

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECITING THE HOLY QURAN

FOREIGN STUDENT OFFICERS' QUARTER, DSCSC

19 Feb 2006 [1535 to 1640]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ وَتُؤْمِنُ بِهِ وَتَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ
شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يَضِلَّهُ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ
أَنَّ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ وَرَسُولَهُ ﴿٢﴾ أَمَا بَعْدُ فَاغْوِذْ
بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ ﴿٣﴾ بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٤﴾ وَذَكَرْ فَانِ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ
الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ﴿٥﴾ صَدَقَ اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمِ ﴿٦﴾ اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَا
نَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ ﴿٧﴾

I have recited before you a very simple and small verse from the Holy Quran. Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says,

51:55 وَذَكَرْ فَانِ الذِّكْرَى تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

There are three parts in this verse. First, ذَكَرْ means you remind, you discuss, then فَانِ الذِّكْرَى - certainly reminding and next, تَنْفَعُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - will benefit the believers. Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} asks our prophet, you remind, reminding will certainly benefit the believers. This is a verse from Sura Dhariyat (in Arabic the word is adh-Dhariyat) in the 26th part of the Holy Quran. Sura adh-Dhariyat means 'The scattering winds' [The winds which are used for scattering]. In this the verse our Prophet (ﷺ) is being addressed by Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala}. The verses of Quran are arranged in such a manner, though they were revealed to our prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), but if a reader reads it now after 1400 years, it appears that as if Allah is asking him. Allah is addressing him. Because no name is mentioned there, Jakkir O Muhammad! No. Generally it says, 'you remind, certainly reminding will benefit the believers.'

So this act of reminding each other is very important in Islam. But reminding what? We remind each other many times regarding our everyday affairs. Have you forgotten that particular job? Be kind to your wife. Be kind to your children. These reminding are constantly done in our society. But if you think deeply, you will find, very little is done so far the Islam is concern.

I told you in my last week discussion, I am not a scholar of Islam. I am a simple electrical Engineering graduate. But Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} has given

me the blessings of being a slave or servant of a scholar of Islam in Bangladesh Hazrat Hafezzi Huzur who was the disciple of the great saint Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi of India. After Hazrat Hafezzi Huzur's death, I got another disciple of Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi whose name was Maulana Abrarul Haq from UP, India. This gentleman used to recite this verse very often,

51:55 **وذكر فان الذكرى تنفع المؤمنين**

You remind again, remind again, remind again and again. He used to say the word ذكّر is in the command form (امر) from باب تفعيل. In Arabic grammar, the verbs are arranged in groups. The particular verse which I am discussing belongs to a particular group (باب تفعيل) which have special characteristic that are common to every verb belonging to that group. For example, here the root is تذكّر which means reminding again and again. So the root is تذكّر and the verb is ذكّر means he reminded. From there the command form is ذكّر. Maulana Abrarul Haq used to say that Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} has used the verb from باب تفعيل where the verbs have the common characteristics of repeating the same. It means do it again and again. Don't stop. Do it again. Don't be disappointed. Oh! I have talked so many times, no result! Never say that. Do it again. So if the casual reader reads the Quran if he understands, it appears to him that as if Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is asking him to remind. So this is a verse from sura Dhariyat, in the 27th part. The next verse is

51:56 **وما خلقت الجن والانس الا ليعبدون**

Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} has said, I have not created mankind and Jinn but for worshiping of mine. So what is the purpose? The purpose has been clearly defined here. Our purpose is to worship only Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala}. The next verse,

51:57 **ما اريد منهم من رزق وما اريد ان يطعمون**

'I do not desire that this creation of mine will give me sustenance.' Look at the way that the supreme creator of our Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is speaking. So three verses, 'You remind, reminding will certainly benefit the believers.' The next verse, what he will remind? What is the purpose? Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} himself gives the point of reminding, 'I have not created mankind and jinn but for that they will worship me.' Next, will worship benefit me? 'I don't desire from them any rijk, any sustenance. Nor do I desire that they will feed me.' That's the language of the Quran. The saying of Allah^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is so human as if somebody is talking to us, Allahu Akbar! Then the next verse,

51:58 **ان الله هو الرزاق ذو القوة المتين**

‘Certainly Allah is the sustenance giver. He is the utmost powerful personality.’ So, one should remind others about the purpose of life. What is the purpose of life? Ask a man from the West, from New York, from California or from Paris - what will be the answer? What is there before them? A common slogan in the West is ‘eat, drink and be married’. Enjoy life! That slogan is very much in our country also. Life is very short, enjoy life! Don’t talk about death. Don’t mention death because that disturbs in our enjoyment. But not mentioning it, can they prevent death? If we don’t mention death, will death never approach to us? The declaration in the Quran,

2:185 كل نفس ذائقة الموت

‘Every soul shall have a taste of death.’ This is a famous verse. Many of you know this verse. But look at the next,

وانما توفون اجوركم يوم القيامة

‘And only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense.’ You will be given your remuneration on the Day of Qiyamah. What you are getting here is not the remuneration. The language of the Quran is so wonderful!

I am not an Arab. As I said, I am an electrical engineering graduate. I didn’t do my Ph.D. or the M.Sc. Engineering. Therefore I joined in BUET as an Assistant Professor in 1969 and I retired 26 years later as an Assistant Professor in 1995. I had no promotion. Alhamdulillah, Allah Subhanahuwata’ala gave me much more than the promotion, the companionship of that great Islamic Scholar, Hafezzi Huzur. He was called Hafezzi Huzur because he was a memorizer of the Quran or Hafez and the word zi means respectable, respectable Hafez. When this man died, then I had a chance to remain with another disciple of Asraf Ali Thanvi, Abrarul Haq. So both this gentleman used to talk about the Quran very much. Look! The Quran was given to our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) 1400 years ago. And if you contemplates on the first five verses,

96:1 اقرأ باسم ربك الذي خلق

‘Read in the name of your Lord who created.’ What He created? The object is not there. The first verse does not have an object. The scholars of Islam say that there is no object is to mean that all conceivable objects are there. He created the sky. He created the Sun. He created the Moon. He created the Mankind. He created the earth. He created all systems. Because

it has not mentioned, the dimension has become wide. You can put any object what you want. He created everything. Next, second verse,

96:2 ﴿خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ﴾

‘He has created man from a clot of blood.’ He is a reminder. The very first verse of the Quran is in-fact a reminder to Mankind. Should not you think about the world around you? You see the beautiful world with beautiful stars, the Sun, the Moon, the wind and the rain from the sky! You are enjoying so much of thing but you never think. You never give thanks to Allah^{Subhanahuwata’ala}. Giving thanks is considered as the most important duty of any human being. Otherwise we say that he does not show any gratitude. When the children, the babies learn to talk, we teach them the first word, say, ‘thank you’. Say ‘thank you’ to your uncle. If a two years baby can speak ‘thank you uncle’, Oh! We are all happy. The guests are happy, the mother is happy, the father is happy. But when it comes to say thanks to Allah^{Subhanahuwata’ala}, we are considered in Bangladesh as communal. If you say Alhamdulillah, you are a communal. They say, you only think about a community. You have to think for the world at large. But you have restricted yourself to a community. But Allah^{Subhanahuwata’ala} has said in the Holy Quran, Muslims are a community. They are totally different from all others. Our Prophet (ﷺ) constantly said,

﴿خَالِفُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى﴾

‘Don’t be like Jews.’ You are separate. As you teach your children, ‘My darling, when you go out in the campus, behaves properly. You are my son. I am a Major. Don’t behave like the street arches. They stand on the road side and urinate there. Never do like this.’ We always teach our children like this - Don’t we? We teach them manner that don’t behave like the street arches; you are not an ordinary young boy. You are my son. You are from a high family. Your links are different. So our Prophet (ﷺ) constantly reminded the Muslim, you are not like others, you are a Muslim. You are totally different, maintain your difference. Plain words of the Hadith,

﴿خَالِفُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَى﴾

Don’t do as they do, you are distinctly separate. You are a chosen community. Whether the West likes it or not, that is also the content of the Quran. The Quran says that we are a different community. The Quran says, in the language of Ibrahim, in the language of Yaqub in the 21st page of the first part of the Holy Quran.

ووصى بها ابراهيم بنيه ويعقوب طينى ان الله اصطفى لكم الدين فلا تموتن الا وانتم

2:132 مسلمون

Here Allah has addressed Ibrahim (عليه السلام) as well as Yaqub (عليه السلام) who was his grand son. Ibrahim's first son was Ismail (عليه السلام), then second son was Ishaq (عليه السلام). The progeny of Ibrahim (عليه السلام) goes into two branches. One towards the elder son, Ismail (عليه السلام) and another towards the younger son, Ishaq (عليه السلام). Ishaq's son was Yaqub (عليه السلام), they call him Jacob, he was a prophet. Jacob's son Yousuf (عليه السلام) was a prophet. Jacob's son Josef (عليه السلام) was a prophet. This branch contains many prophets. But there was no prophet for 2500 years from the progeny of Ismail (عليه السلام). Then comes only one, Muhammad (ﷺ). After Ismail (عليه السلام), who was the prophet from his children? We don't know. Then from the next generation, who was the prophet? We don't know. Come down up to the Qurish, after 2500 years, there came Muhammad (ﷺ), only one and this one is something unique. But the Quran contains many statements referring to other branch also. Here is one; Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says in this verse, 'Who is more foolish than the one who does not take the path of Ibrahim.' This is a beautiful verse of the Quran. Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} mentions Ibrahim's religion in every day prayer. We say,

اللهم صل على سيدنا ومولانا محمد وعلى ال سيدنا

Why is he mentioned so much? Quran says,

22:78 ملة ابيكم ابراهيم هو سمكم المسلمين

'[It is] the religion of your father, Ibrahim. He named you Muslims.' This Muslim community is the community of Ibrahim (عليه السلام). He is called the father of this community. He gave you this name, Muslim. The word Muslimun comes from the basic verb Aslama. The word Aslama is a verb in past tense, it means, he surrendered. In present tense, it becomes yuslimu which means, he surrenders. The person who surrendered, he is called Muslim. So who is called Muslim? The person who has surrendered himself called Muslim. The Holy Quran describes in a beautiful language,

ومن يرغب عن ملة ابراهيم الا من سفه نفسه ولقد اصطفيناه فى الدنيا وانه فى الاخرة

2:130 لمن الصالحين

'And who would be averse to the religion of Ibrahim except one who makes a fool of himself. And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous.' Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is telling us about his dear servant, Ibrahim (عليه السلام). Here سفه نفسه means 'to fool

yourself’. He says if you don’t follow the path of Ibrahim, you are be fooling yourself. He is not saying you are a fool. The language of the Quran is very sweet. He doesn’t say that you are a fool. He says, ‘who be fools himself more than a person who does not follow the path of Ibrahim.’ Then the next verse,

2:131 اذ قال له ربه اسلم قال اسلمت لرب العالمين

‘When his Lord said to him, “Surrender,” he said, “I have surrendered to the Lord of the worlds.” Here اسلم is the command form of اسلم. اسلم is third person, singular number, past tense and Masculine gender. From that command form, اسلم means ‘you surrender’. What did Ibrahim (عليه السلام) do when his Lord asks him to surrender himself? He is the bestower. Now He wants to examine Ibrahim, how much he can show his gratitude. How much he wants to be for Allah. So Allah examined Ibrahim (عليه السلام). When Ibrahim (عليه السلام) was tested by his Lord, he perfected and passed in all test. That certificate is also lies in another page of the Holy Quran,

2:124 واذا ابتلى ابراهيم ربه بكلمات فاتمهن

‘And remember that Ibrahim was tried by his Lord with certain commands, which he fulfilled.’ That is in the page 18 of the first part of the Quran, sura Bakara. In this page the entire description is about Ibrahim (عليه السلام). Now the verse which I have recited earlier,

ووصى بها ابراهيم بنيه ويعقوب طينى ان الله اصطفى لكم الدين فلا تموتن الا وانتم

2:132 مسلمون

‘And Ibrahim instructed his sons and [so did] Yaqub, [saying], “O my sons, indeed Allah has selected for you the religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.’ The wording of the Quran is wonderful! Here the verse contains الدين. What is الدين? الدين means the religion not religions. What is the religion? The explanation lies elsewhere. In another part of the Quran, Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says,

3:19 ان الدين عند الله الاسلام

‘Certainly the religion before Allah is Islam.’ What is Islam? Islam means surrendering oneself. Look how beautifully Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says a word and then explain it in another verse of the Quran! So what did Ibrahim (عليه السلام) say at the time of his death, as well his grand son, Yaqub (عليه السلام)? They gave the last advice to their sons regarding that point, what is that point? The point is Islam. I discussed in the previous verse, when Allah asked Ibrahim (عليه السلام) to surrender, he said that he has surrendered himself to the Lord of the worlds. I have surrendered myself means I have totally surrendered

myself, I don't have any desire of mine. His desire is my desire. His command I fulfil in every minutes, in every seconds. That's Islam. So this is a beautiful verse. Din is one that is Islam. Every prophet called to the same religion. Look at the saying of Hud (ﷺ), his calling is in the verse of the Quran,

11:50 قال يقوم اعبدوا الله ما لكم من اله غيره

He is asking his community, 'O may brothers, worship only Allah; you have no deity other than Him.' The same saying is repeated by the different prophets. Hud (ﷺ) said this, Shoaib (ﷺ) said this, Saleh (ﷺ) said this Nuh (ﷺ) said this - All prophets invited people to the same religion.

71:3 ان اعبدوا الله واتقوه واطيعون

'That you should worship Allah, fear Him, and obey me.' Islam is a very beautifully coherent religion and it is also beautifully described in the Holy Quran. There is a verse in the Holy Quran,

37:36 ويقولون انا لنا ركوا الهتنا لشاعر مجنون

'Shall we forsake our gods for a mad poet?' This is a verse of Sura Saffat. Our Prophet (ﷺ) was called mad poet by the disbelievers. They say, 'Shall we forsake our gods who have been worship by my forefathers for this poet who is a mad man.' This verse has come in different form. Our Prophet (ﷺ) was called مجنون means mad. Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} gave different answers to the same accreditation. In sura Saffat, the reply is one. In another sura, the reply is another. In another sura the reply is different. The easiest reply is in sura Qalam. There Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says,

68:2 ما انت بنعمة ربك بمجنون

'You are not, [O Muhammad], by the favour of your Lord, a mad man.' Because the Arab used to call our prophet a mad fellow, Muhammad is mad! So Allah gave the reply. The reply was given to the Prophet (ﷺ), he was consoled. As a child who goes outside and he is chased by other wicked boys, he runs and comes to the house, 'Abba, that boy has chased me!' Then father consoles him. Our Prophet (ﷺ) didn't complain like this. But Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is giving him solace, 'By the supreme grace of your Lord you are not a mad.' You are in the neamat of your Lord, you are being submerged in the neamat, and you are not a mad fellow. So the reply is very direct and any one can understand. They called him maznun and Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} is consoling our Prophet (ﷺ).

68:3 وان لك لاجر غير ممنون

‘And indeed, for you is a reward unfathomable.’ Our Prophet is being consoled by Allah ^{Subhanahuwata’ala}. First, your Lord has submerged you in His neamat, in His blessings; you are not a mad fellow. Allah has not stopped there. Number two, for you I have innumerable rewards, the dimension of rewards that I will bestow upon you is unfathomable. Then,

68:4 انك لعلى خلق عظيم

‘You are in the supreme state of all character.’ You have been given such a character, no man in the whole universe never ever has given like this; best possible of creation of Allah. Allah ^{Subhanahuwata’ala} gives this certificate to our Prophet. Our Prophet (ﷺ) said,

.....Makim akhlak

‘I have been sent to put into perfection of the best of nature which a man can have, one can imagine.’¹ Let them abuse our Prophet, Allah ^{Subhanahuwata’ala} declares,

94:4 ورفعنالك ذكرك

‘And raised high for you your repute.’ Allah will raise your honour more and more till the day of resurrection. This is the verse many of you know it. There Allah ^{Subhanahuwata’ala} gives the prediction, ‘Your honour I will raise high.’ That is the constant thing. The honour of our Prophet (ﷺ) we will be raised and raised.

Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi [his name I mentioned, because he was the teacher of my immediate superior Muhammadullah whose shoes I carried] did a very important comment,

‘When we say اللهم صل على محمد [if you translate them, meaning is ‘O Allah send your blessing upon Muhammad’] we generally consider it is a prayer for our Prophet (ﷺ). But it is not a prayer. Our saying اللهم صل على محمد is not a prayer for Muhammad (ﷺ). It is actually dua for us. Because if we say it once, then the angels shower blessings upon us ten times.’

There is saying of our Prophet, ‘Anybody who says, اللهم صل على محمد [O Allah bless Muhammad], the angels say the same prayer upon them, ‘O Allah! Bless this man who has uttered this.’ The great Islamic scholar Maulana

¹ Al-Muwatta, Hadith 47.8 [Yahya related to me from Malik that he had heard that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "I was sent to perfect good character."]

Ashraf Ali says, when we say ‘O Allah! Bless Muhammad’, our prayers of 600 crores Muslim of the world [if they are all Muslims, just a point of talking], does not raise the status of our Prophet by a single magnitude. He has given such a high status, unimaginable! He is not a god, he is not a deity. He is a slave of Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala}. We say ^{عبد ورسوله}, he is an ubd but this ubd has such a status that all the combine prayers of all mankind can't raise his status. Because Allah has already given him so much.

So the point is our Prophet has been given such an honour, such a status which is unimaginable, unfathomable. Fathomable is the language of Navy people. You can't think about it. So Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says, ‘By the grace of your Lord you are not a mad. For you remains so much of rewards I will give you. You are in the supreme state of character.’ Character, manner, humanity - all these qualities have been given to you. That's why he has been mentioned,

21:107 وما ارسلناك الا رحمة للعالمين

‘And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.’ One who has been given the title mercy for whole universe ^{رحمة للعالمين}, what is the meaning? ^{رحمة} means mercy, ^{للعالمين} for the whole world. A man is being called mercy for the whole world, why? If he would not be given such status, if he would not be given such character, If he would not be given such qualities, why should he be called rahmat? So Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says, ‘You are on the supreme level of character.’ There can be nothing greater than you in character. Then,

فستبصرون ويبصرون ﴿١٠﴾ بأيكم المفتون

‘So you will see and they will see which of you is afflicted [by a devil].’ Just wait for a while, [the word ^س in Arabic means soon, in future], Shortly you will see and they will also see who is mad. Now look at the Quran, the description 1400 years ago! Now compare those who called him mad, where they lie?

So far I have discussed the reply of Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} from the sura Qalam to the disbelievers as they called our Prophet mad. Now I quote another verse of the Quran where Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} has given reply in such a language which will be difficult to follow without discussion. As I have mentioned earlier from the sura Saffat, the disbelievers say, ‘Shall we forsake our gods for this mad poet?’ The reply of Allah sub is wonderful but not easy to understand. The reply is,

37:37 بل جاء بالحق وصدق المرسلين

'He came with the truth and he has attested the truthfulness of all the prophets.' The previous verse,

37:36 انهم كانوا اذا قيل لهم لا اله الا الله يستكبرون ﴿٣٦﴾ ويقولون انا لنا ركواء اهتنا لشاعر مجنون

'Indeed they, when it was said to them, 'There is no deity but Allah,' were arrogant. And were saying, 'Are we to leave our gods for a mad poet?' They used to show arrogance, what for care about this la ilaha illallah? The west says the same thing. They say, 'Eat, drink and be marry.' Now compare the verse of the Quran with the modern society. Allah Subhanahuwata'ala gives the answer, 'He came with the truth and he has attested the truthfulness of all the prophets.'

You will not find it in any other religions who say Abraham was a perfect man, and he was a prophet of Allah. Nuh was a perfect man and he was a prophet of Allah. Ijak - Ishaq, Jacob - Yaqub, Josef - Yusuf, they are all chosen person of Allah. They are the mursulun - the sent ones. The word is mursulun means the sent one, whom I have sent with my messages. Here in the verse for the comment of the disbelievers [what did they say, mad poet], the answer is not like the earlier one which was easy to follow. He says,

37:37 بل جاء بالحق وصدق المرسلين

'No, he has come with the supreme truth and he has attested the truthfulness of all previous prophets.' It is singularly different thing, you will not find it in any other religion except Islam. We say, peace be upon them.

سبحن ربك رب العزة عما يصفون ﴿٣٧﴾ وسلام على المرسلين

'Exalted is your Lord, the Lord of might, above what they describe. And peace upon the messengers.' Here سلام means salam, على means upon, المرسلين means the sent ones, messengers. Peace upon the sent ones. Who are the sent ones? The prophets. No other people say like us, Moses (ﷺ) peace be upon him, Musa (ﷺ). We say or not? Isa (ﷺ), we say or not? You can talk to the Christian, they will say, 'Yes, Abraham was prophet in our religion.' Allah has chosen such a personality who is claimed to be the forefather by Jews, by Christian, by Muslims. Who is that man? Abraham (ﷺ). Look at him, if you do not like Muhammad (ﷺ), you start from Abraham (ﷺ) peace be upon him. The Jews do not say Jesus peace be upon him. Nor the Moses say, Moses peace be upon him! We only say

peace upon the messengers, all prophets. Nobody does this. Has it existed in whole Muslim or not? Allah has declared in the Quran 1400 years ago, Peace be upon the sent ones. See the execution, Musa (عليه السلام), Isa (عليه السلام), Nuh (عليه السلام), Ibrahim (عليه السلام).

I mentioned before you that I am not an Alim. I was with the great scholar, the devout Muslim, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi's student Muhammadullah Hafezzi Huzur. He was a Hafez. He used to recite the Quran constantly. Usually he used to make a khatam of the Holy Quran in every three days. He used to do so much of recitation. There is a usual tendency among the highly blessed persons; they say, what is the use of reciting the Quran if we do not understand it? Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi said, 'There is an affirmative statement in this integrative statement.' What is the people's comment? 'What is the use of recitation the Quran if we do not understand it?' Look, this is an integrative statement. But there lies an affirmative statement. What is the affirmative statement? It is clear from their statement that recitation is very useful if one could understand it. Now ask the man who has asked the question, 'Sir, Do you understand the Quran?' He will say, 'No.' 'Then why you said that?' Actually this is a mistake. Our Prophet (ﷺ) recited the Quran every now and then. In our everyday prayer, the Imam has to recite the Quran correctly. If the Imam is a great Alim and he stands for reciting the Quran where he makes a mistake in sure Fatiha in the salah, will not every Musalli catch him? You say he is a great scholar but he can't recite sure Fatiha correctly! Which is more important for leading the salah? The simple masala is, if a person can recite the Quran correctly, your salah is valid. But if the recitation of a great Alim / great scholar is imperfect, your salah is null and void. So which comes first? Recitation comes first. And Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says,

اقرا باسم ربك الذى خلق

'Recite in the name of your Lord who created.' If you do not agree, look at the other verses,

87:6 سنقرئك فلا تنسى

'We will make you recite [O Muhammad], and you will not forget.' What did Allah teach? Did Allah teach him writing? Did our Prophet know how to write? He says, 'I will teach you reciting the Quran, you will never forget.' Our Prophet didn't become a memorizer or a hafez by the usual manner as our young boys are doing. He didn't recite the Quran again and again by looking into the Quran, angel Gabriel put it into his heart.

So this is a mistake commonly make in the society. There are two stage of the Quran. First stage is the recitation of the Quran. This is a unique

Ibadat. Just reciting the Holy Quran singularly is a unique Ibadat. Number two, understanding the Quran. There is a saying of our Prophet (ﷺ),

"If anyone recites a letter from Allah's Book he will be credited with a good deed, and a good deed gets a tenfold reward. I do not say that Alif-Lam-Mim is one letter, but alif is a letter, lam is a letter and mim is a letter.'²

So when you can recite the Quran correctly, for every alphabet you get 10 virtues. Even if you don't understand, you are given 10 virtues. What will be the reward if you can understand and recite correctly? Don't you see Quran is for understanding or Quran is not for understanding? Allah Subhanahuwata'ala says again and again,

ان هذه تذكرة فمن شاء اتخذ الى ربه سبيلا^{73:19}

'Indeed, this is a reminder, so whoever wills may take to his Lord a way.'
The language of the Quran,

افلا يتدبرون القرآن^{4:82}

'Do they not think deeply about the Quran?' How can you think deeply for something if you don't understand the meaning? The Quran is a message from Allah and a message must be understood. This is a mercy of Allah Subhanahuwata'ala that He says, even you can read my message.

You have received a certificate of honour from your Staff College for your excellent performance. Your child who is only four years old, he does not understand what is the meaning of excellent. But he knows the alphabet. He reads it in English. Will not everybody give him the credit? 'Oh! This child, he is reciting my certificate?' He does not understand the meaning. Similarly this is a mercy from Allah Subhanahuwata'ala that even if we can recite this message, He will give us the credit. Our salah will be valid if we can recite this correctly. But the core of the matter lies in the understanding this. If you don't understand, you don't understand the message. What is the message of the Quran,

ان هذا القرآن يهدي للتي هي اقوم ويبشر المؤمنين الذين يعملون

الصلحت ان لهم اجرا كبيرا^{17:9}

'Certainly this Quran leads to the most established truth and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward.' Quran declares its purpose itself, Sura Bani Israil. It gives good

² Al-Tirmidhi Hadith, Hadith 2137, Narrated by Abdullah ibn Mas'ud

tidings to the believers that there lies ahead for them a beautiful reward. Quran is describing its purpose. Why the Quran has been sent? It has been given to guide mankind. Guide to what? Guide to the path of satisfaction of Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala}. What is the path to earn the satisfaction of Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala}? The path is Islam. What is Islam? Islam means to surrender oneself. Such a beautiful exposition of the Quran is given in the Quran itself. So the verse I first recited,

ووصى بها ابراهيم بنيه ويعقوب طينى ان الله اصطفى لكم الدين فلا تموتن الا وانتم
مسلمون 2:132

‘And Ibrahim instructed his sons and [so did] Yaqub, [saying], “O my sons, indeed Allah has selected for you the religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims.’ The word Muslim here means perfect Muslim. This is a beautiful way of talking in Arabic.

Ibrahim (عليه السلام) is being called to surrender, Aslim, what is the meaning? Here Islam means the top most level. Surrender yourself is totally different than saying only لا اله الا الله. If a man just utters لا اله الا الله, basic definition is, he is a Muslim. But that is not the goal of this word here regarding Ibrahim (عليه السلام). Here the meaning is totally different. It is the same in every language. If you say PG, what is the meaning? PG means Play Group. Again PG also means Post Graduate. My son is in PG means in Play Group. Same abbreviation can also be used to mean my son is in Post Graduate. Similarly the word Islam has two meaning. One meaning is entry into the Islam and another meaning is coming through the process of Iman and Ihsan. This is the highest stage of faith where he has totally surrendered himself to Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala}. That is Islam. So Islam has two meaning. One meaning is PG, play Group, another meaning is PG, Post Graduate - like that. When it is applied to the Prophet, its meaning is the superlative one.

Quran gives constantly examples that we should follow to become best Muslim. Now if you look at the life of our Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions, we can see easily the examples. Ibrahim(عليه السلام) left this world 2500 years ago before the birth of our Prophet. But Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), he followed the Prophet (ﷺ). He was two years junior to our Prophet. But physically he looked more aged. His hair, his beard had grown greyer than the Prophet. He looked older than the Prophet (ﷺ).

There is a beautiful story. When Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) and our Prophet (ﷺ) arrived Medina on the first day after Hizrah, the people of Medina were anxiously awaiting them. The day became quite hot in the early part of the

morning. They were coming. They were on the slope of the mountain. People rush towards them. Because of the two, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was fairer, looked more aged, people thought he was Muhammad. Everybody went and shakes hand with Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه). Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) realized that and he didn't stop them. What he did? He stood up and took the scurf and started giving shade over the Head of the Prophet (ﷺ). Then everybody realized who the Prophet was. People now switch over to Muhammad (ﷺ). Scholar quotes this to quote how a beautiful character Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was! He didn't stop them or told them, 'I am not Muhammad, go to him.' What he did? He took out the scurf and started giving shade over the head of the Prophet (ﷺ). So the people immediate realized that the Prophet was that man and he is only a Khadem, servant of him.

Now if you look at the life of Abu Bakr Siddiqe (رضي الله عنه), there are superb examples before us. How did he behave when the Prophet (ﷺ) died? He was a man of **ferial** health, he looked older, and he looked thinner. Everybody when they looked at him, they consider him as an old man, weak person! But when the Prophet died, you know the story; the strong man Umar (رضي الله عنه) became mad. He was saying, 'Whoever will say Muhammad has died, I will kill him.' People were afraid of him.

Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was not there. He came from outside. He then entered into the mosque and called, 'Umar!' Umar (رضي الله عنه) did not listen. So he first went to the Prophet's room where he was lying dead. He kissed the forehead of the Prophet (ﷺ), blessed him, then he came out. Umar (رضي الله عنه) was still shouting in the Mosque. Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) went strait to the , sat down there and recited the Quran,

وما محمد الا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل أفان مات او قتل انقلبتم على اعقابكم فلن يضركم الله شيئا وسيجزي الله الشاكرين
3:144

'Muhammad is nothing but a Prophet. Many Prophets went before him. If he died or were slain, will you then turn back on your Heels? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful.' When he recited the Quran, Umar (رضي الله عنه) heard it. Just listening to the verse of the Quran, Umar (رضي الله عنه) returned to senses. He came to Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه). He realized that he was making mistake.

There started the stern character of the Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه). He looked weaker, but he was very firm in faith. He gave Islam the most important leadership

right at the critical moment. Allah has chosen him for this. There were revolutions all around. Some people said that they will not give zakat. Someone claimed to be prophet.

Musilama kazzab demanded to be Prophet when the Prophet (ﷺ) was alive. He wrote a letter to our Prophet (ﷺ), 'Look! Muhammad, you are a Prophet so also am I. We will share the Arab half and half.' He wrote 'a letter from Musilama to Muhammad, prophet of Allah'. Our Prophet (ﷺ) gave the answer, From Muhammad (Prophet of Allah) to Musailama kazzab (the utmost liar). Musailama kazzab - that was the language which our Prophet (ﷺ). Allah's desire, Muhammad (ﷺ) died after few days and Musailama was gaining strength. His tribe was known Hanifia. They were a brave people in the North of Medina, very beautiful land. His tribe gathered all around him because he was very lovely to look at, handsome and a big man. He apparently showed Muhammad (ﷺ) that I am a Muslim and then claimed the prophet hood. So during the period of Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه), he was claiming the prophet hood. There were people who did not say properly salah. There were people who were not willing to give zakat. In the midst of this, Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) said, 'I will send Usama ibn Zaid for the expedition.' When Umar (رضي الله عنه) listened this, he said, 'Abu Bakr, please be patient! Don't send Usama out with such a large force towards Syria.' The answer of Abu Bakr siddique was, 'Umar! You are a strong man, now you are telling me that the first thing I should do as a khalifa of my Rasul (ﷺ) to stop the expedition which Prophet (ﷺ) sent? How intelligent you are?' So Umar (رضي الله عنه) became silent.

Next, Umar (رضي الله عنه) said, 'All right, at least choose a new leader.' Usama ibn Zaid, a dear one of the Prophet (ﷺ), was about only 20 years old, a young man. Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) again said, 'Umar! The first thing I should do to bring down the leader whom the Prophet chosen? Aha! What a leader you are?' Abu Bakr's comment was, 'I will do exactly what our Prophet (ﷺ) did. I will send the expedition with Usama. I will fight everyone who tries to do damage to the religion of Muhammad. I may die and you will see my dead body but I will not see any defect anywhere in the Islam.' So Allah Subhanahuwata'ala gave him the victory. In every front Abu Bakr (رضي الله عنه) was successful. But apparently he was a man very lean and thin, much elderly compare to the Prophet, but he showed how to follow the Prophet. That's why our scholar says that if we want to move in the path of Muhammad (ﷺ), our examples are those who were in the immediate vicinity of the Prophet. Look at the character of Abu Bakr Siddique, look at Umar Faruq, look at Usman, Look at Ali and look at his disciples. What was the purpose of their life and how are we leading our life? What we have made our purpose? Will our purpose serve in Hereafter if we say, I was a major

General in Nigerian Army? Will it give me any reward in the grave? If our Prophet (ﷺ) ask, ‘My dear, you have become Major General but what you did for my religion?’ There is a famous saying of our Prophet (ﷺ),

خيركم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه

‘Best amongst you is that person who learns the Quran and teaches it.’ Who are given the highest honour in the whole society in Bangladesh, in Pakistan, in Nigeria, in Saudi Arabia? The answer is definitely the Generals, the Secretariats, the Commodores, the Rear Admirals and the rich peoples. Who gives credit to the peoples who teach the Quran? Again I quote the same man, Maulana Ashraf Ali from India used to say, ‘The ulamas are generally looked down upon. The current train in the whole Islamic society is to rebuke the Molvees (means the ulamas). They are the roots of all troubles. They are not doing anything, useless. They are not doing any work in the whole world. We are working as Generals, as Professors, we are working as Commodores, we are working as Businessman – these ulamas are useless. Listen! The ulamas are given the worst names. Except those who can speak well, he is considered that he is doing some service. But those who are unknown, poor and ill-fed teaching in a mosque (alif, ba, ta, sa) - they are never cared upon. People look down upon them and considered as useless creature. No, I tell those peoples who devout themselves for the service of Quran, who teach the children alif, ba, ta... so that they can recite the Holy Quran, they are the people nearest to Allah ^{Subhanahuwata’ala}. Now you look at his quotation and the quotation of the Prophet (ﷺ),

خيركم من تعلم القرآن وعلمه

‘Best amongst you is that person who learns the Quran and teaches it.’ Therefore this Maulana Ashraf Ali, scholar of Islam, his famous comments,

‘There is no nafal work optional which is greater in worship then establishing a Madrasa where the Quran will be taught.’

Because our Prophet (ﷺ) said, ‘Quran is my miracle.’ Whatever we talk about the Quran, how can the Quran exists if we don’t learn the recitation? As I told you earlier, your prayer is null and void if you recitation of Quran is incorrect. Who lead the prayers?

Last year during Hajj I said one thing to my group in Saudi Arabia; I quoted that this time also. There were many Ph.D. with me this year. There were some 8 Ph.D. from BUET [somebody did their Ph.D. from Japan, somebody from America, somebody from England, somebody from

Canada] and 4 Ph.D. from Dhaka University. One, who was fellow of Royal Society, Ph.D. from Cambridge, I told him, 'My dear professor, if tomorrow a declaration is given that the Fazr prayer should be lead by somebody from outside may be Bangladeshi, Pakistani or India. Can some of you lead the Prayers at Makkah Sharif? Will you be courageous enough to go and stand at the seat of Imam and lead the prayers?' 'Sir, please don't rebuke us.' This was their comment.

I said to them that just bring any Hafez from any corner of the world, whether he is from Bangladesh, Pakistan, India or Philippine, ask him, a young boy of 17 or 18 years old who even never been took to the capital, can you lead the prayer? He will say, 'Inshaallah, I can.' He may not speak in Arabic like Captain Ibrahim, because he does not know how to speak in Arabic. But he can recite the Holy Quran perfectly. He will say, 'Yes, I can be the Imam Inshaallah.' This is a miracle of the Quran. When the competitions are held in Saudi Arabia, you may see the first Qari from Malaysia or from Nigeria. What you would grade them if you ask them to talk like Captain Ibrahim? They can't speak in Arabic. But when it comes for the recitation, they defeat the Arabs. This is a miracle of the Quran.

Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} has given us the Quran which our Prophet (ﷺ) said as the object of glory for the Muslim and the Quran contains such statement which are unbelievable! There is a verse in the Holy Quran,

51:47 ^{والسمااء بنينها بايد وانا لموسعوز}

'And the sky, I have created it with my Hand and I am the expander thereof.' Now the Muslim scientist look at this verse, the newest theory of Astronomy, the expanding universe, do you know this? Look at the verse of the Quran; you can see yourself the translation. The Quran says,

الذى خلق الموت والحياة ليبلوكم ايكم احسن عملا وهو العزيز الغفور الذى خلق سبع سماوات
طباقا ما ترى فى خلق الرحمن من تفاوت فارجع البصر هل ترى من فطور ثم ارجع
البصر خاسأ وهو حسير

'Who created seven heavens in layers, one above the other? You will not find any fault in the creation of the Most Merciful. So raise your vision [to the sky], do you see any faults? Then raise your vision again, your vision will return to you humbled, humiliated, defeated, tired.' Allah ^{Subhanahuwata'ala} says this in sura Mulk. The scientist by looking at the furthest galaxies 10⁸ light years away with the latest gazettes gives us much more information about the sky, but what is the situation? Your vision does not become tired? Has they got the end? Can anybody could say, 'Look! This is the

end of the sky!’ Allah says, ‘And the sky, I have created it with my Hand and I am the expander thereof.’ He says,

79:27 ^{79:27} ءانتم اشد خلقا ام لبسماء بنها رفع سمكها فسوها

‘Are you more difficult to create than the sky?’ This comment is from Ampara, sura Naziat. So there are many miracles of the Quran and many verses of the Quran can be explained only if you take the help of the latest science and technology. Otherwise the meaning does not come clear. So our Prophet’s claim that the Quran is a glory for Muslim, may Allah give us tawfiq to understand this. May Allah give us tawfiq to follow our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

واخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العلمين