

A Study Of Prophethood

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Jamal al-Din ibn Yusuf 'Allamah Hilli

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Al-Allama Jamal al-Din Abu Mansur Hasan ibn Yusuf ibn Ali ibn Mutahhar al-Hilli

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This text has been translated by Dr. I. K. A. Howard and Maulana S. M. Waris Hasan. The Muhammadi Trust hopes to publish a full translation of this text.

This translation has been made from the text published in Qum, 1388 A.H. pp. 215-225.

This is a translation of the fourth section of 'Allama al-Hilli, Jamal al-Din Ibn Mutahhar's (died 720 A.H.) commentary entitled *Kashf al-Murad fi tajrid al-i'tiqad*, "The Explanation of the Meaning of the Basic Outlined of Faith". The commentary is intended to explain Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's (died 672 A.H.) work *Tajrid al-i'tiqad*, "The Basic Outlines of Faith".

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi was one of the great scholars of his time. His works range across a vast stretch of knowledge and include works on theology, philosophy, logic and science. 'Allama al-Hilli had been an outstanding student of al-Tusi's. He, himself, was a prolific writer and his works cover the whole range of Islamic Studies.

The whole work is an important statement of the Shi'ite Islamic faith in terms of dogmatic theology. As such it is still a standard work in Shi'ite schools of theology.

The treatise takes the form of al-Tusi's statements which are then followed by 'Allama al-Hill's explanation.

The prophetic mission is good because it encompasses such benefits as giving reason support in matters which reason can deduce for itself, and providing information of the law in matters which reason cannot deduce for itself; it removes fear (of uncertainty) and makes known good and evil, and what is beneficial and what harmful; it preserves the human species and enables individuals to fulfil themselves according to their different capacities; it teaches them the sciences ordinarily hidden from reason, morals and beneficial policies; it provides information about punishment and reward, (through it) grace comes to the *mukallaf*. [1](#)

In this section there are several problems.

The First Problem: Concerning the Goodness of the Prophetic Mission

People differ on that. All the Muslims, all the leaders of (religious) communities and a group of the philosophers hold that view (i.e. that prophethood is good). However, the Brahmins reject it. [2](#)

The evidence for the goodness of the prophetic mission is that it has encompassed benefits and has been free from corrupting influences. Therefore, it was absolutely good. The author has mentioned some of the benefits of the prophetic mission.

Among these is the fact that reason is supported by the prophetic transmission of laws which reason can also deduce for itself, like the unity of the Creator and other such things. Then there is the fact that through the prophetic mission information of the law is provided in matters which reason cannot deduce, like the stipulations of the divine law and other such problems of the principles of religion.

These benefits include the removal of the fear (of uncertainty) which comes to the *mukallaf* with regard to his own actions; for he knows from rational evidence that he is owned by another (ie. God) and that using another's possession without his permission is vile. Without the prophetic mission, he would not know of the goodness of actions and thus, he would be afraid of acting and of not acting. Since reason allows the master (i.e. God) to demand the servant to perform certain actions, the only way in which they can be performed is through (the information brought) by the prophetic mission.

Another of these matters is the fact that some actions are good and some are evil. These include what reason can know to be good independently and what it cannot know to be good independently. The same applies to evil actions. As a result of the prophetic mission knowledge is acquired of the good and

evil actions of which reason had no knowledge independently.

Also included in these matters is the fact that some things are useful to us, like many kinds of food and medicine, while others are harmful to us, like many kinds of poison and drugs. Reason does not acquire full knowledge of all of these. This great benefit comes through the prophetic mission.

Then, there is the fact that mankind was not created like any of the other animals. He is an urban creature by nature, who depends on many factors without which the organisation of his livelihood would be incomplete. He would be unable to achieve most of this without partnership and co-operation. The tendency to dominate others is also present in human nature, as a result of which conflict, which is contrary to the rationale of social life, arises. Therefore, it is necessary that a unifying factor prevail over society. Such a unifying factor is the *Sunna* of the Prophet and the divine law.

A *Sunna* must have someone to introduce it, who will establish it and lay down its regulations. Such a person would have to be different from others of his species because of the absence of the (required) superiority in them. That distinguishing (feature) could not be anything which is given him by his fellow men because of the possibility of resentment arising in some, through him being singled out by others. Therefore he (a prophet) must be distinguished by God through a miracle, by which men will be led to believe the claim which he makes, and through which he can cause men to be afraid of disobeying him and promise them (rewards) for following him. As a result of this the organisation of life may be fulfilled and the preservation of the human species maintained to the highest possible degree.

There is also the fact that individual humans differ in attaining the elements of perfection, in acquiring knowledge and in gaining virtues. Some do not need any other person to help them in this because of their own strength of spirit, complete awareness, and strong disposition to be in contact with higher matters. Others are entirely unable to do those things, while there are others who reach an intermediate state. The degrees of perfection within this scale vary in accordance with their nearness to one of the two extreme groups and their distance from the other. The benefit which a prophet brings is that he supplements the deficient individuals of the species according to their varying dispositions' need for more or less.

Furthermore, there is the fact that the human species needs tools and beneficial things for its continuation, like clothes and houses and other such things. These are things which require knowledge of their techniques in order for them to be acquired. Human faculties (left to themselves) are incapable of that. Thus, the benefit which the Prophet brings is to teach these hidden crafts which are beneficial.^{[3](#)}

In addition, it is known that degrees of morality vary. In this, there is need for one who is perfect to give instruction in morality and beneficial policies to the extent that human affairs, in terms of both country and home, may be properly organised.

Finally, Prophets make known the rewards for obedience and the punishments for disobedience. Thus, grace comes to the mukallaf through their mission. Because of these benefits, the mission of prophets is

necessary.

The specious argument of the Brahmins is invalid because of what has been said earlier. The Brahmins argued for the non-existence of the prophetic mission by maintaining the view that the Messenger would either bring what conformed to reason or what opposed it. If he brought what conformed to reason, there was no need for him nor advantage in having him. If he brought what opposed reason, it would be necessary to reject his statement.

This specious argument is invalid according to what was said earlier with regard to the first benefit of the prophetic mission. That was that we say: "Why is it not possible for prophets to bring what conforms to reason? For the advantage in that would be a confirmation of the deduction of reason." Or we say: "Why is it not possible for prophets to bring that which reason does not require and to which (reason) does not guide, even though it does not oppose reason in the sense that they do not bring anything which reason would be required to contradict?" Many of the stipulations of the divine law and acts of worship to whose detailed exposition reason does not give any guidance, are like this.

The Second Problem: Concerning the Necessity of the Prophetic Mission

It (the prophetic mission) is necessary because it encompasses the grace (required) for the responsibilities which are enjoined on man according to reason.

Here the people differ. The Mu'tazilas [4](#) maintain that the Prophetic mission is necessary while the Ash'arites [5](#) maintain that it is not necessary. The Mu'tazila argue that the responsibilities which are enjoined on man through revelation (*taklif sam'iyya*) are the grace which enables man to perform the responsibilities which are enjoined on man through reason (*taklif 'aqliyya*). Grace is necessary (for men to perform these rational responsibilities), therefore, the responsibility enjoined on man through revelation (*taklif sam'i*) is necessary. However, it is only possible to know about it through the Prophet. Therefore, the existence of the Prophet is necessary because that, by which the necessary can only be fulfilled, is (itself) necessary.

They argue for the responsibility enjoined on man through revelation (*taklif sam'i*) being a grace for (the performance of) that responsibility enjoined on man according to reason (*'aqli*), by maintaining the view that when man is diligent in carrying out duties enjoined by revelation and in avoiding things forbidden by the divine law, he would be close to one who was carrying out the duties enjoined by reason and avoiding those things forbidden by reason. These latter are necessarily known by every rational being. We have explained earlier that grace is necessary.

The Third Problem: Concerning the Necessity of Infallibility

Infallibility is necessary for the Prophet in order that he may gain men's confidence and thus attain his purpose, and because of the necessity for men to follow him and the necessity of the contrary of that (i.e. not following a sinner) and the necessity of repudiating the acts of a sinner.

The people differ on this point. A group of the Mu'tazila concede the possibility of minor sins to prophets either through forgetfulness, as some of them think, or on the basis of interpretation, as a group of them believe, or because they (minor sins) occur in men surrounded by an abundance of rewards (i.e. thus diminishing the effect of these minor sins). The Ash'arites and the Hashwiyya [6](#) hold the view that minor sins and major sins, other than unbelief and lying, are possible for prophets. The *Imamiyya* maintain that they must have infallibility from all sins, whether minor or major. The evidence for this comes in a number of arguments:

1. The purpose of the mission of prophets can only be attained through the infallibility of the prophets. It is necessary that that purpose be attained. That explains that if those to whom a prophet had been sent allowed the possibility of prophets lying and being sinful, they could also allow the possibility of such a thing in what prophets ordered and forbade and in their actions which they enjoined them to follow. Then the prophets could not call them to obey their orders, and that would be a contradiction of the purpose of the prophetic mission.
2. It is necessary to follow the Prophet. Therefore, if he perpetrated an act of disobedience to God, it would either be necessary to follow him or not. The second (i.e. not following him) is invalid because it is a denial of the main purpose of the prophetic mission. The first (i.e. following him) is invalid because performing a disobedient action is not allowed. He (al-Tusi) indicates the above argument by his statement" ... because of the necessity for men to follow him and the necessity of the contrary of that". For through regarding him to be a prophet, it is necessary to follow him; while if the action was regarded as being sinful, it would not be allowed to follow him.
3. A sinful act must be repudiated because of the universal application of the obligation to forbid all sin (*al-nahy 'an al-munkar*). That would require hurting him while it is forbidden to do that. [7](#) All such views of the Prophet sinning are logically absurd.

(It is necessary for the Prophet to have) the perfection of reason, intelligence, perspicacity and sound judgement. He must not have any form of forgetfulness or anything which would cause people to shun him, such as a base father, an unchaste mother, coarse manners, physical defects and the like, nor any bad habit such as eating on the road and similar things.

It is necessary that the Prophet should have these qualities which he has mentioned. His statement "...the perfection of reason" is connected to (his earlier requirement of) infallibility. It is clear that he must have the ultimate in intelligence, perspicacity and sound judgement in so far as he could not be weak in judgement, and hesitant and bewildered in affairs because that would be the greatest inducement for people to shun him. It is clear that forgetfulness is not possible for him lest he should forget about some matter he was enjoined to communicate.

He should be free from a base father (i.e. born of a good father) and an unchaste mother (i.e. born of a chaste mother) because those are things which would cause people to shun him. He should be free from coarseness and harshness of manner lest he should make people avoid him. He should be free from sicknesses like physical deformities, constant wind and leprosy, as also from many things ordinarily permitted, which should not be in him since they are matters which diminish his greatness, such as eating on the road and other things like that. For all such things would be reasons for people avoiding him and as such would negate the purpose of his prophetic mission.

The Fourth Problem: Concerning the Means of Knowing the Truthfulness of the Prophets

The means of knowing his truthfulness is through the appearance of miracles performed by him. A miracle is the bringing into existence of something which is abnormal or the removal of something which normally would exist, in a way which breaks through normality and which conforms to the claim (of prophethood which is made).

After he has mentioned the qualities of the Prophet, it is necessary for him to mention the explanation of how he is known. This is by one thing, through the appearance of miracles performed by him. We mean by miracles "the bringing into existence of something which is abnormal or the removal of something which normally exists, in a way which breaks through normality and which conforms to the claim (of prophethood which is made)". Bringing into existence and removal are both equal in the performance of miracles. Thus, there is no difference in the stick being turned into a snake and preventing the powerful from removing the weakest things.

We have made the condition breaking through normality because performing a normal action, or not performing an action which is abnormal, does not give evidence of the truthfulness (of a prophet). We have said "in a way which conforms with the claim", because whoever claims prophethood and bases his miracles (in support of the claim) on the healing of a blind man who, then, becomes deaf without the

blindness being cured, will not be a true prophet. In miracles there must be the (following) conditions:

1. The community to whom he was sent must be unable to do the like or what is equivalent to it.
2. It must be done through God, the Most High, or at His command.
3. It must be done during the time of *taklif* because normality will be broken on the appearance of the signs of the Day of Judgement.
4. It must occur after the claim of the claimant to prophethood or come within the terms of that. We mean by "come within the terms of that" that he puts forward the claim of prophethood during his life while no-one else makes a (valid) claim of prophethood. Then he makes known that miracle after he has made known other miracles following his claim. Thus, the appearance of the second type of miracle would be like that which followed his claim because its association with his claim is known and because he has made it known for the sake of that claim, just as the miracle which followed the claim.
5. It must be (something) which breaks the course of normality.

The Fifth Problem: Concerning Miracles of Proofs of Great Holiness (karamat)

The story of Mary, and of others, indicates the possibility of miracles being performed by the righteous.

The people differ here. A group of the Mu'tazila hold the view of the impossibility of miracles being performed by the righteous as acts of great holiness or of them appearing, on the contrary, from liars as a proof of their lying. However, Abu 'l-Husain from that group, and another group of the Mu'tazila as well as the Ash'arites maintain that that is possible. The latter view is the most correct.

The author proves this with the story of Mary. That indicates that miracles could be performed by her and others, as does the story of Asif and (also) the well-substantiated (*mutawatur*) stories reported of 'Ali and the other Imams. Those who deny miracles apart from the miracles of prophets interpret the story of Mary on the basis of it being an extension (of the miracles) of Jesus, and the story of Asif on the basis of

it being a miracle of Solomon with Bilqis, as if Solomon was saying: "My followers can do this while yours cannot." Because of this, she submitted after becoming aware of his miracles. (They interpret) the story of 'Ali as the completion of the miracles of the Prophet.

It is not necessary for (such miracles) to be excluded (from the status) of being miracles, nor for them to cause the Prophet to be abandoned, nor for them to require the absence of the Prophet's distinction from others, nor for them to invalidate his evidence for his prophethood, nor does it require them to become common (to every class of person).

These are the arguments which those of the Mu'tazila, who deny that the righteous may perform miracles, use:

1. They say that if it was possible for miracles to appear from those who are not prophets as a mark of their being honoured, it would be possible for miracles to be performed even though no-one else knew of them, because the purpose (of these miracles) is the happiness of those involved in them. If that was possible, then miracles in such large numbers would come to be excluded from the status of being miracles.

The answer is to deny the consequences of the argument (i.e. no-one knowing about them) because the fact that such miracles are excluded from the status of being miracles is an unacceptable argument. We only concede the possibility of the performance of miracles when it is free of such unacceptable aspects. Thus, the performance of miracles is possible so long as they are not in such large numbers as to come to be excluded from the status of being miracles.

2. They say that if the performance of miracles was possible by those who are not prophets, it would be necessary to abandon prophets since the reason for the necessity of obeying them is the performance of miracles by them. For, if those, to whom obedience was not required, participated in that, the prophets' position would be diminished. In support of this, they maintain that if the leader honoured (whatever the nature of that honour might be) everyone then the type of that honour would certainly be degraded were it to be extended to someone who did not deserve that honour.

The answer is to deny the idea of a miracle being reduced in merit if it has been performed by another prophet. Thus, if it had been only performed by one prophet his status would have been exalted. But similarly, if it had been performed by a group of prophets, no reduction in its merit is required. In the same way, there is no reduction in the merit (of prophets) through the miracle being performed by the righteous.

3. Abu Hashim [8](#) argues that the miracle is evidence (of prophethood) through distinguishing him and specifying him. The *Qadi al-qudat* [9](#) explains that by arguing that the miracle points to the distinction of the Prophet from others. For individuals of the community share humanity and its inherent characteristics with him, and if it was not for miracles, he would not be distinguished from them. Thus, if others share this ability to perform miracles with him, no distinction between them occurs.

The answer is that the distinction of a prophet from others occurs through miracles and through their association with his claim to prophethood. This latter is something which he is characterised by, apart from others. The fact that others can share the performance of miracles with him, does not mean that they share in everything with him.

4. (They say that) If the performance of miracle is allowed to people other than a prophet, then its (miracles) validity for being the exclusive evidence to the prophethood is nullified. And since it is not so, the whole premise is void. (To explain it further they say) If miracles were performed by all and sundry it would deprive the claimant of the prophethood of the exclusivity of the evidence. As we know that a general (evidence) cannot be applied to the specific (claim).

The answer is to deny the requirement (of miracles alone proving prophethood) because what is particular to the Prophet is the miracle in association with the claim (to prophethood). If a miracle is performed by a person, either he claims prophethood or he does not. If he claims it, we know that he is speaking the truth, since reason cannot accept the performance of a miracle by a liar. If a man did not claim prophethood, there would be no consideration of prophethood for him. Thus, the result is that the miracle does not initially point to prophethood, rather it points to the truth of a claim (to prophethood when such a claim is made). Thus, if the claim embraces prophethood, the miracle points to the truthfulness of the claimant with regard to his claim, and that necessitates the reality of prophethood.

5. They maintain that if the performance of a miracle is possible for someone who is not a prophet, it could be performed by every truthful person. Thus, a miracle could be performed by one who gives information about being full and being hungry and other such things.

The answer is that the performance of miracles does not have to be common (to every class of person), i.e. the appearance of miracles from every truthful person is not required. For we only require the appearance of a miracle from one who claims prophethood, or from the righteous as a mark of their being honoured and exalted. That does not occur for every person who gives true information.

The Prophet's miracles before his prophethood gave (the picture) of setting the way (to his prophethood).

The people differ on this. Those who deny the appearance of miracles (as acts of honouring a person), deny the performance of miracles as a way of setting the way (to prophethood), except for a group of them. The rest concede it. The author points to its possibility through the occurrence of miracles from the Apostle before (his) prophethood, such as is reported of the bursting of the courtyard of Khosrau, the causing of the water of the sea of Sawih to sink, the extinguishing of Persian fire, the story of the companions of the Elephant, and the clouds which shaded him from the sun, and the stones which greeted him, and others like that which are confirmed of him before prophethood.

The stories of Musaylimah, Pharaoh and Abraham, (all) provide for the possibility of the performance of miracles which contradict the claims (of liars).

The people differ on this point. Those who deny miracles as acts of honouring persons deny the performance of miracles by liars as a contradiction of what they claim, through showing their lie. The author demonstrates the possibility through the occurrence of such incidents as one reported of Musaylimah, the liar, when he claimed prophethood. He was told that the Apostle prayed for a one-eyed man and God restored the eye which had gone. Then Musaylima prayed for a one-eyed man, but the one-eyed man lost his sound eye. Similarly, it is reported that when God made the fire over Abraham cold and secure (so that it did not burn him), Nimrod said at that: "The fire has only become like this out of fear of me." Then, in that circumstance, a fire descended suddenly upon him and burnt his beard. Thus, it could not be said that the absence of a miracle after the claim (of false prophets) was sufficient to demonstrate their lying. For the appearance of a miracle in contradiction to their wicked claims exists as an act which breaks through normality without bringing any advantage to them.

Thus, it is fruitless for them because we maintain that sometimes the general interest is served through the appearance of miracle in contradiction to wicked claims as a demonstration of their lying about the circumstances. In this way doubt is removed of the possibility of it being said that there will be a delay of the (supporting) miracle (appearing) after their (false) claim because of some (false) public interest, and that it would appear at another time, so that complete certainty of their lying would not occur.

The Sixth Problem: Concerning the Necessity of the Prophetic Mission at all time

The evidence of the necessity of the prophetic mission provides for its generalisation (to all times).

The people differ here. A group of the Mu'tazila say that the prophetic mission is not necessary at all times, but rather in one circumstance apart from another and that is when there is public benefit in the prophetic mission. The 'ulama' of the Imamiyyah maintain that the prophetic mission is necessary at every time insofar as there can never be a time without the revealed law (*shar'*) of a prophet. The Ash'arites maintain that the prophetic mission is not necessary at every time because they deny the rationally good and the rationally evil, and the study of this has taken place earlier.

The author demonstrated the necessity of the prophetic mission at all times, by stating the fact that the evidence for the necessity of the prophetic mission provides for its generalisation, namely the evidence of the prophetic mission provides for the generalisation of the prophetic mission to all times, because in the prophetic mission is that which drives away wrong and urges obedience. Therefore, it is (a means of) grace. Since, in it, there is a warning for those who are unaware, the removal of differences, the defence against turmoil and confusion and all matters of necessary public interests which could only be fulfilled through the prophetic mission, the prophetic mission must be necessary at all times.

It is not necessary (for a prophet to have) a revealed law (*shari'a*).

The two shaikhs [10](#) differ on this point. Abu 'Ali concedes the possibility of a prophetic mission for the

purpose of confirming what has been suggested by reason, and does not require that he should have a revealed law. On the other hand, Abu Hashim and his companions maintain that a prophet cannot be sent without a revealed law because reason is sufficient for knowledge of the things necessary according to reason. Therefore, the prophetic mission (without a revealed law) would be pointless.

The answer is that it is possible for there to be a prophetic mission which has embraced a kind of public benefit, by the fact that knowledge of his prophethood and his call to men to what has been suggested by reason is in their interest. Therefore, the prophetic mission does not necessarily bring a revealed law. Men must observe a prophet miracle and then public benefit will occur to them which would not have occurred without the prophetic mission. Abu 'Ali has argued on the basis of the view that it is possible for the mission of a prophet to follow the mission of a prophet with one revealed law and similarly it is possible for the mission of a prophet to require what has been suggested by reason.

The Seventh Problem: Concerning the Prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad

The appearance of the miracle of the Qur'an and other miracles in association with the claim of our Prophet Muhammad prove his prophethood. The challenge to copy it in association with the impossibility of doing so despite the many motives to try to do so prove the inimitability of the Qur'an. Well-substantiated reports of other miracles, in addition to it, also support (his claim to prophethood).

When he has finished with the study of prophethood in general, he begins to confirm the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad. The evidence for it is the fact that miracles have appeared from him and he has claimed prophethood. Therefore, he is true. As for the miracles that have been performed by him, there are two aspects:

1. The Qur'an is a miracle and it is appeared through him. As for the inimitability of the Qur'an, he challenged the eloquent of the Arabs according to God's verse:

"Produce a sura like it" (Qur'an, 2:23).

"Then produce ten suras forged like it" (Qur'an, 11:13).

"Say: if man and jinn agreed to produce the like of the Qur'an, they could not produce its like, even if some of them were helping others" (Qur'an, 17:88).

The challenge (to produce the like) coupled with the impossibility of producing its like, together with the abundant motives for (people) to do so as a demonstration of their merit, a refutation of his claim and a security from being killed, demonstrate their deficiency and their inability to compete with it. As for it occurring through him, that the Qur'an revealed exclusively to him is well-authenticated.

Numerous miracles are reported of him. Examples are the spring of water which came from between his

fingers so that many were satisfied by little water after his return from the raid of Tabuk, the causing of the water to sink at the well of Hudaybiyya when his companions all sought for water and the well was dry. He gave his arrow to al-Bara' b. 'Azib and ordered him to go down and stick it into the well. He stuck it in and immediately the water was so abundant that there was fear that al-Bara' would be drowned.

On another occasion the Prophet spat in a well when the people complained to him of the disappearance of the water, and then cold water burst forth from it. Then the people of Yamama learnt about that and asked Musaylima to do that when there was only a little water in their well. He spat in it and the water disappeared completely. When God's verse descended:

"Warn your clan who are kinsmen" (Qur'an, 26:214).

He said to 'Ali: "Go and take a ewe and bring me a jug full of milk. Then summon to me the sons of your father, the Bani Hashim." He did that and summoned them. There were forty men. They ate until they were full, yet the only sign that any of it had been eaten was the traces on their fingers. They drank from the jug until they were sated and still the milk remained in its earlier state (i.e. it looked as if it hadn't been drunk). Then when he wanted to summon them to Islam, Abu Lahab said: "Muhammad is likely to bewitch you". Therefore, they got up before he called them to (believe) God, the Most High. Then he said to 'Ali: "Do the same as you did". So, he did the same on the second day. Then when he wanted to call them to (believe) God, Abu Lahab repeated his words. Again, he said to 'Ali: "Do the same as you did" He did it again on the third day. After this he made a pledge to 'Ali of the caliphate after his death and in succession of him.

Jabir b. 'Abd Allah slaughtered a young female goat during the Campaign at the Ditch and he baked bread out of a *sa'* of barley. He invited the Prophet to dine. The (Prophet) said: "Do you mean me and my companions?" Jabir answered: "Yes". Then his wife came and he told her of that. She asked: "Did you say: 'Come with your companions?' He replied: "No, but when he said: 'Do you mean me and my companions?', I said, yes". She said: "He is more aware of what he said". Then when the Prophet came, he asked: "What do you have?" Jabir answered: "I have a young female goat in the fire and a *sa'* of barley which we have baked." He said: "Make my companions sit ten by ten (i.e. in rows of ten). He did so and all of them ate.

Little stones in the hands of the Prophet praised God. A wolf gave testimony to his mission, for when Ruhban b. Aws was pasturing his sheep a wolf came and seized a ewe and made off towards him. The wolf said to him: "Is there surprise at my taking a sheep when this Muhammad summons people to the truth and is not answered?" Then Ruhban went to the Prophet and accepted Islam. After, he was called "the one who talked to the wolves".

He (the Prophet) spat in the eye of 'Ali, when it suffered from ophthalmia. It never suffered from the disease after that.

The Prophet prayed that God might keep the heat and cold from 'Ali, as a result 'Ali's dress in summer

and winter was the same. For the Prophet the moon was split and he called to a tree and it answered him, coming through the ground without anything pulling or pushing it and then returned to its place. He used to preach at the trunk of a palm tree, and then a *minbar* (pulpit) was made for him and he moved to it. The palm trunk lamented for him as a she-camel laments for her offspring. Therefore (he went) and embraced it and it became silent.

He told us of what was as yet unknown concerning many people and places, such as when he told of the killing of Husain, and the place at which the killing would take place. Then he was killed in that place. He told of the killing of Thabit b. Qays b. Shammās and he was killed. He informed his Companions of the conquest of Egypt and told them to treat the Copts well, for they had the right of a protected minority (*dhimma*) and a right through relationship to him. [11](#) He told them of the claims of Musaylima to prophethood in Yamama and the claims of al-'Absi to prophethood in San'a, and that they would both be killed. Fayruz al-Daylami killed al-'Absi around the time of the death of the Prophet and Khalid b. al-Walid killed Musaylima. He told 'Ali about the report of Dhu 'l-Thaddiyya and (what) would happen.

He invoked God against 'Utba b. Abi Lahab when he recited:

"By the star" (Qur'an, 53: 1).

'Utba said "You have disbelieved in the Lord and the star". Thereupon (the Prophet) called on God to set a dog upon him. 'Utba went to Syria and a lion came out and violent fear gripped him. His colleagues said to him: "What are you shaking at?" He answered: "Muhammad has invoked God against me. By God, the heavens have never shaded a speaker more truthful than Muhammad." Then the people surrounded him with themselves and their equipment. But the lion came and bit off their heads one by one until it came to him, and it took a mouthful of him, and he was terrified of it.

The Prophet gave information of the death of the Najashi (of Ethiopia) and the killing of Zayd b. Haritha at Mu'ta. He told of his death in Medina (as if was watching the battle) and how Ja'far took the standard. Then he told of Ja'far's being killed. He stopped for a moment and said that 'Abd Allah b. Rawaha had taken the flag. After that he reported the killing of 'Abd Allah b. Rawaha. He went to the house of Ja'far and took out the latter's children. Tears filled his eyes as he announced the news of Ja'far's death to his family. The matter was later shown to have happened as he had told it.

He (the Prophet) said to 'Ammar: "A group which will usurp (authority) will kill you," and the followers of Mu'awiya killed him. Because of the fact that this report was wide-spread Mu'awiya was not able to deny it, but he deceived the common people and said that 'Ammar was killed by those who brought him. However, Ibn 'Abbas refuted this, maintaining that by the same argument it could be said that the unbelievers had not killed Hamza and only the Apostle had killed him since it was, he who had brought him against them until they killed him.

The Prophet said to 'Ali: "After me you will fight against those who break their allegiance, those who act unjustly and those who stray from the true path of religion." The ones who broke their allegiance were

Talha and al-Zubayr because they pledged allegiance to him ('Ali) and then they broke that allegiance. The ones who acted unjustly were Mu'awiya and his followers because they were oppressive usurpers. Those who strayed from the true path of religion were those who left the community; they were the Kharijites.

These are some of the miracles which have been reported. We have shortened their number because there are so many, and these will attain our purpose. We have reported other miracles in our book *Nihayat al-maram*.

It is said that the Qur'an is inimitable because of its eloquence; and it is said to be so because of both its eloquence and its style together; and it is said to be so because of the fact that it turns (men) away (from copying it). All of these are likely.

The people differ on this point. The two Jubba'is maintain that the reason for the inimitability of the Qur'an is its eloquence. The *ahl al-haqq* declare that it is its eloquence and style together. While al-Nazzam [12](#) and al-Murtada [13](#) maintain that it is the element in it which turns men away (from copying it), in the sense that God turned them away from, and prevented them from, competing with it. The first (i.e. the two Jubba'is and their supporters) argue that the Arabs regarded its eloquence as magnificent. It was for this reason that al-Nabigha [14](#) wanted to embrace Islam when he heard the Qur'an and recognized its eloquence. Abu Jahl attempted to stop him and said to him: "Forbidden to you is (everything) except the best." Because of that God gave information about them in His statement:

"He thinks, and he plots" (Qur'an, 74:18).

"Yet he was killed" (Qur'an, 74:19).

"How can he plot and then be killed" (Qur'an, 74:20).

"How can he plot and then look" (Qur'an, 74:21).

"Then frowned he and showed displeasure" (Qur'an, 74:22).

"Then turned he away in pride" (Qur'an, 74:23).

"And said: This is naught else than magic from of old" (Qur'an, 74:24).

It is argued against the view of the element which averts men from copying the Qur'an that if the element of averting men from copying it was a reason for its inimitability, it would be necessary for it to be extremely indistinct because indistinctness is the most profound form of inimitability, and thus this reason is necessarily invalid. However, al-Sayyid Murtada argues that the Arabs were able to produce the individual words and structures (of the Qur'an) but they were unable to produce its like as a result of their being turned away from doing what they had the power to do. All these different views are possible.

Abrogation is a factor which involves different elements of public benefit.

This is an indication of the reply to the Jews when they maintain the continuation of the revealed laws of Moses. For they said that abrogation was invalid because if that which was abrogated was an advantage, forbidding it would be evil. If it was a corrupting influence, enjoining it would have been evil. Thus, since abrogation is invalid, the doctrine of the continuation of the revealed law of Moses is required. The outline of the answer is that we maintain that the laws are dependent upon public benefit. However, public benefits change with changing times and they differ through the differences of those on whom responsibility is placed (*mukallafin*). Therefore, it is possible that there may be a law appointed for the benefit of one people at one time, while for another people to be ordered to carry it out at another time would be a corrupting (influence). Thus, it is forbidden.

It happened that some things permitted to those before Noah, were forbidden to him. Thus, circumcision was made obligatory when (previously that law) had been withheld, and marriage of two sisters (to one man) was forbidden and other things (like that).

This is corroboration of the invalidity of the Jewish doctrine when they deny abrogation. He has explained first the possibility of its occurrence. Here he explains its occurrence in their own revealed law. That (also) occurs in other contexts. It comes in the Torah that God said to Adam and Eve: "I have permitted to you everything which crawls on the face of the earth. Thus, snakes were permitted to him (Adam). While it also comes in the Torah that (God) said to Noah: "Take with you of the permitted animals such and such, and of the forbidden animals, such and such." Thus, he forbade to Noah some of the animals he had permitted to Adam.

Another example from the Torah is that he had allowed Noah to defer his own circumcision until he grew up, while he forbade other prophets to do so. He allowed Abraham to delay the circumcision of his son Isma'il until he grew up. However, he forbade Moses to delay circumcision (longer) than seven days. Another example from the Torah is that while he allowed Adam to marry two sisters, he forbade it to Moses.

The Jews report from Moses about the eternal nature of the revealed law is a lie. Even if it was conceded, it would not indicate (such) a meaning absolutely.

A group of Jews concede the possibility, in terms of reason, of the occurrence of abrogation but yet deny the abrogation of the revealed law of Moses. They adhere to the (fact) that it is related that Moses said: "Keep the Sabbath for ever". Eternity points to continuation and continuation of the condition of the Sabbath denies the doctrine of the prophethood of Muhammad. The answer (includes several) points:

1. This tradition is forged and it has been attributed to Ibn al-Rawandi.

2. Even if we conceded the report of it, its authentication by the Jews has come to an end because the fortunes of victory uprooted them and annihilated them so that there does not remain any of them whose report can be relied upon.
3. The expression "eternity" does not indicate absolute continuation. For it comes in the Torah without the meaning of continuation. For example, with regard to the slave, he served for six years and then his freedom was offered to him in the seventh. However, the slave refused, and his ears were pierced (as a slave) and therefore he served "for ever", and in another passage "he served for fifty years". They were enjoined with regard to the cow which they were entrusted to slaughter, that that should be a *Sunna* for them "for ever". Then their worship of it came to an end. In the Torah it says: "Sacrifice two lambs, a lamb at morning and a lamb in the evening between sunset and nightfall as an 'eternal' sacrifice required of you." Their worship in this manner has ceased. Since "eternity" in these passages does not refer to continuation, the evidence for it is absolutely absent. The most which can be said in this connection is that it points to a superficial meaning. But the superficial meanings of expressions should be abandoned when contrary evidence exists.

Revelation (*sam*) points to the universality of the prophethood of the Prophet.

A group of the Christians hold the view that Muhammad was sent to the Arabs in particular. However, revelation gives the lie to this doctrine of theirs. For God said:

"So that I may warn you and whoever is (able to be) reached" (Qur'an, 6: 19).

And He said:

"We have not sent you except to all the people" (Qur'an, 34:28).

The Sura of the Jinn [15](#) points to his being sent to them. The Prophet said: "I have been sent to the black and to the red." It could be argued: How could his mission to those who do not understand his speech be possible? For God said:

"We have not sent an apostle except with the language of his people" (Qur'an, 14:4).

However, we maintain that there is no impossibility in that because a translator could translate his speech to anyone who did not understand his language. It does not say in the verse that God did not send an apostle except to a people who could understand the language of his people. The *Qadi al-qudat* allows two possibilities with regard to Gog and Magog:

1. That they were not people originally capable of responsibility (*mukallafin*) and that they were corrupters of the earth, like the beasts who were corrupters of the earth.
2. That they were people capable of responsibility (*mukallafin*) and that the Prophet's summons reached them to come near to the places where they might hear the speech of him who was beyond the barrier (*sadd*).

Some people concede that there were in some places those whom the Prophet's summons did not reach, and they could not be subject to the responsibility of following his revealed law. In my view, if the meaning of that was that responsibility (*taklif*) was completely absent from them whether the call reached them after that or it didn't, then it (the meaning) is absolutely invalid because of what we have explained of the universality of the Prophet's prophethood. If the meaning was that they were not responsible as long as they did not know, and when the call reached them, they became responsible, it is correct.

The Prophet is greater in merit than the angels, as are the other prophets, because of the existence in the Prophet of that which conflicts with rational power and his compelling it to submit to reason.

The people differ on this. The majority of the Muslims hold the view that prophets are greater in merit than angels, while others and a group of the ancients hold the view that angels are greater in merit. The ancients argue on the basis of reasons, some of which the author has mentioned, and they are not aware of the inadequacy of their argument. The fact is that in prophets there is the appetitive faculty, the anger faculty, and the rest of the bodily faculties like imagination and fancy and things like these. The majority of the laws of these faculties are contrary to the law of rational power and oppose it so that the majority of people have recourse to the faculties of appetite, anger and fancy, and they abandon rational power. However, prophets conquer their nature and act in accordance with their rational powers and avoid the appetitive faculties and the other bodily faculties. Therefore, their acts of worship and their actions are more difficult than the acts of worship of the angels insofar as the angels do not have these bodily faculties. Since prophets acts of worship are more difficult, they are greater in merit, according to the Prophet's saying: "The actions which are greater in merit are those which are the hardest." There are other arguments from the two points of view which we have mentioned in our book *Nihayat al-maram*.

¹. The mukallaf is one who is subject to taklif. Taklif is the awareness of the effect of actions. Thus, some actions will produce good results and some bad. There are two forms of taklif by which individual may be aware of the effect of their actions and thus be responsible for them. One is through reason and the other divine revelation. The individual human who

is subject to taklif is, as said before, the mukallaf. God who is the author of taklif is the mukallaf. cf. al- 'Allama al-Hilli al-Babu 'l-hadi 'ashar (translated by W. M. Miller) (London, 1928) pp. 46–50. [1]

2. The view of prophethood which is termed the view of the Brahmins was that reason was sufficient for human beings and therefore there was no need for prophets. This view is given at greater length later in the text. [2]

3. It seems that al-'Allama al-Hilli has here misunderstood the sina'i khafiyya and has taken it to mean unknown crafts when it probably refers to knowledge that is not known to humans through reason. [3]

4. The Mu'tazila famous school of theology in Islam, alleged to have been founded b. Wasil b. 'Ata' cf. Encyclopaedia of Islam under "Mu'tazila". [4]

5. The Asha'rites were a group of theologians who followed Abu I-Hasan al-Ash'ari and lived at the turn of third century A.H., he broke away from the Muthe Mu'tazila. [5]

6. The Hashwiyya a sub-group of the Murji'ites, an early moderate group. [6]

7. This refers to a passage in the Qur'an which forbids hurting the Prophet.

See verse:

"And there are some of them who molest the Prophet and say: He is one who believes every thing that he hears; say: A hearer of good for you (who) believes in Allah and believes the faithful and a mercy for those of you who believe; and (as for) those who molest the Messenger of Allah, they shall have a painful punishment" (Qur'an, 9:61). [7]

8. Abu Hashim al-Jubba'i, Mu'tazilite theologian of the fourth century A.H. His father Abu 'Ali was also an important theologian. [8]

9. 'Abd al-Jabbar died in the early part of the fifth century A.H. and was a leading Mu'tazilite theologian. [9]

10. The two Jubba'is – Abu 'Ali and Abu Hashim. [10]

11. Through the Prophet's marriage to Mary the Copt. The Copts lived in Egypt. [11]

12. Mu'tazilite theologian who flourished at the beginning of the third century A.H. [12]

13. Al-Sharif al-Murtada who flourished during the early part of the fifth century A.H. was an important Shi'ite theologian. [13]

14. One of the leading Arab poets at the time of Prophet. [14]

15. Qur'an, Chapter 72. [15]

[1] [1]

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