

THE CLEAR QURAN

A Thematic English Translation

Dr. Mustafa Khattab

'Allah'
Edition

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بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah —
the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

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Use the Table of Contents to navigate through this e-book.
Click the superscripted numbers in the translation
to access the hyperlinked endnotes.

QURANIC THEMES

As pointed out in the Table of Contents and the Thematic Index, the Quran has three main themes:



Doctrine (e.g., acts of worship, human interactions, family relations, and business transactions), which focuses mainly on a Muslim's relationship with Allah, other people, and the rest of Allah's creation.

■ **Stories** (e.g., the story of Moses, Noah, and Şâliḥ), which served two purposes: to reassure the Prophet's heart, as he was met with rejection in Mecca, and as cautionary tales for the pagans (see 11:120-123). Other stories (e.g., Joseph and Job) focus on moral lessons.

☀ **The Unseen** (e.g., the belief in Allah and His qualities, as well as angels, resurrection, judgment, etc.), which reaffirms one's faith in the divine through one's heart, not eyes.

Some chapters contain more than one theme, and some individual verses may touch on a theme not presented here, but the following table represents the general themes covered in the body of the text.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

INTRODUCTION

STYLISTIC FEATURES OF THE QURAN

NOTES ON TRANSLATION

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

MAP OF ARABIA AND AREA IN THE 7th CENTURY

THE CLEAR QURAN

- ☀ 1. The Opening (*Al - Fâtiḥah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 2. The Cow (*Al-Baqarah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 3. The Family of 'Imrân (*Âli-'Imrân*)
- 🕌 ☀ 4. Women (*An-Nisâ'*)
- 🕌 ☀ 5. The Spread Table (*Al-Mâ'idah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 6. Cattle (*Al-An'âm*)
- 🕌 ☀ 7. The Heights (*Al-A'râf*)
- 🕌 8. Spoils of War (*Al-Anfâl*)
- 🕌 9. Repentance (*At-Tawbah*)
- ☀ 10. Jonah (*Yûnus*)
- ☀ 11. Hûd (*Hûd*)
- ☀ 12. Joseph (*Yûsuf*)
- ☀ 13. Thunder (*Ar-Ra'd*)
- ☀ 14. Abraham (*Ibrâhîm*)
- ☀ 15. The Stone Valley (*Al-Hijr*)
- 🕌 ☀ 16. Bees (*An-Naḥl*)

- 🕌 ☀ 17. The Night Journey (*Al-Isrâ'*)
- ☀ 18. The Cave (*Al-Kahf*)
- ☀ 19. Mary (*Mariam*)
- ☀ 20. Țâ-Hâ (*Țâ-Hâ*)
- ☀ 21. The Prophets (*Al-Anbiyâ'*)
- 🕌 ☀ 22. The Pilgrimage (*Al-Hajj*)
- 🕌 ● ☀ 23. The Believers (*Al-Mu' minûn*)
- 🕌 ☀ 24. The Light (*An-Nûr*)
- 🕌 ☀ 25. The Standard (*Al-Furqân*)
- ☀ 26. The Poets (*Ash-Shu'arâ'*)
- ☀ 27. The Ants (*An-Naml*)
- ☀ 28. The Whole Story (*Al-Qaṣaṣ*)
- 🕌 ● ☀ 29. The Spider (*Al-'Ankabût*)
- 🕌 ☀ 30. The Romans (*Ar-Rûm*)
- 🕌 ☀ 31. Luqmân (*Luqmân*)
- ☀ 32. The Prostration (*As-Sajdah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 33. The Enemy Alliance (*Al-Aḥzâb*)
- ☀ 34. Sheba (*Saba'*)
- ☀ 35. The Originator (*Fâtir*)
- ☀ 36. Yâ-Sîn (*Yâ-Sîn*)
- ☀ 37. Those 'Angels' Lined up in Ranks (*Aṣ-Ṣâffât*)
- ☀ 38. Ṣâd (*Ṣâd*)
- ☀ 39. The 'Successive' Groups (*Az-Zumar*)
- ☀ 40. The Forgiver (*Ghâfir*)
- ☀ 41. 'Verses' Perfectly Explained (*Fuṣṣilat*)
- 🕌 ☀ 42. Consultation (*Ash-Shûra*)
- ☀ 43. Ornaments (*Az-Zukhruf*)
- ☀ 44. The Haze (*Ad-Dukhân*)

- ☀ 45. The Kneeling (*Al-Jâthiyah*)
- ☀ 46. The Sand-Hills (*Al-Aḥqâf*)
- 🕌 ☀ 47. Muḥammad (*Muḥammad*)
- 🕌 ☀ 48. The Triumph (*Al-Fath*)
- 🕌 49. The Private Quarters (*Al-Hujurât*)
- ☀ 50. Qāf (*Qāf*)
- ☀ 51. Scattering Winds (*Az-Zâriyât*)
- ☀ 52. Mount Ṭûr (*Aṭ-Ṭûr*)
- ☀ 53. The Stars (*An-Najm*)
- ☀ 54. The Moon (*Al-Qamar*)
- ☀ 55. The Most Compassionate (*Ar-Raḥmân*)
- ☀ 56. The Inevitable Event (*Al-Wâqi'ah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 57. Iron (*Al-Ḥadîd*)
- 🕌 58. The Pleading Woman (*Al-Mujâdilah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 59. The Banishment (*Al-Ḥashr*)
- 🕌 60. The Test of Faith (*Al-Mumtaḥanah*)
- 🕌 61. The 'Solid' Ranks (*Aṣ-Ṣaff*)
- 🕌 62. Friday Congregation (*Al-Jumu'ah*)
- 🕌 63. The Hypocrites (*Al-Munâfiqûn*)
- 🕌 ☀ 64. Mutual Loss and Gain (*At-Taghâbun*)
- 🕌 ☀ 65. Divorce (*Aṭ-Talâq*)
- 🕌 ☀ 66. The Prohibition (*At-Taḥrîm*)
- ☀ 67. All Authority (*Al-Mulk*)
- ☀ 68. The Pen (*Al-Qalam*)
- ☀ 69. The Inevitable Hour (*Al-Ḥâqqah*)
- 🕌 ☀ 70. Pathways of 'Heavenly' Ascent (*Al-Ma'ârij*)
- 71. Noah (*Nûḥ*)
- ☀ 72. The Jinn (*Al-Jinn*)

73. The Wrapped One (*Al-Muzzammil*)
 74. The One Covered up (*Al-Muddaththir*)
 75. The 'Rising for' Judgment (*Al-Qiyamah*)
 76. Humans (*Al-Insân*)
 77. Those 'Winds' Sent Forth (*Al-Mursalât*)
 78. The Momentous News (*An-Naba'*)
 79. Those 'Angels' Stripping out 'Souls' (*An-Nâzi'ât*)
80. He Frowned (*'Abasa*)
 81. Putting out 'the Sun' (*At-Takwîr*)
 82. The 'Sky' Splitting Open (*Al-Infîât*)
83. Defrauders (*Al-Muṭaffifîn*)
 84. The 'Sky' Bursting Open (*Al-Inshiqâq*)
 85. Constellations (*Al-Burûj*)
 86. The Nightly Star (*Aṭ-Ṭâriq*)
87. The Most High (*Al-A'la*)
 88. The Overwhelming Event (*Al-Ghâshiyah*)
 89. Dawn (*Al-Fajr*)
90. The City (*Al-Balad*)
 91. The Sun (*Ash-Shams*)
92. The Night (*Al-Layl*)
 93. The Morning Sunlight (*Aḍ-Ḍuḥa*)
 94. Uplifting the Heart (*Ash-Sharḥ*)
 95. The Fig (*At-Tîn*)
96. The Clinging Clot 'of Blood' (*Al-'Alaq*)
 97. The Night of Glory (*Al-Qadr*)
 98. The Clear Proof (*Al-Bayyinah*)
 99. The 'Ultimate' Quake (*Az-Zalzalah*)
 100. The Galloping 'Horses' (*Al-'Âdiyât*)

- ☀ 101. The Striking Disaster (*Al-Qâri'ah*)
- ☀ 102. Competition for More 'Gains' (*At-Takâthur*)
- 🕌 103. The 'Passage of Time' (*Al-'Aşr*)
- ☀ 104. The Backbiters (*Al-Humazah*)
- 105. The Elephant (*Al-Fîl*)
- ☀ 106. 'The People of Quraysh' (*Quraysh*)
- 🕌 107. 'Simplest' Aid (*Al-Mâ'ûn*)
- ☀ 108. Abundant Goodness (*Al-Kawthar*)
- 🕌 109. The Disbelievers (*Al-Kâfirûn*)
- 🕌 110. The 'Ultimate' Help (*An-Naşr*)
- ☀ 111. The Palm-Fibre Rope (*Al-Masad*)
- ☀ 112. Purity of Faith (*Al-Ikhlâş*)
- 🕌 113. The Daybreak (*Al-Falaq*)
- 🕌 114. Humankind (*An-Nâs*)

THEMATIC INDEX

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT ISLAM

SELECT TEACHINGS OF THE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD (ﷺ)

WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT MUḤAMMAD (ﷺ)

ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

With over two decades of experience in Arabic-English Islamic translation, Dr. Mustafa Khattab is a Canadian-Egyptian authority on interpreting the Quran. He was a member of the first team that translated the Ramadan night prayers (*Tarawîh*) live from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque in Medina (2002-2005). He memorized the entire Quran at a young age, and later obtained a professional *ijâzah* in the Ḥafṣ style of recitation with a chain of narrators going all the way to Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ). Dr. Khattab received his Ph.D., M.A., and B.A. in Islamic Studies in English with Honors from Al-Azhar University's Faculty of Languages & Translation. He lectured on Islam at Clemson University (OLLI Program, 2009-2010), held the position of Lecturer at Al-Azhar University for over a decade starting in 2003, and served as the Muslim Chaplain at Brock University (2014-2016). He is a member of the Canadian Council of Imams and a Fulbright Interfaith Scholar. He has served as an Imam in the U.S.A. and Canada since 2007 and is the author of *The Nation of Islam* (2011) and *Outfoxing Fox News* (2017), and contributor to the *Encyclopedia of Muslim American History* (2010). His forthcoming works include: *Qamus-ul-Quran (The Dictionary of Quranic Vocabulary)* , *The Illustrated Clear Quran for Kids* , and *Shukran: the Grateful Young Man*.

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Whatever good is in this work is from Allah.
Only the mistakes are mine.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

It was a summer day in Toronto and I had just finished leading the Friday congregation at a downtown mosque. On the way home I had an unlikely encounter, since all my cab-drivers in Toronto had been Muslims so far. That day my driver was non-Muslim, so he was able to identify me as Muslim simply because of my traditional Arab garb. Out of nowhere, he commented, "I think Muslims are good, but Islam is evil!" Taken aback by this Fox News style rhetoric, I responded, "Well, first of all thanks for the compliment about Muslims, but why do you think Islam is bad?" He replied, "Because your holy book calls me an animal." In astonishment, I answered, "I know the whole Quran by heart and I don't think it says that anywhere!" He cited 8:55, and I responded by telling him that the word *dâbbah* in Arabic does not mean an animal but a living being (see 24:45). He persisted, saying that his translation says so. I later checked many popular translations by Muslims and non-Muslims and realized that the man was right. This fateful encounter opened my eyes to the rampant misrepresentations of the Quran.

The Quran was revealed to Prophet Muḥammad (ﷺ) in the 7th century and was not translated into English by a Muslim until the 20th century. Many Muslims had long believed that the Quran should only be read in Arabic, the original language of revelation. This led to many inaccurate, ill-willed translations by missionaries and orientalists—which explains why we still see some words like 'holy war' and 'infidels' as well as many theological inaccuracies in some existing translations. All this leads to endless false assumptions about Islam and Muslims. Some Muslim translators are no better off than their non-Muslim counterparts because they are not well-versed in Arabic, or English, or Islamic studies, or translation, or all of the above. Looking up words in an Arabic-English dictionary or copying earlier translations when frustrated does not always guarantee accuracy in translation. There are some noteworthy modern translations like that of Dr. Ahmad Zaki Hammad (2007) and Dr. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem (2004), but many are either overtranslated,

making it difficult for laypeople to understand, or undertranslated, doing a great disservice to the Quran. This is why I saw a need for an accurate, smooth, and accessible translation.

To achieve accuracy, I have made use of the greatest and most celebrated works of old and modern *tafsîr* (Quran commentaries), and shared the work with several Imams in North America for feedback and insight. For clarity, every effort has been made to select easy to understand words and phrases that reflect the beauty and power of the original text. Along with informative footnotes, verses have been grouped and titled based on their themes for a better understanding of the *sûrahs* , their main concepts, and internal coherence.

Thanks to our editing and proofreading teams led by Abu-Isa Webb, I believe that what you are holding in your hands now is the most accurate and eloquent translation of the Final Revelation: *The Clear Quran* .

Mustafa Khattab

INTRODUCTION

The first translation of the Quran into English was done in 1649 by Alexander Ross. Since that first translation, many more attempts have been made to penetrate the work from an outside, academic point of view, but it wasn't until the early 20th century that the Quran was first translated by Muslims. In 1934, Abdullah Yusuf Ali published one of the most widely circulated translations to date.

Aside from concerns about academia and orientalism, translating the Quran can be an enormous task even for the sincere of heart. Arabic, as a Semitic language, has words that have meanings and shades of meanings which do not easily move over into English, and total mastery of both languages is needed before any truly satisfactory translation can be put forward. Translators also struggle to render what they believe to be the right meaning into a foreign language—knowing that it is almost impossible to reflect the Arabic style, rhythms, and figures of speech, while also struggling with different interpretations of the original Arabic words.

The development of linguistics, current events, and the gradual drift of the English language puts us in an important time to move forward in Quranic translations. For the most part, a lack of understanding Arabic can be seen in older, less popular works from European scholars, however mistakes and errors are persistent in more modern copies, and blunders can even be found in the likes of Yusuf Ali when he writes, “those who believe not in the hereafter name the angels with female names.” (53:27) A brief survey of names such as Gabriel, Michael, and Mâlik offers no female names whatsoever. Keeping in mind that some pagan Arabs believed that the angels were Allah's daughters, the true translation can be rendered, “those who do not believe in the Hereafter label the angels as female.”

The failure to understand the complex forms of Classical Arabic found in the Quran, and sometimes found only in the Quran, can be a stumbling block for many scholars, but even those with a strong understanding of Arabic need to have their intelligence backed with

the wisdom found in a sound theological background. Without understanding the religious context of the Quran, such mistakes can be made as when Muhsin Khan & Muhammad al-Hilali write, “Allah will never lead a people astray after He has guided them until He makes clear to them as to what they should avoid.” (9:115). In context, the verse is instructing the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions that they should no longer pray to Allah for the forgiveness of polytheists after their death. As pointed out by Ibn Kathîr, drawing on the understanding of Aṭ-Ṭabari, the meaning is clearly “Allah would never consider a people deviant after He has guided them, until He makes clear to them what they must avoid.”

For these reasons it is clear that any translation of the Quran must be led by scholars with a profound understanding of the theological context of the Quran, as well as a native understanding of Arabic, but also considerable training in the meaning of the Classical Arabic particular to the Quran. These three things enable a scholar to truly understand the Quran, and a profound understanding is the first step towards a good translation.

Of course, a firm understanding of Arabic is not all that is needed in order to translate the Quran effectively. The Quran states repeatedly that it is accessible, clear, and easy to understand, so it would be an error to translate it into dense or inaccessible language. Naturally, the academic traditions that first dealt with translating the Quran value language density, and the religious and scholarly traditions of the English language assume a correlation between complexity of language and truth. This correlation has been carried over into translations of the Quran despite complexity, density, and inaccessibility being tenets far from Islamic scholarly tradition. What we are left with are translations that, though they may be technically correct, miss the simplicity, vigour, or eloquence of the original in favour of a contrived sense of divinity.

Two striking examples of overinflated, though accurate, English translations come to mind. First, M.M. Pickthall writes, “Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo! the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass.” (31:19) In today’s English, this can only be

read as a rather vulgar statement, especially by non-academic readers and should instead be rendered, "Be moderate in your pace and lower your voice, for the ugliest of all voices is certainly the braying of donkeys." Second, T.B. Irving writes of 44:16, "Some day We will kidnap everyone in the greatest operation; We shall be Avenged!" Giving Allah a distinctly immature, vindictive, and even rueful voice where a more appropriate translation is, "'On' the Day We will deal 'you' the fiercest blow, We will surely inflict punishment."

The tone of the Quran, as a revelation for all humanity, relies heavily on a number of emotions as well, and a poor understanding of English can lead even great scholars of Arabic into error with translation. There are numerous instances in the Quran of sarcasm and wit, which are often lost entirely in complicated and fragile grammar structures. Elegance and prose are also usually cast out of translations, especially when scholars use a rigid word-for-word replacement technique to encode Arabic into a mock-English cypher that sometimes gives the opposite meaning of what is intended in the verse. The problem with undervaluing the subtleties and intricacies of human language can be underlined by examining the work of Dr. M. Mahmoud Ghali. He translates 4:105, "and do not be a constant adversary of the treacherous." The true translation of this verse is, "so do not be an advocate for the deceitful." Another example is his English translation of the Arabic word '*khair*' to 'charity'. The Arabic term '*khair*' has multiple meanings and often has nothing to do with charitable giving. Instances of such inaccuracy transform the meaning of Quranic verses. For example, 100:8 reads "And surely he is indeed constantly (passionate) in his love for charity," where "love for charity" in fact refers to "greed for 'worldly' gains." Likewise, 33:25, which speaks of the enemy alliance that laid a siege around Muslims in Medina, reads "they attained no charity," whereas the verse actually talks about "war gains."

In respecting the order and particulars of the Arabic words being used, the meaning of dozens of idioms are lost in translation, hundreds of sentences become a tangled mess of improper grammar, and the flow and ease of reading is entirely lost. It is better

to respect the meaning and power of the Quran than the language it happened to be revealed in, otherwise one might end up with the near blasphemous statement found in the Şaḥeeḥ International translation, “They have forgotten Allah, so He has forgotten them.” (9:67) Surely Allah does not ‘forget’ anything or anyone (see 20:52). Google Translate might give up a similar translation, but the meaning is poetic, it is much closer to ‘neglect.’ Both parties are aware of each other, but when humans neglect their duties to Allah, He neglects them in the Fire: “They neglected Allah, so He neglected them.”

Aside from these more theologically problematic translation issues, there are dozens of simple grammar structures in the Quran that are easy, clear, or beautiful in Arabic, but entirely untranslatable. Rather than try to fit the English structures and words into a foreign context, it is much better to accept English for what it has to offer and use its own native poetry and balance to create a translation that carries the real meaning and power of the Perfect Book.

With grammar and the particularities of translating aside, a considerable understanding of the context of the Quranic revelation itself as well as the stories found within is needed in order to render a proper English translation. For example, the word ‘corn’ is no longer used to describe all forms of grain, yet many translations still use this word to describe the fields in the dream of the King in the story of Joseph (12:43 and 46). When Yusuf Ali first wrote this in 1934, it may have been acceptable to refer to wheat as a kind of corn, but in modern vocabulary this is totally unheard of, yet many translations simply erroneously copy that word into their own works.

It is clear that the modern age demands not only a great scholar of Arabic and the Quran to come to the table, but also a modern, adaptable scholar of the English language, as well as someone with native fluency who knows how the translation will be received.

The reception of the Quran by English audiences now indicates a third stage in the historical development of Quran translation. At first it was an academic exercise, a curious study of the ‘other.’ Next,

Muslims translated the Quran as a matter of love or pride, and they shared it among themselves. With this long history and background, and a team of experts in the Quran and in the English language, the struggle we now face is transmitting the real beauty and message of the Quran to Muslims and non-Muslims alike who are interested in it and who also know and love English.

The *Alcoran* of Ross was the first small step forward, and Yusuf Ali's *The Holy Qur'an* was a turning point in the history of the Quran in English. The next step is to overcome the obstacles outlined here and to deliver Allah's Final Testament to English speaking audiences like never before. The next step is *The Clear Quran* .

STYLISTIC FEATURES OF THE QURAN

The Quran was revealed in 7th century Arabia, where people took so much pride in their mastery of Arabic that literary fairs were commonly held and prized poems were inscribed in gold for all to see. The Quran, which is believed to be Allah's inimitable Word, is a literary miracle, unmatched by any other work of Arabic literature. While Arabic has served as the medium for communicating the Quranic message, the Quran has forever changed the landscape of Arabic literary tradition, promoting Arabic to a leading world language and influencing other languages including Farsi, Urdu, Swahili, Turkish, Spanish, and many others. Several sciences have emerged to serve the Quran such as *tafsîr* (Quranic commentary), *tawhîd* (theology), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tajwîd* (phonetic rules of recitation), *qirâ'ât* (styles of recitation), *naḥw* and *ṣarf* (grammar and morphology), *balâghah* (rhetoric), and *khatt* (calligraphy). Algebra was also developed in part to solve issues related to the distribution of inheritance shares laid out in *Sûrah* 4. Together with the *Sunnah* or the example of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Quran is the bedrock of Muslim civilization and the main source of Islamic law and practice. The following are some of the distinctive stylistic features of the Quran in its original Arabic form.

Structure

The body of the Quran is made up of 6236 verses (or *âyat* , plural of *âyah* , which literally means sign, proof, or miracle), composed of 114 *sûrahs* (or chapters) in more than 600 pages. A *sûrah* usually takes its name from the main theme, a story, or a distinctive word within it. With the exception of *Sûrah* 9, all *sûrahs* begin with the *basmalah* : "In the Name of Allah—the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful." Depending on their respective *sûrah* , verses typically rhyme and vary in length—some are long (2:282 is the longest at fifteen lines long), while others are short (20:1 is the shortest at only two Arabic letters). The Quran is divided into 30 parts (or *ajzâ'* , plural of *juz'*), each with 8 subparts (or *arbâ'* , plural of *rub'*), making it convenient for reading and memorization.

Of the Quran's 114 *sûrahs*, eighty-six are classified as Meccan because they were revealed before the Prophet's emigration to Medina. These *sûrahs* focus mainly on restoring the belief in the One True God. The other twenty-eight *sûrahs* are categorized as Medinian since they were revealed after the Prophet's emigration from Mecca with an emphasis on the commandments regarding a Muslim's relationship with their Lord, their fellow humans, and the rest of Allah's creation. Some Meccan *sûrahs* may have Medinian verses and vice versa. *Sûrahs* and passages were revealed over a period of twenty-three years to address issues facing the Muslim community. As instructed by Allah through the angel Gabriel, the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered his scribes to arrange *sûrahs* mostly according to their lengths, with the longest *sûrahs* first, not chronologically.

Although the Quran is not arranged chronologically, the *sûrahs* are perfectly interrelated. Some of the stories or themes that are touched on passingly in one *sûrah* are explained in detail in the next *sûrah* (see 12:105 and 13:1-17). In some cases, both the end of a *sûrah* and the beginning of the next *sûrah* cover the same subject (see 53:57-62 and 54:1-5). One *sûrah* might give some stories and the next will continue the narrative by adding more stories (see *sûrahs* 37 and 38). Additionally, two consecutive *sûrahs* might cover the exact same themes, but in a different order (see *sûrahs* 55 and 56).

Quranic *sûrahs* have diverse themes, with main overarching subjects (e.g., verses 2:221-242), interjected by secondary subjects (e.g., verses 2:238-239). In essence, all themes have a common denominator: one's relationship with their Creator and the rest of His creation. Assuming that not everyone will read the Quran in its entirety, readers will run into this common denominator at any given *sûrah*.

Style

With the word 'Quran' (lit., recitation) repeated about seventy times, the Quran is unique in that it actually speaks about itself, its Revealer, its purpose, its devotees, and its detractors. The author of this profound book is nowhere to be found on the cover; rather He reveals Himself on every page, speaking with authority, offering

compelling proofs, giving commandments to prophets, believers, and all of humanity.

Perhaps one of the most visible stylistic features of the Quran is repetition, which comes in three different forms:

1) **Repetitive phrases** such as “Then which of your Lord’s favours will you both deny?” which appears a total of thirty-one times in *Sûrah* 55 and “Woe on that Day to the deniers!” which appears ten times in *Sûrah* 77. Far from redundancy, the purpose of repetition in these two instances is to create an impact by reinforcing the point being made—to acknowledge Allah’s many blessings in the former and deter people from denying Allah in the latter. This rhetorical device is still employed by many modern orators. One of the most notable examples is the repetition of “I have a dream” and “Let freedom ring” in Martin Luther King’s 1963 famous speech.

2) **Repetitive themes** such as the arguments for Allah’s oneness, uniqueness, and power in *sûrahs* 16, 35, and 112; the comparison between Paradise and Hell in *sûrahs* 37, 39, 40, and 41; and the horrors of Judgment Day in *sûrahs* 77, 78, 79, 80, and 81. The purpose is to emphasize a recurring theme (e.g., the reward of the believers and disbelievers) or present more details (e.g., the testimony of bodily organs in 41:19-24 and the fruit of the *Zaqqûm* tree in 37:62-68).

3) **Repetitive stories** such as the story of Moses (ﷺ) in *sûrahs* 7, 18, 26, and 28 and Abraham (ﷺ) in *sûrahs* 2, 6, 19, and 37. The purpose is to reassure the Prophet (ﷺ) and focus on a different aspect of the life of these prophets. For example, the highlights of the story of Moses (ﷺ) in *Sûrah* 7 are the arrogance of Pharaoh, the defeat of the magicians, and the suffering of the Children of Israel. In *Sûrah* 26, the focus shifts to Moses’ childhood, his unintentional killing of an Egyptian man, as well as his escape to Midian and his marriage.

The fact that these repetitive themes and stories are perfectly consistent, despite having been revealed over the course of two

decades to an unlettered prophet, is yet another proof of the divine source of the Quran.

The Quran contains some fascinating numerical patterns. For example, 'Paradise' and 'Hell' are each repeated 77 times, 'angels' and 'devils' 88 times, 'world' and 'Hereafter' 115 times, 'prayers' (*ṣalawât*) 5 times (the exact number of daily prayers), 'punishment' 117 times, whereas 'forgiveness' is repeated double that number, 234 times. 'Day' is repeated 365 times (the average number of days in the year), 'days' 30 times (the average number of days in the month), and 'month' 12 times (the number of months in the year).

Sarcasm is another common feature of the Quran, especially when it talks about the fate of those who ridicule the truth (see 24:53 and 44:49). So readers can expect to see a warning such as: "Give them good news of a painful punishment." This style aims at paying the ridiculers back in kind as well as adding more intensity to the warning.

Many passages in the Quran utilize a preferential style called *tafdîl* —that is to say, two things share a certain quality but one of them supersedes the other. For example, the Quran says repeatedly that the people of Pharaoh were more powerful and resourceful than the people of Mecca. However, some structures look like *tafdîl* but do not actually signify a comparison in quality. The assumption that both sides share the same quality but one is greater than the other is what causes confusion in most translations of the Quran. For example, when 12:33 suggests that going to prison is dearer to Joseph (عليه السلام) than committing adultery, this does not mean that either option is dear to him. Similarly, 17:84 suggests that the believers' Way is better in guidance than that of the pagans, but in truth the latter is not guided at all. Furthermore, 11:78 suggests that Lot (عليه السلام) instructs men that the single women of his nation are purer for marriage than other men, when other men are not pure for marriage in the first place.

Emphasis

Emphasis is commonplace in the Quran, especially where a concept is likely to be challenged by the skeptics. Sometimes one or more emphasis words are used, such as 'surely,' 'indeed,' and 'certainly' (see 15:9). The repetition of a sentence two consecutive times is also used as emphasis, such as 102:3-4: "But no! You will soon come to know. Again, no! You will soon come to know." The repetition of a verb in its noun form can also be used to similar effect. If translated literally, 56:4 will read, "When the earth will be shaken with a shaking," whereas the meaning is: "When the earth will be violently shaken." Lastly, an oath is one of the most common forms of emphasis. Allah has the right to swear by any of His creation, such as the sun and the moon, the day and night, the heaven and earth (91:1-6). However, a Muslim can only swear by Allah.

Persons, Time, and Place

To prove its divine nature, the Quran often refers to past events that were not known to anyone at the time of the revelation (see 12:25-42 and 27:17-28), constantly reminding the Prophet (ﷺ) that, since he was not an eyewitness to these events, it was through divine revelation that he came to know about them (see 12:102). The Quran also foretells future events that were later proven true (see 30:1-6 and 48:27).

Unlike English, the Arabic language has only three tenses: past, present, and future. The Quran is unique in using the past tense to refer to future events, particularly when it describes the Day of Judgment (see 39:68-75). In addition to reminding us that Allah is not bound by the limits of time, the aim is to give the impression that these events are so certain to happen that it is as if they have already happened. However, when these sentences are translated into English (or any other language for that matter), the future tense is used.

Generalizations are also common in the Quran, where "the people," or "the Jews," etc., actually refers to a small group that said or did something that was not challenged by the larger group (see 5:64).

With some exceptions, the Quran does not dwell on the names of persons, places, or times (see for example 2:259, 12:21-23, and 18:9-26). Rather, attention is usually focused on the moral of the story, making it valid for every people, time, and place.

To express the greatness and magnitude of a definite noun (such as *the* Straight Path, *the* Merciful Lord, etc.), the Quran often uses that name in an indefinite form (*a* Straight Path, *a* Merciful Lord, etc.), but this translation uses the definite form in these instances in order to maintain the true meaning in English.

The Quran states that the pleasures which Allah has prepared for the believers in Paradise are beyond human comprehension (see 32:17). Hence, generic terms (e.g., rivers, gardens, fruits, garments of silk, bracelets of gold, etc.) are often used to describe these pleasures in an appealing way, bringing it down to our level of understanding, whereas the realities of Paradise are far beyond these descriptions. These terms are no different than those one would have used in 1876 C.E. to describe a cutting-edge smartphone to Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone.

Letters and Pronouns

Of the twenty-nine letters of the Arabic alphabet, only fourteen appear in various combinations at the beginning of twenty-nine *sûrahs* of the Quran. These letters are: *Nûn*, *Şâd*, *Ha*, *Kâf*, *Ya*, *Mîm*, *Qâf*, *Alif*, *Ṭa*, *'Aîn*, *Lâm*, *Ha*, *Sîn*, and *Ra* . According to Ibn Kathîr, a renowned Quran commentator, in his explanation of 2:1, these letters can be arranged into an Arabic sentence that reads **ذُكِرَ صِرَاطٌ عَزِيزٌ** **سِرَاطٌ عَزِيزٌ** which roughly translates to: “A wise, decisive, full of wonders.” Although several theories have been suggested by scholars regarding the meaning of these letters, it is commonly believed that these letters are among the miracles of the Quran and, as such, no one knows their actual meaning except Allah.

Unlike other conjunctions like *fa* ف (then/right after) and *thumma* ثُمَّ (then/after), *wa* وَ (and) does not signify an order of events. The subjects of ‘and’ clauses have sometimes been rearranged for better

flow in English, such as ‘day and night’ instead of ‘night and day,’ ‘seen and unseen’ instead of ‘unseen and seen,’ etc. (see 35:19-22).

One of the first things that strikes novice readers of the Quran is that the word ‘We’ is frequently used when Allah speaks (see 15:9-23). This plural form, known as the royal we, is employed to indicate reverence and not number. Almost always, ‘Allah,’ ‘I,’ or ‘He’ is mentioned either before or after to emphasize Allah’s oneness.

Another visible stylistic feature is the ‘rotation of pronouns’ (*iltifât*) found throughout the Quran, alternating between first person, second person, and third person (see 17:1). If rendered verbatim into English this rhetorical device becomes entirely meaningless, as it is rarely found in any Indo-European language at all, and almost never in English.

A similar feature is found in the referential nature of pronouns in either language. In Classical Arabic, especially in the Quran, the repeated use of a single pronoun (such as ‘he’) rotates in reference, which is to say it first speaks of the first speaker, then the next use speaks of the second speaker, then back to the first, all using the same pronoun (see 26:24-31). In this way, repeatedly using “he said” would indicate a dialogue, whereas a direct translation of the conversation would be rendered as a monologue in English. The same can be said of other pronouns such as ‘they.’

The Quranic Challenge

Unlike any other scripture, the Quran poses a falsification test to those who challenge its authenticity which, over time, was made easier and easier. The first challenge was to produce a similar book in Arabic (17:88). Next, the challenge was reduced to only ten *sûrahs* (11:13). Finally, the challenge was to only produce one *sûrah* similar to it (10:38), and despite the shortest *sûrah* being only ten words (*Sûrah* 108), none have been able to match it. The Quran

also challenges readers to find contradictions (4:82). Some have attempted these challenges, only to prove their inability to match the elegance and eloquence of the divine revelation or their ignorance of the nuances of Arabic syntax and grammar.

NOTES ON TRANSLATION

Allah's names and attributes are capitalized as well as pronouns used to reference Him.

Proper nouns referring to events and cosmology are also capitalized, such as the Day of Judgment, the Day, the Hour, the Hereafter, Paradise, and Hell.

In some cases, the use of a pronoun would be confusing or misleading, so it has been replaced with the corresponding noun for clarity. Similarly, in some places where the 'rotation of pronouns' (*iltifât*) is found in the Arabic, pronouns have been altered in English to maintain pronoun agreement.

Gendered pronouns have been replaced with 'they' where the meaning is neutral, except in the case of Allah, Who is referred to as 'He' despite being gender-neutral in order to preserve the use of a singular pronoun, while avoiding the use of 'it.'

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Half brackets " " indicate words inserted into the English which do not directly correspond to Arabic words in the original text.

The most frequently used speech verb in the Quran is "said," especially in conversation. To enrich conversations in English, several speech verbs are used in this translation (such as replied, cried, protested, pleaded, and threatened), depending on the meaning (see 18:71-73).

The name "Muḥammad" appears only four times in the Quran. In some cases, words such as "Prophet" and "Messenger" are used to address him. But most of the time, the Prophet is addressed in the second person "you," this is when "O Prophet" will be used between half brackets " " to indicate that "you" is referring to Muḥammad (ﷺ) and not to the believers or anyone else.

ﷺ

is a calligraphic contraction of an Arabic phrase meaning 'peace be upon him,' which is used respectfully after the mention of prophets outside the text of the Quran.

“The Day of Judgment” and “Judgment Day” are equivalent and used interchangeably based on the flow in English.

Abbreviations used in this translation:

A.H. After *Hijrah*

B.C.E. Before Common Era

C.E. Common Era

e.g., *exempli gratia*, ‘for example’

i.e., *id est*, ‘that is to say’

lit., literally

TRANSLITERATION GUIDE

Arabic letter in **red** , transliteration in **blue** , followed by an example in brackets ().

ا ... â (Fâtihah)	ع ... ' (An'âm)
ء ... ' (Nisâ ')	غ ... gh (Ghâfir)
ب ... b (Baqarah)	ف ... f (Furqân)
ت ... t (Tîn)	ق ... q (Qalam)
ث ... th (Kawthar)	ك ... k (Kahf)
ج ... j (Fajr)	ل ... l ('Alaq)
ح ... ḥ (Ḥajj)	م ... m (Mariam)
خ ... kh (Ikhlâṣ)	ن ... n (Nûḥ)
د ... d (Balad)	ه ... h (Humazah)
ذ ... z (Zâriyât)	و ... w (Wâqi'ah)
ر ... r (A'râf)	و ... û (Burûj)
ز ... z (Nâzi'ât)	ي ... y (Yâ-Sîn)
س ... s (Isrâ ')	ي ... î (Ibrâhîm)
ش ... sh (Ḥashr)	ـ ... a (Shams)
ص ... ṣ ('Aṣr)	ـ ... i (Jinn)
ض ... ḍ (Ḍuḥa)	ـ ... u (Mulk)
ط ... ṭ (Ṭâ-Hâ)	
ظ ... ḏ (Ḍihâr)	

MAP OF ARABIA AND AREA IN THE 7th CENTURY

