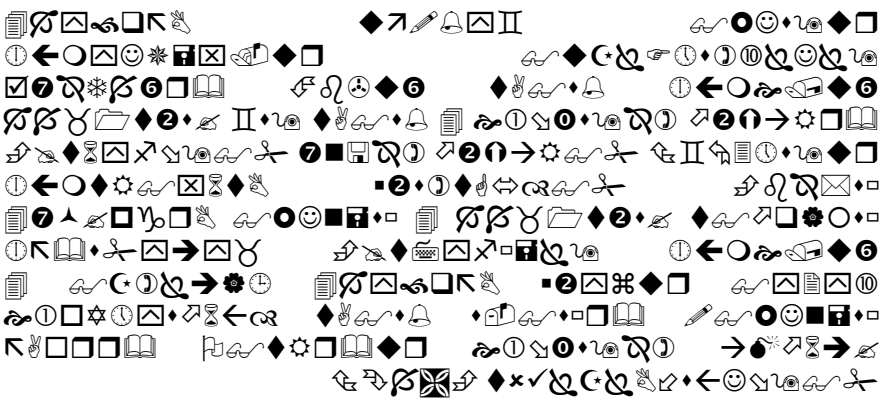
### 4.9.2 His Views on the Visibility of Allah

The visibility of Allah is known in Arabic as *Ru'yatullāh*-رؤية الله. According to Newby, the word *ru'ya*, which means vision, is a technical term in Islamic Mysticism that is used to refer to the beatific vision of God. In his own submission, Ash-Shurbājī views it as seeing Allah, the Exalted, in reality with the eyes or in the dream.[213] This means that

the visibility of Allah can be divided into His vision in this life or in the Hereafter and in the dream as the word "reality" means physically which is possible in both lives.

This issue, as a doctrinal principle, has caused ideological differences among the Muslim *Ummah* to the extent of not only threatening one another but also declaring one another as disbelievers. The *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāᶜah* including the Ashᶜarites[214] believes in the visibility of Allah on the Day of Judgment while the Muᶜtazilites, *Jahamiyyah, Khawārij* and the *Imāmiyyah* believe in contrary[215]. The Qur'ānic verse that serve as the main ground and basis for this discussion are:

(i) In *Sūratu'l-'Aᶜrāf* (Q7):143, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> When Moses came to the place appointed by us, and His Lord addressed him, He said: "O My Lord! Show (Thyself) to me, that I may look upon thee." Allah said: "By no means canst Thou see me (direct); but look upon the mount; if it abides in its place, then shalt Thou see me." when His Lord manifested His glory on the Mount, He made it As dust and Moses fell down In a swoon. When he recovered his senses He said: "Glory be to Thee!to Thee I turn In repentance, and I am the first to believe."

(ii) In *Sūratu'l- Qiyāmah* (Q75): 22-23, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> Some faces that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty);-.Looking towards their Lord;

(iii) In *Sūratu'l-Yūnus* (Q10): 26, Allah says:

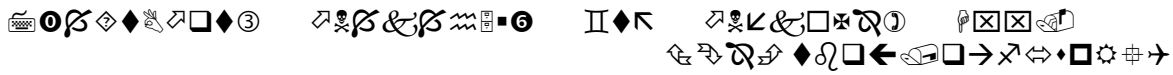




**Meaning:**

> To those who do right is a goodly (reward)- yea, more (than In measure)! no darkness nor Shame shall cover their faces! They are companions of the Garden; they will abide therein (for aye)!

(iv) In *Sūratu'l-Muṭaffifīn* (Q83):15, Allah says:



**Meaning:**

> Verily, from (the light of) their Lord, that Day, will They be veiled.

It should however be noted that they all agreed on the fact that it is impossible for anybody to see Allah in reality in this life with the two eyes. This is based on the *Ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of ᶜUmar bin Thābit Al-Ansārī that some of the companions of the Messenger of Allah informed him that the Messenger of Allah said on the day he was warning them of Dajjāl that:

> إنه مكتوب بين عينيه كافر يقرؤه من كره عمله، أو يقرؤه كل مؤمن. وقال:
> "تعلموا أنه لن يرى أحد منكم ربه عزوجل حتى يموت [216]

**Meaning:**

> (The word) *Kafir* (disbeliever) shall be written (on his face) in between his two eyes. Whoever dislikes his action will be able to read it as well as the believer. Then, he said: you should know that none of you shall see his Lord (in this life), the Exalted till he dies.

The divergence is on the vision in the hereafter. It is on this note that, the study delves into a critical examination of the Qur'ānic verses in line with the interpretation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī.*

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has afforded his audience the opportunity of knowing all the arguments that surround the credibility of seeing Allah from both proponents and opponents. First of all, he defines the word "*Ar-Ru'yah*-الرؤية"to be:

> الإدراك بالباصرة بعد التقليب [217]

**Meaning:**

> The perception of something with the eye after the reflection

After his brief exegesis of Q7:143, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī establishes the fact that the verse has been used as a proof by both the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*, who accept the visibility of God as reality, and the *Mu$^{c}$tazilites*, who reject it as saying it is an impossibility. He says:

> واستدل أهل السنة الموجوزون لرؤيته سبحانه بهذه الآية على جوازها فى الجملة، واستدل بها المعتزلة النفاة على خلاف ذلك، وقامت الحرب بينهما على ساق ...

**Meaning:**

> The *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*, who has permitted the visibility of Allah, the Glorified, has buttressed their permissibility of it with this verse generally. And the Mu$^{c}$tazilites has proved their negation of it with the verse also. Thus, (argumentative) battle broke out between them.

Thereafter, he presents the arguments of both based on this verse and examines them all in favour of the proponents of visibility of Allah, who are the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* including the Ash$^{c}$arites and Maturidites. The summary of this is hereby presented:[218]

**First Opinion**: This is the view of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* who observes that Prophet Musa did ask for Allah's visibility and nothing else. He asked because he knew it was possible. Had it been he was aware of its impossibility he would not have ventured into asking such as not just a reasonable person but also a Prophet among the five determined Prophets. To them, it is impossible for a Prophet to be unaware of his Creator and to say this, is the peak of ignorance. Likewise the visibility is possible as it was conditioned by Allah on the stability of the mountain, which is contingent. Thus, whatever is made contingent is possible. Similarly the negative answer by Allah, as contained in the verse, does not indicate impossibility but that he could not be seen in the present state of man.

**Second Opinion**: This is the view of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites who interpret the verse differently as their position and response to the position of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*. To them, Prophet Mūsa did not ask Allah for His visibility (*Ru'yāh*) but asked Him for *al-$^{c}$llmu-ḍ-Ḍarūrī* (The Immediate Knowledge or The Necessary Knowledge) and that he only used

the word "*Ru'yah*" metaphorically. Likewise, if it is agreed that Prophet Musa did ask for vision then it was because he was not aware of his prohibition and that is why his request was turned down by Allah. Also, if it is agreed that he did ask for Allah's visibility then this does not mean that he was not aware of its impossibility as he did that because his followers insisted in seeing Allah. So, he wanted to reply and certify them through divine speech of Allah. Similarly, the vision in the verse is about requesting Him to show him one of the signs of the Last Hour and not the visibility of Allah.

After a long presentation of their arguments and explanations, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī concludes in favour of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* by observing as follows:

(a) If the word "*Ru'yah*" is interpreted as "*ᶜIlmu Ḍarūrī*" then the word "*Naẓar*" i.e. looking at, should also be interpreted likewise. But, it can never be like that as the word "*Naẓar*" when it used along with the preposition "*ilā* -إلى" means vision and visibility (*Ru'yah*) and nothing else as it is being used in Arabic language. Thus, the Muᶜtazilites claim in this is baseless.

(b) The Muᶜtazilites' claim, that Prophet Mūsa was asking Allah to show him signs of the last Hour, is against the apparent meaning of the verse without any convincing proof.

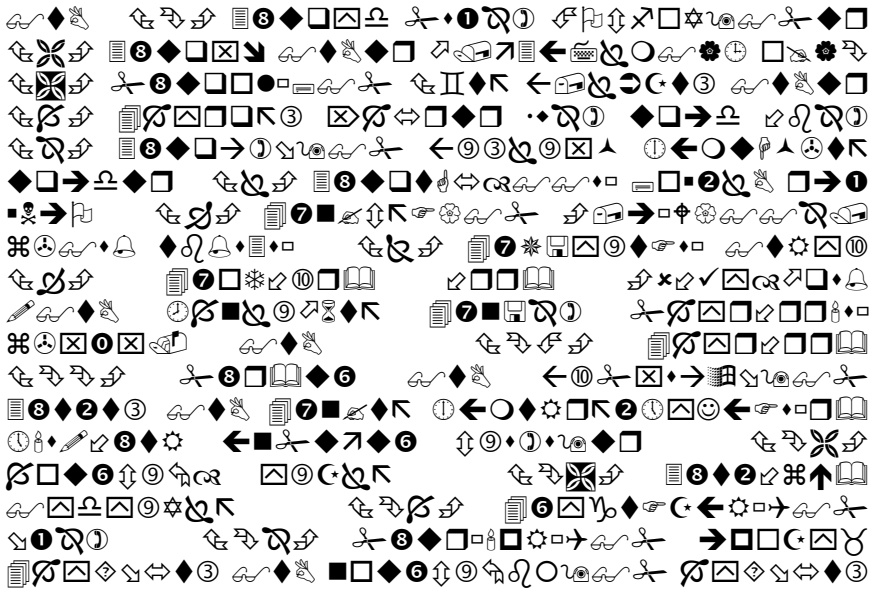
(c) Likewise, their claim that he was asking Allah about the vision as a response to his people is also without evidence. In contrary to that, Prophet Mūsa had been responding to the demand and request of his people personally such as when they requested him to make an idol for them as their Lord.

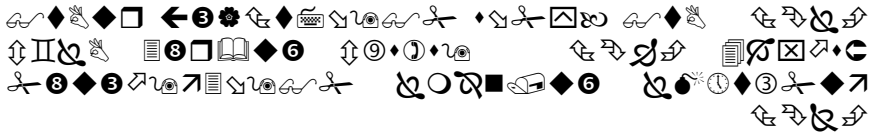
(d) With regards to their claim that Prophet Mūsa was not aware that it is impossible to see Allah, it is a foolish and feeble minded statement and a distorted part that no sensible person will follow. It is not debatable that the prophets are the best people

in knowing about the one who has sent them message. Thus, this statement of there is baseless.

After the above and other points on the refutation of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites position, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī disagrees to the opinion that says they all agree on the fact that Allah cannot be seen in this life before the Day of Judgment. He observes that it is the Mu$^{c}$tazilites that accept the impossibility in both worlds while the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* accept that He shall be seen in reality on the Day of Judgment and in Paradise but disagree among themselves on the possibility of seeing Him in this life. Majority of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* opines that it is only possible for the Prophet which he experienced in the night of ascension and descension (*Al-Isrā' wāl-Mi$^{c}$rāj-* الإسراء والمعراج) according to the opinion of $^{c}$Abdullah bin $^{c}$Abbas and Anas bin Malik while the minority uphold that it is not possible for all including the Prophet according to the opinion of $^{c}$Āishah.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī observes that the above discussion of whether the Prophet saw Allah in reality or not, is a serious debate among the *Salaf* right from the companions' era. Some of them opined that he did not see Him in any form while others said he saw Him. The basis for this difference is the exegesis of the verses 1 to 18 in *Sūratu-n-Najm* (Q53) which says:





**Meaning:**

> By the Star when it goes down, your companion is neither astray nor being misled. Nor does He say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him: He was taught by one mighty In power, endued with Wisdom: for He appeared (in stately form); while He was In the highest part of the horizon: then He approached and came closer, and was at a distance of but two bow-lengths or (Even) nearer; So did ((Allah)) convey the inspiration to His Servant- (conveyed) what He (meant) to convey. The (Prophet's) (mind and) heart In no way falsified that which He saw. Will ye then dispute with Him concerning what He saw? For indeed He saw Him at a second descent, Near the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass: Near it is the Garden of abode. Behold, the Lote-tree was shrouded (in Mystery unspeakable!). (His) sight never swerved, nor did it go wrong! For truly did He see, of the Signs of His Lord, the Greatest!

Thereafter, the second group differed on the nature and style of the seeing. Some said he saw Him in reality with his two eyes while others said he only saw the moderate illumination of Allah (*Nūrullāh*-نورالله). At the end of the whole discussion on this, 'al-Imām 'al-'Alūsī submits thus:

وأنا أقول برؤيته – ﷺ -ربه سبحانه وبدنوه منه سبحانه على الوجه اللائق

**Meaning:**

> I am supporting his vision of his Lord (Allah) the Glorified and His approach to Allah, the Glorified, in the suitable way.

The above submission of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is also supported as a way of harmonizing the evidences together. But, with further explanation as this issue is not an issue to be imagined or formulated by anybody. It is better solved as follows.

(i) The authentic *Ḥadīth* of ᶜĀishah, that Prophet did not see his Lord, should be understood as he did not with his two eyes because of the presence of another authentic evidence of Ibn ᶜAbbas that he did see Him. This is because; evidence that affirms an issue will be given preference over the one that is negating.

(ii) The vision should be understood to mean the illumination of Allah (*Nūrullāh* -نورالله ) in line with other authentic *Aḥādith* on it as the *Ḥadīth* of Ibn ᶜAbbas does put it categorically that he saw Him with the two eyes.

In furtherance of his discussion on the Visibility of Allah on the Day of Judgment, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī after bringing more evidences on its reality and acceptability as well as his refutation of Az-Zamakhshari's position on the meaning of *Nāẓirah* to be blessing and honour being expected from Allah, he concludes while commenting on *Sūratu'l-Qiyāmah* (Q75):22-23 thus:

> ثم إن أجهل الخلق عندهم المعتزلة وأشدهم عمى وأدناهم منزلة حيث أنكروا صحة رؤية من لا ظهر سواه بل لاموجود على الحقيقة إلا إياه و أدلة إنكارهم صحة رؤيته تعالى مذكورة مع ردودها فى كتب الكلام وكذا أدلة القوم على الصحة وكأني بك بعد الإحاطة وتدقيق النظر تميل إلى أنه سبحانه وتعالى يرى لكن لا من حيث ذاته سبحانه البحت ولا من حيث كل تجل حتى تجليه بنوره الشعشعانى الذى لا يطاق [219]

**Meaning:**

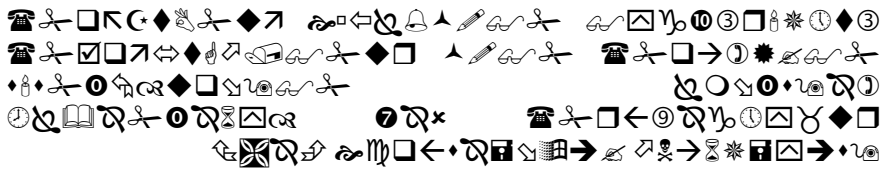
> Thereafter, the most ignorant of the creature with blindness and lowest in terms of level is the Muᶜtazilites for denying the authenticity of the visibility of the real existence (Allah) the evidences of their demal have been mentioned and refuted in the books of theology. Likewise, the evidences of those that accepted its authenticity have been mentioned. My position, after all the discussion with you, is that, the Exalted is going to be seen not in His absolute essence and not in totality of appearance to the extent of His shining light that cannot be withstood.

Based on the above quotation, it is clear that 'al-Imām al-Alūsī is supporting the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah's* position even though with a slight modification as stated in the quotation. This means He is going tom be seen in a way that befits His essence and magnificenHis essence and magnificent. Allah knows best.

### 4.9.3 His Views on *Al-Tawassul Wa'l- Wasilāh* (Intercession and Its Means)

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has, through his commentary on Q5:35 in his *Magnum Opus,* afforded his audience an insight into perhaps almost that had been said and available to him on intercession and its means (*at-Tawassul wal-Wasīlah*)

In his own contribution, he has not only agreed with other *Mufassirūn* that *al-Wasīlah* is the means of getting closer to Allah, the Most Exalted, through obedience acts and the avoidance of sins but also identified other meanings given to *al-Wasīlah* in his discussion on the Qur'ānic verses which says:



**Meaning:**

> O you who believe! Fear Allah and seek means (*Wasīlah*) of nearness to Him and strive hard on His way that you may besuccessful. (Q5:35).

He remarks, while relying on narrations, that *al-Wasīlah* in the above verse could also means; the need (*al-Ḥājah*) as well as a special place in the paradise for the Prophet even though the latter is not obviously closed to the discussion. In other words, *al-Wasīlah* is the means to an end while at-*Tawassul* is the use of *Wasīlah* to attain and achieve closeness to Allah or the favour of Allah in other to fulfill ones need. In his own submission, al-Ilorī views it as closeness to Allah by mentioning His beloved in order to achieve one's demand or take away any fear or seeking blessing in his supplication to remove any difficulty[220]. The author of the "Reliance of the Traveler"[221] defines it as "Supplicating to Allah by means of an intermediary, whether it is a living person, dead person, a good deed or a name or attributes of Allah- the Most High". All the definitions given on *at-Tawassul* made 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to observe that the aforementioned verse has been taken as a legal proof by some people for the validity of calling for help from the righteous ones by making them intermediaries between them and Allah. While some call on physically absent person or the deceased among the pious servants of Allah to achieve their desires thinking that it is part of the means to an end (*Al-Wasīlah*).

From 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion on *at-Tawassul*, it can be observed summarily that, he has identified various forms of *at-Tawassul* (Intercession); some of

which are legally and evidently valid and some are evidently not only invalid but also forbidden unanimously by the theologians while some remain controversial. These are:

(a) *At-Tawassul* through a living personality by requesting his supplication. This does not mean the one being requested is better and virtuous than the one that makes the request. Such as the case of the Prophet requesting ᶜUmar to pray for him at ᶜ*Umrah* and the case of the Prophet demanding the Muslim '*Ummah* to supplicate to Allah to grant him '*al-Wasīlah* etc. This is permissible evidently

(b) *At-Tawassul* through a deceased person by requesting the dead to supplicate for the seeker or intercede on his behalf. This is not only impermissible but also an innovation as it has not been reported that the pious predecessors did it. It is an extremism of the highest order in seeking nearness to Allah.

(c) *At-Tawassul* through the promise of Allah, out of His mercy and Majesty, to answer prayer and reward good deed, i.e., His ability to reward and answer prayer. Thus, both are regarded as part of His attributes of actions just like His act of overlooking and being pleased with someone are used as means (*Washīla*) in seeking refuge (*al-Istiᶜādhah*) as contained in Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim and other books of *Ḥadīth*. There is no dispute on the permissibility of this among the scholars.

(d) *At-Tawassul* through the seeker's good deed to achieve his desires. The legal validity of this is based on the *Ḥadīth* that describes the actions of the three men who were trapped in a cave by a rock that blocked its entrance. Hence, they could not exit until they supplicated to Allah though their good deed and they were relieved by Allah.

(e) *At-Tawassul* through Allah's Names and Attributes. This is also permissible in consonance with Qur'ānic verses and various prophetic supplications.

(f) *At-Tawassul* through the personality of a living person among the prophets, angels and saints. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī presents the polemical views of the scholars on this in two divisions; those that disallow it generally regardless of the rank and position of the person before Allah (including the Prophet) and those that disapprove it with the exception of the Prophet because he is the master of all the children of Adam.

He concludes in support of the *Salafiyyah's* theology that this kind of *at-Tawassul* is not permissible as the early Muslims did not do it. And that the available evidences are in support of *at-Tawassul* through the supplication of the Prophet and not his essence as in the *Ḥadīth* of ᶜUthmān bin Hunayf recorded by Trimidhi and Ibn Mājah. The *Ḥadīth* is authenticated by scholars of *Ḥadīth* including Al-Albāni.[222]

(g) *At-Tawassul* through the personality of the deceased among the Prophets and the saints. This is not permissible as it was not done by the *Ṣalaf.* Had it been permissible, ᶜUmar bin Khaṭṭāb would have done it directly instead of doing *Tawassul* through the supplication of al-Abbās, uncle of the Prophet. The Companions made a distinction between the living and dead Prophet in this issue.

(h) *At-Tawassul* through the *Jāhu* (Honour and Virtue) and the *Hurmah* (Sacredness and Sanctity) of the Prophet. In our opinion, this is different from *at-Tawassul* through his essence (*Dhāt*). 'Al-'Imām 'Al-Alūsī does not see anything wrong in this kind of *at-Tawassul* if the meaning of *Jāhu* is taking to be an attribute among Allah's attributes such as Love of Allah for the Prophet. He affirms that this has not been reported from any of the companion perhaps because of their fear of being turned to another thing like *Tawassul* through idols. He then remarks, despite this view of his, that there is no doubt in the fact that what Allah and His

Prophet explained and taught mankind and the companions lived by it, then became accepted by those that followed them is the most virtuous, all-encompassing, beneficial and acceptable.

(i) *At-Tawassul* through the *Jāhu* of others than the Prophet. According to 'al-'Imām 'al-Alūsī, there is nothing wrong in this also provided it is obvious that the person has status before Allah. But, if it is not obviously known then it should not be used as *at-Tawassul*. This is because; it is tantamount to claiming to know only what Allah knows.

(j) *At-Tawassul* by Supplication directly to the Saints and others both the living and the dead. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī remarks that this is not among the permissible *Tawassul* at all and it is better for the believers not to move closer to sanctuary of Allah as this, according to some scholars, is nothing but *Shirk* - Polytheism.

Other important contributions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to these theological discussions include the followings:

(i) His identification of the permissibility of visiting the graves generally and making *Taslīm* (greeting) on them only without requesting them for any need as the companions did not involve in this whenever they visited the Prophet's grave.

(ii) The legal validity of praying at the *Rawdah* by facing the *Qiblah* and not the Prophet's grave as done by the pious predecessors.

(iii) The fulfillment of needs through *at-Tawassul* by supplicating to other than Allah is nothing but mercy and favour in disguise as well as trails, tribulations and tests from Allah.

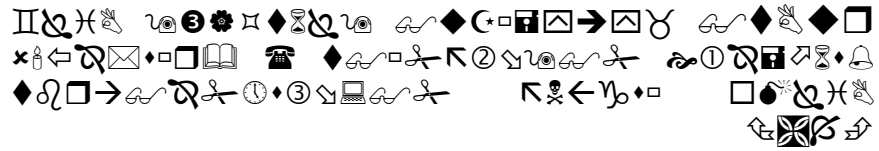
### 4.9.4 His Views on the Return of Prophet ᶜĪsā

Prophet ᶜIsā- May the Peace of Allah be upon him-, who is known in the Christendom as Jesus, is one of the Determined Prophets of Allah (*'Ulu'l-ᶜAzm*). In Islam and as part of the Muslim Creed, none of the prophets and messengers of Allah claimed to be adored as god. Likewise, none of them is related to Allah as son or brother or otherwise. It is expected of a Muslim to believe in them all without any discrimination. They all lived and died as confirmed by Allah in the Glorious Qur'ān *Sūratu'l-'Anbiyā'* (Q21): 8 and 34 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Nor did we give them bodies that ate no food, nor were they exempt from death.



**Meaning:**

> Or have they taken for worship (other) gods besides Him? Say, "Bring your convincing proof: This is the Message of those with me and the Message of those before me." but Most of them know not the truth, and so turn away.

There is no disagreement on the death of all the prophets and messengers of Allah as every soul shall taste death except in the case of Prophet ᶜĪsā (Jesus) whom the Muslim scholars differ on his death. The basis of this difference is the combination of some Qur'ānic verses on it. These verses include: *Sūratu'l-ᶜImran* (Q3): 55; *Sūratu-n-Nisā'* (Q4):157-158 and *Sūratu'l-Mā'idah* (Q5): 110.

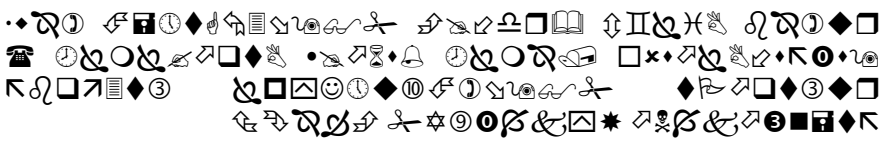
It should however be noted that belief in the return of Prophet ᶜĪsā and his descent is among the Islamic creeds according to the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* [223] while the *Ahmadiyyah* rejects this saying that he (Prophet ᶜĪsā) had died and will not return.[224] 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī has, through his commentary on the above mentioned verses in his *Magum Opus*,

afforded his audience with an insight into this discussion from which his own position on the issue is also made known.

In his own contributions to the discussion, he has not only agreed with all the *Mufassirūn* including the Mu$^{c}$tazilites *Mufassir* -Az-Zamakhshari, that Prophet $^{C}$Īsā was neither crucified nor killed by the Jews and that his death was a confusion for them as Allah put his resemblance in one of his disciples – the hypocrite among them. Thus, they did not know whether it was Prophet $^{C}$Īsā that was killed or their man as their man could not be seen [225]. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī explains that Prophet $^{C}$Īsā was raised to the sky alive and is still existing in the second heaven according to the *Ḥadīth* on *al-Isrā' wa'l-Mi$^{c}$rāj* (The Ascent and Descent of the Prophet to the Heaven). On this Al-Ash$^{c}$arī was quoted by Ṭahir Ḥussain to have written that:

> There is a consensus among the community of the faithful (*Ijma$^{c}$ul-'Ummah*) that Jesus was raised alive to the heavens[226].

On the return of Prophet $^{c}$Īsā', 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī believes and explains that he is coming back to this world to live for forty (40) years or complete his age as forty (40) years as contained in the narration of $^{c}$Abdullah bin $^{c}$Abbas[227]. His descent will be at the Damascus at the time of *Fajr* Prayer and in another narration it is said that he will appear on Mount '*Afīq* near Jerusalem which is still the same place of Damascus. This descent will be an opportunity for the people of the Book to believe in him as contained in *Sūratu-n-Nisā'* (Q4):159 which says:



**Meaning:**

> And there is none of the people of the Book but must believe In Him before His death; and on the Day of Judgment He will be a witness against them;-

On his commentary on *Sūratu-z-Zukhruf* (Q43):61 which declares Prophet ᶜĪsā as a great sign among other signs of the Last Hour, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī informs that the indicator to this conclusion in the verse is the pronoun "ۥ - *hu*-he" which is referring to the preceeding verses (57-60) on Prophet ᶜĪsā. It is under this commentary that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī brings some traditions to explain the duties and tasks to be performed by Prophet ᶜĪsā when he returns to this world. One of these traditions is the one narrated by Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah said:

> ينزلن ابن مريم حكما عدلا فليكسرن الصليب وليقتلن الخنزير وليضعن الجزية وليتركن القلاص فلا يسقى عليها وليذهبن الشحناء والتباغض والتحاسد وليدعون إلى المال فلا يقبله أحد [228]

**Meaning:**

> Surely, the son of Mary (Jesus) will soon descend amongst you and will judge mankind justly; he will break the cross, kill the pig, remove Jizyah (tax taken from the non-Muslims), abandon Hyades, and abolish enmity, hatred and jealousy. The people will call to the collection of money and nobody will accept it.

In another narration of the same *Ḥadīth*, Prophet ᶜĪsā will descend to make use of the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of Muhammad (ﷺ). This is sufficient as a response to the question posed by the *Aḥmadiyyah* that the coming of Prophet ᶜĪsā will still make him a prophet which will be against the finality of prophethood of prophet Muhammed. Since it is Allah, Himself Who has mentioned the descent and return of Prophet ᶜĪsā then it befits a Muslim to submit without any objection. It has even been established that his (Prophet ᶜIsa) descent will only be as a judge using the *Sharīᶜah* of this *Ummah* and not as a Prophet in order to fulfill some natural rights such as death and be buried like normal human being.

'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī concludes as we observed above that Prophet ᶜĪsā will die, after discharging the duties on him, like other human beings including the prophets such as getting marry and giving birth and thereafter will be buried in the room of the Prophet or in *Baytu'l-Maqdis*[229]. By this, the position of 'al-'Imām 'al-Alūsī on the return of Prophet

[C]Īsā is observed to be in line with the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah's* creed as established in the Glorious Qur'ān and *Sunnah*.

### 4.9.5 His Views on the Finality of Prophethood

The word "Finality of Prophethood" is technically known in Arabic as "*Khatmu – n-Nubuwwah-* ختْم النبوة" or "*Khatamu-n-Nubuwwah* –خَتَم النبوة". Thus, it comprises two words which are"*Khatam* or *Khatmu-*خَتَم/ختْم" and " *An-Nubuwwah* – النبوة".

Linguistically, the word *Khatam* or *Khatm* is from the verbal root of *Khatama* which means *Ṭaba*$^{c}$ –طبع, according to al-Harbi[230] i.e., to stamp or to seal[231] while *Khatam* or *Khatm* is a noun meaning last, or sealing[232]. Thus, when it is used along with something such as document then it means sealing it to secure its contents from being forged or edited. And when it is used as *Khātim* or *Khātam,* it means the last of a group[233]. In the case of *Nubuwwah,* as discussed earlier, it means Messengership as well as Prophethood. This is because all the messengers are Prophets.

Therefore, the word *Khatamu-n-Nubuwwah* means "the last or the seal of Prophethood which begins with Prophet ʾĀdām and ends with Prophet Muhammad - ﷺ- [234]. But, when it is used as "*Khatamu-n-Nabiyyin* –خَتم النبين" then, according to the lexicons,[235] it means the last of the Prophets for bringing the Prophethood to an end[236]. It is thus unanimously agreed upon by the Muslim *Ummah* [237] that Prophet Muhammad - ﷺ - is the seal and last of the Prophets in accordance with *Sūratu'l-Aḥzāb* (Q33):40 which says:



**Meaning:**

> Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (He is) the Messenger of Allah, and the seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things.

’Al-’Imām ’Al-’Alūsī, on the above verse, has contributed to the discussion on the finality of Prophethood of Muhammad - ﷺ - . First of all, he defines the word *al-Khātam* – الخاتم” as the name of something that is used to seal up or close something (*aṭ-Ṭābi*$^{c}$- الطابع). Thus, he defines *Khatama-n-Nabiyyīn* (خَاتَم النبين) that is mentioned in the above verse to mean something or someone that the prophets used to seal up or close their chain of prophethood which indirectly means the last or the seal of the prophets. He furthers his explanation by saying the word can also be recited as *Khātim* –خَاتِم instead of *Khātam*- (خَاتَم), according to the majority, which is an active subject (اسم فاعل) that is used to connote:

الذى ختم النبين، والمراد به آخرهم آيضا

**Meaning:**

> The one that seals the line of the prophets which means again ‘’the last of the prophets”

Based on the above, it can be concluded that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the last of the prophets as well as the seal of them and their prophethood from being diluted. Thus, as the word *Nabiyy* (Prophet) is more general than the word *Rasūl* (Messenger), then, according to ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī, Prophet Muhammad is not just the last, final and seal of the prophets but also the messengers. He says

والمراد بكونه - ﷺ -خاتمهم انقطاع حدوث وصف النبوة فى أحد من الثقلين بعد تحليه ﷺ - بها فى هذه النشأة

**Meaning:**

> The meaning of his (Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) being their last (Prophet) is the cutting off of any prophetic quality in anybody among both mankind and the Jinn after his being honour with it in this period.

Furthermore, ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī affirms the Prophet being the last of all the prophets as part of faith that a Muslim must believe in compulsorily and any attempt to deny it makes him a disbeliever as contained and affirmed by the Glorious Qur’ān and authentic traditions of the Prophet as well as the consensus (*Ijmā’*) of the *Ummah*. He says:

وكونه - ﷺ - خاتم النبين مما نطق به الكتاب وصدعت به السنة وأجمعت عليه الأمة فيكفر مدعى خلافه ويقتل إن أصر. ومن السنة ما أخرجه أحمد والبخارى ومسلم والنسائى وابن مردويه عن أبى هريرة أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: " مثلي و مثل الأنبياء من قبلي كمثل رجل بنى دارا بناء فأحسنه و أجمله إلا موضع لبنة من زاوية من زواياها فجعل الناس يطوفون به و يتعجبون له و يقولون: هلا وضعت هذه اللبنة فأنا اللبنة و أنا خاتم النبين". و صح عن جابر مرفوعا نحو هذا، و كذا عن أبي بن كعب، و أبي سعيد الخدري –رضي الله عنهم- و للشيخ محي الدين بن عربي قدس سره كلام في حديث اللبنة قد انتقده عليه جماعة من الأجلة فعليك بالتمسك بالكتاب و السنة والله تعالى الحافظ من الوقوع في المحنة[238]

**Meaning:**

And his (Muhammad) being the last of the Prophets is proclaimed by the Book (Glorious Qur'ān) and opened up by the *Sunnah* (Traditions of the Prophet) and the Muslim *Ummah* unanimously agree upon it. Thus, whoever acts in contrary has disbelieved and should be killed if persisted. Among the (evidences) in *Sunnah* is what is recorded by Aḥmad, Bukhārī, Muslim, Nisā'i and Ibn Mardawi on the authority of Abu Hurayrah that the Messenger of Allah-ﷺ said: "My likeness in relation to the prophets who came before me is like a man who erected a building and adorned this edifice with great beauty, but he left an empty niche without a brick. When people entered it, looked around the building and marvelled at its beauty, but wondered why a brick was missing from that niche? I am that missing brick and I am the last in the line of the prophets." The like of this *Ḥadīth* has also been authentically narrated by Jābir, Ubay bin Kaᶜb and Abu Saᶜīd al-Khudri- May Allah be pleased with them all-. Shaykh Muhyidīn bin ᶜArabī -May Allah sanctify his secret- has some comments on this *Ḥadīth* but has been criticized and replied by some eminent scholars. It is upon you to hold firm to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. May Allah save us from falling into calamity and catastrophe.

Other important contributions of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to this theological discussion includes the following issues which are related to clarify some other ambiguities on the finality of Prophethood by Prophet Muhammad-ﷺ :-

(i) The return and descent of Prophet 'Īsā does not negate this finality for Prophet Muhammad as Prophet 'Īsā is not coming back as a new Prophet or messenger but as a representative of Prophet Muhammad and a just judge by following the present Islamic law. This is also why he is not going to lead the people in prayer.

(ii) His rightful owner to the finality of Prophethood made Allah not to give him (Prophet Muhammad) a male heir after his demise. It has been observed that if Ibrahim, the son of the Prophet did not die, then he would have attained the level

of Prophethood[365]. He supports this with the *Ḥadīth* narrated by ᶜAbdullah bin Abi Awfi that he saw Ibrahim the son of Prophet Muhammad-ﷺ-when he died. Then, he said about him:

مات صغيرا ولوقضى بعد محمدﷺ-نبي عاش ابنه ابرهيم ولكن لا نبى بعده

**Meaning:**

> He (Ibrahim) died at childhood. Had, it been that Allah has decreed that there would be a Prophet after Muhammad then his son, Ibrahim would have lived. But, there is no Prophet after him

Another narration is reported by As-Sadī on the authority of Anās bin Malik who said that Ibrahim, the son of Muhammad died young. Had he lived, he would have become a Prophet. But, he died because your Prophet is the last of the Prophets. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī later concludes that this is special to Ibrahim only among the sons of the Prophet. Had it been there are other sons they might not be Prophets.

However, in our opinion, the above is also an assumption from him which may or not occur. The most obvious is that, had there been Sons(s) after the demise of the Prophet for him, the *Ummah* would have given him almost the regard that was given to his father, the Prophet. The close example to this is the case of the *Ahlu'l-Bayt* (Household of the Prophet) that people, especially the Shi'ites, raised in high esteem that is closer to the level of Prophethood.

(iii) Allah's negation of him being the biological father of anybody among the Muslim *Ummah* including his two grandsons- Ḥasan and Ḥusayn. If not, these two personalities among the companions would have been given the same regard[368]. It should however be noted that they were honoured and respected as his sons directly and if not for this verse (Q33:40) that negates his being biological father of anybody, both would have received that honour of Prophethood.

Based on the above discussions, it can be concluded that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's faith is not only in line with that of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* but also the *Salafiyyah*. The questions, raised by the opponents of this finality of Porphethood for Prophet Muhammad such as the *Qadianiyyah*, some Philosophers and those that think in their direction, have been answered satisfactorily by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. His submission on it can be used to resolve the contentions among the contemporary Muslims if all and sundry are sincere in their claims for Allah, His Messenger and the Unity of the *Ummah*.

## 4.10 Conclusion

It is obvious from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's discussion on theology-related verses of the Glorious Qur'ān that the convergent theological issues, which are the six articles of faith, are understandable and undebatable. It should, however, be noted that differences in understanding will arise as people are not equally talented. Thus, this is bound to happen on religious texts. And whever it happens this way, the discussion should be refered to the early period of Islam as Allah has refered the Muslims in Q4:59. With this, the convergent creed will not be a means of division among the contemporary Muslims.

With regards to the divergent theological issues, there is bound to be differences of opinions on the understanding of these issues. This is because of the availability of contradictory evidences or multiple meanings of an Arabic word or philosophical thinking in defence of individual sect or lack of reference to the pristine Islam among others. In this kind of situation, the contemporary Muslims are to apply the following points while debating or correcting any faulty Muslim:

a. Softness in speech and not harshness.
b. Compassion in discussion and not to be merciless.
c. Identification of the category of the theological issue to be discussed whether convergent or divergent.

d. Giving of excuse to one another when there is theological flaw especially in the divergent theological issues.
e. Not to be in haste to pass judgement on one another until explanation is done.
f. Declaration of one another as disbeliever should be avoided except in extreme cases such as belying the Oneness of Allah and Prophethood of Muhammad among others. Rather, the action, instead of the personality, should be tackled and tagged as a disbelief act.
g. Consideration of the explanation of the exegetes on the Qur'ānic verses to be used as proofs in discussion before their application in order to avoid misapplication of evidences.

There is need for further research on this issue of theological anomalies through which the contemporary Muslims are labelling one another with different kinds of terms. The major among these terms are: *Mushrik* (Polytheist); *Kāfir* (Disbeliever) and *Murtadd* (Apostate). However, the most common used term in the contemporary society is the word *Kāfir* which is often enunciated whenever there is mutual disagreement on any theological issue, especially, with regards to belief in Allah and the Messengership of Muhammad-ﷺ-.

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64. This is a book on the meaning of Arabic words. 'Al-'Alūsī does not mention the author, who is Ismaᶜil bin Ḥumayd al-Jawhari (d.1002). It is of two volumes.

65. This is a book of *Tafsīr* that delves mostly into the literary meaning of Qur'ānic words. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī does not also mention then author-in this discussion-who is az-Zamakhsharī (d.538 A.H./1144 C.E.), a Muᶜtazilite Scholar and *Mufassīr.*

66. His book of reference is not mentioned by 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī. It may be, perhaps, the book of *Alfiyatu Ibn Malik*.

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71. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (London: Adam Charles Black, 1968) 115. Accessed on 3rd October, 2016; http://archieve,or/details/polfy-CY7YNVnvfwgyDJnT.

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74. Kelly,…125.

75. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*…

76. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*…

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79. This Cousin of his is ᶜAli bin Aḥmad 'al-'Alūsī.

80. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*,…160.

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82. Others include al-Ḥākim Abu Ḥātim, Ibn Abi Shaybah, and Abu Yaᶜlā. It is authenticated by Al-Albānī in his *Silsilatu'l-Aḥādīth-s-Ṣaḥīḥah*, *Ḥadīth* number 199.

83. ᶜAli bin Ismaᶜil, Al-'Ashᶜari, *'al-'Ibānah ᶜan 'Uṣuli-d-Diyānah,…* 56-57.

84. M.M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy,* 1 (Otto: Harasowitz Wiesbadan, 1963) 2000.

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85. Y.K. Jimoh, "A Study of Selected Theme in Ar-Rāzī's Mafātīḥu'l-Ghayb" (Ph.D. Thesis, the Department of Religions, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin, 2006) 239.

87. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*, 2,…13.

88. The Arabic word *Tanwīn* is known in English language by the oritentalists as Nunation or n 'ing'. This applies to the three vowel signs *(Fātiḥah, Kasrah and Dammah)* when they are doubled in writing at the end of a word. See Hans Wehr, *An Introduction to Modern Literary Arabic*, ed. D. Cowan (Lagos: Academic Press, 1983) 6.

89. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*,…13 (Part 26) 469.

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91. Rūḥī al-Baᶜalabaki, *Al-Mawrid: A Modern Arabic English Dictionary,* 7th Edition (Beirut: Daru'l-ᶜIlm lil-Malayin, 1995) 306.

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93. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*,… 1 (Part 1) 134.

94. 'Al-'Alūsī, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*,…548.

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# CHAPTER FIVE

# CONCLUSION

## 5.1 Summary

An attempt has been made, so far, to examine some fundamental theological issues in Islam. The examination is based on the exegetical study of some theology-related verses of the Glorious Qur'ān as interpreted and discussed by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his monumental and encyclopedic work on *Tafsīru'l*-Qur'ān (Exegesis of the Qur'ān) entitled: "*Rūḥu'l-Ma'ānī fī Tafsīri'l-Qur'āni'l-ᶜAẓim wa-s-Sabᶜi'l-Mathānī"* (The Spirit of Meanings of the Exegesis of the Glorious Qur'ān and the Seven Reoccurrence). One of the fundamental and authentic sources of theology in Islam is the Qur'ān which its misinterpretation, by people of different backgrounds and motives, has made theology to be a dependable and an in-separable branch of knowledge from *Tafsīr*. Thus, *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* was chosen for this study because of the author's interest and vast erudition in theological issues to the extent of being nicknamed as the Ottoman Theologian.[1]

The first chapter, which is the introductory part of this study, gave insight information into the topic by laying background knowledge, the motives behind this research and the set objective to be achieved. It also included the areas to be examined among the theological issues as well as those areas not to be examined as the issues are numerous to be covered by this research.

In the second chapter, an effort had been made to present the birth place of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, which is Baghdād, as a highly intellectual environment that was full of various scholars of different fields[2] such as Jurists, Exegetes, Grammarian, Poet, *Sūfīs*, Philosophers and Scientists, who were of different level in their interpretations of the Qur'ān. It was originally built by Caliph al-Mansūr in the year 145 A.H./762 C.E.[3] It was in this scholarship environment that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was born in the month of

*Shaᶜbān* 14th 1217 A.H./December 11th 1803 C.E. It should be recalled that his family background was a family of scholars who had left indelible legacy in Iraq particularly and the Muslim world generally by producing high reputable scholars including his father, ᶜAbdullah Ṣalaḥu-d-Dīn, who was the first teacher of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.[4]

The life of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has been portrayed in this study as a pupil under the tutelage of his father who taught him *Fiqhu-sh-Shāfiᶜ* at his early age before going out to learn under other teachers. He was not only a *Ḥafiẓu'l-Qur'ān* (i.e. Memorizer of the Qur'ān) at the age of seven along with some other books such as *Matnu'l-Ajrūmiyyah, Alfiyatu Ibn Mālik* and many others but also a student under a Mystic Teacher, Diya'ud-Din an-Naqushabandi who was responsible for the establishment and spread of *Naqushabandiyyah Ṭarīqah* in Baghdād. This made him to have affiliation with the *Sūfī* order of *an-Naqushabanddiyyah* which was regarded then as one of the *Sunni-Sufi* order. He is a researcher, who read very wide in almost all the fields available to him as he did not only read Islamic books but also other religious books and the books of sciences such as that of Aristotle, Plato Ibn Sina and others.

Furthermore, he was not only portrayed as a prolific writer who started to write at the age of thirteen when he wrote his first book entitled:"*Ḥāshiyatu Sharḥi'l-Qaṭar*- حاشية شرح القطر" but also a preacher since the age of twenty five in the presence of both his teachers and other scholars in the city as well as a teacher since his tender age till his age of puberty with utmost passion for knowledge dissemination to the extent of awarding him an honorary title of "Teacher of the *Astanah*". He was not only a religious and devoted person but also a reviver of *Sunnah* as well as an advocate of it by his sayings and actions according to the practice and understanding of the *As-Salafu-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ*. He attained the Muftiship of Baghdād at the age of thirty-three (33) years and won both honorary and model award to the extent of becoming a celebrity throughout the whole region of

Ottoman Empire. He was a rich but ascetic man who was living comfortably according to his source of income from his teaching activities.

'Al-'Imān 'Al-'Alūsī had been described as an accessible man to the less privileged people especially the students and the destitute as well as an upholder of the truth, who did not fear the abuse and hatred of the people which later landed him in trouble and crises with the ruling political power of the time. He did serve as an adviser to Governor Dāwud which made him to involve in the then politics. He was not only an opponent of any ideology or action that is in contrary to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* but also a follower of *Shāfiᶜ* legal school by name and *Ḥanafi* legal school by judgment and practice which portrayed him as a *Sunni* and *Salafi* in thought and practice. He traveled throughout the cities in Ottoman Empire. As a prolific writer, he authored many works that cover books, articles, commentaries and poems across different fields such as *Tafsīr* (Qur'ānic Exegesis), *ᶜAqīdah* (Islamic Creed and other Religious Creed), *Tārīkh* ( History), Arabic Grammar and others.

In the chapter three of this study, it has been established that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī is not only an exegesis of the Qur'ān but also a compendium and an encyclopedia of various branches of both Islamic and Arabic Sciences as well as the modern Sciences.[5] Its encyclopedic nature has generated a considerable controversy among the Islamic Scholars of *Tafsīr* with regards to its classification under the kind of *Tafsīr*. Some of them such as Adh-Dhahabi categorized it as an example of *Tafsīr bi-r-Ra'y* (Opinion-Based *Tafsīr*) that is praiseworthy.[6] Some others like Yasir Qadhi Portrayed it as a *Sūfī*-oriented *Tafsīr* which is to be avoided.[7] It is viewed by others like AZ-Zarqānī as an example of *Tafsīr bi'l-Ishārah* (*Tafsīr* based on Indication)[8]. While Muhammad ᶜAli Aṣ-Ṣabūnī, classified it as an all-encompassing *Tafsīr* of all the three kinds of *Tafsīr*.[9]

It was, however, concluded that the *Tafsīr* is better classified under Opinion-Based *Tafsīr* that is praiseworthy which has also taken into consideration the *Ishārah* part of the *Tafsīr* to be part of *Ra'y*. This is because; the author has approached the exegesis of the Qur'ān in a unique way different from other *Tafsīr* works of the same standard or of higher standard than it, an approach that makes the book to be informative and educative. 'Al-'Imam 'Al-'Alūsī has logically connected a preceding verse or chapter to another verse or chapter to be discussed along with a brief introduction to the *Sūrah* where he discussed the other names of the *Sūrah* under discussion with their authenticity and weakness. This approach would be followed by the reason for the revelation of a verse or chapter where necessary and after which the author followed it by a grammatical analysis and linguistic meaning supported by other verses, *Ḥadīth*, statements of the companions and their students as well as poetical lines where necessary.

It was also established in the earlier chapters that the author of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* makes use of *Isrā'iliyyāt* narrations where necessary for further explanation if they are authentic and to reject them if they are weak or fabricated. Thus, this *Tafsīr* is discussed to be unique in this regard of making verification of *Aḥadīth*. It has also been explained previously that the author would not leave any jurisprudence – related verses of the Qur'ān unanalyzed. He does this by quoting and making references to opinions of the Islamic Jurists of both the *Sunni* and the *Shi'a* Schools of thought

Furthermore, it should be recalled that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī paid special attention to the interpretation made by the other Islamic sects other than the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* for the purpose of correcting them and expose these to the populace for protection against falling into it. Thus, he did reject the interpretation of the Shi'ites, Mu'tazilites, Kharijites and the extremists among the *Sūfīs* on the Qur'ān constructively with proofs. It was also established that his interpretation of some verses of the Qur'ān through *Ishārah* was done

either for a benefit therein or refutation of such *Ishārah* meanings from their claimers even though he was not free from error.

It had been stated in the earlier discussions that the sources of information for this *Tafsīr* book cut across the books of *Tafsīr*, *Aḥadīth* (traditions of the Prophet), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence), *Tārīkh* (History), Arabic Grammar (*Naḥw*) and Dictionaries among others. Many Scholars in different fields of knowledge were also discussed to have been quoted by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his attempt to bring out his encyclopedia book of *Tafsīr* which took him almost fifteen (15) years before he could finish it.[10]

In the chapter four of this study which was designed to focus on the discussion of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's view on some selected theological issues in his *Tafsīr*. The theological discussions were majorly centered on the six fundamental articles of faith in Islam from exegetical point of view. Each of the articles is discussed vividly with a view to knowing the position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on them theologically.

With regards to the Islamic Monotheism (at –*Tawḥīd*), 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was discussed earlier to have believed with conviction in the three divisions of *Tawḥīd*; *ar-Rubūbiyyah* (Lordship of Allah), *al-'Ulūhiyyah* (Worship of Allah) and *al-'Asmā'u wa-ṣ-Ṣiffāt* (Names and Attributes of Allah). He affirmed the qualities of Allāh being the Lord of everything to be embedded in the word "*Rabbu*" which according to him, means the Master, the Cherisher, the Provider, the Protector, Who has total concern for His slaves as if He has no other slaves and that the word "*Rabbu*" is the first name of Allah to be known to mankind. He also affirmed that the existence of Allah brings about the existence of other things. His existence is referred, according to 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, to as the Necessary Existent while that of other creatures is Contingent Existent.

On the Essence of God (*Dhātullah*-ذات الله ), 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī discusses that the word "Allah– الله" is the proper name of God that shows His real essence as the name is a

non-derivative name and stands as the main name which all other names and attributes are depending upon. As discussed earlier, he explains that the name is special to God as each of the letters composing the word has an independent meaning to the extent that if they are to be removed one by one, the remaining letter(s) will still be referring to God, the Almighty. It is by the name that the *Kalimatu-sh-Shahādah* (Statement of Testimony) becomes valid and acceptable. It was discussed in the earlier chapters that despite all the discussions and explanations on the essence of Allah by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, he believes that Allah's essence is still incomprehensible and unfathomable absolutely as well as transcendental

On the Attributive of Allah, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī viewed, as discussed earlier, that these attributes are also called the attributive names (*'Asmā'u-ṣ-Ṣiffāt* - أسماء الصفات ) of Allah and should be ascribed to Him according to the *Salaf* and in contrary to the Mu'tazilites who denied those attributes of Allāh thinking that it will lead to the plurality of Allah. Similarly, explanations had been made that 'al-'Imām'al-'Alūsī does not only believe that Allah has ninety-nine names as mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* of Abu Hurayrah but also believes that His names are not limited to ninety-nine but are more than that according to the *Ḥadīth* of ᶜAbdullah bin Masᶜud. It was also discussed previously that 'al-'Imām'al-'Alūsī divided these attributives names into different division and groups as: Essential Attributes, Constant Attributes, Subsidiary Attributes and Negative Attributes. It was also explained thereafter that some of the attributes are specifically for Allah and not to be shared by any creature and some are shareable while some are not to be attributed to Him but describing His actions only as they belittle Him in His essence and others that are allowed to be ascribed to Him but along with the opposite ones in order to neutralize the negative connotation they carry.

On the belief in the Angels, it should be recalled that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī believed in them as the messengers of Allah in charge of certain affairs assigned to them by Allah and that they are not stars, as believed by some philosophers, or daughters of Allah. In the case of the belief in the Books and Messengers, he affirmed his belief in them all with the Qur'ān as the last book that comprises all the messages in the previous books and Prophet Muhammad as last of the Prophets and messengers. It was explained earlier that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī identified the total number of the prophets and messengers to be one hundred and twenty-four thousand (124,000) and three hundred and thirteen (313) respectively in contrary to some scholars among the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* who asserted that it is part of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah'*s creeds to believe that their total number is only known to Allah. The difference between a prophet and messenger was also expatiated on from the views of the scholars before the submission of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was given.

The discussion on freewill and pre-destination had generated a lot of controversy within and outside the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī, as usual, did not leave the Mu'tazilites on this issue pardoned. He rejected the Ash'arites doctrine of Acquisition (*al-Kasb*) and affirmed his denial of causation (*Sabab*) systematically in natural phenomena as well as establishing the fact that Allah has influence in every natural phenomenon. He also affirmed, along with some other scholars like Ibn Qayyim that Allah's judgment can be rationalized which portrayed him as an embodiment of the ideas of the early period of Islam.

Apart from the fundamental articles of Islamic Faith, that had been discussed in the previous chapter, some other theological issues were identified from 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's theological discussions and discussed accordingly. These other issues include; the createdness of the Qur'ān, Visibility of Allah, *al-Tawassul wa'l-Wasīlah* (Intercession and its means), return of prophet Isa and the finality of prophet-hood.

It was discussed that the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* and Mu'tazilites differ on the nature of the Qur'ān as to whether it is created of not. The *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* which include the Ashᶜanites and Maturidites were discussed to have believed that the Qur'ān is Allah's speech literally and contextually with being preexistent, uncreated, unquestionably beyond invention and without origin in time. However, they later divided Allah's speech into *al-Kalāmu-n-Nafsī* (psychological or spiritual speech) and *al-Kalāmu-l-Lafẓī* (oral or verbal speech). It is on this note they declare that it is the psychological or spiritual speech of Allah that is uncreated while the verbal speech is created as it comes from the creatures.[11] As discussed earlier, this position of the *Ashᶜari-Matūrīdī* is denied and rejected by the *Salafiyyah* including the Hambali school of law and this was supported by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

On the visibility of Allah, it was discussed that the Mu'tazilites denied this but 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in support of the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah* accepted its reality and possibility based on many evidences from the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. In the previous discussion, it was established that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had contributed to the issue of intercession (*at-Tawassul*) by identifying the permissible from the forbidden and the controversial ones. The previous chapter has equally discussed the return and descent of prophet ᶜIsa to be reality and must be believed in because of the available evidences in both the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. It was however explained that the *Qadianiyyah* disbelieved in this because they believed that he died. On the finality of prophethood by Prophet Muhammad, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was discussed to have affirmed his faith in him being the last prophet and messenger and that the return of prophet ᶜIsa will not be coming back as a new prophet but as a representative of the Prophet and a judge by the *Sharīᶜah* of Allah that was given to Prophet Muhammad.

## 5.2 Observations

In our critical study of this *Tafsīr* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, it has been observed that the motive of the author in writing this work was to uncover all the available knowledge at his disposal in line with the fact that the Qur'ān itself has left nothing unanalyzed in all aspect of human life even if it is in concise and not in details. Thus, the work was written out of deep and extensive research by the author which is the major factor that makes the work encyclopedic in nature as a researcher will want to put down everything he has researched on.

The complexity of the society in which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī grew up from made him to have a wider scope of religious sectarianism as well as different ideas and ideologies including various philosophical thoughts which led to different interpretations of the Glorious Qur'ān towards the viewpoints of their doctrinal schools. This, perhaps, also developed his interest in writing his monumental work of *Tafsīr* in order to purify his society in general and individual particularly from heretic and fallacious ideas which had saturated the society. Thus, it became imperative for him to identify and refute the ideas which cut across the Mu$^{c}$tazilites, Shi'ites, Ash$^{c}$arites, *Sūfī* and the Philosophers among others.

It was observed that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī, as the author of *Rūḥu'l-Ma$^{c}$ānī* on the exegesis of the Qur'ān, had tried to emancipate himself intellectually by not leaning to any *Madh-hab* or sect which may enslave his thought and practice. It was obviously clear that he was only searching for the truth and not matter to him where the truth is coming from even his opponents. That is why, despite his refutation of Mu$^{c}$tazilites' ideas and thoughts, he still deem it correct to benefit from az-Zamakhshari, a leading Exegete of the Mu$^{c}$tazilites, grammatically. It is, perhaps, this stand of him that made him closer to the *Ṣalāfiyyah* group than any other Islamic sects. Likewise, his affiliation to the

*Naqushabandiyyah Ṣūfī* order did not hinder him from pointing out the extreme practices of the *Ṣūfīs* whenever the needs arise during the process of interpreting any related verse(s). Unlike the contemporary scholars who do not see any weakness in whichever group they are affiliated to but do in others which they are not inclined to.

It was equally observed that his conclusion on any issue raised for discussion in his *Tafsīr* is not based in his whims and caprices but on the available evidences to him and in case he is not sure of the authenticity of the proofs, he usually hangs his conclusion on the authenticity of the proof which means if it is not authentic then that is not his position. Likewise, it is usually after quoting from the pros and cons of the issue and giving analysis on the evidences of both sides with the reasons for rejecting one and accepting the other or rejecting the two sides and bring in his own view. All these is because of his versed and versatile erudition which are not all that common if not unavailable in many of the contemporary scholars as they make quick judgment and conclusion without being well informed about the various views and opinions on such issue.

His determination to uphold the truth landed him in trouble and initially contributed to his downfall, as a trial, before he was later elevated. An action that is very rare in the scholars presently where their actions are parallel to their sayings all in the name of not wanting to be persecuted by the ruling power, thus, causing series of corrupt practices in the society. He is equally observed to have respect and honor for the elders among the scholars by addressing them politely and giving them honorable appellations like *Sādatana* which means our Master even though they are not in good terms in terms of Creeds and Practices.

The hidden meanings mentioned by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī were very minute compare to the volumes of his *Tafsīr*. This is observed to be an indication that his primary motives was not to write a *Tafsīr* based on *Ishārah* (Hidden Meanings). It is an

undisputable fact that *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* contains some inner meanings of some verses. However, it is observed after a critical study of it that the inner meaning (*Ishārah*) is given after his explanations and exegeses of a set of some verses or at the end of a whole *Sūrah* (chapter). It was also observed that this section of *Ishārah* was majorly dedicated to refutation of *Sūfī* interpretations of the Qur'ān which are in contrary to the apparent meanings of the verse or totally against the tenets of Islam.

Our observations have revealed that despite 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī's wish not to dabble into discussion on *Ishārah* on any verse, he went backs to it for reasons best known to Allah and then him. This attitude of his shows his inconsistency and had made some writers like Yasir Qadhi to declare his *Tafsīr* as *Sūfī*-oriented. It is apposite to state here that this declaration of Qadhi can only come from someone who has not read the book himself and based his conclusion on just hear saying.

Another observation during our study of this work is the inability of the author to document his references properly and academically which makes it difficult in most cases to research further to the referred books or authors. At times books are mentioned without their authors, page and volume while at times authors are mentioned without their books and it is possible for an author to have more than one book as in the case of legal discussions from *Mālikiyyah* and *Shāfiᶜyyah* books among others. This attitude, like other classical writers, is not acceptable in the contemporary academic circle as it may be counted against the writer to be an act of plagiarism.

Though our study of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī*, it was also discovered that 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī referred to the *Isrā'iliyyāt* (Judaical stories) during his process of interpreting some verses of Qur'ān. In most cases, he was observed to be rejecting them because of their weakness and at times he would just pass on them without verification but with a dislike statement.

Theologically, he was observed to be strict but firm in discussing it. This, perhaps, was due to its fundamentality in the religion. He was, however, skeptical in declaring any of his opponents as *Kāfīr* (disbeliever). Rather, he put this indirectly using the third person pronoun or describing the action with *Kufr* (disbelief) or blameworthy qualities in order for the doers to know the evil therein. Similarly, it is observed that the significance of Islamic creed made 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī not to leave any distorted belief by the Islamic sects uncorrected on the platform and method of the *Salaf*. He was equally observed to be referring to the *Salaf* in most of his theological discussion in line with the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, which is an indication of his Sunnism and Salafism. This also shows his efforts in abstaining from being a dogmatic follower of anybody's opinionother than the early predecessors, most especially, in matters of *ᶜAqīdah*. This attitude of his is an indication that theological differences can be resolved if referred to the *Salaf*.

In his discussion of theological issues, he dissociated the *Salafiyyah* theology from the extreme *Taṣawwuf* as he did not condone the *Bāṭiniyyah* whom he referred to as the infidels. Despite this, he was still found of exaggeration while praising some *Ṣūfī* scholars like Muḥyi-Dīn Ibnᶜ Arabi, though this did not prevent him from criticizing the *Ṣūfī Shuyūkh* (scholars). His inconsistent position on the *Sūfīs* and some of their practices in his exegesis of the Qur'ān could be the reason for categorizing his *Tafsīr* under the *Tafsīr* of the *Ṣūfī*. However, this statement or assertion is observed not only to be baseless but also unjust to this author and his work.

### 5.3 Research Findings

In the process of carrying out this study, the research revealed that the discussion and interpretation of the Qur'ānic verses by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to cover various knowledge of human endeavor, affirms the all-encompassing nature of the Qur'ān as contained in Q6:38 that "…nothing have we omitted from the Book". 'Al-'Imām 'Al-

’Alūsī’s efforts to come out with his mammoth commentary on the Glorious Qur’ān, which itself is a compendium of knowledge, shows that *Tafsīr* is a vast subject that the knowledge of almost every art and science subjects can be incorporated there in.

It has been revealed that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī is not a controversial scholar but an objective scholar as his *Minhaj* (path and method) is clear from his discussion on issues as he always refers to the *Salaf* and the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*, making his arguments to be of high quality and in accordance with the fundamental sources of Islam. Thus, he can be regarded a *Sunni* and *Salafi* according to the contemporary usage even though both terms are the same contextually. Likewise, the contributions of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī in his voluminous commentary on the Glorious Qur’ān were unique and indicative of his mastery of exegesis.

The research revealed that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī lived in a society saturated with *Taṣawwuf*, hence, had *Taṣawwuf* orientation and took knowledge from a *Sūfī* Scholar. However, his *Sūfī* activities and tendency were balanced with *Sunni* and *Salafiyyah* teachings through his learning from other teachers with pure *Salafiyyah* orientations. By this, it was obvious through the findings that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī was a *Sūfī-Sunni*. It was also revealed that it is difficult to trace the statements or opinions of some scholars that were quoted by ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī as he only referred to them without pages and volumes. It is also noted attimes that author’s name are mentioned without books.

It was also revealed that some people are mistaken *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī* of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī for *Rūḥu’l-Bayān* of Ḥaqqi Ismail al-Barsawi which is a pure *Sūfī Tafsīr*. By this, they are abstaining from it in order not to be affected with *Sūfi* orientations, doctrines and teachings. The research has shown that there is different between *Tafsīr Ishārah* and *Tafsīr Sūfī*. Likewise, the theological discussions of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī subsumed the views of the major Islamic sects; Sunnites, Shiites, Muᶜtazilites, Ashᶜarites and

Maturidites and thereafter brought out his own opinion. The theological divergences in the early period of Islam were born out of philosophical thinking in defense of individual sect. In the contemporary period, the theological differences among the Muslims are, in addition to philosophical thinking, due to some other reasons such as lack of proper understanding of Islamic texts; lack of in-depth research on issues before concluding on them; sense of superiority complex and superciliousness and hastiness in giving Islamic verdict among others.

The criticism of other scholars or sects by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī was sincerely out of searching for the truth, defending it, upholding it and practicing it. Unlike the contemporary society, it is done out of hatred and to downgrade the opponents as well as to open the door of eternal enmity. It was also revealed that the early divergence did not affect the fundamentals of Islamic creed. But, presently, it has extended to the core tenets of Islam such as denouncing the *Sunnah* of the Prophet and its application in Islamic judgment. The study has also revealed that the *Tafsīr Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* is a class in its own for combining all kinds of *Tafsīr*, a quality which is rare in all other *Tafsīr* books.

It was also revealed that this *Tafsīr* is saturated with discussions on various subjects in both Islamic and Arabic sciences as well as the modern sciences to the extent of the author quoting Aristotle, Plato and Ibn Sīnā among others. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-Alūsī possessed qualities of a *Mujtahid* and that of becoming *Shaykhu'l-Islām*, if not for the fact that he was not living in the capital city, hence, he would have assumed the position of *Shaykhu'l-Islam.* It was revealed that the Muslim *Ummah* converged on the six articles of Faith in Islam without any disagreement in their originality. But, they diverged in their understanding and interpretation of the six articles of Islamic faith.

With regards to other theological issues, it was revealed that the Islamic sects disagreed among themselves, perhaps, due to the available but conflicting evidences such

as in the case of *at-Tawassul* and misunderstanding of the Islamic texts as in the case of visibility of Allah among others. It was, however, revealed that the position of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on any theological issue was predicated on the stand of the *Salaf*.

## 5.4 Recommendations

In the light of the observations made in this study, the following points are hereby recommended:

1. There should be an in-depth research by the Islamic Scholars of various Islamic groups and organisations generally and in Nigeria particularly, whose speeches and verdicts are listened to in the society before making any speech or verdict. This will enhance objectivity in forming an opinion on issues to be presented to the public as well as avoiding criticism in a way that will destroy the Islamic brotherhood. It will also assist in having better mutual understanding among one another.
2. Islamic Researches should be conducted using both the primary and secondary books of sourcing for information. This is because the secondary books, which are saturated in the contemporary society, are written based on the primary sources but it is possible that some other vital information or opinions are left out for reasons best known to the contemporary authors. Likewise, some issues suppose not causing enmity or debate if the earlier information about them is made available.
3. The Islamic Scholars should not limit themselves to a particular group or *Madh-hab* as well as books of some scholars, especially the opponents, by rejecting and counting them as irrelevant. This is important for knowledge is very wide and nobody can lay claim to it in totality. By doing this, it will give room for intellectual appreciation of one another as well as knowing the reason behind the opinion of one another. It will also give room for wider understanding of an issue.

If this is of no benefit, then there would not be many exegeses of the same Qur'ān and explanations of the same *Aḥadīth*. This will also allow the Islamic Researchers to update their knowledge.

4. The contemporary researchers and authors should cultivate the good habit of documenting their works. Apart from being free from the accusation of plagiarism, it will assist any serious and sincere further researcher in going to the original source of the information. There is the possibility of misquoting or misunderstanding the original source which can only be corrected through further research.

5. On issues, not limited to theological issues alone, that have different views among the early pious predecessors (*As-Salaf-u-ṣ-Ṣāliḥ*), the contemporary Islamic authors and scholars should endeavour, as it is the trust of knowledge (*amānatu'l-ᶜIlm*), to present them all to the public and bring out the less probable opinion (*Ra'yu Marjūḥ*) and the more probable opinion (*Ra'yu Rājīḥ*) along with the reasons for being so. The Islamic scholars should not just conclude on an issue without presenting others' opinion either in their books or speeches. Firstly, this will eradicate the feeling of doing the right thing and others are wrong, that is saturated in the contemporary society. Secondly, it will breed mutual understanding in forming an opinion. Thirdly, it will instil the good habit of tolerating, understanding and appreciating others with different views that is also in line with *Sharīᶜah.*

6. To achieve the lost glory of the Muslim, which is the Unity of the *Ummah*, discussion on theological differences should be referred to the early period of Islam.

7. The Department of Islamic Studies with the extension to Arabic Language should introduce a new course into her syllabus with the title "Islamic Conflict Management" or "Conflict Management in Islām". This will serve as preparatory class for the challenges to be faced in the society.

8. Criticism among the contemporary scholars should be with a view to correcting misconceptions and misunderstandings and not to molest, embarrass and show the winner from the loser. The case of ᶜAbdullah bin ᶜAbbas and his debate with the *Khawārij* is the best example on this. This will not only create sense of belonging among the *Ummah* but also enhance and strengthen the Islamic brotherhood.

9. The *Tafsīr Ishārī* that is commonly regarded as the *Sūfī* oriented interpretation of the Qur'ān should be looked into by the scholars who are well grounded in the knowledge of *Sharīᶜah* and are spiritually reformed. Firstly, this will bring about the opportunity of refuting those mystical interpretations that are in contrary to the fundamentals of Islamic creed. Secondly, this will bring about a means of addressing the mind and purifying the hearts if done according to the laid down rules by the scholars of *Tafsīr.*

10. The contemporary scholars should desist from declaring their opponents as *Kuffār* (disbelievers) directly. They should rather focus on the actions and not the doers as this, perhaps, may make them to take the corrections.

11. Spiritualism is very important in religious affairs for Allah's guidance and protection. Thus, the contemporary Islamic scholars need to improve in their relationship with Allah spiritually by engaging in both the compulsory and voluntary acts. They should be more into worship and research than criticism. This will make them to combine spiritualism with knowledge.

12. Materialism should be avoided and asceticism should be imbibed to assist the scholars and the students in upholding the truth in the society regardless of the challenges.

13. Differences in *Fiqh* issues should not jeopardise the togetherness of the *Ummah* as forum for resolving theological issues among the contemporary scholars should be created for the forwardness of the *Ummah*. This will go a long way in making the *Ummah* as one and not divided.

14. There is need for re-examination and re-consideration of positions and conclusions on some theological issues that are causing confusion and conflicts among the Muslim *Ummah* by making research into the earlier books in Islamic knowledge and referring to which ever source an author has referred to in his work or speech for clarity and certainty with a view to having a united as well as focused *Ummah*.

15. In case of debatable issues, contemporary scholars should let the Muslim populace be aware of their point of agreement and that of disagreement with a view to tolerating the tolerable and dissociating from the intolerable.

16. Avoidance of philosophical discussion on Qur'ānic verses relating to Islamic creeds. This will caution both the scholars and their listeners or followers from questioning what are not to be questioned other than to accept as contained in the Islamic texts, most especially, in the issues of the unseen. This will enhance having a clear understanding of such issues.

17. The contemporary scholars and students of Islamic students should endeavour to have a copy of this *Tafsīr* in addition to other books of *Tafsīr* in order to be well acquitted with differences of opinions, and how to handle them intellectually and academically from the response of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī.

## 5.5 Contributions to Knowledge

This study has contributed enormously to Islamic knowledge and society. These contributions include:

1. Bringing the encyclopaedic work of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī closer to the English audience in order to afford them the opportunity of benefiting from the intellectual discussions of ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī on Qur’ānic verses through his multifarious approaches.
2. Establishing the fact that all the Islamic sects, including the *Sūfī* order, affirm the Unification of Allah in His existence and essence.
3. Establishing the fact that some verses of the Glorious Qur’ān have scientific connotations which serve as good insight for the scientific to make research on them and others not discussed.
4. Portraying *Tafsīr* as a vast subject and science that encompass other Islamic sciences and Arabic sciences as well as the modern Sciences.
5. Revealing the fact that the emergence of Islamic sects brought about the evolution of Islamic theology, hence, the beginning of theological discussions in Islam
6. Clearing the notion that ’al-’Imām ’al-’Alūsī is a controversial scholar in *Madh-hab* of *Fiqh* and creed. He is, therefore, among the *Ahlu-s-Sunnah wa’l-Jamāᶜah* in creed on the platform and method of the *Salaf*. With regards to *Fiqh*, he is an upholder and a seeker of the truth which may be with any or all the *Fiqh* schools of thought. But, generally leaned to *Ḥanafi* school than the *Shāfiᶜ* school of thought and other schools.
7. Removal of doubts from the minds of those Muslims that categorised *Rūḥu’l-Maᶜānī* as *Ṣūfī Tafsīr* and classified it to be under *at-Tafsīru’l-Ishārī*. It is,

therefore, a special school of *Tafsīr* on its own which makes it an encyclopedia of *Tafsīr* that is indispensable for scholars and students.

8. Establishing the fact that some Islamic sects have interpreted Qur'ānic verses to suit their doctrines against the apparent meanings.
9. Identification of the Islamic creeds that are not controversial to all the sects in Islam originally but are controversial evidently in understanding.
10. Establishing the fact that Allah's attributive names are unlimited and that the *Ḥadīth* on their limitation is on the reward for memorising them.
11. Application of philosophy and logic in the discussion of Islamic creed led to theological discussion.
12. Presenting *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as a fertile *Tafsīr* for further research on multifarious themes in both Islamic and Arabic Studies.

## 5.6 Suggested Areas for Further Study

The encyclopedic nature of *Rūḥu'l-Maᶜānī* as a *Tafsīr* book calls for different researches to be conducted on it. Its richness and fertility in information on various branches of knowledge in almost all aspect of human endeavour cannot be underrated as its scope is very wide and all-encompassing. There is lots of information that need to be made available to the English audience for the benefits of both individual and the society. It is against this backdrop that the following areas are suggested to scholars, students and researchers to venture into for their research:

(a) **Theology:**

i. Each of the articles of faith can be studied separately in relation to the related verses from the exegetical perspective of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī. It is discovered that the import of a verse as well as the discussions contain in the preceding and succeeding verses have influence in the approach of 'al-

'Imām 'al-'Alūsī to the theology-related verses. Thus, this will be a fertile and viable area for further study in relation to the contemporary society.

ii. The Mu$^{c}$tazilites interpretation of the Qur'ān and the refutation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on it.

iii. The *Sūfī* exegesis of the Qur'ānic verses related to the Islamic creed and the refutation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī on them.

iv. The efforts of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in refuting the doctrines of the *Shi$^{c}$a* in his exegesis of the Qur'ān.

v. 'Al-'Imām 'Al-'Alūsī's view on other theological issues.

**(b) Social Issues:**

Through our study of *Rūḥu'l-Ma$^{c}$ānī,* it is interesting to note that, 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī had concerned for social justice and equality which are the key to peaceful co-existence among the people. This issue and its likes such as the treatment of the Orphan, Murder, Trust, Inheritance and Neighborliness among others; are viable areas for further research.

**(c) Legal Issues:**

The *Fiqh*-related verses of the Qur'ān can be studied from the exegetical perspective of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Tafsīr*. These related verses are discussed extensively along with opinions from the most common school of thoughts and other including the *Imāmiyyah* school of thought. Thus, the *Fiqh* position of the *Shi$^{c}$a* and the refutation of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī can be studied.

**(d) Science of the Qur'ān**

i. His view on *an-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh* can be studied as he has discussed this in his *Tafsīr*.

ii. The connection between verses and chapters is another area in which 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī has displayed his vast erudition.

iii. The different modes of Qur'ānic Reading or Recitation is another fertile topic for students and scholars of Islamic studies to further their research in the *Tafsīr* of 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī .

iv. The *Tafsīr al-Ishārī* that is discussed by 'al-'Imām 'al-'Alūsī in his *Tafsīr* can be examined with a view to sanitizing the *Tafsīr* against the allegation of being a *Sūfī*–oriented *Tafsīr*.

v. The *Isrā'iliyyāt* mentioned by him and their authenticity or weakness can be compiled for the benefit of the masses.

(e) **Arabic Language:**

i. The grammatical analysis of the Qur'ānic words can be researched into by the grammarians and the Morphologists.

ii. His efforts in using Rhetorics (*al-Balāghah*) to explain the Glorious Qur'ān is another viable area.

iii. The etymological meanings of the Qur'ānic words are also another fertile topic for research.

(f) **Modern Sciences**

i. Research can be carried out on his discussion on Astronomy (*ᶜIlmu'l-Falak*).

ii. Research on his discussion on Embryology can also be carried out.

iii. His discussion on Geophysics is another area for research.

Finally, there are more areas of study in this *Tafsīr* which may be of interest to both the students and scholars for the benefit of the humanities.

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