

Guiding Light

Selections From the Holy Qur'an

Comments by *AbdulHamid A. AbūSulaymān*

Translation

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

قرآن کریم

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1. And those who
Having done something
To be ashamed of,
Or wronged their own souls,
Earnestly bring Allah to mind,
And ask for forgiveness
For their sins
And who can forgive
Sins except Allah?
And are never obstinate
In persisting knowingly
In (the wrong) they have done. (3:135)

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَحِشَةً
 أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا
 لِذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرَ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
 وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَعَلُوا
 وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ
2. When they disregarded the warnings
That had been given them,
We rescued those who forbade
Evil, but We visited
The wrongdoers with a
Grievous punishment, because
They were given to transgression. (7:165)

فَلَمَّا نَسُوا مَا ذُكِّرُوا بِهِ
 أَفْجِنَا الَّذِينَ يَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ السُّوءِ
 وَأَخَذْنَا الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا بِعِزَابٍ مِّنْ بَيْنِ
 يَمَانِنَا إِنَّهُمْ لَكَاذِبُونَ
3. If ye do it not,
Take notice of war
From Allah and His Messenger:
But if ye turn back,
Ye shall have
Your capital sums;
Deal not unjustly,
And ye shall not
Be dealt with unjustly. (2:279)

فَإِن لَّمْ تَقْعَلُوا
 فَاذْنُوبُوا يُحَرِّبُ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ
 وَإِن تُبْتِغُوا فَلَكُمْ رُءُوسُ أَمْوَالِكُمْ
 لَا تَظْلِمُونَ وَلَا تُظْلَمُونَ
4. We ordained therein for them:
"Life for life, eye for eye,

وَكَبْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهَا أَنَّ النَّفْسَ بِالنَّفْسِ

Nose for nose, ear for ear,
Tooth for tooth, and wounds
Equal for equal." But if
Anyone remits the retaliation
By way of charity, it is
An act of atonement for himself,
And if any fail to judge
By (the light of) what Allah
Hath revealed, they are
(No better than) unbelievers. (5:45)

وَالْعَيْنَ بِالْعَيْنِ وَالْأَنْفَ بِالْأَنْفِ
وَالْأُذُنَ بِالْأُذُنِ وَاللِّسَانَ بِاللِّسَانِ
وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصَاصًا فَمَن تَصَدَّقَ بِهِ
فَهُوَ كَفَّارَةٌ لَّهُ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ
بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

5. A divorce is only
Permissible twice: after that,
The parties should either hold
Together on equitable terms,
Or separate with kindness.
It is not lawful for you,
(Men) to take back
Any of your gifts (from your wives),
Except when both parties
Fear that they would be
Unable to keep the limits
Ordnained by Allah,
If ye (judges) do indeed
Fear that they would be
Unable to keep the limits
Ordnained by Allah,
There is no blame on either
Of them if she give
Something for her freedom
These are the limits
Ordnained by Allah;
So do not transgress them
If any do transgress
The limits ordnained by Allah,
Such persons wrong
(Themselves as well as others). (2:229)

﴿٢٢٩﴾ الطَّلَاقُ مَرَّتَيْنِ
فَأَمْسَاكُهُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ أَوْ تَسْرِيحُهُ بِإِحْسَانٍ
وَلَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمُ أَنْ تَأْخُذُوا
بِمَاءٍ اتَّيَمُّوهُنَّ شَيْئًا
إِلَّا أَنْ يَخَافَا
أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا يُقِيمَا حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِمَا فِيمَا افْتَدَتْ بِهِ
تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا
وَمَن يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ
فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

6. Behold, Luqmān said
To his son by way of
Instruction: "O my son!
Join not in worship
(Others) with Allah: for
False worship is indeed
The highest wrongdoing." (31:13)

﴿٣١﴾ وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ
وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

7. And before them,
The people of Noah,
For that they were (all)

﴿٣١﴾ وَقَوْمِ نُوحٍ مِن قَبْلُ
إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا هُمُ

Most unjust

And most insolent transgressors. (53:52)

أَعْلَمَ وَأَطْفَىٰ

8. Say: "See ye?

If (this teaching) be

From Allah, and ye reject it,

And a witness from among

The Children of Israel testifies

To its similarity

(With earlier scripture),

And has believed

While ye are arrogant,

(How unjust ye are!)

Truly, Allah guides not

A people unjust." (46:10)

﴿١٠﴾ قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ كَانَ

مِنَ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ وَكُفِّرْتُمْ بِهِ

وَشَهِدَ شَاهِدٌ مِّنْ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

عَلَىٰ مِثْلِهِ فَمَنْ وَأَسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي

الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمِينَ

9. But if the thief repents

After his crime,

And amends his conduct,

Allah turneth to him

In forgiveness for Allah

Is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. (5:39)

﴿٣٩﴾ فَمَنْ تَابَ مِن بَعْدِ ظُلْمِهِ

وَأَصْلَحَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَتُوبُ عَلَيْهِ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

10. Generations before you

We destroyed when they

Did wrong: their Messengers

Came to them with Clear Signs,

But they would not believe!

Thus do We requite

Those who sin! (10:13)

﴿١٣﴾ وَلَقَدْ أَهَلَكْنَا الْقُرُونَ مِن قَبْلِكُمْ لَمَّا

ظَلَمُوا وَأَجَاءَهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَمَا كَانُوا

لِيُؤْمِنُوا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْقَوْمَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

11. Nay, the wrongdoers (merely)

Follow their own lusts,

Being devoid of knowledge

But who will guide those

Whom Allah leaves astray?

For them there will be

No helpers. (30:29)

﴿٣٠﴾ بَلِ اتَّبَعَ الَّذِينَ

ظَلَمُوا أَهْوَاءَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ

فَمَنْ يَهْدِي مَنْ أَضَلَّ اللَّهُ

وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّن نَّاصِرِينَ

12. And he giveth you

Of all that ye ask for.

But if ye count the favours

Of Allah, never will ye

Be able to number them.

Verily, man is given up

To injustice and ingratitude. (14:34)

﴿٣٤﴾ وَهَاتِكُمْ مِّن كُلِّ مَا سَأَلْتُمُوهُ

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ

13. He did indeed offer

The Trust To the Heavens

﴿٧٦﴾ إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ

- And the Earth
And the Mountains,
But they refused
To undertake it.
Being afraid thereof:
But man undertook it—
He was indeed unjust
And foolish—(33:72)
14. And fear tumult or oppression
Which affecteth not in particular
(Only) those of you who do wrong: (8:25)
15. If anyone does evil
Or wrongs his own soul
But afterwards seeks
Allah's forgiveness, he will find
Allah Oft-Forgiving,
Most Merciful. (4:110)
16. If Allah were to punish
Men for their wrongdoing,
He would not leave, on the (earth),
A single living creature;
But He gives them respite
For a stated Term:
When their Term expires,
They would not be able
To delay (the punishment)
For a single hour, just as
They would not be able
To anticipate it (for a single hour). (16:61)
17. "It is those who believe
And confuse not their beliefs
With wrong—that are
(Truly) in security, for they
Are on (right) guidance." (6:82)
- وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ
فَأَيُّكُمْ أَنْ يَحْمِلَهَا
وَإِسْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ
إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا
- ﴿٨﴾ وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَأَنْصِبَنَّ الَّذِينَ
ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً
- ﴿١٠﴾ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا
أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ
يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا
- ﴿١١﴾ وَلَوْ نَوَإْخَذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِظُلْمِهِمْ
مَا تَرَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ دَابَّةً وَلَكِنْ
يُؤَخِّرُهُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَجَلُهُمْ
لَا يَسْتَجِرُّونَ سَاعَةً
وَلَا يَسْتَفِيدُونَ
- ﴿٨٢﴾ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ
أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْأَمْنُ وَهُمْ مُّهْتَدُونَ

I have quoted above a few Qur'anic *ayāt* (verses) from among the hundreds which deal with the word *dhulm* (injustice) and its various derivatives. The meaning and dimensions of this term are far reaching and comprehensive and the concept is of major importance to Islam. The verses dealing with this concept treat the different categories of *dhulm*, explore its meaning, indicate how to avoid it, warn against its serious consequences and open up the door of hope by giving guidance for a proper course for human life on this earth.

The last verse quoted discusses the relationship of *dhulm* and *amn* (security) for if there is *dhulm* there can be no *amn*. This verse also tells us the identity

of truly guided people (*al-muḥtadūn*). They are believers (*al-muʾminūn*) who do not mix their belief with *dhulm*. This is an extremely important subject and the Qurʾān once again draws man's attention to a key question in his life: in this case the need for the believers to attain security which will be impossible in the face of *dhulm*. The last verse, furthermore, touches on four major issues related to human life and destiny and the relationship between these issues:

1. *al-Iman* (true belief in Allah)
2. *al-ʿadl* or *ʿadam al dhulm* (justice, non aggression or keeping to the right course of action)
3. *al-amn* (security)
4. *al-hidayah* or *al-huda* (the straight path or the true and right way and direction)

For man to achieve security is no doubt a prime goal and concern and for contemporary man and civilization this goal is of extreme urgency and importance but one which seems increasingly elusive and difficult to attain. Contemporary man is suffering from a lack of security in all aspects of life; physically, financially, psychologically, morally and spiritually. Man's life is more and more filled with worries and fear from the moment he first sees the light of day, to life at home, in school and in the street. What constitutes security and how can security be achieved? This is the significance of the above verse which deals with this issue. Mankind can achieve security by holding onto and accepting the true *ʿaqīdah* (belief) in Allah and by avoiding committing injustice and aggression which leads to true security.

Muslim social scientists are invited to study and understand the meaning of these terms and issues in their various dimensions. They need to understand the relationship between these issues in order to operationalize these factors in the service of mankind in general and Muslims in particular in their various capacities and functions as members of society, parents, educators, and legislators. By rendering the issues operational for Muslims, social scientists will allow them to understand these meaningful relationships in order to serve their people and humanity, and to help mankind achieve peace and security. They need to look at these revealed directions and statements of fact in the Qurʾān as a paradigm and hypothesis – not to test their truthfulness and validity – for this is not a question in the mind of Muslims, but to enable them to understand and operationalize them in Muslim life. To do this, it is not enough to simply look at the linguistic meaning of these key concepts. The various philosophical and practical meanings and relations are equally important. This kind of approach will make revealed knowledge an integral part of the methodology of the Muslim social scientist and extend the benefits

of methodology beyond the judicial, legal and formal approach without violating the scientific, analytic, and experimental approach of the social scientist.

Revealed knowledge will enable the Muslim social scientist to understand the most important issues regarding man's life on this earth and provide the right landmarks and directions. With this source of knowledge, the Muslim social scientist is equipped with a comprehensive and total vision and insight otherwise not readily available. This aspect of knowledge is important as it enables us to overcome the sharp differences in competing schools of thought in the social sciences. Without the input of revealed knowledge it is not possible to be sure if a particular approach will work or not as each approach will be subject to the whims and fancies of man and his limited and fragmented knowledge.

Errors in the social sciences will be extremely costly in terms of human suffering and any mistakes will be difficult to rectify and will only become evident after several generations. For example, the attitude which completely forbids marital separation under any circumstances will not work but the opposite attitude which places no control on it will also result in many social problems. The permissive attitude towards child rearing which now has been abandoned by its founders has resulted in several generations of children with no self-discipline. The permissive attitude towards non-marital sexual relations either between members of the opposite sex or the same sex has now come back to haunt modern man and women with the problems of single parent families, child abuse, AIDS and the destruction of the family and social structure. Theories in the social sciences seem to be going in opposite directions and there is no way that these competing positions can all be true. The non-Muslim social scientist has no way to judge between the right and wrong way because he lacks direction as to the real, total nature of man and the ultimate goal of his existence. Revealed knowledge and guidance minimize such dangers and give guidelines as to the direction to be taken to achieve workable solutions to man's problems.