

(At-Takrar Fil Qur'an)
**The Purpose and Significance of
Repetition in the Holy Qur'an**
(in comparison with World Scriptures)

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INTRODUCTION

The Holy Qur'an was revealed to our beloved master, the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, Al-Nabi Al-Ummi (the unlettered Prophet), in the Arabic language of the highest standard of Ummul Quraa (Makkah), which surpassed all the literary standards as set by the rich Arabic literature in the period of Jahiliyyah (ignorance) through its unique style and diction.

Apart from its divine origin, established authenticity, universal message and natural appeal, the Holy Qur'an is the only book on the surface of the earth which can rightly be credited for keeping its original language (i.e. Arabic) still live, vibrant, and unchanged, as compared to all other languages of the revealed scriptures. The inimitable linguistic features of the Qur'an have been universally admired by friends and foes alike. In the preliminary discourse of his well-acknowledged translation of the Holy Qur'an (published in 1734) George Sale observes:

"The Koran is universally allowed to be written with the utmost elegance and purity of language. It is confessedly the standard of the Arabian tongue. The Moslems or more orthodox believe, and are taught by

the book itself, that it is inimitable by human pen; and, therefore, insisted upon as a permanent miracle, greater than the raising of the dead to life, and alone sufficient to convince the world of its heavenly origin." ¹

E.H. Palmer, another renowned orientalist and translator of the Holy Qur'an seems marvelled by the sublime beauty of Qur'an:

".....the language of the Qur'an is universally acknowledged to be the most perfect form of Arabic speech.....the language is noble and forcible." ²

And the famous Arabist from the University of Oxford, H.A.R. Gibb has recognized the 'inimitable' style of the Holy Qur'an as being 'an outstanding evident miracle' in these words:

"...the Meccans still demanded of him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and self-confidence Mohammad appealed as a supreme confirmation of his mission to the Koran itself. Like all Arabs they were the connoisseurs of language and rhetoric. Well, then if the Koran were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evident miracle." ³

One of the outstanding features of the language of the Qur'an is the use of repetition (Al-Takrar in Arabic) of some words or phrases, and topics or themes throughout its 'protected and inimitable' text. However some people unfamiliar with this unique style of the Qur'an fail to recognize its beauty and purpose, claiming that the Qur'anic text is 'scrambled and incoherent'. They raise the objection that the Qur'an repeats words and themes and this is contrary to the eloquence of a written language. Repetition in the Qur'an appears to be problematic and a 'wearisome confused jumble' to many orientalists both old and new, and whether they are objectors or admirers.

One such example is of Thomas Carlyle, a famous British historian. Carlyle has paid rich tribute to the Holy Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and has refuted many falsehoods fabricated by the orientalists in his well-known book "Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History", under the title "The Hero as Prophet Mahomet: Islam." However he is reluctant to appreciate the beauties of the Qur'an in the fullest form partly on the account of "endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement" and frankly admits that this may be due to its virtues (i.e. of Qur'an) being lost in translation. Refuting some misconceptions about the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم he observes:

"...Mahomet dictated at intervals his Sacred Book, which they name *_Koran_*, or *_Reading_*, "Thing to be read". This is the

Work he and his disciples made so much of, asking all the world, Is not that a miracle? The Mahometans regard their Koran with a reverence which few Christians pay even to their Bible..... ***We also can read the Koran; our Translation of it, by Sale, is known to be a very fair one. I must say, it is as reading as I ever undertook. A wearisome confused jumble, crude, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement; most crude, incondite; -insupportable stupidity, in short! Nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran. We read in it, as we might in the State-Paper Office, unreadable masses of lumber, that perhaps we may get some glimpses of a remarkable man. It is true we have it under disadvantages: the Arabs see more method in it than we.....*** ***Read in its historical sequence it perhaps would not be so bad. Much of it, too, they say, is rhythmic; a kind of wild chanting song, in the original. This may be a great point; much perhaps has been lost in the Translation here.***" ⁴

Another recent example is of Robert Morey. In his book "Islamic Invasion: Confronting the World's fastest growing religion", he writes:

"Another problem is that of repetition. The Qur'an we are told, was intended to be memorized by those who were illiterate and uneducated. It therefore engages in the principle of endless repetition of the same material." ⁵

Before we analyse and deal with this so-called 'problem' let us define and discuss the concept, use and purpose of

repetition found in the Holy Qur'an particularly in comparison with other World Scriptures.

Lexicological Meanings

(Repetition: English & Takrar: Arabic)

Repetition: The English lexicographers have defined the word 'repetition' as:

"The repeated use of the same word or word pattern as a rhetorical device."

"Reiteration, or repeating the same word, or the same sense in different words, for the purpose of making a deeper impression on the audience".

"The repeated use of the same word or word pattern as a rhetorical device."

"Repetition is just the simple repetition of a word, within a sentence or a poetical line, with no particular placement of the words."

"An instance of using a word, phrase, or clause more than once in a short passage dwelling on a point."

From the above quotations⁶ we may therefore conclude that repetition has a wider meaning including synonymy, resemblance, similarity, prolixity and emphasis.

Takrar: From a close study of various authentic Arabic dictionaries like Lisan al-Arab, Munjad etc one can agree and confirm that originally the letters Kaaf and Raaf indicated the meaning of

'repetition' and 'gathering together'. Here are some examples:

'**Karartu**' means: I redid something that had already been done i.e. to do something repeatedly. The verbal noun '**Al-Karr**' which is conjugated "**Karra 'alayh, Yakirru, Karran,**" has the meaning of 'a rope by which to climb a date-palm. The plural of the verbal noun, "**Kuroor**" also means 'sail ropes'. "**Al-Karr**" also means 'retreat'. "**Karrara al-shay'a**" and "Karra karrahu" mean 'he did something **over and over again.**' And "**Karrartu 'alayhi al-haditha wa karkartuhu**" means 'I repeatedly described the incident to him. This verb is used in various places in the Qur'an i.e. 79:13 and 67:5 etc.

In his famous work 'Mufradat Fi Ghraib al-Qur'an, **Imam Raghīb al-Isfahani** observes:

*"Al-karr has the meaning of 'folded up' and a folded rope is called 'Karr'. This usage was originally a verbal noun, but it later became a noun, with its plural as kuroor."*⁷

Imam Raghīb has quoted three verses from the Holy Qur'an in support of his deliberations: i.e. 17:7, 26:19, and 2:168.

According to W.E. Lane, the word 'Karra' signifies: He, or it, returned time after time. You say 'afnaahu karrul-laili wanna-haari' ie the returning of night and day time after time caused him to come to an end. Karrun means a rope

(made in the form of a hoop) by means of which one ascends a palm-tree. Quoting Imam Es-Suyootee, he writes:

"... 'Takarar' signifies the renewing of the first word or phrase, and it denotes a sort of 'takeed' [or corroboration] but it is said to be a condition of 'takeed' that the word or phrases [which are repeated] be without interruption, and occur not more than three times and that 'takrar' differs from it in both these particulars. The phrase "Fabi ayyi aalaai rabbikuma tukadhibaan" is an instance of 'takrar' not of 'takeed' because it occurs [with interruptions and] more than three times and so another phrase " Wailu(n) yawmai-zillil mukazzibeen" ⁸

Based on lexicological meanings, we can conclude that the verb karra revolves around the meanings of 'to gather together,' 'to repeat,' 'to redo something,' and 'to wind something around something else.' The same is true for speech, for words are repeated, and like trying to reach the top of a date-palm by means of a rope (al-karr), are brought together and reiterated in order to emphasise and reinforce the meaning.

Repetition as an embedded Natural Process

Human life either physical or spiritual is subject to repetition for its survival and progress. This is a natural process that is governed by laws of nature, devised by the Creator (Al-Khallaq Al-Aleem). The Holy Qur'an highlights the significance of this embedded process in these words:

فَظَرَّتْ اللَّهُ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا

" And follow the nature made by Allah —the nature according to which He has fashioned humankind." (30:31)

The Holy Qur'an is the eternal Word of Allah and the Laws of Nature and His Work. In other words we can say that The Qur'an is the Book of Allah's Speech and the Universe, governed by the Laws of Nature is the Book of His Work. The best way to testify the truth of a word can be presented by an action. When we look into the Holy Qur'an (the Book of Allah's Speech) in comparison to the Universe (the Book of Allah's Work) we find repetition in the manifestation of Allah's attributes and works. If we suppose that there is no such repetition, we can end up with the concept of mortality in the universe, negating its very existence.

To elaborate this point further, let us reflect on ourselves ie: humankind. Man is called the micro universe, and one cannot avoid but to experience the structured repetition in his body either in his organs or in their functions. Human organs can be categorized into two groups: (a) Organs with repetition like hair, teeth, ribs, intestines and fingers etc and (b) Organs without repetition such as mouth, nose, tongue and heart etc. However, after contemplation we can conclude that though organs related to the second group (b) have not been repeated in body yet they are subject to repetition in their function such as eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, speaking, breathing, palpitation of pulse

and more understandably the beats of the heart (normally 60 to 90 times per minute) etc – all need repetition of some form or other.

Repetition an important Tool of Speech

According to Arab linguists and grammarians repetition is an important factor in speech accuracy under the category called Al-Etnab which is a language tool that deals with direct and indirect repetition, the indirect one such as saying the sentence then explaining it. This is such a common literary device that it is almost never even noted as a figure of speech. Repeating key words in a paragraph is an important technique for achieving coherence.

Categories of Repetition

Language experts have categorized the repetition into the following two groups:

(a) Purposeful Repetition

(b) Needless Repetition

Purposeful repetition has many functions such as making the meaning stronger, extending the sentence, highlighting and emphasizing the importance of an issue and inviting the attention of the reader or listener.

Needless or unintentional repetition is a kind of clutter that may distract or bore a reader. However, if used skillfully and selectively, this technique can help to hold sentences together and focus the

reader's attention on a central idea. Deliberate and careful repetition of key words and phrases can be an effective rhetorical strategy for achieving emphasis and fashioning coherent paragraphs.

Some Quotes of World Scholars

Following are some quotes of famous scholars⁹ of the world who express the effectiveness and validity of its use being part and parcel of human nature.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe,
a German writer and polymath (1749-1832):
There is repetition everywhere, and nothing is found only once in the world.

Claude M. Bristol,
an American writer (1891-1951):
'It's the repetition of affirmations that lead to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen.'

Nathaniel Cotton,
an English physician and poet (1707-1788):
"Mental pleasure are never cloy; unlike those of the body, they are increased by repetition, approved by reflection, and strengthened by enjoyment."

Soren Kierkegaard, *a Danish philosopher, theologian, and psychologist (1813-1855):*
"Repetition is the reality and the seriousness of life."

Napoleon Hill, *an American speaker and writer (1883-1970):*
Any idea, plan, or purpose may be placed in

the mind through repetition of thought.

Robert Collier, *an American writer and publisher:*

Constant repetition carries conviction.

Ralph W. Emerson, *an American poet and essayist (1803-1882):*

Nature is an endless combination and repetition of a very few laws. She hums the old well-known air through innumerable variations.

W. Clement Stone, *an American writer and businessman (1902-)*

You affect your subconscious mind by verbal repetition.

Willie Tyler:

"The reason lightning doesn't strike twice in the same place is that the same place isn't there the second time."

Examples of Repetition in Ancient Literature

We find many examples in pre-Islamic Arab literature. Experts of pre-Islamic Arab literature have quoted many examples of rich inclusion of repetition in famous Qasaid (eulogies) written by well known poets. One of such examples is that of Harith Ibn al-'Ibaad who used one phrase "Qarriba Marbat-an-Na'aamati Minnii" (bring near to me the stable of Na'aamah (name of his horse) more than 50 times in his qaseeda (eulogy). Another example is of the famous poet Muhal-hal Ibn Rabi'ah, who employed this rhetoric device in his poetry. In reply to Harith Ibn al-'Ibaad he has repeated a

similar phrase: "Qarriba Marbit-al-M a s h h a r i Minnii" (Bring to me the stable of Mashhari [name of his horse]) 40 times. From the early Islamic period the famous women poets Khunsaa and Laila Khaylia are also worth mentioning in this regard.⁹

This phenomenon is not limited to Arab literature. We can find this feature in the literature of other nations since ancient times. For example in the national Songbook of China, which is an older anthology of her poetry, apart from common songs, ceremonial or festive sections several times repeat the same formula, without any amendment. For instance, the poem under the title: "**Peach tree slim and strong**" throughout repeat the following highlighted phrases :

Peach trees slim and strong,
Flowers red and wild,
Girls will be married,
This is much more convenient home.
Peach trees slim and strong,
Fruit sweet and abundant.
Girls will be married;
This is much more convenient home.
Peach tree slim and strong,
Rain and green leaves.
Girls will be married,
Peach tree slim and strong.¹⁰

One of the classic instances of verbal repetition in recent British history is found in the form of a speech by Winston Churchill (the former British Prime Minister) delivered to the House of Commons on 4th June 1940 after the

British evacuation from Dunkirk that year. At that point of time, France had fallen to Nazi Germany, the United States was still neutral, and Britain stood alone. In order to hammer home the message, Churchill used some words repeatedly in his speech.

"...We shall go on to the end, **we shall fight** in France, **we shall fight** on the seas and oceans, **we shall fight** with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, **we shall fight** on the beaches, **we shall fight** on the landing grounds, **we shall fight** in the fields and in the streets, **we shall fight** in the hills; we shall never surrender...."¹¹

Commenting on the repeated phrase 'We shall fight', an analyst writes:

"Churchill's thundering 'we shall fight' (repeated 7 times) fall like hammer strokes, building to that emphatic, defiant, and irresistible 'we shall never surrender'. **In 1940 Churchill's rhetoric was perhaps the most important weapon deployed against Adolf Hitler.**"¹²

Is there repetition in the Qur'an?

In the field of Qur'anic studies the views and opinions expressed by various scholars within Islam and outside regarding repetition can be categorized into two main groups:

Objectors: *The Qur'an is replete with repetition which is 'wearisome and cause boredom'.* This is the opinion expressed by many orientalist, either reviewers, doubters or objectors against the Qur'an such as Robert Morey and Thomas Carlyl (as already quoted in the beginning) Unfortunately some misguided Muslims are also influenced with such views and to adopt these themselves. Mentioning the great deeds of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud عليه السلام Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II, al-Musleh al-Maud رضى الله عنه writes:

*"One of the mistakes that got a way into the Muslims and non-muslims as well about the meaning of the Holy Qur'an, was that there was repetition in the Holy Qur'an. Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud عليه السلام proved that there was no (purposeless) repetition at all in the Holy Qur'an."*¹³

Defenders: *There is no verbal or conceptual repetition in the Qur'an at all that can be called superfluous.* This is the general opinion held by many defenders and submitters of the Qur'an. Opinions and views expressed by some scholars and divines before the advent of Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud عليه السلام are given below:

Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi has beautifully explained the subject and philosophy behind repetition in his famous work 'Mathnavi'. He says that we eat and drink regularly the same food but we never complain that why do we eat and drink the same sort of food every day. The reason for this is that when we eat or drink we experience hunger and thirst in its newest form. Therefore we

experience a new delight and taste in it. We do not say that this is the same water which we have drunk so many times before so it is of no use now. The same case is of those whose souls feel thirsty and they wish to quench their thirst from the fountain of divine water descended from the heaven ie the divine revelation whose culmination we have in form of the Holy Qur'an. The righteous believers find new delight and taste in every verse of the Qur'an and the apparent repetition does not affect their spiritual pleasure but rather increases it.¹⁴

Allama Jalal-ud-Din Es-Suyootee(r.a) has dealt with this subject in detail, outlining its objectives and benefits in his well-known book called: 'Al-Itqan'.¹⁵ 'This is one of the qualities of eloquence. There are many benefits of Takreer and one of them is called 'Taqreer' (establishment) as the famous saying is: *الكلام اذا تكررتقرر* meaning: when a word is repeated it establishes (its meaning). God himself has pointed out the reason for which the stories and warnings have been repeated in the Qur'an as He says:

*وَصَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحْدِثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا*

We have explained therein certain warnings, that they may fear God or that it may give birth to divine remembrance in them. (20:114)

Allama Al-Tabari has denied that there was repetition in verses that were close to each other or followed on in sequence. He said:

"There are no two successive verses in God's Book in which a single word or meaning is repeated especially if another verse intervenes and changes the meanings of the two verses. Of course there may be several identical verses in a single sura, but since they are separated by other verses, such verses bear different meanings."¹⁶

Allama Al-Qurtubi says about the following phrase repeated in verses (3:178-179) that it is repeated for emphasis:

لَنْ يَضُرُّوا اللَّهَ شَيْئًا

Surely, they cannot harm Allah in any way.[3:178]

Similarly, when expounding the verse (2: 157):

*أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ
مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ*

"It is these on whom descend blessings from their Lord and also mercy"[2:157]

He says: "Although as a word, Rahmah (mercy) is different, it is, however, repeated in order to emphasize and enrich the meaning."¹⁷

Allama Abu Hayyan Al-Andalusi, in his interpretation of the verse [5:49]

لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَا جَا

For each of you We prescribe a clear spiritual Law and a manifest way in secular matters.

states: "Shir'atan (law) and Minhaaj

(way) are two words expressing the same meaning, that is, 'road,' and have been repeated for emphasis."¹⁸

Allama Al-Zarkashi has discussed the question of repetition from various angles and has defined it that:

"Repetition is the restatement either identically or synonymously of a meaning which may be forgotten due to a lengthy interval, for the purpose of impressing it on the mind. Therefore, if something is repeated to emphasize a previous meaning, it is not counted as repetition."

He further says:

"Those who suppose repetition to be without benefit although it is one of the styles of good speech, and deny it, are in errors particularly if there is a connection between the repeated things. It is a custom of the Arabs to repeat and emphasize things when they speak, in order to show the importance of something they want to be achieved, or to indicate that it is about to be realized, or to summon something."¹⁹

Hadhrat Shah Waliullah رحمه الله تعالى has comprehensively discussed this subject in his well-acknowledged book: 'Al-Fawz al-Kabeer'.²⁰ Giving reasons for repetition in the Qur'an he is of the opinion that this is a divine strategy for instilling the core messages in the hearts and minds of the people. And for this very reason we have been commanded to recite the Holy Qur'an times again.

Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud عليه السلام

categorically denied the concept of so-called 'repetition' and emphatically removed this misconception about the Qur'an, highlighting the beauties and excellences of the 'Word of Allah' in his different writings. Outlining the great services rendered by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام to the cause of the Qur'an, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih II, al-Musleh Maud رضي الله عنه says:

"Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud رضي الله عنه has compared the verses of the Holy Qur'an to a flower by using a simile. In a flower, apparently, every new circle of petals seems to be a repetition but as a matter of fact every circle adds beauty to the flower. Will a flower remain intact if one circle of petals is detached from it? ..no. The same is the case of the Holy Qur'an. As every petal increases beauty in the flower and God makes a new chain of petals only when the first one is complete; similarly in the Qur'an every thematic place brings new meaning and purpose to it and the whole of the Holy Qur'an then makes a complete picture."²¹

Hadhrat Musleh Maud رضي الله عنه has also dealt with this subject in scholarly manner at different places in his invaluable commentary of the Holy Qur'an [Tafseer-e-Kabeer], and in his other writings. Explaining the philosophy behind the repetition of the Holy Qur'an he writes:

"Every recurring word brings new meaning and excellence to it.....This is wrong to think that the verses of the Holy Qur'an are detached from one another. The example of

the Holy Qur'an is like particles of body and the example of surahs is like the example of body parts. For instance humans generally have 32 teeth. Can one say that as teeth have been repeated 32 times so only one should be left and the rest 31 teeth should be extracted out. Similarly, man has two ears. Will one remove an ear for the reason that why has the other been made? Or can one say that man should not have 12 ribs and the 11 out of them should be broken? If someone will break even one rib of the other individual he will file a claim for grievous injury. Likewise there are millions of hair in human body. Will anyone keep only one, shaving the rest, to avoid repetition? Just remove the repetition then see what is left behind." ²²

On another occasion he enlightens the reader of his marvelous commentary of the Holy Qur'an [Tafseer-e-Kabeer] concerning issue:

"When a statement is repeated for a new purpose it is not contrary to the eloquence. Only that repetition is objectionable which is without any purpose and benefit. But if a command is mentioned and a new purpose demands its repetition, it cannot be called a repetition. Its example is as sometimes we say in a gathering; 'Sit down'; then after some time we repeat it twice more at different occasions. Now apparently there seems to be a repetition in these words but when we say them for first time; our addressees are those who are standing at that time. But when we say it again then those people are meant who are not yet seated. Likewise when we say it third time then those few individuals are the addresses who are still

standing. Now in this example using a phrase several times is neither ineloquence nor repetition, instead each use (of the said phrase) carries a different purpose in its essence." ²³

Why is there Repetition in the Qur'an?

The Holy Qur'an is a timeless book of guidance for the whole of the humanity. The Qur'an repeatedly claims that its verses have been expounded in detail:

كِتَابٌ فَصِّلَتْ آيَاتُهُ قُرْآنًا
عَرَبِيًّا لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

A Book, the verses of which have been expounded in detail – oft-recited, made manifestly clear – for a people who have knowledge.[41:4]

Allama Al-Suyuti has mentioned about 55 names of the Holy Qur'an in his well known work entitled: Al-Itqan Fi Uloom il Qur'an.

In order to appreciate the significance and purposefulness of repetition in the Holy Qur'an we must not forget the attributive names of the Holy Qur'an, mentioned within the Qur'an. Three of them are worth-exploring in context of this subject.

1. **Al-Dhikr:** which means an exhortation; an admonition or a warning (or reminder):

إِنَّ هُوَ إِلَّا ذِكْرٌ لِلْعَالَمِينَ

It is nothing but a Reminder unto all the worlds. (82:28)

Expounding the philosophy of this attributive name, the Holy Promised Messiah عليه السلام writes in his outstanding book: 'Karaamat-us-Sadiqeen':

"The Qur'an....is the 'Zikru-lil-'Aalamin' (a Reminder for all the worlds); namely it reminds every person, possessed with different nature, of his required excellences and men of various level of understanding that is to say; a common man as well as a philosopher, benefit from it...Whatever the aspects of human nature are, this (Word of Allah) can foster and moderate all of them."²⁴

The following verses further strengthen the theme of constant reminding being one of its prime features:

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا
وَمَا يَزِيدُهُمْ إِلَّا نُفُورًا

We have explained the truth in the Qur'an in various ways that they may be admonished, but it only increases them in aversion.(17:42)

وَلَقَدْ صَرَّفْنَا فِيهِمْ بَيْنَهُمْ لِيَذَّكَّرُوا
فَأَيُّ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ إِلَّا كُفُورًا

And We have explained it to them in diverse ways that they may take heed, but most men would reject everything but disbelief. (25:51)

وَكَذَلِكَ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا عَرَبِيًّا وَ
صَرَّفْنَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْوَعِيدِ لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَتَّقُونَ أَوْ يُحَدِّثُ لَهُمْ ذِكْرًا

And thus have We sent it down – the Qur'an in Arabic – We have explained

therein certain warnings, that they may fear God or that it may give birth to divine remembrance in them. (20:114)

Here in the above quoted three verses the common verb 'Sarrafnaa' is of pivotal importance. 'Tasreef' is the verbal noun of the above mentioned verb and it means 'the turning from one state of condition to another or from one direction or course or way to another. So 'Tasreef-ul-Ayaat' signifies the varying of the Qur'anic verses by repeating them in different forms (Lane & Aqrab).

So in light of the above verses we understand that: (a) the Qur'an refutes all possible objections raised against its principles and teachings and (b) that it discusses all important subjects from all conceivable points of view. For a book which has to deal exhaustively with all the questions of importance it is quite natural and even necessary that it should revert, time and time again, to the relevant points which bear on the main theme. No reasonable person can call this repetition. Repetition is objectionable only when it serves no useful purpose, but when it is intended to throw light upon a question from a new angle of vision or to refute a new objection, no sane and intelligent person can object to it.²⁵

Moreover, the fact that Man (Insaan) by nature is forgetful of many important matters so he has to be constantly reminded of them and to have his attention regularly directed towards them. Regarding the Arabic word 'Insaan'

(man), the lexicographers have differed in its derivation. One of the acknowledged opinions is that "its is originally 'Insiyaanun' from 'An-Nisyaan' (forgetfulness). It is said: Innamaa Summiya Insaan Li-annhu 'Ahida Ilayhi Fa-nasiya: He was only named 'Insaanun' because he was commanded and forgot."²⁶ So all these repetitions and reminders are necessary because men forget the life of the hereafter and easily indulge in the life of this world. Therefore need for constant reminders cannot be overemphasized. The Holy Qur'an says:

وَلَقَدْ صَرَبْنَا لِلنَّاسِ فِي هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ
مِنْ كُلِّ مَثَلٍ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

And, indeed, We have set forth for the benefit of humankind, every kind of similitude, that they may take heed.[39:28]

And in Surah al-Qasas we read:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّلْنَا لَهُمُ الْقَوْلَ
لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ

And We have, indeed, thoroughly conveyed to them the Word, that they may be admonished.[28:52]

Al-Mathani: the Qur'an presents itself as 'Kitaaban Mutashabihan Mathani': a Book consistent by repeating its injunctions and we find an echo of this feature throughout its text. Ponder over the following verse [39:24]:

اللَّهُ نَزَّلَ أَحْسَنَ الْحَدِيثِ
كِتَابًا مُتَشَابِهًا مَثَانِي

Allah has send down the best Discourse – a Book, whose verses are naturally supporting and repeated in diverse forms.[39:24]

Expounding the meaning of the above-quoted verse the Holy Promised Messiah عليه السلام writes:

"This book is resembling and its verses and themes have similarities with one another. There is no discrepancy and disagreement in them. Every reminder and admonition has been stated in it by way of repetition. Its purpose is that the narration at one place may serve as a commentary to another similar place"²⁷

At another place he advises:

"We should never forget this point that some parts of the Holy Qur'an are the commentary and the explanation of other parts. At one place a point is mentioned in brief and at the other place the same point is explained in detail as if the second place is a commentary of the first place."²⁸

Further to strengthen his point the Promised Messiah عليه السلام has quoted the verse 7 of Suratul Fatihah (i.e. the path of the ones blessed by Allah) linking it to the verse 70 of Surah Nisaa (i.e. where divinely blessed people have been categorized into four groups: the Prophets, the Truthful, the Martyrs, the Righteous).

Moreover, it is noteworthy that in the Holy Qur'an, Allah, the Exalted, has also referred to Suratul Fatihah as 'Mathani'(oft-repeated).

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِنَ الْمَثَانِي
وَ الْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمِ

And We have, indeed, given thee the seven oft-repeated verses, and the Great Qur'an.[15:88]

These are the 'seven oft-repeated verses' which have been explained and expounded in great detail throughout the Holy Qur'an. This is that beautiful and compact surah which is repeated in every section of Salat (the Islamic way of worshipping God) and even its verbal repetition yields great spiritual benefits to the humble hearts. Advising his followers regarding the power and effectiveness of its repetition the Promised Messiah عليه السلام states:

"Repeating the prayer of Suratul Fatihah in Salat is highly effective. Whenever one experiences insipidity and tastelessness this practice should be continued i.e. sometimes repeating the verse:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Thee alone do we worship Thee alone do we implore for help.

And sometimes the repetition of:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the right path.

And in prostration (sajdah) keep repeating:

يَا حَيُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ أَسْتَغِيْثُ

'O (Allah), the Living, the Self-Subsisting, I appeal to Your mercy.' ³⁰

On another occasion the Promised Messiah عليه السلام highlighted the importance of purposeful repetition as such:

"Repeating Suratul Fatihah in prayer is good. It will be better to repeat the words:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

Guide us to the right path; the path of those on whom thou hast bestowed thy blessings

with full concentration and humbleness and present your heart for divine blessings to be descended. Moreover, keep repeating some times the verse:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

Thee alone do we worship Thee alone do we implore for help.

Repetitions of these two verses will, insha-Allah, enlighten the heart and purify the soul." ³¹

2. Al-Shifa: Thirdly, its healing properties to cure all the spiritual diseases and maladies have been described by its title 'Shifa' (a healing and cure) which also naturally requires repetition in the healing process. In Surah Younas the whole of humanity is reminded as such:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَ تَكْوِينُ مَوْعِدَةٍ
مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ

O mankind! There indeed has come to you an Exhortation from your Lord and a healing for whatever disease there is in the hearts. [10:58]

In Surah Bani Israel we read:

وَنُنزِّلُ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ مَا هُوَ
شِفَاءٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And We are gradually revealing of the Qur'an that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers; [17:83]

And in Surah Hamim Sajdah the powerful claim comes in these words:

وَلَوْ جَعَلْنَاهُ قُرْآنًا أَعْجَمِيًّا لَقَالُوا
لَوْلَا فُصِّلَتِ الْآيَاتُ أَغْجَمِيٌّ وَعَرَبِيٌّ
قُلْ هُوَ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا هُدًى وَشِفَاءٌ

And if We had made it a Qur'an in a foreign tongue, they surely would have said,

"Why have not its verses been made clear? What! A foreign tongue and an Arab?"

Say, 'It is a guidance and healing for those who believe.' [41:45]

Commenting on this feature of the Holy Qur'an in connection with the objection of repetition, the Holy Promised Messiah عليه السلام states:

"This is useless logic of the stupid who say that the repetition conflicts with eloquence. They may continue to say so, but the purpose

of the Holy Qur'an is to cure the sick. It will definitely give medicine time and again to him. If this principle is not correct, why do, then, such objectors repeatedly give medicine when any one of them gets ill? And why you (addressee; follower) administer repetition of food and clothes etc in your day to day life." ³²

بحر حکمت ہے وہ کلام تمام
عشق حق کا پلار ہے جام
اس کے منکر جو بات کہتے ہیں
یونہی اک واہیات کہتے ہیں

Every word of it is an ocean of wisdom. It makes one drink cups full of love of God.

Whatever they say who deny it, say nothing but sheer nonsense. ³³

Kinds of Repetition in the Qur'an

Having a close-up study of the Holy Qur'an, one can conclude that in fact there are two kinds of Takrar (repetition) found in the text:

- Repetition of Theme
(Takrar-e-Ma'anvi: Conceptual Repetition)
- Repetition of Expression
(Takrar-e-Lafzi: Textual Repetition)

Takrar-e-Ma'anvi (Repetition of Theme)

The Holy Qur'an has four universal aims:

- Proof of a single Maker and His ultimate powers

- (2) Prophethood
- (3) Resurrection and Accountability
- (4) Absolute Justice.

All the verses of the Holy Qur'an follow on after each other for the purpose of proving these fundamental aims, and some are repeated in order to clarify them further from various angles. This includes the mention of the attributes of God, manifestation of His powers, rejection of Shirk (polytheism), obligations of man towards his creator and fellow human beings, heaven and hell, moral values, righteous deeds and stories of the prophets etc

The Qur'an repeatedly mentions certain deeds so that they may become the part of human nature with a sustained practice. For instance the institution of prayer and its benefits have been mentioned hundreds of times, highlighting its importance and significance in the believer's life, being the prime object of his existence.

Moreover, in order to develop the reflective power of man for practice and reformation, the Holy Qur'an has used many techniques. One of them is that it has repeated certain stories of past prophets from various angles. Allama Es-Suyootee (in his book al-Itqaan) and Allama Al-Zarkashi (in his book al-Burhaan) have given several reasons and benefits for the repetition of prophetic stories particularly of Hadhrat Adam عليه السلام, Hadhrat Ibraheem عليه السلام, Hadhrat Musa عليه السلام and Hadhrat Isa Ibn Maryam عليه السلام.

One of the purposes of the stories was to console the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم because he used to feel distressed by vain practices and sayings of the unbelievers. The Qur'an itself has mentioned this:

وَلَقَدْ نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ يَضِيقُ
صَدْرُكَ بِمَا يَقُولُونَ

And, indeed, We know that thy bosom becomes straitened because of what they (unbelievers) say. [15:98]

We read in Surah Hood:

وَكُلًّا نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الرُّسُلِ
مَا نُنَبِّئُكَ بِهِ فُؤَادَكَ ۗ وَجَاءَكَ فِي
هَذِهِ الْحَقِّ وَمَوْعِظَةٌ وَذِكْرٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

And all of the tidings of the Messengers, whereby We make thy hear firm, We relate unto thee, And herein has come to thee the truth and an exhortation and a reminder for the believers.[11:121]

Another purpose was to express the same meaning in various ways and styles, which was evidence for the Qur'an's sustained eloquence. The stories served great warnings to the opponents of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم who used to reject him, diverting their attention that they would meet same pathetic end if they did not stop rejecting him. Moreover, the stories in various surahs (ie Surah Hood, Taa-Haa and Shu'araa etc) of the Holy Qur'an are not exactly repeated; in one place they are related

at length and in detail, and in others they are briefly summarized, and sometimes their places are changed. All these stories are like independent sections. Each contains noteworthy aspects. Each opens for its reader the doors of new meanings so that he made draw conclusions according to his level of understanding.

Takrar-e-Lafzi (Repetition of Expression)

The Holy Qur'an comprises of 114 surahs of unequal length with a total of 6348 verses which include more than 78000 words. The actual vocabulary of the Qur'an is not more than 2000 words which are repeated in various forms; sometimes by a single word, phrase or even a complete verse.

It should be borne in mind that apart from just adding ordinary emphasis and stress in the meaning through repetition of expression, the Qur'an does also furnish the faithful readers with other subtle divine indications and notions. All such repetitions can be classified into the following types:

I. Spaced Repetition of a single word (Example 1)

One such example is in Surah Toor [52: 31-44] in which the word **أَمْرًا** has been repeated twelve times, demanding answer to many thought provoking questions in succession from the disbelievers, objectors or doubters with regards to the Ultimate Power of God and

the authenticity of the Holy Qur'an. Some examples are given below:

أَمْ خُلِقُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ شَيْءٍ أَمْ هُمْ الْخَالِقُونَ ۝
أَمْ خَلَقُوا السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بَلْ لَا يُؤْقِنُونَ ۝
أَمْ عِنْدَهُمْ خَزَائِنُ رَبِّكَ أَمْ هُمُ الْمُضْتَبِرُونَ ۝

Have they been created for nothing, or are they themselves the creators? Did they create the heavens and the earth? Nay, but they have no faith. Do they own the treasures of thy Lord, or are they the guardians thereof?

(Example 2)

One of the role of the Qur'an is to rectify the prevalent mistaken beliefs and possible misunderstandings which could creep into certain doctrines with the passage of time. One such example of mistaken belief has accumulated around the personality of the Prophet Isa (Jesus) عليه السلام. For example, the verse [5:111] states some of the miracles of Hadhrat Isa عليه السلام in metaphorical language:

وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِأَمْرِي
فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِأَمْرِي
وَتُدْرِي الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِأَمْرِي
وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِأَمْرِي

*".....And when thou didst fashion a creation out of clay, in the likeness of a bird, **by My command**; then thou didst breathe into it a new spirit and it became a soaring being **by My Command**; and thou didst heal the night-blind and the leprous **by My***

command; and when thou didst raise the dead by My command;.....”

Here in the above quoted verse the word ‘bi-idhni’ (by My command i.e. by Allah’s command or by Allah’s Will) is repeated four times. This emphasis through repetition removes the misconception which people generally (Muslims and Christians) now associate with the miracles performed by Jesus عليه السلام. The whole theme, presented in metaphorical expression, establishes the truth that in fact, Allah, the Exalted, was the source of all such miraculous deeds and Hadhrat Isa عليه السلام was just only an instrument to bring about the spiritual revolution, like other Prophets, by Allah’s Command and Will. “This is a special tribute to the qualities of Hadhrat Isa عليه السلام who out of all the Prophets of God was chosen as model for bringing about such miraculous transformations.”³⁴ This theme is further strengthened and testified by another similar instance of repetition of the word ‘bi-idhnillah’ (by Allah’s command) in Sura Al-Imran [3:50] in which Hadhrat Isa عليه السلام is portrayed, speaking in first person:

“.....I come to you with a Sign from your Lord, which is, that I will fashion out for you a creation out of clay after the manner of a bird, then I will breathe into it a new spirit and it will become a soaring being **by the command of Allah**; and I will heal the night-blind and the leprous, and I will quicken the dead **by the command of Allah**;.....”

(Example 3)

Another example is of Suratul Airaaf [7:196] in which four questions are asked in succession; the first one with the word “ala-hum” and other three with the words “am-lahum”. However, the introductory words “being short and simple, are quickly processed in the mind as they occur, deflecting attention away from themselves” and the powerful construction and theme of the words capture the attention of reader to reflect and contemplate over the main argument:

أَلَمْ أَرْجُلُ يَمْشُونَ بِهَا
أَمْ لَهُمْ أَيْدٍ يَبْتَطِشُونَ بِهَا
أَمْ لَهُمْ أَعْيُنٌ يُبْصِرُونَ بِهَا
أَمْ لَهُمْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا

Have they feet wherewith they walk? Or

Have they hands wherewith they hold? Or

Have they eyes wherewith they see? Or

Have they ears wherewith they hear? [7:196]

(Example 4)

وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ لَفَرِيقًا يَلْوُنَ أَلْسِنَتَهُم بِالْكِتَابِ
لِيُخَسِّبُوهُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ

And, surely, among them is a section who twists their tongues while reciting the Book; that you may think it to be part of the Book, while it is not part of the Book.[3:79]

According to Imam Raghīb, (in the above verse), the first mention of the word 'al-Kitaab' refers to those writings which people had written themselves (in pretext of being the Word of Allah) as mentioned by the Holy Qur'an:

فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ

Woe, therefore, to those who write the Book with their own hands.[2:80]

And the second mention of the same word refers to the Torah while the third mention of 'a'-Kitaab' refers to all the categories of Book sent by Allah, ie the Word of Allah altogether.

(Example 5)

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عِنْدَ الْمَشْعَرِ الْحَرَامِ
وَاذْكُرُوهُ كَمَا هَدَيْتُمْ

...فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا

So remember Allah at Mash'ar al-Haram; and remember Him as He has guided you.....celebrate the praises of Allah as you celebrated the praises of your fathers, or even more than that.³⁵
[2:199]

Likewise, where ever the word of 'Zikr' (remembrance) is mentioned it does not refer to only one particular situation but each time it denotes a different situation.

II.Successive Repetition of the same word

(Example 1)

كَلَّا إِذَا دُكَّتِ الْأَرْضُ دَكًّا دَكًّا
وَجَاءَ رَبُّكَ وَالْمَلَكُ صَفًّا صَفًّا

Nay, when the earth is pounded a thorough pounding; And thy Lord comes and also the angels in rows after rows.
[89:22-23]

(Example 2)

وَإِكْوَابٍ كَانَتْ قَوَارِيرًا
قَوَارِيرًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ

And also goblets of glass, glass of silver
[76:16-17]

(Example 3)

هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ لِمَا تُوعَدُونَ

Far, far from truth is that which your are promised.[23:37]

III. Repetition of the same verse but with some addition

(Example 1)

الْحَاقَّةُ ۚ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ۚ
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْحَاقَّةُ ۚ

The Inevitable! What is the Inevitable? And what should make thee know what the Inevitable is? [69:2-4]

(Example 2)

الْقَارِعَةُ ۚ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۚ
وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْقَارِعَةُ ۚ

The great Calamity! What is the great Calamity? And what should make thee know what the great Calamity is?
[101:2-4]

(Example 3)

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝
 ثُمَّ مَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا يَوْمَ الدِّينِ ۝
 وَمَا لَا تَمْلِكُ نَفْسٌ لِنَفْسٍ شَيْئًا
 وَالْأَمْرُ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلَّهِ ۝

And what should make thee know what the Day of Judgment is! Again, what should make thee know what the Day of Judgment is! The day when a soul shall have no power to do aught for another soul! And the command on that day will be Allah's. [82:18-20]

From the above three examples, it is worthy of note that apart from stimulating our attention towards the core message the Holy Qur'an eloquently defines its own vocabulary. Let us look at the very first page of the Holy Qur'an: "Guide us to the right **path**; the **path** of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings".

(Example 4)

أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ ۝
 ثُمَّ أُولَىٰ لَكَ فَأُولَىٰ ۝

'Woe unto thee! And woe again! 'Then woe unto thee! and woe again!'
 [75:35-36]

(Example 5)

كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝
 ثُمَّ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۝

*Nay! you will soon come to know.
 Nay again! you will soon come to know. [103:4-5]*

(Example 6)

فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝
 إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا ۝

*Surely there is ease after hardship.
 Aye, surely there is ease after hardship.*

It is important to note that, in linguistic terms, all the above examples (ie of category II and III) are called **Takeed** (emphasis) in Arabic i.e. to cast an emphasis to the meaning. This is a common feature in all languages of the world as being the a part of Man's natural speech. [94:6-7]

IV. Repetition of a phrase

فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ

And from wheresoever thou comest forth, turn thy face towards the Sacred Mosque. [2:145]

In the verses 145, 150 and 151 of Surah Al-Baqarah, the command to turn to the Ka'aba has been mentioned thrice using the above phrase. Commenting on this it is written in the five-volume commentary:

"This is not a repetition; for the first command i.e. in verse 145 pertains to the change of Qibla, while the second and the third i.e. in vv. 150, 151 refer to the conquest of Makkah. But here, too, there is truly speaking no repetition, for the command about the conquest of Makkah contained in each of these two verses serves a different purpose. In v. 150 Muslims are asked to turn their attention to the conquest of Makkah

because God wished them to do so. So they were duty bound to carry out, undeterred by any fear of failure; whereas in the v. 151 the benefits which were to accrue to Muslims on their carrying out the command relating the conquest of Makkah have been mentioned.”³⁶

V. Repetition of a complete verse

(Example 1)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ .

*In the name of Allah,
the Most Gracious, Ever Merciful.*

This has been repeated the most in the Holy Qur’an ie 114 times. This is probably the most repeated verse in a Muslim’s day-to-day life. The Holy Prophet ﷺ attached very great importance to this verse. He is reported to have said that any important work which is done without reciting Bismillah is apt to prove devoid of God’s blessings. So it is a general practice among Muslims to commence every work with a recital of this prayer.

(Example 2)

فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ

*Which, then, of the favours of
your Lord will you twain deny?*

This verse is repeated 31 times in Surah Rahman. Opponents of Islam have referred to this verse time and time again on account of its ‘needless repetition’. Even this has aroused a natural question mark in the minds of Muslims. Once answering such a query, the Holy Promised Messiah ﷺ said:

“Such practice is a distinctive feature of the Word of Allah. It is the natural tendency of man that he can easily preserve a well proportioned word. That is why Allah Almighty says:

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ

*Indeed, we have made the Qur’an easy
to remember. (Al-Qamar: 23)*

The phrase **فَبِأَيِّ آيَاتِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ** is repeated for inviting attention. Do not consider this to be the only repetition. In the Qur’an there are other places of repetition. I also like repetition for this very reason. If one studies my writings he will find abundant repetition in them. A person, unaware of its purpose would consider this to be contrary to eloquence. As if this is forgetfulness. However this is not fact. I believe that perhaps the reader may have forgotten what I have written previously. Therefore I repeatedly remind him so that at least at some point his eye is opened. Innamal A’maalu Bi-Niyyaat: (Deeds are judged by motives)

Moreover, raising an objection on repetition is useless as it is also part of human nature that unless a thing is repeated, it cannot be remembered. Why, then, were the phrases ‘Holy are You, the High’ and Holy are You, the Great’ made to be said repeatedly. One time was sufficient. Nay, the secret is that abundant repetition has an effect and awakens even very negligent faculties. Therefore Allah the Exalted says:

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

"Remember Allah abundantly so that you may prosper." (Al-Anfal:46)

As there is a link between mind and repetition and abundant repetition preserves a thing in the mind. Similarly there is a spiritual link which also needs repetition. Without repetition that spiritual bond and relation cannot remain intact" .³⁷

Hadhrat Maulana Ghulam Rasool Rajeki رضى الله عنه, a prominent companion of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام explained the philosophy behind the repetition of this particular verse from a different angle:

"In Surah Rehman, Allah, the Exalted, has particularly invited our attention towards that part of the Qur'anic sciences which is related to divine blessings. It is strange to note that in the verse:

الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ بِحُسْبَانٍ

The sun and the moon run their courses according to a fixed reckoning.

the solar and lunar months have been presented for counting and reckoning. Its further detail is given in the following verse of Surah Younas (10:6):

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسُ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ
نُورًا وَقَدَرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا
عَدَّةَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابِ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ
ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

He it is Who made the sun radiant and the moon lambent, and ordained for it stages, that you might know number of years and

the reckoning of time. Allah has not created this but in truth. He details the Signs for a people who have knowledge.[10:6]

Lunar months comprise 29 days or 30 days and solar months have 30 or 31 days; meaning, from the counting point of view a month is fully complete with the digit of 31. Now the verse

فِي آيِ الْآءِ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبِينَ

has been repeated 31 times in this surah. This number indicates that in this surah the divine blessings bestowed on humankind by Allah, the Exalted, have been mentioned conspicuously.....By repeating this verse Allah, the Exalted, has revived the human inherent nature as repetition also has an effective power. In order to dig out the well or fountain of pure water, sometimes five to ten yards are needed to be dug out and other times digging up to fifteen to twenty yards are required. Similarly sometimes in order to revive the spirit, admonition once or twice is sufficient and at other times repeated reminders are needed. Like the complete month of 31 days, Allah, the Exalted, has adopted the way of repeating 31 times the verse to fully revive human nature and has drawn his attention to be thankful for the favours, bestowed on him by God under His attribute of 'Al-Rehman' (the One Who bestows blessings without any endeavour)."³⁷

Some critics have objected that the verse (under focus) has been repeated even where it has no connection with the previous verse. Instead it is against the coherence of the meanings. They have particularly quoted the verses 27 and 28 in support of their claim which mention the mortality of humankind and the

immortality of Allah, the Exalted, followed by the reminder of the blessings bestowed by Him to the humanity: **“Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?”**:

كُلُّ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا فَانٍ ۖ وَبَقِيَ وَجْهُ
رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَلِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ۗ
فِي أَيِّ آيَةٍ رَبِّكُمْ تَكْذِبِينَ ۚ

“All that is on it (earth) will pass away. And there will remain only the Person of thy Lord, Master of Glory and Honour. Which, then, of the favours of your Lord will you twain deny?” [55:27-28]

Answering this objection Hadhrat Musleh Maud رضي الله عنه says:

“It should be borne in mind that mortality is also a blessing for humankind. Other religions have seen it as a punishment, however, the Qur’an explains it as a blessing. Therefore at another place the Qur’an mentions:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ الْمُلْكُ وَهُوَ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۚ الَّذِي خَلَقَ الْمَوْتَ
وَالْحَيَاةَ لِيُبْلِغَكُمْ أَجْسَانَكُمْ أَحْسَنَ عَمَلًا ۗ
وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ ۗ

“Blessed is He in Whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things; Who has created death and life that He might try you – which of you is best in deeds; and He is the Mighty, the Most Forgiving.” [67:2-3]

In the above verses Allah, the Exalted, has given the reason of death and life that

‘Li-yablu-wakum ayyukum ahsanu ‘amalan’ (so that He might try you – which of you is best in deeds). Therefore, death was necessary because without death human deeds could not have produced the results, namely, if the one who performs good deeds is rewarded and the one who performs bad deeds is punished in this very world, who, then, will deny the prophets? Witnessing the immediate manifestation of reward and punishment every one will accept. The fact of the matter is that reward is awarded after tireless efforts. If Hadhrat Moses عليه السلام and Hadhrat Jesus عليه السلام had been present in this world and the degrees of rank had been granted to them, who, then, could remain their deniers? Or the Pharaoh and Abu Jehl had been tormented in fire because of their disbelief, who could have been the denier?-----so this is not repetition but it has been placed on account of great wisdom. ³⁸

(Example 3)

وَنُذِلُّ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْمُكَذِّبِينَ

Woe on that day unto those who reject the truth. [77:16]

This verse is repeated 11 times in Surah Al-Mursalaat. This surah foretold many prophecies which were fulfilled in the time of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام.

Commenting on this verse and its repeated occurrence, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I رضي الله عنه says that the Holy Qur’an has repeated this verse several times in this surah and in fact this is in agreement with the prophetic words, expressed by the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم for the Promised Messiah عليه السلام which mention

the high spiritual powers of the Promised Messiah عليه السلام **By repeating this verse, Allah, the Exalted has established the fact that the deniers and rejecters will never ever be victorious.**³⁹

(Example 4)

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ

And indeed We have made the Qur'an easy to understand and to remember. But is there anyone who would receive admonition?

This verse is repeated 4 times in Surah Al-Qamar (54) though its last 3 words (فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ) are repeated 6 times altogether. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV رحمه الله تعالى says:

In this Surah a verse has been repeatedly mentioned, namely: **'We have made the Qur'an easy to take admonition'**, indicating that if anyone would have a slight reflection over the past nations, he could easily understand that the polytheism had been the cause of greatest disorder in the world. But is there anyone who would receive admonition?⁴⁰

Repetition and World Scriptures

Regarding the subject of Qur'anic repetition in comparison with other scriptures of World Religions we find many examples and can conclude that this is a common feature of all of them. Below are some examples from each major scripture with a brief introduction:

The Hebrew Bible (Judaism)

The scripture of Judaism is Tanakh which is commonly known as Hebrew Bible. This is recognized as Old Testament in the Christian Bible. It is made up of the Law (Torah), the Prophets, and the Writings. The centre of this scripture is the Torah, the Five Books of Moses ie Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which were written over a period of more than thirteen hundred years of Jewish history, from the time of Hadhrat Moses(a.s) until several centuries before the common era.

In the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament we find ample examples of repetition of various kinds. The following are some examples:

- Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)
- Thou shalt not kill. (Deuteronomy 5:17)
- Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- Neither shalt thou commit adultery. (Deuteronomy 5:18)
- Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- Neither shalt thou steal. (Deuteronomy 5:19)

In the following passage of 8 verses (Ecclesiastes 3:1-8) the word 'time' has been **repeated 29 times**.

"For everything there is a season, and a **time** for every matter under heaven:
a **time** to be born, and a **time** to die;
a **time** to plant, and a **time** to pluck up what is planted;

a **time** to kill, and a **time** to heal;
 a **time** to break down, and a **time** to build up;
 a **time** to weep, and a **time** to laugh;
 a **time** to mourn, and a **time** to dance;
 a **time** to cast away stones, and a **time** to
 gather stones together;
 a **time** to embrace, and a **time** to refrain from
 embracing;
 a **time** to seek, and a **time** to lose;
 a **time** to keep, and a **time** to cast away;
 a **time** to rend, and a **time** to sew;
 a **time** to keep silence, and a **time** to speak;
 a **time** to love, and a **time** to hate;
 a **time** for war, and a **time** for peace.”

We also find instances of repetition which seem quite superfluous. For example, in the fourth book i.e. Numbers 7:12 and continuing through verse 83, each of the twelve tribal chieftains is described presenting exactly the same offering: one silver bowl weighing 130 shekels, one silver basin weighing 70 shekels, both filled with choice flour mixed with oil; one gold ladle of 10 shekels, filled with incense; one bull, one ram, and one lamb for the 'olah-sacrifice; one goat for the hattat-sacrifice; and two bulls, five rams, five goats, and five lambs for the shelamim-sacrifice. However, **instead of just saying that each tribal chieftain brought exactly the same offering, the Torah repeats the above details twelve times.** Then, at the end of this long text appears a summary section detailing the totals: twelve silver bowls, twelve silver basins, twelve gold ladles, and so on for all the animals (verses 84-88).

Baffled by natural objections raised on

such superfluous occurrences Professor Gary A. Rendsburg of Cornell University observes:

‘Clearly modern readers question the need for such a repetitive description.....Why could it not simply list once what each chieftain brought and then state that such was done twelve times? Would not that have been much simpler? From our perspective, yes. But from the perspective of ancient literature, the answer is no. ⁴¹

He further writes:

“Scholars have noted the same practice can be found in archival material from throughout the ancient Near East.....The point is: We moderns should not judge the text too hastily in light of our own expectations. Every culture has its own conventions, in art, literature, and so on.” ⁴²

The Christian Bible Old Testament + New Testament (Christianity)

The Christian Bible includes the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament was the scripture of Jesus and his followers who were themselves Jews. It is identical to the Jewish Bible but with its books in a different order. Christians emphasize the prophetic books above all other parts of the Old Testament, for they are seen to announce the advent of Jesus Christ. The New Testament contains the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They contain the detailed recording of the life and sayings of Jesus Christ (Hadhrat Isa Ibn Maryam). Apart from

the four gospels, Christian Bible also includes various other books (epistles) as well.

The Christian Bible also contains many instances of repetition. Hadhrat Musleh Maud رضى الله عنه says:

“Christians and Hindus raise objection of repetition in the Holy Qur’an but their own scriptures cannot escape this. Many things have been repeated in the Bible. All four gospels contain repetition and repeat the same incident”⁴³

The New Testament also contains many instances of repetition of the same word in succession like we find in the Old Testament. Look at the following example, taken from the Gospel of Matthew (7:21-23):

“The kingdom of heaven will not give entrance to every man who calls me **Master, Master**; only to the man that does the will of my Father who is in heaven. There are many who will say to me, when that day comes, **Master, Master**, was it not in thy name we prophesied? Was it not in thy name that we performed many miracles?”⁴⁴

Commenting on this element a Christian scholar observes:

“We might miss the strength of these statements (Matt. 7:21-23) unless we realize that repeating a person’s name is a Hebrew expression of intimacy. When God speaks to Abraham at Mount Moriah, as he is about to plunge the knife into the breast of Isaac, He says, **“Abraham, Abraham.”** Or when God

encourages Jacob in his old age to take the trip to Egypt, He says, **“Jacob, Jacob”** (Genesis 22:11, 46:2). Compare the call of Moses from the burning bush: **“Moses, Moses,”** Or consider David’s cry of agony, **“Absalom, Absalom,”** and Jesus’ cry of desolation on the cross, **“Eli, Eli i.e. My God, my God.”**(Matt. 27:46). When Jesus confronted Martha, when He warned Peter, and when He wept over Jerusalem—in each case we find the word repeated for intimacy’s sake (Luke 10:41; 22:31; Matt. 23:37).”⁴⁵

The Bhagavad Gita (Hindusim)

The Bhagavad Gita which means "Song of The Blessed Lord" is a sacred Hindu scripture. Also commonly known as Gita, it is considered among the most important texts in the history of literature and philosophy of Hindusim. Gita is often being described as a concise guide to Hindu theology and also as a practical, self-contained guide to life.

It comprises of roughly 700 verses, and is a part of the Mahabharata (a renowned Sanskrit epic of ancient India). The teacher of the Bhagavad Gita is Krishna, who is revered by Hindus as a manifestation of God himself, and is referred to within as Bhagavan, the Divine One. The content of the Gita is the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna (dear friend and brother-in-law of Krishna) taking place on the battlefield before the start of a war. In this dialogue Krishna explains different philosophies with various examples and analogies. One such example is given below:

"The sun does not shine there (in the Atman), nor the moon and stars; neither the lightning shine there, what to speak of fire; when it shines, all other things shine; by its light all the manifested universe is lighted." 46

In the above example one verb is repeated four times. Concerning repetition a Hindu religious scholar Swami Ranganathananda confirms:

"There is repetition of spiritual truths in Gita. Repetition is considered a fault in literature. But, in his commentary on the Upanishads, Shankaracharya quotes this statement of India's ancient Mimamsa (a Sanskrit word meaning "investigation") philosophers that 'na mantram jamita asti' i.e. repetition is not a fault in conveying spiritual truths. They are difficult to grasp and retain, and hence, repetition helps." 47

Apart from the above example other sacred books of Hinduism also contain repetition. In this regard Hadhrat Musleh Maud رضى الله عنه has given the example of the two sacred texts of Hinduism i.e. 'Uthar Ved, Vol 1, Book 2, Hymn No. 27 and Rig Ved, Vol 1, Book 1, Hymn No. 96. (Anwar-ul-Uloom, Vol 11, page 136)

The Avesta (Zoroastrianism)

The prophet Zarathustra (c. 1000 B.C.) was the founder of Zoroastrianism. The scripture of Zoroastrianism is the Avesta. Among its books, the main liturgical text is called the Yasna. At the core of the Yasna are the Gathas, hymns composed by Zarathustra and his immediate

followers, which make up chapters 28-34, 43-51, and 53 of the Yasna. They are at the centre of Zoroastrian worship. Only one example of repetition is quoted below in which the pronoun 'Who' is repeated ten times. A similar example is also found in the Holy Qur'an 27:61-65 where the same pronoun 'Who' [Amman] is repeated five times.

This do I ask, O Lord, reveal unto me the truth!

Who is the first begetter, father of the Cosmic Law?

Who assigned orbit to the sun and the stars?

Who causes the moon to wax and again to wane?

Who other than Thee? This and else I wish to know!

Who is the upholder of the earth and of the sky?

Who prevents them from falling down?

Who maintains the waters and also the plants?

Who yoked speed to winds and clouds?

Who is the creator of the creatures?

Who is the architect of light and darkness?

Who created sleep and wakefulness?

By whom exists dawn, mid-day and night, Which monitor the duties of men? 48

The Tipitaka (Buddhism)

Buddhism is a religion and a philosophy encompassing a variety of traditions, beliefs and practices, largely based on teachings attributed to Siddhartha Gautama, (c. 581-501 BC) commonly known as the Buddha (the awakened

one). Buddha lived and taught in the northeastern Indian subcontinent where Buddhism flourished for nearly fifteen hundred years and where most of its basic scriptures were written. However, unlike many religions, Buddhism has no single central text that is universally referred to by all traditions.

Buddhism has evolved into many schools, of which two major branches survive: **Theravada Buddhism** (The School of the Elders) which spread to Sri Lanka and throughout Southeast Asia, and **Mahayana Buddhism** (The Great Vehicle) which spread northward to Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea, and Japan. The followers of Theravāda Buddhism take the scriptures known as the Pāli Canon as definitive and authoritative, while the followers of Mahāyāna Buddhism base their faith and philosophy primarily on the Mahāyāna sūtras and their own vinaya.

The Theravada scriptures are written in Pali language. The canon of Theravada scriptures is called the **Tipitaka** or **Tripitaka** (Three Baskets). There are three parts of Tipitaka ie **the Vinaya Pitaka** which is a collection of rules and precepts for the order of monks; **the Sutta Pitaka** that comprises the discourses and dialogues of the Buddha; and the **Abhidhamma Pitaka** - the scholastic and philosophical treatises.

Many attempts have been made to unify the various Buddhist texts. In Sri Lanka, the Dhammapada is a well-known text and was championed as a unifying scrip-

ture. Let us look the following quote:

The charge to avoid the taking of life.

The charge to avoid taking what is not given.

The charge to avoid unchastity.

The charge to avoid falsehood.

The charge to avoid fermented liquor, distilled liquor, intoxicants giving rise to sloth.

The charge to avoid unseasonable meals.

The charge to avoid dancing, song, playing music, and seeing shows.

The charge to avoid the use of flowers, scents, and unguents, wearing ornaments and decorations.

The charge to avoid the use of raised beds, of wide beds.

The charge to avoid the accepting of gold and silver.⁴⁹

The Analects (Confucianism)

Confucianism is a tradition of beliefs and ethical systems based on the teachings and practices of the great Chinese sage, teacher, social reformer named Confucius (which is the Latinized form of his original name Kong Zi or K'ung Fu Tzu, 'Kong the master: 551-479 BC). He placed emphasis on moral order and observance of the established family and social relationships of authority, obedience and mutual respect. His emphasis on tradition and ethics attracted a growing number of pupils during his life time. The Analects of Confucius is the compilation of his teaching which was published after his death. It is interesting to note that within 300 years of his death, his teaching and philosophy was adopted by the Chinese

state. This reminds us of the prophecy made by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام in which he foretold the world that within 300 years Ahmadiyyat, the true Islam, will be dominant all over the world, Insha-Allah.

In the Analects one can also find several instances of repetitions of both kinds i.e. (a) `Repetition of Expression and (b) Repetition of Theme. In Book II, verse 10, we read:

"The Master said, Look closely into his* aims, observe the means by which he pursues them, discover what brings him content – and can the man's real worth **remain hidden from you**, can it **remain hidden from you?**"⁵⁰

*Here Confucius is referring to his favourite disciple whose early death is several times referred to in the Analects.

Regarding the Repetition of Theme let us look into the following quote:

The Master said, 'One who makes no change to the ways of his father for three years after his father passed away may be called a filial son.'⁵¹

With regards to the above quote it is written in the commentary of the Analects by Edward Slingerland:

'This is a repetition of the second half of 1:11 [the verse 11 of Chapter 1].'⁵²

Confucius also motivated his disciples to have 'spaced repetition' in connection with learning and experienced it as 'the

greatest pleasure':

'To study and at times to go over what one has studied is this not the greatest pleasure?'⁵³

Conclusion

From the above detailed discussion we may conclude the following:

1) Repetition is a common feature of all World Scriptures and raising objection of repetition on the Holy Qur'an lacks logical standing.

2) Use of repeated phrases has been an acknowledged and accepted rhetoric device not only in pre-Islamic Arabic literature but also in the ancient literature of other nations.

3) There are repetitions of words and forms in the Qur'an, but every repeated phrase indicates a different meaning and message. In reality, there are no repetitions in the Qur'an that are devoid of purpose or additional meaning.

4) The Qur'an was revealed in the Arabic and this is part of the eloquence of Arabic language to use the repetition both in expression and theme. It was fully accepted by the early receivers (believers or unbelievers) of the Qur'an as this was the normal practice, found in their oral literature. The so-called Arab intellectuals raised many objections against the Qur'an like fabrication, poetry, copying the old stories etc but never raised any objection of its repetitiveness. Instead they forbade the

people listening to the Qur'an lest they might be influenced by its 'magical words' and instructed them to make noise when being recited. The Holy Qur'an has challenged the unbelieving intellectuals several times to produce a chapter similar to it but despite all their enmity they failed to do so.

5) The charge of being 'wearisome' has occurred because in the translation of the original Arabic text, there is a high possibility of the 'virtues being lost' as mentioned by Carlyle. The beauty of unique Qur'anic style and diction cannot be appreciated by just reading the translation as it very much pertains to the oral quality of the Holy Qur'an. 'The rhythms and rhymes (of the Holy Qur'an) are inseparable features of its impressive eloquence, and these are indeed inimitable'. Those who tried to mimic its rhymes, as, for instance, in the case of R.A. Nicholson, who has been recognized 'as experienced a translator of Arabic as the English world has produced' and Burton of the Arabian Nights but look at what they did in their vain efforts in the following examples:

- In mimicking the style and rhyming quality of Surah Al-Qariah, Nicholson translates it as such:

The Smiting!
What is the Smiting!
And how shalt thou be made to understand what is the Smiting?
The Day when Men shall be as flies scattered,
And the Mountains shall be as shreds of wool tattered,

One whose Scales are heavy, a pleasing life he shall spend.

But on whose Scales are light, to the Abyss he shall descend.

What that is, how shalt thou be made to comprehend?

Scorching Fire without end!

And the beautiful Surat-ul-Fatihah is rendered by Burton, though 'scarcely more successful' as compared to Nicholson yet see the outcome:

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Praise be to Allah, who the three worlds made,

The Merciful, the Compassionate,
The King of the day of Fate.

Thee alone do we worship, and of thee alone do we ask for aid.

Guide us to the path that is straight –
The path of those to whom they love is great,

Not those on whom is hate,
Nor they that deviate, Amen.

Comparing the above English renderings to the Arabic text, and feeling 'the emotive and evocative qualities of the original' which penetrate deep in the heart through its beautiful Tarteel (the mode of slow, rhythmic and measured recitation), enriched with powerful theme, I fully endorse the view of Arberry that:

'I do not think if the Qur'an had spoken like that, it would have shaken the world.'⁵⁴

6) The objectors particularly the Western reader should not treat the Holy Qur'an like a commonly structured book rather they *'must get rid of the assumption that the Qur'an is more or less like the Old Testament.'* In fact, the Holy Qur'an is a universal discourse, addressed to the whole of humanity, for all time to come by the Creator of the Universe Who is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

If this approach is not adopted then it is quite possible that 'he opens at a likely place, the beginning of a Sura, and is lulled into un-suspicion by the familiar lay-out of chapter and verse; he finishes his first Sura, and goes on to several more; he is bewildered by the rapid and seemingly illogical change of subject, and he quickly wearies of the frequent repetitions of themes and formulas;.... Having no clue to the Qur'an's own excellences, he compares it unfavourably with what he has known since childhood, and is now ready to concur with Carlyle.'⁵⁵

7) Coming back to the comment of Robert Morey, quoted in the beginning, I would say that it is utterly wrong to conclude that the Qur'an's use of verbal or conceptual repetition was because it was *'intended to be memorized by those who were illiterate and uneducated'*. As a matter of fact, in the arena of scriptures, this distinction goes only to the Holy Qur'an that it was preserved both in written and verbal form from its very beginning. Millions of people, young and old, from all walks of life have been

able to memorise it from cover to cover. This is the grace of God that the style, diction, rhythm and rhyme of the Qur'an is of such nature that it can be easily memorized in full.

It is totally wrong to think that the *'repetition of same material'* makes it easy. As a matter of fact, based on the personal experience of this humble self with regards to the memorization and retention of the Holy Text, for more than 30 years, such places are the most difficult to maintain as they require high level of concentration because of their rhyming resemblance. The objectors have particularly quoted Surahs like al-Rahman, al-Qamar, Hood, Shu'ara and al-Mursalat etc on account of repetition but these are unanimously considered difficult verses for accurate retention and therefore need more attention.

Proclaiming the matchlessness and greatness of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Promised Messiah عليه السلام, the Champion Defender of the Glorious Qur'an, states:

'The Holy Qur'an is a Book which has proclaimed its own matchlessness and has claimed its own greatness, its wisdom, its truth, the beauty of its composition and its spiritual lights. It is not true that the Muslims have themselves put forward these excellences on behalf of the Qur'an. It sets out its own merits and excellences and puts forward its matchlessness and peerlessness as a challenge to the whole of creation and calls out loudly: Is there any contestant? Its verities and fine points are not confined to two or three which would leave room for

doubt on the part of an ignorant person, but are like the surging ocean and are visible in every direction like the stars of heaven.⁵⁶

The following extract is another motivational example of his intense love for the Holy Qur'an:

*'The Holy Qur'an is a rare pearl. Its outside is light and its inside is light and its above is light and its below is light and there is light in every word of it. It is a spiritual garden whose clustered fruits are within easy reach and through which streams flow. Every fruit of good fortune is found in it and every torch is lit from it. Its light has penetrated to my heart and I could not have acquired it by any other means. If there had been no Qur'an I would have found no delight in life. Its beauty exceeds that of a hundred thousand Josephs. I incline towards it with a great inclination and drink it into my heart. It has nurtured me as an embryo is nurtured and it has a wonderful effect on my heart. Its beauty draws me away from my soul. It has been disclosed to me in a vision that the garden of holiness is irrigated by the water of the Qur'an, which is a surging ocean of the water of life. He who drinks from it, comes to life and brings others to life.'*⁵⁷

Enlightened with the above words, written by the Promised Messiah عليه السلام in the appreciation of the Holy Qur'an and summing up all the discussion I am indebted to applaud A.J. Arberry Esq. and agree with him that:

'When appreciation rests upon these foundations, the charges of wearisome repetition and jumbled confusion come meaningless. Truth cannot be dimmed by

being frequently stated, but only gains in clarity and convincingness at every repetition; and where all is true, inconsequence and incomprehensibility are not felt to arise.⁵⁸

Further, his fair and unbiased advice (in 1953) to the West, seems to me quite appropriate and relevant even now in view of current media propaganda against the Holy Book of Islam that:

'No man seeking to live in the same world as Islam, and to understand the affairs of Islam, can afford to regard lightly, or to judge ignorantly, the Book that is called the Qur'an. It is among the greatest monuments of mankind. It surely deserves and demands to be more widely known and better comprehended in the West.'⁵⁹

The Holy Promised Messiah عليه السلام has rightly said:

The Holy Qur'an is a casket of jewels but people are unaware of it.⁶⁰

ہے قصور اپنا ہی اندھوں کا وگرنہ یہ نور
ایسا چمکا ہے کہ صد نیر بیضا نکلا
زندگی ایسوں کی کیا خاک ہے اس دنیا میں
جن کا اس نور کے بولتے بھی دل اعمی نکلا

It is the fault of the blind themselves, otherwise that light is so intensely brilliant, that it shines forth, with the intensity of a hundred suns.

Woe to the life of such on this Earth, who had access to this light but their hearts turned out to be blind.⁶¹

May Allah, the Exalted, enable us to remove misconceptions about the Holy Qur'an prevalent in the society and grant us its true love and practice, following the footsteps of our beloved master, Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud عليه السلام who expressed his heartfelt desire in the following couplet:

دل میں یہی ہے ہر دم تیرا صحیفہ چوموں
قرآن کے گرد گھوموں کعبہ مرا یہی ہے

My heart yearns every moment
to kiss Thy Book and to perform
a circuit around the Holy Qur'an,
for it is my Ka'ba.⁶²

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