

# Minhaji Fata Morgana

*An examination of Prof. Tahir's embellished narrative of the Najran and Abyssinian delegations*



**Minhaji Fata Morgana**

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*Acknowledgements*  
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*alḥamdu lillāhi rabbi'l áālamīn; wa's ṣalātu wa's salāmu álá sayyidi'l anbiyā'yi wa'l mursalin  
allāhumma hidāyatu'l ḥaqqi wa's ṣawāb*

## PREFACE

Praise be to Allāh ﷻ Lord and Creator of the universe. Blessings and peace upon our master Muḥammad ﷺ, the prince of all worlds; and the leigelord of prophets and messengers; he was sent with guidance and to guide the world. O Allāh! We ask thee to guide us upon the right path and truth.

Professor Tahir Jhangvi,<sup>1</sup> originally from Pakistan, and founder of Minhajul Quran has been decried in Sunni circles in the last few weeks. Prof. Tahir has been controversial for years, but recently, some of his actions have cast him into outright heresy and perhaps even apostacy.<sup>2</sup> *al-íyādhū billāh*.

He took his distasteful hobnobbing with heretics one step further, when he celebrated Christmas in the offices of his organisation under the banner of Qur'ān. In a short speech, he made strange claims contradicting Sunni creed and said things to please the Christian crowd. Christmas is being celebrated by Minhajis all over the world, ever since. In September 2011, the professor conducted an interfaith gathering in London, where he encouraged representatives of various faiths to pray according to their 'own tradition'.

Be it known, that as far as worldly relations are concerned, it is not against Islām to cooperate with Christians or people of other religions – in respecting<sup>3</sup> their rights as humans, neighbours and so forth; being fair in dealing with them and being just; neither deceiving them, nor betraying their trust. Alahazrat writes:<sup>4</sup>

Bearing love and affection,<sup>5</sup> is entirely different from giving consideration and conducting transactions<sup>6</sup> with someone. The difference between the two, is like that between the sky and the earth. It is permissible to

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<sup>1</sup> Known as Prof. Tahir ul Qadri.

<sup>2</sup> It is because of the principle of takfir, and extreme cautiousness required before ruling someone kāfir, that we tarry in takfir. These actions and words are kufr without doubt, but some more investigations are underway to ascertain facts. Allāh táālā knows best.

<sup>3</sup> *Respect*, as in 'being mindful' and 'consideration.'

<sup>4</sup> *Al-Maḥajjatu'l Mu'tamanah fī Āyati'l Mumtaḥanah*, Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān.

<sup>5</sup> *mawālāt*

<sup>6</sup> *muāmalāt*

conduct transactions and have dealings with anyone, except with apostates like Wahabis and Deobandis,<sup>7</sup> in worldly matters, and [matters] in which there is no harm for religious obligations. The *Dhimmi*<sup>8</sup> is similar to a Muslim in all such dealings: "They shall have the same rights and obligations as us".<sup>9</sup>

It is permissible to conduct transactions even with non-dhimmis.<sup>10</sup> Transactions like buying and selling, leasing and renting, giving and accepting gifts (upon the condition that these gifts are permitted by the shari'ah); and to purchase anything from them, when such goods are of benefit for Muslims; and to sell them anything except weapons<sup>11</sup> or such things that may be (mis)used to insult Islām. So also, it is permitted to employ them to do things that are not contrary to the shari'ah; and to accept employment of non-muslims in permissible activities that are not humiliating [to Muslims]; so also is hiring them and getting hired by them. It is permissible to give them gifts as goodwill<sup>12</sup> as long as such gifts do not honour the rituals and religious customs of infidels,<sup>13</sup> and to accept their gifts as long as such gifts do not contravene or criticise Islām.<sup>14</sup> It is even permissible to marry a Christian or Jewish woman.

As long as they make peace with us, we shall be inclined towards them [in amity] – as long as such treaties do not force us to make *halāl* as *harām* and vice versa.<sup>15</sup> So also, [it is allowed] to have contracts with them, and have covenants with them to a certain extent;<sup>16</sup> and when such a permissible covenant is made, it is obligatory to fulfil it and it is forbidden to betray or renege from such promises.

Whether in Muslim lands or not, coexistence and cooperation with non-Muslims was never forbidden in worldly matters. This does not mean that Muslims can compromise on religious obligations or appease non-Muslims by embracing their religious traditions, ceremonies or condone them.

Prof. Tahir's deplorable actions seek to erase the identity of Muslims, and attempt to even alter Islamic laws to please his western audience or gain acceptance in their circles. It is necessary to expose the fraud of the professor, who is viewed by a section of the Muslim public as an erudite scholar. Muslims should be warned of evil scholars in our time<sup>17</sup> and their harm; those, who have bartered the hereafter for fame and glory in this world. *al-iyādhū billāh*.

The arrival of the delegations of Najrān and Abyssinia is being misquoted by unscrupulous or ignorant people and a false notion is gaining credence;<sup>18</sup> hopefully, this paper will clarify misconceptions and

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<sup>7</sup> That is, the apostates among them. Because, in our times, many who call themselves as Deobandis are not aware of the heresies of their elders, unlike in Alahazrat's time; and not all Wahābis in our time can be ruled as apostates. Allāh tāālā knows best.

<sup>8</sup> *dhimmī*: a non-muslim living in Muslim lands and under Islamic rule. Literally 'those under Muslim protection.'

<sup>9</sup> In worldly matters. *lahum mā lanā wa ālayhim mā ālaynā*.

<sup>10</sup> *Non-dhimmi*: those non-muslims who may live in Muslim lands but do not pay jizyah; or do not live in Muslim lands at all.

<sup>11</sup> That may be used against Muslims in war. A hundred years ago, these were swords and sticks; but in our times, non-Muslims have far more powerful weapons, which makes this condition irrelevant.

<sup>12</sup> *maṣlahat e shara'yī*: for a valid reason and not contrary to shari'ah; for diplomatic or political reason and for the long term benefit of Muslims.

<sup>13</sup> For example, gifting a Cross to Christians or gifting idols or unislamic religious motifs. However, giving any other gifts to Christians, Hindus or any other non-Muslims is permissible as explained earlier.

<sup>14</sup> For example, it is not permissible to accept a bottle of wine or figurines considered as gods by Hindus.

<sup>15</sup> That is, as long as our religious matters are not disturbed. For example, usury is *harām* and polygamy is *halāl*.

<sup>16</sup> Permitted by the Shari'ah.

<sup>17</sup> Foretold by RasūlAllāh ﷺ, in his description of the portents of the Hour.

<sup>18</sup> The Common Word website, has a page which makes a similar claim that the Prophet ﷺ invited Christians to pray in his ﷺ mosque. *al-iyādhū billāh*.

doubts planted by enemies of religion. Indeed, the Prophet ﷺ was exemplary in his kindness and politeness, but he never condoned false beliefs, nor did he encourage people to remain on their own false ideas about God and religion.

Initially, I wanted to write a few pages highlighting the fallacies in his speeches; but some more material was added stretching the original scope. In this paper, we do not issue an Islamic ruling upon Prof. Tahir's actions and statements in the Wembley Arena (September 2011) or the Christmas gathering (January 2006) in Pakistan. Those actions and statements should be analysed separately. The main objective of this paper is to demonstrate the unreliability of Prof. Tahir as an Islamic scholar. This also aims to educate students and commoners like myself, and hopefully serve as a stimulus for a serious and orderly work by qualified scholars to unveil the chicanery of the professor.

I beseech Allah táālā to forgive me for my lapses.

#### Notes:

1. Both videos are quite recent and at least one of them is post 24<sup>th</sup> September 2011, as the Wembley Arena event in London is mentioned. The videos can be found at these URLs:

**clip one:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcaogVHIiIc>

**clip two:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rz7O7DLIzPM>

2. These speeches have been transcribed verbatim and reproduced in Appendix C and Appendix D.
3. In certain citations, the translation may sound pedantic with Arabic grammar terms; but I have retained the details, only to remain faithful to the original. Yet, in some cases where it interrupts the narrative, such details are omitted and duly mentioned in the footnotes.
4. **The problem of 'Al'**: In Arabic, appellations as well as names are written with the definite article 'al'. Rules governing its usage are found in books of grammar, contravening which would be decried as being solecistic; but it is cumbersome to follow in English. I have tried to strike a middle path by retaining the 'al' when used as an auxiliary, and without 'al' when used alone. Thus it would be Abu Bakr al-Bayhaqi and Badruddīn al-Áynī; but only Bayhaqi or Áynī when used alone.
5. I have included tables of evaluation in Appendix A and Appendix B for quick reference. Statements of Prof. Tahir are listed as entries and the status of their factual or contextual accuracy mentioned alongside.

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*wa billāhi't tawfīq.*

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# Minhaji Fata Morgana

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## 1. PROF. TAHIR'S VERSION

Two events were conducted by Minhajul Quran and in the presence of Professor Muḥammad Tahir al-Qadri. The first is a Christmas celebration<sup>19</sup> in Pakistan in January 2006 and the second is an Interfaith gathering sponsored and conducted by the Minhaj organization in Wembley Arena in London.<sup>20</sup> In both the events Prof. Tahir invited non-Muslims to pray “*according to their own traditions.*” Thereafter in Q-A sessions,<sup>21</sup> Prof. Tahir justified his actions by citing ḥadīth and claimed that his actions are proven by the Sunnah.<sup>22</sup>

Key points from the two clips<sup>23</sup> are summarised below:

1. Prof. Tahir mentions two Christian delegations that came to the Prophet ﷺ: The Najrān<sup>24</sup> Delegation and the Habshah<sup>25</sup> Delegation.
2. Concerning the Najrān Delegations, Prof. Tahir mentions two narrations:<sup>26</sup>
  - a. Company of 14 delegates (clip one)
  - b. Company of 60 delegates (clip two)
3. It is not clear from Prof. Tahir’s speeches whether he considers these as separate delegations.
4. However, Prof. Tahir’s description about the Najrān delegation is the same in both cases.
5. In the first case (of 14 delegates,) Prof. Tahir mentions the period as the 2nd year after Hijrah and that it occurred between the battle of Badr and the battle of Uḥūd.<sup>27</sup>
6. Concerning the Najrān delegation (both cases) Prof. Tahir claims:
  - a. The Prophet ﷺ allowed Christians to stay in the Masjid Nabawī.<sup>28</sup>
  - b. The Christians asked whether they could worship according to their own religion.
  - c. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Yes, you are allowed to worship according to your own religion in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī”
  - d. That Christians prayed in Masjid Nabawī by the permission of the Prophet ﷺ.
7. In the second case (of 60 delegates,) Prof. Tahir claims:
  - a. The companions ﷺ asked the Prophet ﷺ where the delegation should stay.
  - b. The Prophet ﷺ allowed 60 Christian leaders<sup>29</sup> to stay in the Masjid Nabawī.

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<sup>19</sup> This was reported by a number of newspapers in Pakistan on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2006. Newspaper clippings are displayed on a Minhajul Qurān site: <http://www.mcdf.info/en.php?tid=3714> [Retrieved on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2011].

<sup>20</sup> Held on the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2011.

<sup>21</sup> As seen in two video clips posted on Youtube; the second clip is certainly after the 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2011 because the Wembley event is mentioned. Even though Tahir’s explanations are also related to the Christmas speech of 2006, that speech itself is not discussed in this paper.

<sup>22</sup> Meaning the practice and tradition of the Prophet ﷺ.

<sup>23</sup> Transcripts of both clips can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D.

<sup>24</sup> Najrān is a southern province of Saudi Arabia bordering Yemen.

<sup>25</sup> Abyssinia or Ethiopia (although parts of today’s Eritrea were also included in the ancient Ethiopian Empire).

<sup>26</sup> Actually, they are both mentioned in the same narration as we shall see, *in shā Allāh*.

<sup>27</sup> The battle of Badr (al-Úžmā) took place in Ramadān, 2 AH; and the battle of Uḥūd in Shawwāl, 3 AH.

<sup>28</sup> *Masjid Nabawī, Masjid e Nabawī, Masjidu’n Nabawī*: The Prophet’s ﷺ Mosque in Madīnah.

<sup>29</sup> Thus it is said by Prof. Tahir; see Appendix D.

- c. The companions asked the Prophet ﷺ where should they be allowed to worship and that they would worship according to their own religious tradition not according to *tawhīd*.
  - d. The Prophet ﷺ said: “they are allowed to worship according to their own religion in my mosque of Madīnah”.
8. Concerning the Ḥabshah delegation, Prof. Tahir claims:
- a. They were Christians.
  - b. They visited Madīnah.
  - c. They were allowed to stay in the Masjid Nabawī.
  - d. They were given ‘food and other services’ there.
9. Citing the above, Prof. Tahir claims that it is *sunnah* to invite non-Muslims to mosques<sup>30</sup> and ask them to pray according to their own tradition.
10. According to Prof. Tahir, it is the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ to:
- a. Show solidarity with all faiths of mankind
  - b. Invite people of all faiths to say peace prayers according to their own religious traditions
11. According to Prof. Tahir, the visiting Christians from Najrān who prayed facing East in Madīnah were praying facing the opposite side of Kábah.
12. Prof. Tahir says that: a ‘peace prayer’ is not a ‘worship’ item.
13. Prof. Tahir acknowledges that he allowed it<sup>31</sup> and arranged it as he himself says:

“So this act which we have done, and I allowed and I arranged it in London, this is not a *bidáh ḥasanah*,<sup>32</sup> this is Sunnah.”

14. Concerning the events of the Victory of Makkah, he says:
- a. That the Prophet ﷺ only fought defensive wars.
  - b. That the Prophet ﷺ spent his life only to defend Madīnah.
  - c. That the Prophet ﷺ was giving a sermon when a companion said: “Today is the day of bloodshed.”
  - d. And that the Prophet ﷺ answered that companion, during that sermon.
  - e. That Abū Lahab’s sons hid in the curtains of the Kábah and the Prophet ﷺ lifted the curtains of the Kábah and brought them out.
  - f. That Abū Lahab’s sons tortured the Prophet ﷺ and were his biggest enemies.
  - g. Prof. Tahir implies that all the wars in the 10 years in Madīnah were defensive wars.

15. Prof. Tahir says:

Sayyadina Ali, he said: ***idhā qatala’l muslimu an-naṣraniyyah qutila bihi***. If a Muslim kills a Christian, the Muslim will be killed in retaliation. The blood of both is equal.

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<sup>30</sup> This invitation to mosques is found in his speeches; even though, in the clips, he only talks about the Wembley Arena.

<sup>31</sup> The interfaith all-religion chants.

<sup>32</sup> Practice that is a praiseworthy innovation.

16. Prof. Tahir says:

Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, he says: **diyatu'l yahudiy wa'n naṣraniy wa'l majūsiy mislu diyyatu ḥurri'l muslim.** It is reported by Imam Shaybani in *Kitabu'l Ḥujjah*, Ibn Abi Shayba in *Muṣannaf*: Imam e Aázam Abū Ḥanīfah says: that the *diyah*, blood money, of a Muslim and of a Jew and of a Christian and Majusi, all blood money, each and every person is equal, there is no difference between them.

17. Prof. Tahir says:

**inna yahuda wa'l awf ummatun máa'l mu'minīn.** The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation

18. Prof. Tahir says:

**lā ikraha fī'd dīn,** when you get together, this is the demonstration of freedom of religion and expression given by Almighty God and Prophet ﷺ.

These are key points from the two clips, which we shall examine. *In Shā Allāh wa bi tawfīqih.*



## 2. CONTENTIONS

Both clips have factual errors. Prof. Tahir not only adds imaginary details to historical reports and fiqh statements, but also builds a case for his actions, based on fanciful details.

He is claimed to be a ḥadīth scholar and the biography on his official website<sup>33</sup> lists that he has compiled about a 100 ḥadīth books, among which, one is claimed to be a compilation of 25,000 ḥadīth, two are compilations of 5,000, and yet another of 2,200 ḥadīth. For someone claimed to be a foremost ḥadīth scholar, he does not even show the demeanour of a ḥadīth student. This is not about mentioning *asānīd*,<sup>34</sup> but about being meticulous and faithful in narration of ḥadīth. An ordinary speaker may summarise or mention an event or ḥadīth in his own words or paraphrase it; but none cannot add or delete information and present it in a way that is in stark contrast to the original ḥadīth, or mention fanciful detail attributing it to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

In a very famous and rigorously authenticated ḥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said:

One who knowingly attributes a lie to me, should prepare for his place in Hell.<sup>35</sup>

In another related ḥadīth RasūlAllāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

Verily, attributing a falsehood to me is not the same as attributing a lie to someone else.<sup>36</sup>

It is an enormity to attribute a lie to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. According to a fundamental principle of ḥadīth, nothing can be attributed to RasūlAllāh ﷺ unless there is a chain of transmission. It is exceedingly strange that Prof. Tahir attributes the sayings as in 6c and 7d (previous chapter) to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, even though such a narration could not be found in books of ḥadīth, biographies or history. I will list major objections below and discuss proofs in the following chapters, *InShāAllāh*:

1. Indeed, a delegation of Christians from Najrān, came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ. It is also true that they prayed in Masjid Nabawī facing east. But the incident is entirely unlike the fancy picture painted by the professor.
2. The visiting Christians did not stay in the Prophet's Mosque nor did they seek his permission; and certainly, there is no evidence that RasūlAllāh ﷺ gave them permission to pray according to their own religion. They began praying of their own accord and RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not stop them as a gesture of goodwill, but he ﷺ refuted them and their beliefs immediately thereafter. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said:

You both lie. That which prevents you from being [considered] Muslims is your claim that Allāh táālā has a son; and you worship the cross and eat swine.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.minhaj.org/english/tid/8718/A-Profile-of-Shaykh-ul-Islam-Dr-Muhammad-Tahir-ul-Qadri.html> (titles are in the URL itself and not inserted by the author)

<sup>34</sup> *asānīd*, plural of *isnād*, chain of transmission of Hadith. Prof. Tahir has a very impressive list of Ijāzahs and his cult tries to impress this at every opportunity.

<sup>35</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1; *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* 38/106-108 among other narrations. This is among the mass-transmitted ḥadīth, and with the most number of narrators and transmission routes. Imām Zabidi writes that he has seen in Imām Sakhāwī's own writing that he said: "Ibn Mulaqqin reports from Yūsuf ibn Khalīl who said that the [companion] narrators of this ḥadīth are more than seventy." Ibn Diḥyah said that it is narrated by about ninety companions and transmitted through four-hundred routes. Al-Īrāqī says that Imām Nawawī wrote in his *Al-Minhaj*, a commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, citing someone that the ḥadīth has been narrated by two-hundred companions. [*Luqat al-La-ālī al-Mutanāthirah, Ḥadīth Sixty-One*, Imām Zabīdī] And Imām Zabidi himself lists 98 companions and briefly mentions about 72 narrations.

<sup>36</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4.

3. Similarly, the Abyssinian delegation that Tahir mentions was either a Muslim delegation or became Muslim afterwards.
4. There are many mistakes in his description of the Victory of Makkah. These are ordinary mistakes, but his disregard for common practice in narration of ḥadīth and his penchant for story-telling is a telling remark on his scholarship. It is incredible that a man claimed to have compiled 25,000 ḥadīth can make such mistakes, when mentioning one of the most famous events in Islamic history.
5. There are other citations mentioned out of context; for example, he says:  
[The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation.](#)
6. Some other fiqh quotes concerning blood money and Prof. Tahir's assertion that supplication is not worship are discussed.



### 3. THE NAJRĀN DELEGATION

A summary of narrations about the Najrān delegation as found in books of ḥadīth, biographies and histories:

1. A delegation of 60 Christians, 14 nobles among them came to Madīnah.
2. According to one narration, it was the time of Āsr prayer when they arrived.
3. They came to the Prophet's Mosque, and it was time for their prayer as well; so they began to pray facing east. I could not find a narration which says that they asked for permission.
4. The Prophet ﷺ did not stop them.
5. In some narrations, the companions wanted to stop them, but RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'Leave them'.
6. They came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and saluted him after this and he turned away from them and did not speak to them. This was because, the Najrān Christians were wearing religious and ostentatious clothing, gold rings and silk mantles.
7. Sayyidunā Ūthmān ؓ told the Christians that RasūlAllāh ﷺ dislikes their attire.<sup>37</sup>
8. The Najrān Christians went away and came back wearing clothes of monks.
9. There was a discussion and a debate. RasūlAllāh ﷺ invited them to Islām.
10. In the course of the debate, RasūlAllāh ﷺ rejected their claim of being believers and termed them *kāfir*.
11. When the Christians asked whether RasūlAllāh ﷺ expected them to worship him, like they worship Sayyidunā Ūsā عليه السلام, RasūlAllāh ﷺ rejected it and refuted it saying that he would not ask anyone to worship anyone else other than Allāh tāālā. This clearly refutes Prof. Tahir's claim that RasūlAllāh ﷺ 'permitted them.'
12. When they did not accept Islām, RasūlAllāh ﷺ challenged them for an imprecation or *mubāhalah*.
13. Eighty verses of the Qur'ān [Sūrah Aāl Īmrān] were revealed refuting Christian beliefs.
14. The famous event in which RasūlAllāh ﷺ took his blessed daughter and grandsons for the imprecation occurred at this time.
15. The people of Najrān declined imprecation and made a pact with RasūlAllāh ﷺ.
16. The terms of the treaty included an annual tribute to Muslims; and in return Muslims would let them be upon their religion.
17. Two of their chiefs – Sayyid and Āāqib became Muslims thereafter.
18. Praying towards east in Madīnah is not facing opposite side of Qiblah,<sup>38</sup> because Makkah is to the south of Madīnah.



<sup>37</sup> In other narrations, Sayyidunā Ūthmān ؓ asked Sayyidunā Ālī ؓ for his opinion and he advised them to doff their priestly and lavish clothes.

<sup>38</sup> Except in countries lying to the east of Madīnah like Pakistan or India, where the opposite side of Makkah is the east.

RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not invite Christians to pray “according to their own tradition.” Rather, he repudiated their beliefs and commanded them to forsake polytheism. When they refused, he ﷺ challenged them for an imprecation. Some reasons for the Prophet ﷺ not stopping the Christians in their prayer are obvious:

- They were travellers and had just arrived.
- The Prophet ﷺ wished to educate them and invite them to Islām. It was because of his ﷺ immense wisdom that he ﷺ did not wish to antagonise them before they had heard his ﷺ message.
- The Prophet ﷺ invited them to Islām thereafter and advised them to abandon their heretical beliefs.

The Prophet ﷺ did not hesitate to tell them the plain truth about their beliefs or that they were infidels, as is evident from what happened afterward. It also shows that it was impermissible for disbelievers to pray in our mosque even in that age, because the companions tried to stop them. RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not stop them, out of discreetness and consideration for those who are unaware – until they were made aware.

There are other such examples in ḥadīth, where the Prophet ﷺ did not stop a deplorable action immediately, but explained the ruling afterward. For example, a bedouin began urinating in the masjid and the Prophet ﷺ did not stop him. This ḥadīth is found in many books including *Bukhārī, Muslim, Musnad Imām Aḥmed, Sunan Ibn Mājah, Sunan al-Kubrā* of Nasāyī, *Musnad Abū Yaālā, Sunan al-Kubrā* of Bayhaqī and others. The following report is from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:<sup>39</sup>

Anas ibn Mālik mentioned that a bedouin stood up inside the Masjid and urinated therein. People cried out [in shock] and RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave him.”

Imām Bukhārī listed this ḥadīth under the caption: “*On being gentle always.*” Imām Nawawī says<sup>40</sup> that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not stop him because the deed was already done and the bedouin had already dirtied the masjid. Secondly, interrupting him would cause the man discomfort as he would not have completely relieved himself. Thirdly, if people rushed to stop him, he would have risen midway and thus dirtied his clothes too; or if he darted across the masjid in panic, he would dirty a much larger area. Qādī Íyād says<sup>41</sup> that the lesson in this ḥadīth is that we should be considerate with ignorant people and compassionate in teaching them, without being harsh or being abusive with them. The bedouin’s action was because of ignorance; not out of spite or being intentionally disrespectful. In another narration about the incident of the bedouin urinating in the masjid, RasūlAllāh ﷺ called him afterward and said:

These mosques are not for urination or defecation. Rather, the masjid is to remember Allāh, and to pray and recite the Qur’ān.<sup>42</sup>

Can this incident be used as a basis to invite people to urinate in the mosque? Can this narration be embellished thus:

A bedouin asked: “Can I urinate in the masjid?” Holy Prophet ﷺ said: “Yes, you are allowed to urinate in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī.” And he urinated in the masjid facing towards East, opposite side of Kábah. And this was performed in al-Masjid an-Nabawī by the permission of Holy Prophet ﷺ.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 98:284. [Also, in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* #219, and #6025]

<sup>40</sup> *Al-Minhāj*, 3/193, Imām Nawawī.

<sup>41</sup> *Ikmāl al-Múlim*, 2/109, Qādī Íyād.

<sup>42</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* 98:284.

Compare this with Prof. Tahir's embellishment:

They asked: Can we worship according to our own religion? Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Yes, you are allowed to worship according to your own religion in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī. And they performed their worship according to their religion facing towards east, opposite side of Kábah. And this was performed in al-Masjid-un-Nabawī by the permission of Holy Prophet ﷺ.

For example, the delegations of Banū Ḥanīfah came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and the false prophet Musaylamah al-Kadh'dhāb was also with them.<sup>44</sup> Does it mean that RasūlAllāh ﷺ approved of the false prophet? Inviting non-Muslims into masjids and encouraging them to pray "according to their own religion" is patently against Islām. The Prophet ﷺ was sent to guide people toward the true religion; it is absurd to claim that he ﷺ would ask people to pray according to their own false or corrupt religions. Tolerance and acquiescence are two entirely different things. Let us now examine narrations concerning the Christian delegation from Najrān that visited RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah.

1. In *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, The Chapter of Battles and Wars, is a sub-topic titled: "The Account of the People of Najrān":<sup>45</sup>

Narrated to us Ábbās ibn Ḥusayn [who said] narrated to us Yaḥyā ibn Ādam from Isrāyīl from Abū Is'ḥāq from Ṣilah ibn Zufar from Ḥudhayfah, that he said:

Áqib and Sayyid, the [two] Chiefs<sup>46</sup> of Najrān, came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ with an intention to imprecate him. One of them told his companion, "Do not do it."<sup>47</sup> By Allāh! If he is a Prophet, and if we imprecate him, neither shall we prosper; nor will those who follow us, among those who come after us." And they [both] told him ﷺ:<sup>48</sup> "We shall give you [anything] you ask of us. Send a trustworthy man with us. And send not with us, except a trustworthy man."

RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "I shall verily, send with you a trustworthy man; a man of trust, indeed." The companions of RasūlAllāh ﷺ were eager in anticipation<sup>49</sup> when RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Stand Abū Úbaydah ibn al-Jarrāh." When he stood up, RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Here is the Trustee of this nation".

2. In the commentary of this ḥadīth, Ibn Ḥajar al-Ásḡalānī says:<sup>50</sup>

{**The Account of the People of Najrān**}<sup>51</sup>, a very big city at the distance of seven days march<sup>52</sup> from Makkah towards Yemen, [and a province that] includes seventy three hamlets, which can be covered in a

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<sup>43</sup> This is a hypothetical exchange only for illustration; nobody has said this.

<sup>44</sup> Though, according to narrations, he stayed back incognito and became an apostate on their return journey, when the delegation was returning from Madīnah.

<sup>45</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Kitāb al-Maghāzī, Bāb Qiṣṣati Ahli Najrān, 72/4380.

<sup>46</sup> *ṣāḥibā* – the two chieftains– as we shall see in the translation from *Fat'ḥ al-Bārī*, the word refers to both of them being prominent nobles and leaders in their community.

<sup>47</sup> That is, do not curse him.

<sup>48</sup> RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

<sup>49</sup> *istishrāf*: Áynī says, "every one of them expecting to be that emissary."

<sup>50</sup> *Fat'ḥ al-Bārī*, Imām Ibn Ḥajar al-Ásḡalānī, Ḥadīth #4380.

<sup>51</sup> Here and in all instances of such commentaries, the original text is in flower brackets and in boldface. Also, the text has clarification "with the fat-ḥah of nūn, the sukūn of jīm".

<sup>52</sup> *marḥalah*: according to classical sources, one *marḥalah* is equal to the distance travelled in one day; approximately 40 km. Najrān is at a distance of approximately 800 km according to current land routes.

single day by a swift rider. Thus it is said in the *Addenda*<sup>53</sup> of Yūnus ibn Bukayr<sup>54</sup> with his chain of transmission of *Al-Maghāzī*. Ibn Is'ḥāq mentions that a delegation of twenty people from Najrān came to Makkah; and then he mentions them<sup>55</sup> again among delegations that visited Madīnah. It appears that delegations from Najrān came [to RasūlAllāh ﷺ] at two different times. Ibn Saād said: The Prophet ﷺ wrote to them and a delegation of fourteen noblemen came to visit him ﷺ. Ibn Is'ḥāq also says that the delegation was comprised of fourteen men and listed their names.

**{Narrated to me Ábbās ibn Ḥusayn}** he is from Baghdād, and a trustworthy narrator. There are only two ḥadīth narrated by him in Bukhārī; he narrates individually in this narration and another in association<sup>56</sup> which was mentioned earlier in the chapter of Night Prayer.<sup>57</sup>

**{Narrated to us Yahyā ibn Ādam}** In a report by Ḥākīm in *Mustadrak*: from Aṣamm from Ḥasan ibn Ālī ibn Áffān from Yahyā ibn Ādam with the same chain, [but] from Ibn Masūūd instead of Ḥudhayfah; thus it is also cited by Aḥmed, Nasāyī and Ibn Majah from Isrāyīl via a different route; and Dār Quṭnī preferred this in his *Ílal*, though it is debatable.<sup>58</sup> Because Shūbah narrated the ḥadīth from Abū Is'ḥāq and said: 'from Ḥudhayfah' as also mentioned in this chapter. Thus, it is as if Bukhārī anticipated this and backed Shūbah's narration; though, both are sound routes.<sup>59</sup> Ibn Abī Shaybah has also narrated it [likewise] and Ismāyīl through the narration of Zakariyyah ibn Abī Zāyidah from Abū Is'ḥāq from Ṣilah from Ḥudhayfah.

**{Áāqib and Sayyid, the [two] Chiefs of Najrān came to}** The name of Sayyid was Ayham; it is also said that his name was Shuraḥbīl and he was in charge of their belongings<sup>60</sup> and gatherings. Áāqib's name was Ábdu'l Masīḥ and he was the chief of their council. Another person Abu'l Ḥārith ibn Álqamah was also with them, who was their ecclesiastic and their bishop.<sup>61</sup> Ibn Sáad says: The Prophet ﷺ invited them to Islām and recited to them the verses of the Qur'ān, but they refused [to believe.] So he ﷺ said: "If you reject what I say, then come, let us call upon Allāh táālā to damn liars". They declined to do *mubāhalah*.<sup>62</sup>

**{they both intended to curse him}** that is, *mubāhalah*. Ibn Is'ḥāq mentions with a *mursal*<sup>63</sup> chain that the first eighty verses of Sūrah Aāl Ímrān were revealed at this juncture. He refers to the verse:

So tell them: Come, let us call our sons and your sons; [and call] our women and your women.<sup>64</sup>

فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا  
وَنِسَاءَكُمْ

<sup>53</sup> In this ḥadīth, the phrase may simply mean additional comments of Yūnus ibn Bukayr; however, in the commentary of another ḥadīth (#3992) Ibn Ḥajar has said, "Yūnus ibn Bukayr narrated in *Ziyādāt al-Maghāzī*." indicating it as a compiled work. Allāh táālā knows best.

<sup>54</sup> Yūnus ibn Bukayr, passed away in 199 AH. See *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmāyī'r Rijāl*, #7171, Imām Yusuf al-Mizzī [d 742 AH].

<sup>55</sup> The people of Najrān.

<sup>56</sup> *maqrūn*: indicated by *ḥaddathanā*: narrated to **us**.

<sup>57</sup> *tahajjud*

<sup>58</sup> The *tarjīḥ*, or preference of Dār Quṭnī for the narration of Ibn Masūūd is moot.

<sup>59</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ routes.

<sup>60</sup> Lit. "was responsible for their baggage". Something like a sacristan and a sexton.

<sup>61</sup> *usqifahum wa ḥabrahum wa ṣāḥiba midrāsihim*

<sup>62</sup> *mubāhalah*: Disputing parties come together and imprecate each other invoking damnation of Allāh táālā upon the liar.

<sup>63</sup> With an interrupted chain

<sup>64</sup> Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:61.

**{One of them said to his companion}** Abū Nuáym mentioned in *Ṣaḥābah*<sup>65</sup> through his chain of transmission that it was Sayyid who said so. Others have said that it was Áāqib, because he was the chief adviser; and Yūnus ibn Bukayr with his chain of transmission, mentions in *Ziyādāt [al-Maghāzī]*, that the person who said this was Abū Maryam Shuraḥbīl.

**{By Allāh! If he is a Prophet, and if we curse him}** In another version by Kushmīhanī, *lāyīnanā* instead of *lāyinnā*.<sup>66</sup>

**{neither shall we prosper; nor will those who follow us among those who come after us}** The report by Ibn Masūūd contains an additional 'forever'.<sup>67</sup> In a *mursal* narration of Shaábī reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah the Prophet ﷺ said: "A harbinger<sup>68</sup> has come to me [informing me] that the People of Najrān will be destroyed if they carry out their [intention] to curse." So, the next day he ﷺ led Ḥasan and Ḥusayn by the hand and Faṭimah was walking behind him for the *mulāānah*.<sup>69</sup>

**{We shall give you [all that] you ask of us}** In the report of Yūnus ibn Bukayr, he ﷺ made a pact with them for [an annual tribute of] two thousand garments: one thousand in Rajab and another thousand in Ṣafar; and 40 dirhams with every garment,<sup>70</sup> and he<sup>71</sup> then described the agreement between them<sup>72</sup> at length. Ibn Saād mentions that Sayyid and Áāqib returned [to Madīnah] thereafter and became Muslims. In the narration of Ibn Masūūd: "they both came back to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and said: 'we shall not engage in imprecation; rather we shall give anything you demand from us.'"

The incident of the Delegation of Najrān yields a number of outcomes, among which are:

- a) A kāfir will not be considered as having entered Islām, even if he accepts the Prophethood of Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ, unless he submits and completely accepts the Law of Islām.<sup>73</sup>
- b) It is permitted to debate with the Christians and Jews; and obligatory if the situation demands it.
- c) It is permitted by the Shariāh to challenge opponents for an imprecation, a *mubāhalah*, if they are adamant upon their stand, in the face of manifest evidence against it. Thus, Ibn Ábbās, Awzāyī and other scholars have challenged their opponents for imprecations. Experience tells us, that the person in the wrong did not survive the following year after an imprecation. It has happened even in my case, when I debated with a person who was siding with heretics and he did not last two months after it.

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<sup>65</sup> *Márifatu's Ṣaḥābah*, Abū Nuáym al-Aṣbahānī [d.430 AH].

<sup>66</sup> *lāyīnanā*: if he curses us; *lāyinnā*: if we curse him.

<sup>67</sup> *abadan*: That is, an emphasis; "we shall never ever prosper."

<sup>68</sup> *bashīr*: an angel bearing glad tidings.

<sup>69</sup> *mulāānah*: invocation of curse and damnation of Allāh upon the liars.

<sup>70</sup> *ūqiyah*: its weight is equal to 40 dirhams as mentioned in *Tāj al-Árūs*. From other narrations, it appears as if this refers to the value of garments. See *Ṭabaqāt*, 1/357; also translated below. In *Dalāyil* of Bayhaqī, he mentions the value of garments being equal to *awāqiyá* – and 40 dirhams of silver along with every garment.

<sup>71</sup> Yūnus ibn Bukayr.

<sup>72</sup> RasūlAllāh ﷺ and the Christians of Najrān.

<sup>73</sup> *nubuwwah*: obviously, the prophethood of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. *aḥkām al-islām*: that is, to accept the Shariāh completely and consider it binding.

d) It is permitted to make peace with non-Muslims in lieu of revenues as seen fit by the Muslim ruler; and that it could be considered as a form of Jizyah upon them. Because both are kinds of annual taxation on non-Muslims to subdue them.

e) This ḥadīth also praises the qualities of Abū Ūbaydah ibn al-Jarrāḥ ؓ. Ibn Is'ḥāq mentions that the Prophet ﷺ sent Ālī to collect the charity and Jizyah from the people of Najrān; but that is a different incident, because it was Abū Ūbaydah who went with the delegation and returned with the tribute. And the Prophet ﷺ sent Ālī thereafter to collect the dues of Jizyah from the non-Muslim protectorate and obligatory charity from those who had become Muslims among the people of Najrān.

Allāh tāālā knows best.

### 3. In the commentary of the same ḥadīth, Badruddīn al-Āynī says:<sup>74</sup>

**A note on the narrators:** Ábbās is with a bā. Ibn al-Ĥusayn Abu'l Faḍl al-Baghdādī passed away around 240 AH and there are only two ḥadīth in Bukhārī: This one, in which he narrates solitarily; and another in the chapter of Night Prayer where he narrates it with others. Yaḥyā ibn Ādam ibn Sulaymān al-Qurashī al-Kūfī was a companion of Thawrī.<sup>75</sup> Ḥākim has cited him in *Mustadrak* through this chain from Ibn Masūūd instead of Ḥudhayfah; so also have Aḥmed, Nasāyī, Ibn Mājah through a different route via Isrāyīl.

Dār Quṭnī preferred this narration in his *Ílal*, but his preference for the other narration is questionable because, it was originally narrated by Shúbah from Abū Is'ḥāq from Şilah from Ḥudhayfah similar to the ḥadīth in this chapter. Yaḥyā was mentioned earlier in the chapter on the qualities of Abū Ūbaydah.

Mizzī says: the narration from Ḥudhayfah is more rigorous; and Isrāyīl is Ibn Yūnus ibn Abū Is'ḥāq and he narrates from his grandfather Abū Is'ḥāq Āmr ibn Abullah al-Sabīyī; and Şilah ibn Zufar al-Ābsī al-Kūfī and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān is al-Ābsī. And the ḥadīth cited by Bukhārī is also a lone-narrator report; others have also narrated thusly except Abū Dāwūd.

**{Āāqib came}** His name was Ábdu'l Masīḥ.

**{and Sayyid}** His name was Ayham.<sup>76</sup> It is also said that it was Shuraḥbīl. Ibn Saád mentions that RasūlAllāh ﷺ wrote to the people of Najrān,<sup>77</sup> and they sent a delegation of fourteen of their nobles, among whom were the following:

1. Áāqib or Ábdu'l Masīḥ, a man of the Kindah tribe
2. Abu'l Ḥārith ibn Álqamah, a man of the Rabīáh tribe
3. His brother Kurz
4. Sayyid
5. Aws [both Sayyid above and Aws are sons of Ḥārith]

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<sup>74</sup> *Ūmdatul Qārī*, ḥadīth #4380, Imām Badruddīn al-Āynī [d. 855 AH],

<sup>75</sup> Imām Sufyān al-Thawrī.

<sup>76</sup> The commentary mentions letters and diacritics to eliminate ambiguity which is omitted here.

<sup>77</sup> Inviting to Islām.

6. Zayd ibn Qays
7. Shaybah
8. Khuwaylid
9. Khālid
10. Ámr
11. Ábdullāh

Three among the fourteen were prominent: Áāqib was the chief of their council and their leader, and whose advice was sought and obeyed.<sup>78</sup> Abu'l Hārith was their bishop, their ecclesiastic and head of the seminary;<sup>79</sup> Sayyid was in charge of their belongings. They entered the mosque,<sup>80</sup> and were wearing *hībarah* robes<sup>81</sup> and silk mantles, and they began to pray in the Masjid facing east. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Leave them be". Thereafter, they came to the Prophet ﷺ, and he ﷺ turned away from them [by way of objection] and did not speak to them. Uthmān told them<sup>82</sup> that it was because of their attire.

So they went away that day and came back the next day wearing clothes of monks<sup>83</sup> and saluted him. RasūlAllāh ﷺ replied to their salutation<sup>84</sup> and invited them to Islām, but they did not accept it. There was an exchange of words and there was an argument,<sup>85</sup> and then RasūlAllāh ﷺ recited verses from the Qur'ān and told them, 'If you reject what I say, then come forth with your families [for imprecation,]' but they declined.

**{they both intended to curse him}** That is, to do *mubāhalah*; 'to invoke damnation.' The following verse was revealed on this occasion:

So tell them: Come, let us call our sons and your sons; and [we shall call] our women, [and you call] your women; and let us come ourselves and you - and then let us invoke the curse.<sup>86</sup>

فَقُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاءَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا  
وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنْفُسَنَا وَأَنْفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ

When there is a conflict between two peoples, they come together for an encounter and do an imprecation and say: "May Allāh's damnation be upon the oppressors," this is known as *mubāhalah*.

<sup>78</sup> Lit. 'they acted upon his advice.'

<sup>79</sup> *ṣāhību midrās*; *midrās* is the place where they teach their holy book.

<sup>80</sup> Since this occurred in the 9<sup>th</sup> / 10<sup>th</sup> year of Hijrah in Madīnah, it is obviously the Prophet's Mosque – Masjid an-Nabawī.

<sup>81</sup> *hībarah*: a kind of a Yemeni gaberdine. Thus it is in *Tāj al-Ārūs* [10/507 ḥ-b-r] which also says: A spotted mantle. *hībarah* is not the garment itself, but the embroidery that is attribute of the garment. Like it is said: A kermes cloth [*thawbun qirmiz*] – and kermes is the [red] dye.

<sup>82</sup> The delegation.

<sup>83</sup> *ruhbān*, pl. of *rāhib*: monk

<sup>84</sup> As mentioned in various other narrations on how to return the salutation of People of the Book; Allāh tāālā knows best.

<sup>85</sup> *lajāj*: an argument or a debate; in *Ṭabaqāt*, however, the word is *hijāj*; both mean the same.

<sup>86</sup> Sūrah Aāl Īmrān, 3:61.

**{one of them said to his companion}** Abū Nuáym said in his *Ṣahābah* that it was Sayyid; others said that it was Áāqib; and yet some others said that it was Shuraḥbīl.

**{if we curse him}** In the first person 'we', but in a version of Kushmahīnī: 'if *he* curses us'.<sup>87</sup>

**{after us}** In the narration of Ibn Masúūd: "nor will those who come after us will [prosper] ever".

**{they both said}** That is, Áāqib and Sayyid.

**{We shall give you what you ask}** And this was said after they departed from the presence of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and they did not accept Islām as mentioned presently. Sayyid and Áāqib said: "We shall give you anything you ask". In the narration of Ibn Saád: "The next day, Ábdu'l Masīḥ – Áāqib and two other grandees came [to RasūlAllāh ﷺ] and said: "It has emerged [from our council] that we shall not imprecate you. You can impose upon us [your terms] and we shall make peace with you".

So the terms were: Two thousand garments; one thousand<sup>88</sup> in Rajab and another thousand in Ṣafar – the price of which would be in dirhams;<sup>89</sup> thirty armours, thirty lances, thirty camels and thirty horses as a loan, if there was an invasion from Yemen. . In return, the people of Najrān and the surrounding settlements shall be given the protection of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ for their lives, their community, their lands, their property – and for all Najrānis whether local or expatriates – and for their businesses. Their bishops, monks or priests<sup>90</sup> shall not be disturbed. Abū Sufyān, Aqrāa ibn Ḥābis and Mughayrah ibn Shūbah were made witnesses and the Najrānis returned to their country. After some time, Sayyid and Áāqib returned to the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islām".

**{they were anticipating}**<sup>91</sup> from *istishrāf*, meaning 'to inform.' Its origin is when someone puts his hand on his brow to look for something; similar to a person shielding his eyes from the sun when searching for something. Every man among the companions was anticipating and hoping to be the emissary of the Prophet ﷺ.

If you say Ibn Isḥāq has [also] mentioned that he ﷺ sent Álī ؑ to the people of Najrān to collect their charity and Jizyah, I say: the incident of Álī is a separate one from the incident of Abū Úbaydah; because Abū Úbaydah went with them and returned with the tribute [the first time]; the Prophet ﷺ sent Álī thereafter [once again] to collect Jizyah [upon whom it was ordained] and [obligatory] charity from those who had become Muslims.

#### 4. In his *Ṭabaqāt*, Ibn Saád says:<sup>92</sup>

**The Najrān Delegation:** We come back to the ḥadīth of Álī ibn Muḥammad al-Qurashī in which it is said: RasūlAllāh ﷺ wrote to the people of Najrān and a delegation of fourteen Christian noblemen came to him ﷺ.

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<sup>87</sup> The text describes letters and diacritics to eliminate ambiguity. This is incorporated in the translation itself. Lit.: "with the fatḥah of áyn and tashdīd of nūn, the conjugation of first person [*lāyinnā*]" "[*lāyinanā*]" "with fatḥah of both the nūn which means: *lāána* – the past tense and the assimilated pronoun refers to RasūlAllāh and *nā* is *mafúūl*"

<sup>88</sup> In the printed version of Dār Kutub al-Ílmiyyah, there seem to be errors – for example, *ūqiyah* can be easily confused with *aw qīmah* though, in *Ṭabaqāt* it is the former; as well as corroboration from many other sources. Allāh táála knows best.

<sup>89</sup> *awāq*, is plural of *ūqiyah* which is worth 40 dirhams, as mentioned earlier.

<sup>90</sup> *wāqif*: a person who dedicates himself to the service of the church according to *Tāj al-Árūs* which cites this very instance in hadith for illustration of its meaning.

<sup>91</sup> *istishrāf*: to look eagerly in anticipation; in *Tāj al-Árūs*, it means *intaṣab*: to stand up.

<sup>92</sup> *Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, 1/307, Imām Muḥammad ibn Saád al-Zuhrī [d.230 AH]. Also known as *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*.

In that delegation were: Áāqib, whose name was Ábdu'l Masīh, a man of the Kindah tribe; Abu'l Hārith ibn Álqamah, from the Banu Rabīāh; and his brother Kurz; Sayyid and Aws, both sons of Hārith; Zayd ibn Qays; Shaybah; Khuwaylid; Khalid; Ámr; and Úbaydullāh. Three in this delegation were the most prominent and were also their chiefs. Áāqib was the chief of their council and their leader; a person whose advice was sought and acted upon. Abu'l Hārith was their bishop, their ecclesiastic and the head of their seminary; Sayyid was in charge of their belongings.<sup>93</sup> Kurz came first and he would recite:

The harness [of the she-camel] is ardently yanked towards thee;  
[Because] the unborn calf in her belly demurs  
Opposed to the religion of the Christians, her religion.

Kurz came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ prior to the rest of the delegation, which followed afterward. They entered the mosque wearing *hibarah*<sup>94</sup> robes and silk mantles and began praying in the mosque facing east. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Leave them". Thereafter, they came to the Prophet ﷺ, and he ﷺ turned away from them [by way of objection] and did not speak to them. Uthmān told them<sup>95</sup> that it was because of their attire.

They went away and came back the next day wearing clothes of monks and saluted him ﷺ. RasūlAllāh ﷺ replied to their salutation and invited them to Islām, but they did not accept it. There was an exchange of words and there was an argument,<sup>96</sup> and then RasūlAllāh ﷺ recited verses from the Qur'ān and told them, 'If you reject what I say, then come forth with your families to imprecate,' but they declined.

The next day, Ábdu'l Masīh – Áāqib and two other grandees came [to RasūlAllāh ﷺ] and said: "It has emerged [from our conference] that we shall not imprecate you. You can impose upon us whatever is your wish; we shall give [anything that you demand] and we shall make peace with you. So he made peace with them on these terms: Two thousand garments; a thousand in Rajab and another thousand in Šafar – the price of each garment being no less than forty dirhams. Thirty armours, thirty lances, thirty camels and thirty horses as a loan, if there was an invasion from Yemen. In return, the people of Najrān and the surrounding settlements shall be given the protection of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ for their lives, their community, their lands, their property – for all Najrānis whether local or expatriates – and for their businesses. Their bishops, monks and priests shall not be disturbed. He ﷺ then made Abū Sufyān, Aqrāa ibn Hābis and Mughayrah ibn Shúbah as witnesses and they returned to their country. After some time, Sayyid and Áāqib returned to the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islām and the Prophet ﷺ made them stay with Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārīy.

#### 4. In *Sīratu'n Nabawīyyah* of Ibn Hishām:<sup>97</sup>

**Áāqib, Sayyid and the Bishop:**<sup>98</sup> Ibn Is'hāq says: A delegation of Christians from Najrān came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. They were sixty riders and fourteen among them were noblemen; and three of the fourteen were their leaders. Áāqib was the leader of the community and whose opinion was the most respected, and also the leader of their council. Sayyid, whose name was Ayham, was in charge of their belongings. Abū Hārithah ibn Álqamah, a man from the family of Bakr ibn Wāyil, was their bishop, their scholar, their Imām and the head of their seminary.

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<sup>93</sup> *rahl*: luggage, baggage that is loaded on animals and carts on a journey. [*Tāj al-Árūs*]

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 81.

<sup>95</sup> The delegation.

<sup>96</sup> In this version the word is *hijāj*: an argument

<sup>97</sup> *Sīratu'n Nabawīyyah*, 2/215, Imām Ábdu'l Malik ibn Hishām al-Ĥimyarī [d.213 or 218 AH].

<sup>98</sup> *Usquf*: Bishop.

Abū Ḥārithah was a noble, a scholar of their Book and had attained knowledge of their religion. The Roman Christian emperors paid homage to him, heaped him with riches and served him; they built churches for him and extended immense respect and honour to him, because of his knowledge and service to their religion.

**The Islām of Kūz ibn Ālqamah:** When they were coming from Najrān, Abū Ḥārithah was seated on a mule<sup>99</sup> and headed towards RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and his brother, who was known as Kūz ibn Ālqamah was at his side.<sup>100</sup> [Ibn Hishām says:] it is also said that his name was Kurz.

Abū Ḥārithah's mule stumbled and Kūz said: "may the farthest one despair"<sup>101</sup> and he was referring to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Abū Ḥārithah said: "Rather, may **you** despair!" [Kūz] asked: "And why is that brother?" [Abū Ḥārithah] replied: "By Allāh! Indeed, he is the very prophet we have been waiting for." Kūz said: "What prevents you [from becoming a Muslim] when you know this?" He replied: "All that is done by these people: they have venerated us, showered us with riches, and given us honour; they would not have given this otherwise. If I accepted Islām, they would take away, all that you see. Kūz kept this secret of his brother, until he became a Muslim later. He used to narrate this [himself], as it has reached me.

**The Chiefs of Najrān and the Islām of the Chieftain's Son:** Ibn Hishām says:<sup>102</sup> It has reached me that the Chiefs of Najrān had in their possession, books that were handed down to them by successive generations. When a chieftain died, it passed on to the next, and a seal would be put upon them in addition to previous ones which remained unopened. The Chieftain in RasūlAllāh ﷺ time, was going somewhere, and he stumbled; his son said: "May the farther one despair!" and he was referring to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. His father told him: "Don't say that. Verily, he is a Prophet and his name is mentioned in the [sealed] archives. When this chief died, his son was anxious and he broke open the seals and opened the archive. He found the name of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and he became a Muslim and also went on Hajj.

It is he, who has said:

The harness [of the she-camel] is ardently yanked towards thee;  
[Because] the unborn calf in her belly demurs  
Opposed to the religion of the Christians, her religion.

*Wadīn* means harness; the harness of the she-camel. Hishām ibn Úrwah said that the people of Írāq have added the second line: *[Because] the unborn calf in her belly demurs.*

**Christians from Najrān pray facing east:** Ibn Is'ḥāq said: Narrated to me Muḥammad ibn Jāfar ibn Zubayr who said: When they came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah, they entered his masjid during the Āsr prayer and they were wearing silken robes and mantles,<sup>103</sup> in the fashion of the people of the clan of Ḥārith ibn Kaáb. One of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who saw them that day says: "We never ever saw a delegation like that." When the time of their prayer was imminent, they stood in the Masjid of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and started praying. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Leave them." And they prayed facing east.

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<sup>99</sup> In other narrations it is a camel.

<sup>100</sup> It is not known whether he was seated on his side on the same mule or riding by his side. Allāh táālā knows best.

<sup>101</sup> A form of wishing bad luck, which people do their enemies.

<sup>102</sup> In all instances hereafter, I have omitted this phrase it appears as it is redundant.

<sup>103</sup> In other narrations, these are silk mantles. *ḥībarah* robes are explained in footnote 81.

After this Ibn Hishām lists their names mentioned earlier, and their core beliefs. He continues the story of the Najrān delegation thus:

After a conversation with the priests<sup>104</sup> RasūlAllāh ﷺ told them: 'Become Muslims.' They said: 'We have already become Muslims.' RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'No, you have not believed yet; so, become Muslims [now.]' They said: 'Why not? Rather, we have been believers even before you [were].' RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: 'You both lie. That which prevents you from being [considered] Muslims is your claim that Allāh táālā has a son; and you worship at the cross and you eat swine.' The two priests asked: 'Then who is his<sup>105</sup> father, O Muḥammad ﷺ.' RasūlAllāh ﷺ remained silent and did not answer them.<sup>106</sup>

**The verses in the Qur'ān concerning them:** Allāh táālā sent down revelation concerning them, their question, and the rest of the issues which were disputed by them. The initial eighty or more verses of Sūrah Aāl Ímrān were revealed in this regard. Allāh táālā says:

Alif Lām Mīm. [Only] Allāh, and there is no  
God except Him; He is Ḥayy, He is Qayyūm.<sup>107</sup>

الم \* اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ

He begins the Sūrah by declaring His Transcendence from that which they<sup>108</sup> claim; and that He is Alone in everything: He is the only Creator and Absolute Command is His alone; there is no partner unto Him in anything. Thus, their heresy and disbelief was refuted.

{**Ḥayy, Qayyūm**} Ḥayy is He who does not die, the Eternal and the Everlasting; according to Christians, Sayyidunā Yīsā ﷺ died and was nailed to the cross.<sup>109</sup> Qayyūm means He who has remained as He has always been (and shall be) concerning His Power and concerning His Creation; and according to them, Yīsā ﷺ was removed from his station, and it was given to someone else.

Ibn Hishām explains verses of the Qur'ān that refute Christian belief and verses that mention Sayyidunā Yīsā ﷺ and his mother Sayyidah Mariyam; stories about them and their miracles. He then returns to the original discussion of the Najrān delegation and mentions the *mubāhalah*.

**Their declining the imprecation:** When RasūlAllāh ﷺ informed them of the revelation<sup>110</sup> from Allāh and His judgement of what they disputed.<sup>111</sup> And that he ﷺ was commanded to challenge them for an imprecation if they rejected his call.

RasūlAllāh ﷺ challenged them for *mubāhalah*, and they said: "O Abu'l Qāsim,<sup>112</sup> give us some time to think about it. We shall return and tell you about our decision about your challenge." They went away that day and asked Áāqib as they valued his advice. They asked: "O Ábdu'l Masīḥ, what is your opinion?" And he said: "O Christian community, you certainly know that Muḥammad ﷺ is a Messenger and a Prophet; and he has also given you accurate information of your own master. And you also know quite well, that whenever

<sup>104</sup> The dual verb conjugation refers to the two chiefs Áāqib and Sayyid as also mentioned previously.

<sup>105</sup> Of Sayyidunā Yīsā ﷺ عليه السلام.

<sup>106</sup> Because the Qur'ān refuted them; he ﷺ was probably expecting revelation. Allāh táālā knows best.

<sup>107</sup> Sūrah Aāl Ímrān, 3:1.

<sup>108</sup> The Christians; and they speak of trinity.

<sup>109</sup> Therefore, he is not a god.

<sup>110</sup> The first eighty verses of Aāl Ímrān as an answer to their question.

<sup>111</sup> Between the Christian priests and RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

<sup>112</sup> The *kunya* of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

a people cursed a Prophet – neither did their elders survive, nor did their young flourish. Thus it will be with you too, if you intend to carry on with the imprecation. If you wish to remain upon your religion and the belief that you now hold concerning your master, then take a man,<sup>113</sup> and go back to your land.”

They came back to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and said: “O Abu’l Qāsim, we have decided not to imprecate. We shall leave thee upon thy religion and we shall go back with ours. However, send with us, a man from thy companions whom thou wisheth, and who shall accept our tributes in lieu of the peace that we make with thee, for the dispute between us. We remain pleased with thee.”

#### 5. In *Rawḍ al-Unuf* of Suhaylī:<sup>114</sup>

**Christians pray facing east:** Ibn Is’ḥāq said: Narrated to me Muḥammad ibn Jāfar ibn Zubayr, who said: When they came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah, they entered his masjid during the Āsr prayer and they were wearing priestly robes made of *ḥibarah* and mantles<sup>115</sup> in the fashion of the people from the clan of Ḥārith ibn Kaáb. One of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who saw them that day says: ‘We never ever saw a delegation like that.’ The time of their prayer was imminent, so they stood in the Masjid of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and started praying. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Leave them.” And they prayed facing east.

#### 6. In *Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*:<sup>116</sup>

The Christian delegation from Najrān came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ; when they entered the Prophet’s Mosque after the afternoon prayer, the time for their own prayer was imminent. So they stood in the Masjid and began to pray. The companions<sup>117</sup> wanted to stop them, but RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave them.” So the Christians faced east and began to pray according to their own tradition.

#### 7. In the commentary of *Mawāhib*, by Āllāmah Zarqānī:<sup>118</sup>

**{when they entered the Prophet’s Mosque after the afternoon prayer, their prayer was imminent}** it was time for their prayer.

**{So they stood in the Masjid and began to pray}** this would not be considered as *ṣalāh*, because this kind of prayer is specific to our nation as mentioned in Bukhārī and Muslim: “I was given five (prayers) which none was given before me; and the whole earth was made clean and fit for prayer for me”<sup>119</sup> Khaṭṭābī said: Prior to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, people had to pray in designated places of worship – like monasteries.<sup>120</sup> But this was for residents, and when they travelled, they could pray in other places. Because, Sayyidunā Yūsā عليه السلام would travel and pray wherever he could, when it was time for prayer.

**{The companions wanted to stop them}** Because this was an exhibition of their false religion in the presence of Muṣṭafā ﷺ and in his masjid.

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<sup>113</sup> As a trustee.

<sup>114</sup> *Al-Rawḍ al-Unuf*, 5/9. Imām Ābd ar-Raḥmān al-Suhaylī [508-581 AH]

<sup>115</sup> In other narrations, these are silk mantles.

<sup>116</sup> *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, 1/479, Imām Afīmed ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭallānī [d.923 AH]

<sup>117</sup> Lit: People wished to stop them.

<sup>118</sup> *Sharḥ al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, 5/186. Imām Muḥammad ibn Ābd al-Bāqī al-Zarqānī [1055-1122 AH]

<sup>119</sup> That is, for his ﷺ followers.

<sup>120</sup> Lit: People had to pray in designated places, like one does trade in markets; places like hermitages and monasteries.

{but RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Leave them." } Leave them out of consideration<sup>121</sup> in the hope that they may accept Islām, and as a sign of amity and peace. He let them be<sup>122</sup> on their disbelief, and stopped people from rebuking them [at that moment]; but this does not mean that he condoned falsehood.<sup>123</sup>

{So they turned towards the east and began to pray} But turning to east in Madīnah, is not facing the Kābah, nor opposite to it as they have said concerning a ḥadīth in the *ṣaḥīḥayn*: "when any of you goes to the toilet, let him not face the qiblah nor show his back; neither in the east nor west"<sup>124</sup> This is unlike the case of Egypt because, praying to the east in Egypt is praying towards the Qiblah.<sup>125</sup>

Muṣṭafā ﷺ did not stop the visiting Christians because of prudence and considering the situation at hand. In the discussion that ensued, Muṣṭafā ﷺ told them that they were disbelievers, refuted their heretical beliefs and invited them to Islām. This incident is described in many more books, but always in the same manner and almost invariably, they link back to the narration of Ibn Is'ḥāq. I shall simply name some more works or mention only additional comments to avoid lengthy repetitions. Notice that none of these works describe the incident of the Najrān Delegation as described by Prof. Tahir.

#### 8. In *Dalāyilu'n Nubuwwah* of Imām Bayhaqī:<sup>126</sup>

When the Christian delegation to RasūlAllāh ﷺ from Najrān arrived, they entered the Prophet's mosque after the afternoon prayer and it was time for their own prayer. So they stood in the masjid and began to pray. The companions wanted to stop them, but RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Leave them." So they turned towards the east and began to pray in their own tradition.<sup>127</sup>

Interestingly – though, not unsurprisingly – in this very account by Bayhaqī, RasūlAllāh ﷺ says that he would never command anyone to worship other than Allāh, which is an explicit refutation of Prof. Tahir's slanderous charge.

When Christians and [their] monks had gathered near RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and he ﷺ was inviting them to Islām, Abū Rāfi' al-Qar'ī said: "O Muḥammad, do you wish that we worship you, just like the Christians worship 'Īsā ibn Maryam?" A man amongst the [visiting] Christians from Najrān, known as Rabbīs<sup>128</sup> asked: "Is that what you wish O Muḥammad? And is it this, towards what you invite [people]?" RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "I seek Allāh's refuge from worshipping anyone [or anything] other than Allāh tāālā or from commanding others to worship anyone [or anything] other than Him. Allāh tāālā has not sent me with that, nor has He commanded me to do so."<sup>129</sup>

Further in the same book, is the mention of a message sent by RasūlAllāh ﷺ to the people of Najrān:

To the Bishop of Najrān and the People of Najrān: If you accept Islām, then I praise Allāh tāālā for you [to be accepted] – The God of Ibrāhīm and Is'ḥāq and Yāqūb. Thereafter, I invite you to worship [only] Allāh

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<sup>121</sup> *ta'līfan*: to persuade them and invite them by not antagonising them at the outset.

<sup>122</sup> *fa-aqarrahum*: Temporarily, for that moment, for strategic reasons.

<sup>123</sup> *iqrārār āla'l bāṭil*: This does not mean that RasūlAllāh ﷺ accepted or condoned falsehood.

<sup>124</sup> That is, do not face or show your back to the Qiblah whether you are in the east or west.

<sup>125</sup> Makkah falls to the east of Egypt.

<sup>126</sup> *Dalāyil an-Nubuwwah*, 5/382, Abū Bakr Aḥmed al-Bayhaqī [384-453 AH].

<sup>127</sup> In other versions mentioned above, the narrations stop at: 'they prayed facing east'. In some others, including this one: 'they turned towards east, and prayed in their own tradition'.

<sup>128</sup> *Rabbīs* is the name of the person.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم معاذ الله أن أعبد غير الله أو أمر بعبادة غيره ما بذلك بعثني ولا أمرني

and forsake worship of [His] slaves;<sup>130</sup> I invite you to accept the Lordship of Allāh tāālā and forsake the sovereignty of [His] slaves. If you reject this, then Jizyah<sup>131</sup> shall be imposed upon you; and if you reject this, I proclaim war.

And Peace.<sup>132</sup>

The people of Najrān were invited to become Muslims, and the delegation that arrived was expected to become Muslims. This was not an interfaith gathering – where Christians were invited to preach their religion alongside that of Muslims, or some sort of a PR exercise to advertise, what Prof. Tahir says: “freedom of expression”. RasūlAllāh ﷺ told them: Either become Muslims, or pay Jizyah if you do not forsake your faith; if neither is accepted, then prepare for war.<sup>133</sup>

#### 9. In *Tārīkh al-Islām* of Dhahabī:

When the Christian delegation to RasūlAllāh ﷺ from Najrān arrived, they entered the Prophet’s Mosque after the afternoon prayer, the time for their own prayer was imminent. So they stood in the Masjid and began to pray. The companions<sup>134</sup> wanted to stop them, but RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave them.” So they turned towards east and began to pray in their own fashion.<sup>135</sup>

#### 10. In *Bidāyah wa’n Nihāyah* of Ibn Kathīr:

Ibn Is’hāq says that when they<sup>136</sup> arrived, they entered the Prophet’s Mosque in adornment and beautiful clothes. It was time for the afternoon prayer [of Muslims] and they stood to pray facing east. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave them”.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Literally, *al-ibād*, means slaves. But contextually, that is what it means – because other than Allāh tāālā every being is His creation and slave.

<sup>131</sup> Tax on Non-Muslims. Jizyah is a commonly misunderstood concept and misquoted by Islamophobes in their criticism of Islām. A detailed discussion is beyond the scope of just this footnote and this paper. However, it should be noted that non-Muslims living in a Muslim state are levied tax according to their financial condition and is a contribution to the state coffers in lieu of protection and other benefits of the state. In fact, Muslims would pay more than non-Muslims as *Zakāt* and *Úshr* which non-Muslims are totally exempt or partially in the latter case. Old and poor dhimmis are taken care of by the state and are exempt from Jizyah. Imām Abū Yusuf mentions a moving anecdote in his famous book *Kitāb Al-Kharāj*:

Narrated to me Úmar ibn Nāfiy from Abū Bakr who said: Úmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb ﷺ was standing at the door of someone when a beggar came asking for alms. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight.

[Úmar] slapped upon his shoulder from the back and asked: ‘Which among the People of Book are you?’

The man said: ‘Jewish.’

Úmar ﷺ said: ‘What compels you to do this?’

The man said: ‘I beg for Jizyah, and out of need and my old age.’

Úmar ﷺ took the old man by his hand and took him to his house and gave him something from his own house. He then sent the old man to the officer of the state treasury with a message that said: ‘Exempt this man and others like him. By Allāh! We have not been just with him. We have partaken from his [wealth in his] youth, and we have abandoned him to indignity in his old age. Allāh tāālā says: “*Verily, charity is for the poor [fuqarā’a] and destitute [masākīn].*” The fuqarā are Muslims; and this man is among the masākīn of the People of Book.’

And he waived Jizyah from him and people like him. Abū Bakr [the narrator says]: I witnessed this incident in the presence of Úmar himself and I have myself seen that old man.

<sup>132</sup> *wa’s salām*, is the closing salutation of the letter.

<sup>133</sup> Discussion of the strategic and political reasons behind such covenants, is beyond the scope of this paper; because Najrān could have been an outpost of the Christian Roman Empire and a threat to the Islamic state.

<sup>134</sup> *fa arāda’n nās*: lit. “People wanted to stop them”

<sup>135</sup> *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 1/695. Imām Dhahabī.

<sup>136</sup> The Christian delegation from Najrān.

<sup>137</sup> *Al-Bidāyah wa’n Nihāyah*, 7/271, Hafiz Ibn Kathīr; events in the Ninth Year after the Hijrah.

In the same narration, he mentions (citing Bayhaqi's *Dalāyil*) that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not speak to them and they left the Masjid perplexed; until Sayyidunā Ālī advised them to doff their ornaments and decorative clothes.

Until they came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and saluted him; he ﷺ did not return their greeting. They tried to speak to him for the rest of the day; but he ﷺ did not speak to them as they were wearing [gold] jewellery and gold rings.

So they went away looking for Úthmān ibn Áffān and Ábd ar-Raĥmān ibn Áwf as they both were known to the Najranites.<sup>138</sup> They found them sitting in the company of Muhajirs and Anṣār, and they said: "O Úthmān! O Ábd ar-Raĥmān! Your prophet wrote to us and we came to him, responding to his letter. But when we greeted him, he did not return our greeting. We tried to speak to him for the whole day, but he did not speak to us. What is your opinion? Do you think we should go back [to Najrān]?"

Both Úthmān and Ábd ar-Raĥmān asked Ālī, and he too was sitting in the gathering: "O Abū Ḥasan! What do you advise these people?" [Sayyidunā] Ālī told Úthmān and Ábd ar-Raĥmān – ﷺ: "I think they should doff their decorations, ornaments and signet rings; and they should wear their travelling clothes and go back to RasūlAllāh ﷺ."

They did as they were told and came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ again and saluted him; this time he returned their greeting. And he ﷺ said: "By He who has sent me with truth, when you came to me the first time, the devil was with you."<sup>139</sup>

It is obvious from the above narration, that they neither asked to stay in the Masjid, nor were they stationed in Masjid Nabawī. Neither did they ask, nor did RasūlAllāh ﷺ give them permission to pray (though he did not stop them); and when they came to him ﷺ, he did not return their greeting and turned away, as described by Nuwayrī.

#### 11. In *Nihāyatu'l Arab* of Nuwayrī:<sup>140</sup>

[Kūz] arrived to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ first, and then the [rest of the Najrān] delegation followed him. They entered the Masjid and they were wearing *ĥibarah* mantles and upper garments with silk brocade. And they stood in the Masjid and pray facing east. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Leave them." Thereafter, they came to the Prophet ﷺ, but he turned away from them and did not speak to them. Úthmān told them: "This is because of the fashion of your clothes." So they went away that day and came back the next morning wearing clothes of friars and saluted him; he ﷺ returned the greeting.

#### 12. Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazrī in his *Kāmil* does not mention the prayer of Christians, when describing the delegation of Najrān in the events of the tenth year.<sup>141</sup>

#### 13. Shaykh Ábd al-Ĥaqq al-Dihlawī, narrates the same event as mentioned in *Mawāhib* earlier, in his famous prophetic biography *Madāriju'n Nubuwwah* describing the events of the tenth year.

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<sup>138</sup> In *Dalāyil* it is said that both were known because they used to visit Najrān on business.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>140</sup> *Nihāyatu'l Arab*, 18/79. Shihābuddīn Aĥmed ibn Ábd al-Waĥhāb al-Nuwayrī [d.733 AH].

<sup>141</sup> *Al-Kāmil fi't Tārīkh*, 2/162. Abu'l Ḥasan Muĥammad Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī [d. 630 AH].

14. Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari narrates the event in his tafsīr identical to Ibn Hishām’s report:

When they came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah, they entered his masjid during the Āsr prayer and they were wearing silken robes and mantles, in the fashion of the people of the clan of Ḥārith ibn Kaáb. One of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ who saw them that day says: “We never ever saw a delegation like that.” The time of their prayer was imminent, so they stood up and started praying in the Masjid of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave them.” And they prayed facing east.<sup>142</sup>

15. In *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Imām Rāzī describes the event of the Najrān delegation narrating from Ibn Is’ḥāq thus:

They entered [the masjid] to meet RasūlAllāh ﷺ after the Āsr prayer - and they were wearing *ḥībarah* garments - fine and silken gaberdines - and mantles. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ said: “We have never seen such a delegation, of such adornment and grandeur.” The time for their prayer was imminent, so they stood praying in the Masjid of the Prophet ﷺ facing east. The Prophet ﷺ said: “Leave them.”

Then, they stayed there for days<sup>143</sup> debating RasūlAllāh ﷺ about Sayyidunā Yīsā ﷺ, claiming that he is the son of God and other ugly and incoherent ideas and RasūlAllāh ﷺ refuted them with proofs, but they would not see the truth. More than eighty verses of Aāl Ímrān from the beginning were revealed at this juncture.<sup>144</sup>

The tafsīr says they stayed for days there, it is clear that they had not camped in the Masjid Nabawī. We have seen in other narrations earlier, they came to salute him ﷺ after their prayer; when RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not respond to their greeting, they went away perplexed. And they came back the next day, which means they remained in Madīnah for a few days as evident from the pronoun.

16. Qurṭubī’s description of the event is the same as Imām Rāzī’s tafsīr mentioned above.<sup>145</sup>

17. In *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, the event of the Najrān delegation is described similar to that in Sirah Ibn Hishām (translated above).<sup>146</sup>

...and it was time for their prayer; they stood in the Masjid of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and began praying. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Leave them.” And they prayed facing east.

18. Imām Baghawī’s description of the event is similar to the narration in *Sīrah* of Ibn Hishām translated above.<sup>147</sup>

Notice that in all narrations, the grandeur of the delegation is mentioned. Why would such an opulent delegation stay put in Masjid an-Nabawī, when they could always camp in amenity elsewhere? These were Christians and people with worldly riches and luxury (indicated by their gold rings and silken robes); not Muslims to revere and give precedence to the abode of RasūlAllāh ﷺ over material comfort, like the group of companions who lived in sheer poverty on the stone bench in the portico of the Masjid. It is not plausible that they could have stayed in the Prophet’s ﷺ mosque.

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<sup>142</sup> *Tafsīr al-Ṭabari*, 3:1, Imām Abū Jāfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabari [d.310 AH].

<sup>143</sup> *thumma aqāmu bihā ayyāman*

<sup>144</sup> *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, 3:1, Imām Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī [d.606 AH].

<sup>145</sup> *Al-Jāmiy li Ahkāmī'l Qur’ān*, 3:1, Imām Abū ‘Abdullāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmed al-Qurṭubī [d.671 AH].

<sup>146</sup> *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, 3:61, Ḥāfiẓ Ímāduddīn Ismāyīl ibn Kathīr [d.774 AH].

<sup>147</sup> *Māālimu’t Tanzil*, 3:1, Imām Ḥusayn ibn Masūūd al-Baghawi [d.516 AH].

Ibn Taymiyyah<sup>148</sup> and his student Ibn Qayyim<sup>149</sup> have written books discussing the issues of relationship with Christians and other non-Muslims. The event of Najrān is mentioned in all three books listed below:

19. *Hadīyyatu'l Ḥayārā fī Ajwibatī'l Yahūda wa'n Naṣārā* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah.

20. *Al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīḥ liman Baddala Dīn al-Masīḥ* by Ibn Taymiyyah.

21. *Aḥkāṃ Ahl al-Dhimmah* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah.

Even though Ibn Qayyim disagrees with the *qiyās*<sup>150</sup> of our Imām, Abū Ḥanīfah ؓ, he makes an important observation:<sup>151</sup>

Concerning [Non-Muslims] entering mosques with the permission of Muslims, there are two opinions among jurists; and both [differing opinions] are also narrated from Imām Aḥmed.

**Those who permit:** RasūlAllāh ﷺ received delegation of disbelievers in his own mosque; and it is in this masjid that he ﷺ received the delegates of Najrān, Thaḳīf and others. Saʿyid ibn al-Musayyid said: "Abū Sufyān<sup>152</sup> would enter the Masjid an-Nabawī when he was still a polytheist." A polytheist, Ūmayr ibn Wahb entered the masjid with an intention to assassinate the Prophet ﷺ, and he ﷺ was seated therein; Allāh tāālā then bestowed Islām upon him.

**Those who forbid:** They say that non-muslims are in a worse state [of kufr] than the menstruating woman or the ritually unclean person; because non-muslims are unclean according to the Qur'ān and the latter ones are not unclean even according to the ḥadīth.<sup>153</sup>

Abū Mūsā al-Ashārīy entered Masjid an-Nabawī to meet Sayyidunā Ūmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and give him the statement of accounts; Ūmar said: "Call the person who wrote this down." Abū Mūsā said: "He will not enter the masjid." Ūmar asked: "Why so?" and he replied: "Because he is a Christian." This proves that it was a well-known ruling among the Companions. And because he<sup>154</sup> was ritually unclean in addition to the impurity of polytheism, thus it was doubly forbidden for him to enter.

As for disbelievers entering the Prophet's ﷺ mosque in his ﷺ time, it was because of necessity at that time. Because disbelievers would talk to the Prophet ﷺ and discuss treaties and covenants with him, and they would deliver him ﷺ letters [from their own leaders,] and then take his ﷺ reply back to them, listen to his ﷺ

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<sup>148</sup> Prof.Tahir is a self-confessed admirer of Ibn Taymiyyah. Imām Aḥmed Zarrūq said that his opinions on matters relating to reports and those issues on which he did not oppose the majority of scholars and his own heresies, can be cited. [See *Shawāhidu'l Ḥaqq* of Allāmah Yūsuf an-Nab'hānī.] Imām Ibn Ābidīn has cited Ibn Taymiyyah in *Tanbīh al-Wulāti wa'l Ḥukkām* and his celebrated magnum opus *Radd al-Muḥtār*. Alahazrat has written in his *Al-Mustanad al-Mutamad* that we do not do takfir of Ibn Taymiyyah.

<sup>149</sup> In spite of my strong feelings against Ibn Qayyim after reading his *Nūniyah* and its refutation by Imām Subki, I now prefer to be silent concerning him. Many of our ūlamā, who were far more knowledgeable and pious than we are, have cited his books like *Kitāb al-Rūḥ*, *Zād al-Māad*, *Jilā al-Afhām* etc. Still, I find a dislike for him in my heart – *wAllāhu'l mustāān*.

<sup>150</sup> Analogical derivation.

<sup>151</sup> Ibn Qayyim says that Imām Abū Ḥanīfah allowed Christians to enter mosques based on the event of the delegation of Najrāni Christians, and calls this as *qiyās fāsīd*, or invalid analogy. We shall not quibble about the fiqh issue here or attempt to verify Ibn Qayyim's citation of Ḥanafī opinion. Ḥanafī ruling from texts will be mentioned in the conclusion, InShāAllāh.

<sup>152</sup> Abū Sufyān ؓ became a Muslim in the eighth year, just prior to the Triumph of Makkah.

<sup>153</sup> In the footnote of the Arabic published edition: "he indicates to the ḥadīth of Abū Hurayrah ؓ wherein he reports that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Nothing makes a believer unclean". [*Bukhārī* and *Muslim*]

<sup>154</sup> The Christian book-keeper mentioned earlier.

invitation to Islām and so forth. It was not practical for the Prophet ﷺ to go out of the masjid every time, to meet every disbeliever who wanted to see him or speak to him. It was borne out of necessity at that time and the potential for good in their entering the masjid was far greater than the offensiveness of their entering it; compared to the *junub*<sup>155</sup> and menstruating woman, as it was possible for them to cleanse themselves and then enter the masjid.<sup>156</sup>

In our times, there is no need or benefit<sup>157</sup> for Muslims to allow [disbelievers] to enter mosques or let them sit there. However, if there is a pressing need<sup>158</sup> or a benefit, [disbelievers] can enter the mosque even without permission. Allāh táālā knows best.<sup>159</sup>

In addition to the citations above, there are many sources that simply mention the delegation without further details. Allowing Christians in a masjid due to compulsion or in times of duress is at the discretion of Muslims; this is not the same as announcing that the masjid is open forever for Christians to pray in them. It is far more abominable to allege that it is the practice of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

Verily, mosques are for Allāh táālā; then do not worship<sup>160</sup> anyone therein beside Allāh<sup>161</sup>

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

Ibn Jarīr at-Ṭabarī says in the tafsīr of the above verse:

{**Verily, mosques are for Allāh táālā; then do not worship**} O people! {anyone therein beside Allāh} do not ascribe partners to Him; rather, keep the masjids only to proclaim *tawhīd*, that Allāh táālā is One.

It is true that there are various interpretations of this verse: that masjid literally means ‘place of prostration,’ and refers to the seven parts that touch the ground in prostration; or that it refers to Masjid al-Ḥarām in Makkah; or that anywhere on earth because the whole earth was made clean for RasūlAllāh ﷺ to pray. But nobody disagreed that the masjid – as in a mosque – was a place to worship only Allāh táālā and many tafsirs say that it is generic and refers to any masjid.

Allāh táālā knows best.



<sup>155</sup> *Junub*: is a person who becomes ritually impure after having sexual intercourse, until he/she has taken a bath or the ritual ablution (*ghusl*). The state of such impurity is *janābah*.

<sup>156</sup> Because the *junub* and menstruating were not allowed in the masjid during the Prophet’s ﷺ time, though disbelievers were allowed. This was because the former could cleanse themselves, but the latter could not, in their present state of kufr.

<sup>157</sup> *maṣlaḥah*

<sup>158</sup> It is permissible for disbelievers to enter a masjid for a valid reason or a pressing need; but certainly, they will not be allowed to perform their worship in our mosques.

<sup>159</sup> *Aḥkām Ahl al-Dhimmah*, 1/407, Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah [d. 751 AH].

<sup>160</sup> It is mentioned elsewhere and in many tafsirs, that *du‘ā* is used as a synonym for worship in many verses of the Qur’ān.

<sup>161</sup> Sūrah Al-Jinn, 72:18.

## 4. THE ABYSSINIAN DELEGATION

The following is the summary of narrations about the Abyssinian delegation(s) as found in books of ḥadīth, biographies and histories:

1. In ḥadīth, histories and biographies, we find mention of two delegations that came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ from Abyssinia.
2. The first<sup>162</sup> Abyssinian delegation visited RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Makkah prior to migration.
3. Christians in this delegation became Muslims after RasūlAllāh ﷺ invited them to Islām. Upon this Abū Jahl became angry and abused them, and they went away avoiding an altercation with him.
4. The second delegation visited RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah.
5. 'Verily, they have been kind to my companions' [*innahum kānū li aṣ'ḥābinā mukrimīn*] is mentioned in the context of the modesty and the humility of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and his noble character of acknowledging favours.
6. In most books of biographies and histories, it is said that Sayyidunā Jāfar ؑ returned from Abyssinia in the seventh year along with a delegation of Najāshī, on the very day the news of the Victory of Khaybar reached Madīnah.<sup>163</sup>
7. Almost all narrations label it as 'the delegation of Najāshī.' Some narrations<sup>164</sup> that say that they were Christians, and such narrations add that the delegation accepted Islām.
8. In *Fat'h al-Bārī*, Ibn Ḥajar mentions in the commentary of a different ḥadīth, that the delegation of Najāshī visited Madīnah in the seventh year.
9. This delegation of Najāshī was led by his nephew, and they were Muslims who paid respect to RasūlAllāh ﷺ on behalf of their (Muslim) king Aṣ'ḥamah.
10. Since Prof. Tahir mentions Masjid e Nabawī and the Prophet ﷺ personally taking care of the delegation, it is obvious that this is the second delegation. And since it was a Muslim delegation, Prof. Tahir cannot use this as proof for his actions.

The first delegation from Abyssinia visited RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Makkah, prior to Hijrah as described by Ibn Hishām:

Ibn Is'ḥāq said: And then twenty or so Christian men came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ when he was in Makkah, after news reached them in Abyssinia of the advent<sup>165</sup> of the Prophet ﷺ. They met him ﷺ in the Masjid and sat with him, spoke to him and asked him questions. Some people of Quraysh were also in a meeting near the Kābah. When the Abyssinians concluded asking questions, RasūlAllāh ﷺ invited them to [Islam and to worship] Allāh tāālā [alone]<sup>166</sup> and recited the Qur'ān.

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<sup>162</sup> There are differing versions concerning this delegation. Some have opined that it was the first Najrān delegation and not an Abyssinian delegation.

<sup>163</sup> In a famous ḥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said: "I cannot say which of the two has made me the happiest: the arrival of Jāfar or the victory of Khaybar."

<sup>164</sup> That I have examined so far and listed further in a separate chapter. If there is a narration that includes the details claimed by Prof. Tahir, Minhajis are welcome to give us a reference.

<sup>165</sup> The people of the book had been awaiting the arrival of the Final Prophet ﷺ.

<sup>166</sup> Lit. "invited them towards Allāh tāālā."

When they heard the Qur'ān, tears welled up in their eyes, and then they accepted [the message of] Allāh táālā, and declared faith in him ﷺ and attested to his ﷺ being truthful as they recognised him ﷺ as it was described in their scriptures about him ﷺ.

When they stood up to leave, Abū Jahl ibn Hishām and some men from Quraysh chided them and said: "May Allāh táālā disgrace your caravan! You were sent by people of your own religion, to bring news of the man; and you did not as much as sit with him for a while, that you abandoned your religion and attest to the truthfulness of what he says. We have never seen a more stupid company!" Or they said something like that.

The company of visiting Abyssinians told him: "Peace be upon you. We shall not be rude or derisive with you. We shall remain on what we have chosen, and for you, is your own choice; we do not deprive<sup>167</sup> ourselves of any good [by doing so]." It has also been said that the company of Christians was from Najrān, and Allāh táālā knows best.<sup>168</sup>

Concerning the other delegation, Imām Bayhaqī and others have narrated the following ḥadīth under the heading: '*Repaying Favours and Kindness*':

Narrated by Abū Qatādah: The delegation of Najāshī came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ and he began attending to their needs himself. His companions said: "We can take care of them O Messenger of Allāhﷺ." [So] he ﷺ said: "They have been kind and honoured my companions; and I would like to repay the favour".<sup>169</sup>

Qāḍī Íyād mentions this ḥadīth from the same source under the heading: "*On Being Faithful to Friends*"<sup>170</sup> and Mullā Álí al-Qārī explains it thus:

**{A delegation arrived}**

**{delegation of Najāshī}** a company was sent by him to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ; details about Najāshī and his biography have been mentioned earlier.

**{the Prophet ﷺ stood to fulfill their needs}** he served them himself, out of humility in the presence of his ﷺ Lord and as a lesson to his ﷺ followers.

**{his ﷺ companions said: "we are sufficient for you"}** to serve them

**{so he ﷺ said: "they have been kind and honoured our companions}** when they migrated to Abyssinia and stayed with them.<sup>171</sup>

The same is mentioned in Khaffājī's *Nasīmu'r Riyād* without describing any other details of the delegation.<sup>172</sup> So also in Qārī's commentary on *Shamāyil*.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> *āla*: to deprive [Tāj al-Árūs]

<sup>168</sup> *Sīrat Ibn Hishām*, 1/42 and *Rawḍ al-Unuf*, 3/372.

<sup>169</sup> *Shuāb al-Ímān*, 11/381, #8704, Imām Abū Bakr Aḥmed al-Bayhaqī.

<sup>170</sup> *ḥusn al-áhd*: Lit. loyal to covenants, which means being faithful to friends, being mindful of friendship and previous associations and remembering, acknowledging kindness and favours done by others.

<sup>171</sup> *Sharḥ al-Shifā*, 1/285, Mawlānā Álí al-Qārī [d.1015 AH]

<sup>172</sup> *Nasīmu'r Riyād*, 2/89, Shihābuddīn Aḥmed al-Khaffājī al-Ḥanafī [d.1069 AH]

<sup>173</sup> *Jamú'l Wasāyil fī Sharḥ al-Shamāyil*, Álí al-Qārī. "On the Humility of RasūlAllāh ﷺ"

Ibn Kathīr, however indicates that the delegation accompanied Sayyidunā Jāfar when he returned from Abyssinia and reached Madīnah, the day of victory in Khaybar; in the seventh year after Hijrah:

Therefore, it is narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said: "By Allāh! I know not what among the two makes me happier: the victory at Khaybar or the arrival of Jāfar ibn Abū Jālib." They came from Najāshī ﷺ with gifts and presents sent to RasūlAllāh ﷺ accompanied by the migrants of the Yemeni ship, that is, the companions of Abū Mūsā al-Ashārī and his people – the Ashārīs ﷺ. Jāfar arrived with gifts sent by Najāshī ﷺ and along with Najāshī's nephew [known as] Dhū Mikhbar or Dhū Mikhmar, sent to serve RasūlAllāh ﷺ, on behalf of his uncle ﷺ.<sup>174</sup>

The above description is followed by narrations of Abū Qatādah,<sup>175</sup> and a similar narration by Abū Umāmah al-Bāhilī, both transmitted by Bayhaqī. In an unrelated ḥadīth,<sup>176</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-Āsqalānī mentions that the Abyssinian delegation arrived in the seventh year in the company of Jāfar:

...and in a narration through another route, this occurred after the arrival of the Abyssinian delegation; and their arrival was in the seventh year [after Hijrah]...<sup>177</sup>

Some scholars of tafsīr specifically state that the delegation came with Jāfar. Wāhidī in his book on historical background of revelation says concerning the verses in Sūrah al-Māyidah that describe Christians:

And certainly, you will find them closest in endearment of Muslims, those who say:<sup>178</sup>  
"We are Helpers (of God's religion)"<sup>179</sup>

وَلَتَجِدَنَّ أَقْرَبَهُمْ مَوَدَّةً لِلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا الَّذِينَ  
قَالُوا إِنَّا نَصْرِي

The background for these verses is of some debate: some have said that these verses were revealed when Najāshī heard the verses of Qur'ān from Jāfar ﷺ in Abyssinia. Others said that Najāshī sent for Christian monks and priests who heard the Qur'ān from Sayyidunā Jāfar ﷺ and their eyes welled up with tears. Another opinion is:

Some others have said that Jāfar ibn Abī Jālib arrived from Abyssinia with his companions; and along with them were seventy men sent by Najāshī as a delegation to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. They were wearing clothes made of wool; sixty two of them were Abyssinians and eight were Levantines. Among them were Baḥīrā the Hermit, Abrahah, Idrīs, Ashraf, Tammām, Quthaym, Durayd and Ayman. RasūlAllāh ﷺ recited Sūrah Yā Sīn in its entirety and they wept when they heard the Qur'ān.

They accepted Islām and said: "How closely this resembles that [revelation which was] given to [Sayyidunā] Yīsā ﷺ!" The verses were revealed by Allāh tāālā referring to these people.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> *Al-Bidāyah wa'n Nihāyah*, 2/431, Ḥāfiẓ Ímāduddīn Yaḥyā ibn Kathir [d.774 AH]; "On the Praiseworthiness of An-Najāshī"

<sup>175</sup> Mentioned above from *Dalāyil*.

<sup>176</sup> The ḥadīth in Bukhārī is about women looking at unrelated men; Ibn Ḥajar discusses the difference of opinion on this issue. Those who permit it cite that Sayyidah Āyishah was allowed to see the Abyssinians; those who oppose it say that she was a young girl at that time. In the course of this discussion, it is mentioned that the *ḥabashī* delegation came in the seventh year – to compare the dates of Sayyidah Āyishah's age.

<sup>177</sup> *Fat'h al-Bārī*, Kitābu'n Nikāh, #5236, Ibn Ḥajar al-Āsqalānī.

<sup>178</sup> *naṣārā* is idiomatically translated as Christians, though the word means: 'helpers', as said in the verse: "The Disciples said: We are the **helpers** of God's religion." [Aāl Ímrān 3:52, and Al-Şaff 61:14].

<sup>179</sup> Sūrah Al-Māyidah, 5:82.

<sup>180</sup> *Asbābu'n Nuzūl*, verses 5:82-86, Imām Ālī ibn Afḥmed al-Wāhidī [d.468 AH]

He further says:

.. Najāshī sent thirty of his finest men to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. RasūlAllāh ﷺ recited the Sūrah Yā Sīn, and they wept. These verses were revealed [describing] them.<sup>181</sup>

It is clear that the delegation sent by Najāshī came with Sayyidunā Jāfar and they were already Muslims or became Muslims thereafter. RasūlAllāh ﷺ honoured them by saying: “I will serve them myself”.

Qurṭubī sketches the chronology citing Abū Dāwūd, thus:

- Some Muslims migrated to Abyssinia to escape the persecution of polytheists (as described by Ibn Is’hāq).
- Then, RasūlAllāh ﷺ migrated to Madīnah.
- And then, there was the war at Badr where the ringleaders of the Makkan polytheists were killed.
- The Quraysh sent two emissaries to Najāshī, hoping for Muslims to be harmed and thereby avenge their losses at Badr.
- When RasūlAllāh ﷺ heard of this, he sent his emissary with a letter to Najāshī.
- Najāshī sent for Jāfar, who recited Sūrah Mariyam in front of Christian monks and priests who heard it and tears welled up in their eyes. The verses 5:82-83 were revealed on this occasion.

Qurṭubī says that a delegation was sent to RasūlAllāh ﷺ in the company of Jāfar – who became Muslims as mentioned earlier in Wāhīdī’s narration.<sup>182</sup> Here too, the Abyssinian delegation is said to have accompanied Sayyidunā Jāfar. Ibn Kathīr, however, is not convinced that the verses were revealed when Jāfar was with Najāshī in Abyssinia:

Ālī ibn Abū Ṭalḥah said, [narrating] from Ibn Ābbās: “This verse was revealed referring to Najāshī and his companions, when Jāfar recited the Qur’ān to them in Abyssinia – and they wept until their beards were soaked.” This opinion is debatable,<sup>183</sup> because this verse was revealed in Madīnah and the incident of Jāfar and Najāshī occurred prior to the Hijrah.

...

Aṭṭā’ ibn Abi Rabāḥ said: They were from Abyssinia, and accepted Islām when [early] Muslims migrated to Abyssinia. Qatādah says: They were a people following the religion as taught by Sayyidunā Yūsuf ibn Mariyam; when they saw Muslims and heard the Qur’ān from them, they became Muslims without any hesitation. Ibn Jarīr<sup>184</sup> favoured the view that the verse is revealed for anyone with such attributes;<sup>185</sup> whether they were from Abyssinia or elsewhere.<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> *Al-Jāmiy li Ahkāmī’l Qur’ān*, 5:82, Qurṭubī.

<sup>183</sup> *fīhi naẓar*

<sup>184</sup> Ṭabarī, Imām and author of the earliest tafsīr.

<sup>185</sup> Righteous and religious Christians who readily accept Islām and the Qur’ān when presented to them.

<sup>186</sup> *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, 5:82.

Imām Baghawī says:

This verse does not refer to all Christians, because of their enmity<sup>187</sup> of Muslims similar to that of Jews; and that they kill Muslims and imprison them, maraud and ruin their lands, demolish their mosques and burn the Qur’ān. Nay, there is neither friendship with them, nor are they honourable. Rather the verse describes those people who became Muslims, like Najāshī and his companions.<sup>188</sup>

After the arrival of Jāfar, Najāshī sent his own son Az’hā ibn Aṣ’hamah ibn Abjar along with sixty men from Abyssinia. Najāshī wrote to RasūlAllāh ﷺ: “O Messenger of Allāh! I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allāh, the truthful, the veritable, and I have sworn allegiance to you and sworn fealty to your cousin;<sup>189</sup> I submit to the Lord of all creation. I have sent my son Az’hā to you; and if you wish that I should present myself to you, I shall do so. Peace upon thee O RasūlAllāh.” They sailed in a ship following Jāfar and his companions, but their ship drowned midway.

Seventy of them came with Jāfar and his companions to RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and they were wearing clothes made of wool.<sup>190</sup> Sixty-two of them were from Abyssinia, eight were from the Levant. RasūlAllāh ﷺ recited the Sūrah Yā Sīn in its entirety; they wept when they listened to the Qur’ān and became Muslims. And they said: “How closely this resembles that which was revealed to Sayyidunā Yūsā عليه السلام.” Allāh tāālā revealed this verse: “And certainly, you will find them closest in endearment of Muslims, those who say:<sup>191</sup> “We are Helpers (of God).”

That is, the delegation of Najāshī that arrived with Jāfar; they were seventy in number and dwellers of monasteries.<sup>192</sup>

Thus it is in many other tafsīrs. So the Christians who came in a delegation sent by Najāshī were either Muslims or became Muslims after meeting RasūlAllāh ﷺ.



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<sup>187</sup> Imām Baghawī lived during the Crusades and hence his statement about Christians. Indeed, those who invade our countries and cause ruin in the name of freedom and western values, in our times are just like them. But Prof. Tahir and his acolytes consider it an honour to stand in their halls and are proud of being feted by those who have ruined Muslim lands in recent years.

<sup>188</sup> Tafsīr al-Baghawī, 5:82.

<sup>189</sup> Jāfar ibn Abū Ṭālib.

<sup>190</sup> Clothes made of wool in those days were a mark of renunciation of the world and of poverty; people who willingly wore such clothes was out of humility and abstention, unlike in our times, where clothes made of spun wool are expensive. Allāh tāālā knows best.

<sup>191</sup> *naṣārā* is idiomatically translated as Christians, though the word means: ‘helpers’, as said in the verse: “The Disciples said: We are the **helpers** of God.” [Aāl Ímrān 3:52, and Al-Ṣaff 61:14].

<sup>192</sup> *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, 5:82, Imām Baghawī.

## 5. THE VICTORY OF MAKKAH

The following is the summary of narrations about the Victory of Makkah, as found in books of ḥadīth, biographies and histories:

1. The two sons of Abū Lahab – Útbah and Muáttib – who became Muslims and were given amnesty, were not the abusive ones; it was Útaybah, who had scorned the Prophet ﷺ like his father<sup>193</sup> and was likewise damned.
2. Útbah and Muáttib fled Makkah on Victory-Day;<sup>194</sup> RasūlAllāh ﷺ sent Sayyidunā Ábbās,<sup>195</sup> to bring them and he found them on the plains of Árafah. They both came back and became Muslims. RasūlAllāh ﷺ was pleased with them and they both participated in the the battle of Ḥunayn and were among those who staunchly stood their ground that day. They also participated in the battle of Ṭāyif.
3. While a general amnesty was granted, there were four men and two women<sup>196</sup> who were ordered to be executed even if they were found clinging to the curtains of the Kábah.
4. Ibn Ḥajar mentions that scholars have differing opinions about the Victory of Makkah: was victory achieved by force or was it peaceful? Regardless, scholars are agreed that it was largely without bloodshed, but for a few deaths.
5. In a ḥadīth found in *Bukhārī, Muslim, Musnad Imām Aḥmed, Sunan Dārimī, Muwaṭṭāʾ of Imām Mālik, Musnad al-Bazzār, Istidhkār*, and many others<sup>197</sup> concerning Ibn Khaṭal, that a man came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and told him that Ibn Khaṭal was hiding himself in the curtains of the Kábah; RasūlAllāh ﷺ ordered him to kill him.<sup>198</sup>
6. The bearer of the standard<sup>199</sup> said “Today is the day of massacre.” taunting Abū Sufyān, who was captured by scouts before the Muslim army entered Makkah and the Victory of Makkah.

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<sup>193</sup> Among Abū Lahab’s children, two sons Útbah, Muáttib, and three daughters Durrah, Ázzah and Khālidah became Muslims. Útaybah remained a kāfir like his father and was devoured by a lion on his way to the Levant, near Al-Zarqā’a, as a result of RasūlAllāh’s ﷺ imprecation. [*At-Ṭabaqāt* of Ibn Saád; *Fat’ḥ al-Bārī* and *Al-Iṣbah* of Ibn Ḥajar al-Ásqalānī]

<sup>194</sup> *Usdu’l Ghābah*, Ibn al-Athīr. Entries #3552 and #5011.

<sup>195</sup> Sayyidunā Ábbās ﷺ was their uncle too.

<sup>196</sup> According to Ḍiyā al-Maqdisī in *Al-Mukhtārah*; however, according to Wāqidī’s narration they were ten: six men and four women. Ibn Ḥajar listed six men and three women, and said: “these are the names I have collected from various reports” [*Fat’ḥ al-Bārī, Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, under ḥadīth #4280].

<sup>197</sup> I have counted this ḥadīth listed in about fifty books.

<sup>198</sup> RasūlAllāh ﷺ forgave Abū Sufyān and many like him who plotted to kill him; Waḥshī who killed his beloved uncle Ḥamzah, and Hind who chewed Ḥamzah’s raw liver to fulfil her oath. Yet, if these six or ten did not get amnesty from such a Paragon of Mercy, surely, their crimes must have been most heinous. In spite of this exclusion, Ibn Abi Sarḥ, one of the most wanted ones, came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ for forgiveness and eventually he forgave him. So also, some others among those marked ten, like Íkrimah, the son of Abū Jahl and Habbār ibn al-Aswad, who troubled and tortured Muslims; he was the one who caused the fall of Zaynab, RasūlAllāh’s ﷺ daughter, from a camel and she never recovered from that fall and passed away thereafter. Both Íkrimah and Habbār became Muslims and were forgiven. One should not be fooled by the accusations made by orientalist and non-Muslims to sully the character of the Prophet ﷺ. Some people try to appease them, and are apologetic about historical facts, like Prof.Tahir does here. We say that, RasūlAllāh ﷺ was indeed a Paragon of Mercy and if he excluded a few, then most surely those ten must have been the vilest of men. Shooting down a rabid mad-dog running loose is an act of mercy.

<sup>199</sup> It is commonly accepted that it was Saád ibn Úbādah who said this; while it is also mentioned that it was Úmar who said this.

7. When Abū Sufyān heard this, he complained to RasūlAllāh ﷺ and he replied: “Rather, today is a day of mercy.” The standard was handed to Qays, Saád ibn Úbādah’s son.<sup>200</sup>
8. As a backup strategy, RasūlAllāh ﷺ had instructed Sayyidunā Khālid ibn Walīd ؓ to descend from the hill,<sup>201</sup> and there was a skirmish and a few people were killed. When RasūlAllāh ﷺ asked Khālid: ‘Why were they killed, when I had ordered that there should not be any bloodshed.’ Khālid replied: ‘I tried my best, but I was forced to defend my party.’ It is said that fourteen infidels were killed in this confusion.<sup>202</sup>
9. When RasūlAllāh ﷺ stood in front of the door of Kábah, and asked the Meccans, “O people of Makkah! What do you expect me to do with you today?”the Meccans replied: “You are a kind and generous brother, the son of a kind, honourable brother.” And the Prophet ﷺ told them: “Go! You are free and forgiven.”<sup>203</sup>
10. Abū Sufyān had become a Muslim, when the Prophet ﷺ bestowed upon him the honour that anyone who took refuge in Abū Sufyān’s house was given amnesty.

All of the above is from *Fat’h al-Bārī* concerning the Victory of Makkah,<sup>204</sup> and I have omitted translations for obvious the reason.




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<sup>200</sup> Ibn Hajar mentions according to various narrations, there are three opinions about who took the standard: Sayyidunā Ālī, Qays ibn Saád and Zubayr ibn al-Áwwām. He reconciles these three opinions thus: “RasūlAllāh ﷺ sent Ālī to take the standard from Saád; and when Ālī went to take it, he feared that Saád would be aggrieved and therefore gave it to his son, Qays; but Saád feared that his son would do something that would displease RasūlAllāh ﷺ and so he asked him to take it from him; and thus it was handed to Zubayr ibn al-Áwwām.” In other narrations which he mentions, RasūlAllāh ﷺ sent for Saád and the standard was taken from him.

<sup>201</sup> Entering Makkah from the other side.

<sup>202</sup> See *Fat’h al-Bārī*,

<sup>203</sup> Prof.Tahir’s version mixes up chronology and people. This is only to demonstrate that he is unreliable in his citations; he takes a general sketch and fills the gaps with his imagination.

<sup>204</sup> Starting from the commentary on ĥadīth #4274.

## 6. SOME MORE CITATIONS

Prof. Tahir mentions the following:

- **idhā qatala'l muslimu an-naṣraniyyah qutila bihi.**
- **diyatu'l yahudiy wa'n naṣraniy wa'l majūsiy mithlu diyatu ḥurri'l muslim.**
- **inna yahuda wa'l áwf ummatun máa'l mu'minīn**
- **lā ikraha fi'd dīn**

Let us examine the context of the above statements which incidentally includes a verse of the Qur'ān, a ḥadīth, statement of a Ṣaḥābī and a statement of a Ṭābiyī and Mujtahid Imām.

In *Kitāb al-Ḥujjah*, as Prof. Tahir has mentioned in the clip:

...it has reached us from [Sayyidunā] Áli ibn Abū Ṭālib ؑ that he would say: "if a Muslim kills a Christian, he shall be put to death [as punishment]"<sup>205</sup>

But it is not the full truth; as we see further:<sup>206</sup>

A Muslim man was brought to Áli ibn Abi Ṭālib ؑ who had killed a man from the *Ahl al-Dhimmah* [community that is protected]. He said: "Evidence is clear against him and he<sup>207</sup> shall be executed." The brother of the killed person intervened and said: "I have forgiven him." Sayyidunā Áli said: "Perhaps, they might have threatened you?" He replied: "No. But killing him will not make my brother come back; just compensate me and I will be satisfied." Sayyidunā Áli said: "You know well about our responsibility to those in our protection.<sup>208</sup> Their blood is like ours and their blood-money is like blood-money for our kinsfolk." Abū Ḥanīfah told us, narrating from Ḥammād from Ibrāhīm<sup>209</sup> that he said: "The blood-money of those [non-Muslims] who have a covenant<sup>210</sup> is [the same] as that of a free<sup>211</sup> Muslim."

In both cases, there is a qualifier that the Non-Muslim mentioned is one with a covenant with Muslims, or in the protection of Muslims – which Prof. Tahir has omitted. Given below is another quote from the same *Kitāb al-Ḥujjah*:<sup>212</sup>

Abū Ḥanīfah ؑ said: "The blood-money of a Jew, a Christian and a Magian is similar to the blood-money [due] for a free Muslim; and a Muslim who kills them is punishable by death in retaliation."

This is perhaps the only thing quoted by Prof. Tahir that cannot be contested. Even though there are other aspects to this statement, inasmuch as the quote is concerned, it is accurate.

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<sup>205</sup> *Kitāb Al-Ḥujjah ála Ahl al-Madīnah*, 4/347, Imām Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Shaybānī [d. 189 AH].

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.* p.355.

<sup>207</sup> The Muslim killer.

<sup>208</sup> *man kānat lahu dhimmatunā*

<sup>209</sup> Ibrāhīm an-Nakha'yī, famous Ṭābiyī,

<sup>210</sup> *al-mu'āhad* : that is, Non-Muslim under protection in Islamic Rule.

<sup>211</sup> as opposed to a slave.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.* p.322.

This issue has been a matter of considerable debate among jurists. Nevertheless, giving rights to non-Muslims in Islamic rule and to be fair with them is not the same as considering them as believers as Prof. Tahir would want us to believe. He quotes another report to emphasise this:

**inna yahuda wa'l áwf ummatun máa'l mu'minīn**

The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation.

There is an error in the wording and so also in the translation; but these are trifling ones among other problems that beset the professor's citation. The Charter of Madīnah as narrated by Ibn Is'hāq is a lengthy passage, from which the following statement is extracted:

**inna yahuda banī áwfin ummatun máa'l mu'minīn**

verily, the Jews of Banu Áwf are a nation alongside Believers

Even an ordinary student of Arabic would cringe at the professor's translation; moreover, this is only first half of the statement. The full sentence is:

**wa inna yahuda banī áwfin ummatun máa'l mu'minīn; li'l yahūdi dīnuhum wa li'l muslimīna dīnuhum.**<sup>213</sup>

And verily, the Jews of Banu Áwf are a nation alongside Believers; for Jews, their own religion, and for Muslims their religion.

The statement does not say that Jews and Muslims are the same nation as extrapolated by Prof. Tahir. It is also necessary to know the background of these statements. When RasūlAllāh ﷺ arrived in Madīnah after migrating from Makkah, he found that the tribes of Madīnah were at loggerheads with each other and the notorious feud of Aws and Khazraj. RasūlAllāh ﷺ united them and abolished differences based on tribal and familial affiliations and put an end to internecine rivalry. Many among the Helpers had alliances with Jewish tribes; RasūlAllāh ﷺ included the Jews in this charter at that time, but on the condition that they would not conspire or take up arms against Muslims. As it turned out, the Jews reneged on their agreement and fought with Muslims. They were defeated and then exiled by RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Thus, their claim to be included in the citizenry of Madīnah<sup>214</sup> was voided. Incidentally in the very Covenant of Madīnah that had proviso for Jews, that Prof. Tahir mentions is a statement that contradicts his other statement concerning blood-money:

A believer will not be killed [in retaliation] for the killing of a disbeliever; nor will a believer aid a disbeliever against a believer; and the protection of Allāh táālā for them is one, and that includes the lowest or the weakest among them. [Muslims] are only comrades and allies of one another, and exclusive of other people.<sup>215</sup> And those Jews who adhere [to our Charter] shall be given aid and dealt with compassion and courtesy – neither shall they be oppressed, nor will their enemies be supported [against them]...<sup>216</sup>

... Verily, the Jews of Banu Áwf are a nation alongside Believers; for Jews, their own religion, and for Muslims their own.

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<sup>213</sup> *Al-Bidāyah wa'n Nihāyah*, 4/554, Ibn Kathīr.

<sup>214</sup> Yathrib was the name of Madīnah prior to the arrival of the Prophet ﷺ and mentioned thus in the Charter. It is not permissible to call it Yathrib after the arrival of the Prophet as he insisted on its better name: Ṭaybah. In a lengthy ḥadīth, known as *Ḥadīth of Jassāsah*, he ﷺ prodded on the pulpit and said it three times for emphasis: "This is Ṭaybah. This is Ṭaybah. This is Ṭaybah." Alahazrat wrote in a fatwā [*Fatāwā ar-Ridāwiyyah* 21/116] ruling that it is ḥarām to say Yathrib instead of Madīnah. Among the ḥadīth he listed are: "...they call it Yathrib, but this is Madīnah." [*Bukhārī* and *Muslim*] "Verily, Allāh táālā has named Madīnah as Ṭābah" [*Aḥmed*, *Muslim* and *Nasāyī* narrating from Jabir ibn Samurah] Mullā Áli al-Qārī says in *Mirqāt*: Imām Nawawī رحمه الله said, Yīsā ibn Dīnār said: "Whosoever calls Madīnah as Yathrib has committed a sin; and as for the word Yathrib in the Qur'ān, this is by way of citing the hypocrites, whose hearts were afflicted with malady." Thus it is explained also in *Rawḍ al-Unuf* [4/291.] Shaykh Ábd al-Ḥaqq in *Ashīātu'l Lamāāt* says quoting Imām Bukhārī in his *Tārīkh*, that if one says 'Yathrib,' he should say 'Madīnah' ten times to expiate for that mistake.

<sup>215</sup> *dūn an-nās*

<sup>216</sup> *Sīrah Ibn Hishām*, 2/144.

Suhaylī says explaining the above:

Abū Úbayd said in *Kitāb al-Amwāl*: This covenant of RasūlAllāh ﷺ with the Jews was prior to the legislation of Jizyah and because Muslims were weak at that time. Jews used to receive a share from the spoils of war too, if they fought alongside Muslims, as stipulated in that agreement: "Jews shall get a share [from the spoils along with Muslims] from War".<sup>217</sup>

Ibn Hishām describes the enmity of the Jews at length and explains their covert alliances with the hypocrites, lists the names of their leaders and explains that most of Sūrah al-Baqarah was revealed either referring to the Jews and hypocrites; or in reply to their questions. He writes:

Ibn Is'ḥāq said: And the Jewish Rabbis became immensely hostile to RasūlAllāh ﷺ at this,<sup>218</sup> borne out of hatred and jealousy. Because Allāh táālā chose to send a Prophet among Arabs instead of their own community. Some people of Aws and Khazraj, upon whom traces of ignorance from the pagan times still lingered, joined with them. These were the hypocrites, who secretly cherished the religion of their forefathers; a religion of polytheism and rejection of Prophethood. But Islām subdued them and the community as a whole accepted Islām; at this point, the hypocrites publicly accepted Islām to escape the sword, but disbelieved in private. They secretly desired the domination of Jews, because they too belied the Prophet ﷺ and opposed Islam.<sup>219</sup>

Anyway, they eventually rebelled and broke the covenant and even sneered when RasūlAllāh ﷺ invited them to Islām:

After Allāh táālā humiliated the Quraysh at Badr, and RasūlAllāh ﷺ returned to Madīnah, he gathered the Jews in the marketplace of Banū Qaynuqāá and said: "O the community of Jews! Accept Islām before you suffer the fate of the Quraysh." The Jews said: "O Muḥammad ﷺ! Do not be deluded after having fought with a party of Quraysh; they were a people without experience or expertise, and they were trained in the art of warfare. By Allāh! If you ever fought us, you will know that we are *the people*, [to be reckoned with] and that you have never met a people like us."<sup>220</sup>

In the same book, elsewhere:

Ibn Is'ḥāq said: Áāšim ibn Ámr ibn Qatādah said: Banū Qaynuqāá were the first among the Jews who broke the covenant that was made between them and RasūlAllāh ﷺ. And they fought with him ﷺ between the battle of Badr and the battle of Uḥud.<sup>221</sup>

Concerning the verse,

There is no compulsion in religion; the right path is made manifest from the path of evil<sup>222</sup>

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ

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<sup>217</sup> *Rawḍ al-Unuf*, 2/291, Suhaylī.

<sup>218</sup> The arrival of RasūlAllāh ﷺ in Madīnah.

<sup>219</sup> *Sirat ibn Hishām* 2/155.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, 3/9. Perhaps, Prof. Tahir has confused this with the Najrān delegation when he says: "between Badr and Uḥud in the second year."

<sup>222</sup> Sūrah Baqarah, s2:v256.

It is said that the verse has been abrogated by verses from Sūrah al-Barā'ah. Among the various and lengthy explanations of this verse, Imām Qurṭubī's tafsīr, *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkāmī'l Qur'ān* is most suited for citation in our paper. He writes:<sup>223</sup>

**The First Issue:**<sup>224</sup>

*Dīn*, in this verse means, religious belief and the community (of believers) because of the next clause: *the right path is made manifest from the evil [path]*. The other meaning of *ikrāh* or duress, that is mentioned in rulings concerning duress, business, gifts etc is not intended here. That kind of duress is discussed under the verse: *except one in duress*.<sup>225</sup>

Abū Ábdur Raḥmān recited it as *rashad* and thus it also narrated from Ḥasan and Shāabī as it is said: *rashada-yarshudu-rushdan* and *rashida-yarshadu-rashadan*; that is, if one reaches the place he desires to go. *Ghawā* is the opposite of *rashad*, as said by Naḥḥās.<sup>226</sup> Ibn Áṭṭiyah narrates from Abū Ábd ar-Raḥmān al-Sullamī that he recited *rashād* with an alif; Ḥasan is also reported to have recited it as *rushud*. *Ghayy* is the root of *ghawā-yaghwī*. If one has lost his way, and gone astray in his belief or opinion. However, *ghayy* is not used to describe everyone who is lost.<sup>227</sup>

**The Second Issue:** Scholars have differed and there are six opinions concerning this verse:

1. It is said that this is an abrogated verse. Because the Prophet ﷺ forced the Arabs to accept Islām and fought wars with them [for religion]; and he was not pleased with anything less than Islām. This is the opinion of Sulaymān ibn Mūsā and he said that, this has been abrogated by the verse: **"O Prophet ! Fight against the infidels and hypocrites."**<sup>228</sup> He reports this from Ibn Masūūd and many scholars of tafsīr.
2. That the verse is not abrogated; this was revealed specifically for the People of the Book; and they shall not be forced to accept Islām if they pay *jizyah*. Those who shall be forced would be idol-worshippers, and nothing short of Islām would be accepted from them. It is these kind of disbelievers that the verse: **"O Prophet ! Fight against the infidels and hypocrites."**<sup>229</sup> was revealed. This is the opinion of Shāabī, Qatādah, Ḥasan and Ḍaḥḥāk.

The evidence for this opinion is the narration of Zayd ibn Aslam from his father who said: I have heard Úmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb tell a Christian old woman: "Become Muslim and [you will] be safe, old lady! Verily, Allāh táālā has sent Muḥammad ﷺ with the truth." She replied: "I am an old maid and I shall soon die." Sayyidunā Úmar said: "O Allāh! Be a witness. **There is no compulsion in religion.**"<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> *Al-Jāmi' li Ahkāmī'l Qur'ān*,

<sup>224</sup> There are two issues concerning this verse; the first is about the textual aspect – readings, lexical notes etc. And the second is about the meaning of the verse, history, context and background of the verse.

<sup>225</sup> Sūrah An-Naḥl, s16:v106.

<sup>226</sup> In his *Iyrābu'l Qur'ān*.

<sup>227</sup> That is, *ḍalāl* cannot be absolutely described as *ghayy*. I had omitted this passage, not relevant to the discussion at hand; but included it as it was only a small paragraph.

<sup>228</sup> Sūrah Al-Tawbah, s9:v73.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Sūrah Baqarah, s2:v256.

3. Narrated by Abū Dāwūd from Ibn ʿAbbās who said: This verse was revealed for the Helpers.<sup>231</sup> When children of a woman did not survive, she would make a vow that if her next child survives, she would give that child to Jewry and make him a Jew. When the Banū Naḍīr<sup>232</sup> were expelled from Madīnah, many among them were children of Helpers. And they said: "We shall not abandon our children."<sup>233</sup> The verse was revealed on this occasion. Abū Dāwūd said: **Miqlāt** is a woman whose children do not survive. In another narration, they said: "We did so because, we considered their religion to be superior to ours; and when Allāh tāālā has sent Islām to us, we wish to force our children to accept Islām. The verse **"there is no compulsion in religion"** was revealed. Thus, whosoever among them wished to remain with the Jews can do so; and those who wished to accept Islām could do so too.

This is the opinion of Saʿyīd ibn Jubayr, Shāabī and Mujāhid who added: "The reason for their being among Banū Naḍīr was foster relationships." Naḥḥās said: "Ibn ʿAbbās' saying about this verse is the most reliable because of the sound transmission routes; and that such a stand cannot be taken merely based on one's opinion.

4. Suddī said: This verse was revealed for a man among the Helpers known as Abū Ḥuṣayn who had two sons. Oil merchants had come to Madīnah from the Levant, and when they were about to return, the two sons met with them, and became Christians upon their proselytising. They followed the merchants to the Levant and their father came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ complaining of their apostacy. He wished that RasūlAllāh ﷺ would send someone to bring them back, and the verse: "there is no compulsion in religion" was revealed. However, the command to fight against the People of the Book had not yet come, and RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "May Allāh keep them further away; they are the first to have become apostates." Abū Ḥuṣayn was discontented that RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not send someone to bring back his sons, and the verse: **"Nay! By your Lord, they have never become believers until they accept your judgement in all their disputes."**<sup>234</sup> And this verse was abrogated thereafter by the abrogating verse in Sūrah Barā'ah. [This is incorrect, because] the correct reason for the revelation of the verse: **"Nay! By your Lord, they have not believed.."** is according to the ḥadīth of Zubayr and his neighbour among the Helpers, in the issue of the water source. We shall discuss this later, in Sūrah Nisā'a, Allāh willing.
5. It is said that it means: Do not call those who have become Muslims under the [threat of the] sword, that he has become a Muslim under duress, or one who is forced to become a Muslim.
6. This refers to those children living with the People of the Book, and were not to be forced to become Muslims when they became adults. However, if they were Magians or idol-worshippers, they shall be forced to become Muslims. Benefit is not taken from them because they are idol-worshippers. Do you not see that the slaughter of such polytheists is not eaten, nor is it permissible to marry their women? And that they eat carrion and other ritually impure things. If their owner/employer uses them to do dirty work, and gives the excuse that he uses them for benefit, it is permissible for him to force them. Thus it reported by Ibn al-Qāsim narrating from Mālik.

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<sup>231</sup> *Anṣār*, the original inhabitants of Madīnah, who aided RasūlAllāh ﷺ and the migrant Muslims from Makkah.

<sup>232</sup> A Jewish tribe resident in Madīnah which was expelled after Muslims suffered because of their treachery.

<sup>233</sup> As explained in other narrations; they said: 'We do not want to abandon our children to let them go to hell. We want to forcibly convert them to Islām.'

<sup>234</sup> Sūrah An-Nisā'a, s4:v65.

Ibn Kathir in his tafsīr sums this up succinctly:<sup>235</sup>

That is, do not force anyone to enter Islām. The meaning is obvious and clear; and a very important evidence [in shariāh] and manifest proof [in the matter]. There is no need to force anyone to enter Islām. Rather, whosoever Allāh tāālā guides towards Islām and opens up their hearts and illuminates their sight will enter it. And they, whose hearts are blinded by Allāh tāālā, and whose ears and sight are sealed by Him – for them, forcible conversion is of no use. It is said that the verse was revealed for a specific group of people among Helpers, but its scope is generic.

We should not force people to accept Islām; but that does not mean we should not invite others towards Islām or abandon proving the veracity of our belief. Nor does it mean that we should happily participate in their religious ceremonies or attempt to abolish the fundamental difference we have with all other faiths – namely faith itself.

Finally, Prof. Tahir claims that prayer is not a worship item. In this ‘prayer’ item, he invited people to call to their own gods to grant world peace. This is like changing the name of beer and calling it something like barley extract to make it permissible. “Beer is not wine.” Or saying that “it is just the flesh of a dead animal; this is not carrion.” Not that such things are new to Prof. Tahir, as in the past he has said that dancing is permissible by ḥadīth and so forth; but this renaming and redefining of terms has gone a little too far. Prof. Tahir says:

This was peace for humanity conference and very important item in this conference was, the event was, collective peace prayer. The interfaith collective peace prayer. All people belonging to all faiths and religions, they were invited and they were asked to pray for world peace according to their own religious tradition. And ask your Go...and ask God in your supplication so that He may provide the whole mankind and the whole world with peace and security, as your own religious tradition allows.

So it was allowed to everyone and finally the Muslims did the same and then after that there was zikr of *lā ilāha illAllāh* in the end and all people standing there, including all people of all faith, then finally we ended up on *lā ilāha illAllāh* and *Allāh, Allāh* and Qasida Burda.

This was a collective peace prayer. The question arises that the people belonging to other faith, they came there and they supplicated and there...it was not worship item, it was just praying item for peace. So they supplicated or they prayed for peace for mankind but in their own traditional way according to their own religion. And they raised the name of their own God as they used to say.

So ‘supplication,’ ‘praying for peace’ is not a worship item according to Prof. Tahir. Whereas, in Islām, prayer is synonymous with worship.

In a sound ḥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

“**Prayer, is worship**” and then he recited the verse:<sup>236</sup> “And your Lord said: Supplicate to me..”<sup>237</sup>

And in another ḥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

Prayer is the essence of worship.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>235</sup> *Tafsīr Ibn Kathir*, s2:v256, Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathir.

<sup>236</sup> Sūrah Al-Ghāfir s40:v60.

<sup>237</sup> *Al-Ḥisn al-Ḥaṣīn*, Abi'l Khayr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jazarī [d. 833 AH] Citing *Muṣannaḥ Ibn Abī Shaybah*, the four sunan – *Abū Dāwūd*, *Tirmidhī*, *Nasāyī* and *Ibn Mājah*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, *Al-Mustadrak* and *Musnad Imām Aḥmed*.

In the tafsīr of the verse:

And your Lord has said: Call upon me, I shall accept your prayers. And those who haughtily turn away from worshipping me shall enter Hell in utter humiliation.<sup>239</sup>

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ  
يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ  
دَاخِرِينَ

Imām Qurṭubī says:

This proves that prayer is worship itself as said by most exegetes. That is, proclaim that I am One and worship only Me; I shall accept your worship and forgive you.<sup>240</sup>

Imām Baydāwī says:

{**Call upon me**} worship Me alone; {**I shall accept your prayers**} I shall reward you for it.<sup>241</sup>

Ĥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr says after discussing the transmission routes and the grade of the ḥadīth, mentions a narration from Imām Ahmed:

RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "He who does not beseech Allāh ázza wa jall, Allāh táālā shall be angry upon him."<sup>242</sup>

Imām Nasafī says:

{**And Your Lord has said: Call upon me**} worship Me alone; {**I shall accept your prayers**} I shall reward you for it. There are many instances in the Qur'ān where prayer substituted for worship; and here too as it is indicated by {**Those who haughtily turn away from worshipping Me**}. RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Prayer is worship" and recited this verse.<sup>243</sup>

Another verse explicitly repudiates prayers of disbelievers:

Only calling upon him, is right and truthful. And they who are called upon beside Allāh táālā [by polytheists and disbelievers] do not accept their prayers. Their example is like a thirsty person stretching his palms towards water [in a well,]<sup>244</sup> wishing that it reaches his mouth; which shall not reach thus. The prayers of infidels are lost, astray.<sup>245</sup>

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا  
يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاسِطٍ كَفَّيْهِ إِلَى  
الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِبَالِغِهِ وَمَا دُعَاءُ  
الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ

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<sup>238</sup> *Al-Jamiy al-Mukhtasar*, #3382, Imām Tirmidhī.

<sup>239</sup> Sūrah Al-Ghāfir s40:v60.

<sup>240</sup> *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*.

<sup>241</sup> *Anwāru't Tanzīl wa Asrāru't Ta'wīl*, or *Tafsīr al-Baydāwī*, Imām Ábdullāh ibn Úmar al-Baydāwī [d.691 AH]

<sup>242</sup> *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*.

<sup>243</sup> *Madāriku't Tanzīl wa Ḥaqāyiqu't Ta'wīl*, or *Tafsīr Nasafī*, Imām Ábdullāh ibn Aḥmed an-Nasafī [d.710 AH]

<sup>244</sup> Thus it is explained by Sayyidunā Áli ؑ, as reported in *Tafsīr Ṭabarī*. Mujāhid said that it is similar to a man sticking out his tongue and making a sign with his hand to the water to come to his mouth; obviously it will never reach his mouth.

<sup>245</sup> Sūrah Ar-Raád s13:v14.

Imām Ṭabarī says that ‘the supplication of truth’ means, the declaration of the unity of Allāh táālā and bearing witness that there is no God but Allāh. And concerning the latter part of the verse, he says:

The prayer of those who disbelieve in Allāh by calling upon idols and false gods is lost, futile. It is said, that such prayer is not righteous, nor guided. Because it is ascribing partners to Allāh táālā.<sup>246</sup>

Imām Rāzī says:

That is, their prayers are wasted and their prayers are of no benefit. Because if they prayed to Allāh táālā, He will not accept them;<sup>247</sup> and if they prayed to their idols, they are unable to [hear or] accept them.<sup>248</sup>

Imām Qurṭubī says:

That is, the prayers or worship [ibādah] of idol worshippers is astray, because it is ascribing partners to Allāh táālā. It is said that such prayers escape them and are lost; they do not find [any benefit in] them at all.<sup>249</sup>

We seek Allāh’s refuge as the Prophet ﷺ taught us:

O Allāh! I seek Thy refuge from knowledge that does not benefit; and from a heart that does not fear Thee; from a desirous self that remains insatiable and from such prayers that are not accepted.<sup>250</sup>

Āmīn .

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ ، وَمِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ  
وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ ، وَمِنْ دَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا



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<sup>246</sup> *Tafsīr Ṭabarī*.

<sup>247</sup> Because they are not the faithful and only the prayers of believers are accepted.

<sup>248</sup> *Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb* or *Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, Imām Rāzī.

<sup>249</sup> *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*.

<sup>250</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, #4906.

## 7. CONCLUSION

We can safely say that Prof. Tahir does not qualify to be a student of ḥadīth and we are inclined to think that his claims of ḥadīth scholarship are immensely exaggerated, if not totally bogus. Concerning disbelievers entering the Masjid, Ḥanafī texts mention that it is allowed for them to enter our mosques, but this does not permit them to perform their worships and ceremonies in our Masjids. In *Durr al-Mukhtār*:

It is permissible for a dhimmi to enter any mosque;<sup>251</sup> and Malik considered it dislikeable to enter any mosque; whereas, Muḥammad, Shāfiyī and Aḥmed considered their entering [only] Masjid al-Ḥarām as dislikeable.

Imām Ibn Ābidīn in its commentary says:

It is said in *Hidāyah*: "For our [Ḥanafis] position, we cite the report that RasūlAllāh ﷺ allowed the delegation of Thaqīf inside his masjid, and they were disbelievers. Because the filth is in their belief, and this does not dirty the masjid per se. The verse [that prohibits them from entering the masjid] refers to their entering it by way of domineering or superiority<sup>252</sup> or naked, as was the practice of polytheists in pagan times." Which means, the very act of entering the masjid is not prohibited.<sup>253</sup>

He also notes that Imām Muḥammad retracted from his previous stance mentioned in *Jāmiy al-Ṣaghīr* that it was allowed, and ruled that it was impermissible in *Siyar al-Kabīr* which is his last book, and that he settled on this opinion in his final days. Nowhere is it said that disbelievers can be invited into mosques for their worship; notice that they should not be allowed to enter in a way that appears as dominating Muslims or as superior to them. Having good relations in worldly matters with people of other faith, whether Christians or others, is permissible as mentioned earlier; but we not see any reason to invite them in our mosques or for Muslims to participate in their religious ceremonies. Most likely, even Christians themselves would not be interested in going to a mosque to pray – Christians, we are told, visit their churches just once a week. Would they approve of Muslims going to their churches and reciting Sūrah Ikhlāṣ?

Verily, the only religion [accepted] near Allāh is Islām. And those among the people of Book, who contradict [Islām] after they were given knowledge, do so because of obduracy<sup>254</sup>

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ  
الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ  
الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ

Imām Nasafī says in the explanation of this verse:

{those among the people of Book, who contradict } are the Jews and Christians; and their contradiction is that they abandoned Islām – which is *tawḥīd*<sup>255</sup> of Allāh tāālā; the Christians believe in trinity and the Jews claim that Úzayr is the son of God.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> *Muṭlaqan*: absolutely any masjid and not just any specific masjid – and according to *Hidāyah*, even Masjid al-Ḥarām.

<sup>252</sup> *istilā'a, istiylā'a*

<sup>253</sup> *Radd al-Muḥtār*, 6/607, Imām Muḥammad Amīn Ibn Ābidīn al-Shāmī [d. 1252 AH].

<sup>254</sup> Sūrah Aāl Imrān, 3:19.

<sup>255</sup> Unity of Allāh.

<sup>256</sup> *Tafsīr an-Nasafī*.

Ibn Kathīr says:

No religion is accepted near Allāh tāālā, from anyone except Islām. And Islām means following the Messengers that Allāh tāālā has sent during all ages until the final prophet Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ arrived. His ﷺ coming has closed all the routes to Allāh tāālā except one – which is the path of Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ. Whosoever meets Allāh tāālā after the arrival of Sayyidunā Muḥammad ﷺ with any religion or shariāh other than his ﷺ, it shall not be accepted. As Allāh tāālā has Himself said:

And whosoever seeks a religion other than Islām, then it shall not be accepted from him; and he shall be among the losers in the hereafter<sup>257</sup>

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ  
وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ

And said that in this verse there is a proclamation that the only religion that shall be accepted [by Allāh tāālā] absolutely and exclusively is Islām.

Among the most inane justifications for Prof. Tahir's actions, I came across was that of a spinmeister known as Hafiz Akhlaaq Mubarak who said that Prof. Tahir was the first to speak in front of a group of US servicemen in uniform. Indeed, the more you brown nose to their ideals and say things conducive to them, they will cheer you and promote you. If Prof. Tahir was an upright Muslim, he would have refuted or criticised American actions in Muslim lands or even boycotted a function where American officials invited him protesting their crimes against Muslims. A Muslim should find pride in the standing he has among fellow Muslims, not among those who are enemies of our religion. An apt and famous Arabic adage says:

Do not ask about a man; ask about his company–  
For, a man is [known] by the company he keeps!

And in another justification Prof. Tahir himself said that in the interfaith gathering, he made representatives of other religions to listen to the slogans of “lā ilāha illā Allāh”. He seems to forget that the same claim can be made by those representatives, who have a bigger right of bragging – they made thousands of Muslims stand in attention to the chants of the gods they worship and invited by them, on their own stage! If a person goes to a pub, and makes people drink milk, it might be something to talk about; but suppose a man invites a dozen people to his home, who bring wine with them and drink it on his table and the man brags that he showed them that he drinks milk, only a fool like him will be impressed with his ‘feat’.

In a lengthy question that describes a gathering similar to that organized by Prof. Tahir, there is a fatwā by Alahazrat. Given below is an extract of the relevant parts from the background of the event, a question related to the event and the answer:<sup>258</sup>

**Background:** One day, the Pandit said addressing Hindus and Muslims: “We shall do pooja<sup>259</sup> of our Ramayan,<sup>260</sup> the Qur’ān of Muslims and the Bible of Englishmen.”<sup>261</sup> The manner in which it was arranged, was that a palanquin, which they name ‘singhasan’ was adorned with flowers and other decorations; in this, the Ramayan was kept at one side, the Bible on another and in the middle a copy of the Qur’ān.

<sup>257</sup> Sūrah Aāl Īmrān, 3:85.

<sup>258</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Ridawiyah*, 21/296. Alahazrat Imām Aḥmed Riḍā Khān [d.1340 AH]. Question #155-158, dated 1338 AH.

<sup>259</sup> reverence or worship.

<sup>260</sup> Religious epic of Hindus, revered by them as a divine, holy book.

<sup>261</sup> In those days, Christians were predominantly English.

This was carried in a procession, which included Muslims, around the town with much fanfare, singing of Hindu religious songs<sup>262</sup> and music, and taken inside their temple. When Muslims [who participated in this event] were asked whether it was permissible in our Sharīh to do such a thing and take our holy book and place it in a Hindu temple, they replied: 'There is no problem with this; we have asked many scholars in the city and they have replied that there is no problem with these actions; we have also asked about the *Tilak*<sup>263</sup> on the forehead, and they have said that there is no issue with it.'

**Question #2:** Is it permissible [for Muslims] to go in the company of Hindus making a commotion with loud singing of their religious songs and music? And to carry their religious books like *Ramayan* with esteem and reverence in a carriage and attend a gathering of Hindus where they shout their religious slogans such as: "Long live Ramachandra".<sup>264</sup>

**Answer #2:** The questioner asks, whether these acts are permissible or not; he should be asking whether these are kufr or not! Ask whether the wives of such people have gone out of wedlock or not! In *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn*<sup>265</sup> and *Minaḥ ar-Rawḍ al-Az'har*:

**Whoever goes to the platform<sup>266</sup> of infidels becomes a kāfir; Ālī al-Qārī said, it means, a [religious] gathering of disbelievers; because that is meant for advertising their kufr; and this person has as good as aided them in doing so. Allāh tāālā knows best.**

In another fatwā Alahazrat writes:<sup>267</sup>

It is forbidden and impermissible to participate in and assist in [religious] ceremonies and rituals of disbelievers<sup>268</sup> because Allāh tāālā says: "**Do not aid sin and transgression**".

In the Wembley event, Prof. Tahir chirps soulfully:

We will sing together song of peace and love and we will take melodies from the Bible.<sup>269</sup> We will take melodies from the Bible, we will take lyrics from the Torah and we will take rhythm from the Qur'an - and we will take humility and peace from all other sacred books belonging to other religions of humanity...

...may each religion keep its fragrance.<sup>270</sup>

These are explicit *kufriyāt*, because Prof. Tahir commends other religions and their religious literature. There are many fatāwā by Alahazrat, and I will quote a few extracts for perspective as our objective in this paper is not to examine the deeds of the professor at Wembley.

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<sup>262</sup> *bhajan*: Religious songs of Hindus, which were part of the Wembley 'event' organized by Prof. Tahir Jhangvi.

<sup>263</sup> *Teekā*: A mark or some marks made on the forehead, which is a specific attribute of Hindus and their religious symbol. Sometimes, this mark is vertical, sometimes horizontal or sometimes just a dot or a round mark or a smudge.

<sup>264</sup> *ram chandra ki jai*: Hindus worship Rama as a god and one of the ten incarnations (*dashāvatār*) of Vishnu (who is another god in their pantheon).

<sup>265</sup> *Jāmiy al-Fuṣūlayn*, 2/313. The Thirty Eighth Fascicle. Qādī Mahmud ibn Isrāyīl Ibn Samāwinah [d.823 AH].

<sup>266</sup> *suddah*: dias or stage.

<sup>267</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Ridāwiyah*, 21/186, Alahazrat Imām Ahmed Ridā Khān [d. 1340 AH]

<sup>268</sup> *marāsim e kufr*

<sup>269</sup> Here, the professor looks at the representatives of non-muslims on the stage and says the following lines.

<sup>270</sup> Prof. Tahir's speech in the Wembley Arena event on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Alahazrat writes, quoting *Ghamz al-Úyūn al-Başāyir*:

Whosoever considers any [religious] action of the disbelievers as commendable has committed kufr, as agreed by all scholars.<sup>271</sup>

Concerning a query about a person who said that Vedas<sup>272</sup> are like the Qur'ān and just as Muslims act upon the Qur'ān, the Hindus should act upon their Vedas, Alahazrat writes:

To say that the Qur'ān is similar to Vedas is kufr; and to ask others to act upon Vedas is to ask them to commit kufr; asking someone to commit kufr is also an act of kufr. In most books, it is written: "To be pleased with kufr, is kufr".<sup>273</sup>

Concerning a query about allowing disbelievers into Ĥarām al-Sharīf, he writes:

It appears that the questioner means to ask about Masjid al-Ĥarām; because just saying Ĥarām<sup>274</sup> would include both Makkah and Madīnah, and the wastelands and forests surrounding these two cities are also considered as Ĥarām. Whether Masjid al-Ĥarām, or any other masjid – it is absolutely impermissible to take *ĥarb*<sup>275</sup> disbelievers inside.

In another fatwā:

It is written in *Fatāwā Ṣāhīriyyah*, *Ashbāh wa'n Nažāyir*, *Minaĥ al-Ghaffār*, *Durr al-Mukhtār* etc: "To show reverence to a kāfir is kufr."<sup>276</sup>

In another fatwā:

The pristine shariāh terms every non-muslim as a kāfir. As Allāh tāālā has said:<sup>277</sup> **"It is Allāh who has created you [all]; and some are Kafirs amongst you and some are Muslims."**<sup>278</sup>

Alahazrat makes the same observation made by Ibn al-Qayyim mentioned earlier; he says:

RasūlAllāh ﷺ did not have any other place for holding audience, other than his honourable masjid; therefore, delegations would meet him inside the masjid. Nobody disputes this [as it is clear from all texts].<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>271</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawiyyah* 21/186, quoting *Ghamz al-Úyūn*: The Second Category: On War and Apostacy.

<sup>272</sup> Vedas: Scriptures of Hindus.

<sup>273</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawiyyah* 21/272.

<sup>274</sup> Sanctuary.

<sup>275</sup> Those disbelievers who do not have a covenant with Muslims, nor do they pay jizyah, and are hostile to Muslims; they are considered technically 'at war' with Muslims, because there is no guarantee to restrain them from fighting Muslims.

<sup>276</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawiyyah* 21/275. In *Ghamz al-Úyūn*, it is clarified that "if such reverence is on account of his religion." But if one shows respect to disbelievers for political gain or any such reason that does not entail reverence for their religion, it is *ĥarām* and not *kufr*. Allāh tāālā knows best.

<sup>277</sup> Sūrah Al-Baqarah, 2:62.

<sup>278</sup> *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawiyyah* 21/286.

<sup>279</sup> *Al-Maĥajjatu'l Mu-tamanah*, p.105, Alahazrat.

It is clear from the above that attending religious gatherings of infidels without any compulsion is a matter of kufr. Ālī al-Qārī has more details:<sup>280</sup>

In conclusion, he who purchases something on a Navrūz<sup>281</sup> that is not [ordinarily] purchased by Muslims, has committed kufr. It has been reported of Abū Ḥafṣ al-Kabīr al-Bukhārī that he said: "Even if a man worships Allāh tāālā for fifty years, and on the day of Navrūz gifts something to polytheists, to honor their [religious] festival, he has committed kufr and disbelieved in Allāh tāālā; his deeds of fifty years have gone to waste." If one goes to the platform of disbelievers – that is, a [religious] gathering of infidels – on Navrūz, he has committed kufr; because, this is an advertisement of kufr, and this person has as if aided them in their proclamation of disbelief.

Prof. Tahir organised a function that included lengthy programs showcasing religious ceremonies of various faiths and in a separate item, personally invited leaders of other faiths to proclaim their faith and encouraged them to utter their religious chants. In *Iylām*, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytami writes:

Among things that make one an apostate, is when one finds disbelief acceptable, even if such acceptance is implied. For example:

- If a disbeliever wishes to accept Islām and asks a Muslim to instruct him the kalimah,<sup>282</sup> and if the Muslim does not do it<sup>283</sup>
- or says: 'wait until I am free from what I am currently engaged in'<sup>284</sup>
- or a preacher<sup>285</sup> says: 'wait until I finish the sermon'
- or [a person] suggests [to a kafir] that he not accept Islām, even if the kāfir has not sought to become a Muslim expressly.

Ḥulaymī's opinion that follows shortly is questionable, in which he says: "If a person suggests to a kāfir to not become a Muslim, is on the basis of enmity and wishes his enemy to suffer what he dislikes – which is kufr; and hence prevents him from what he loves – which is Islām, he shall not be ruled kāfir."<sup>286</sup>

It remains to be enquired whether Prof. Tahir hated those people he had invited in the function, and because of his hatred, asked them to remain on their faith. In which case, there is a possibility of him escaping the ruling of kufr because of an obscure and criticised opinion.<sup>287</sup> If he did not, and it is obvious that he did not, then such an act is kufr.

Whether in a Muslim society or not, we do not stop people from following their own religion; but this does not mean that we consider their faith as acceptable or that we join in their religious ceremonies or encourage them to continue in their state of disbelief. Our concept of freedom of religion is that we

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<sup>280</sup> *Minah al-Rawḍ al-Az'har*, p.282, Mawlānā Ālī al-Qārī [d.1014 AH].

<sup>281</sup> *Navrūz*, *Nowrūz*: The Magian festival of new year. Wikipedia says: "Originally being a Zoroastrian festival, and the holiest of them all, Nowruz is believed to have been invented by Zoroaster himself, although there is no clear date of origin."

<sup>282</sup> The formula which makes one a Muslim, the declaration of faith, the *Shahādah*: Lā ilāha illā Allāh; Muḥammadu'r RasūlAllāh ﷺ. There is no God but Allāh; Muḥammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allāh.

<sup>283</sup> However, Alahazrat has written that it is a major sin [kabīrah] to tarry in instructing a kāfir the kalimah, without any valid excuse; acknowledging that some Imams have even considered it as kufr. Ponder. [*Fatāwā ar-Ridāwiyyah* 21/172]

<sup>284</sup> It is as if one is pleased

<sup>285</sup> In some books, this is the Friday preacher and the Friday sermon is mentioned to highlight the importance of this act.

<sup>286</sup> *Al-Iylām li Qawāṭi'ī'l Islām*, 31, Shaykhu'l Islām Abū'l Ābbās Aḥmed Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytami [d. 974 AH].

<sup>287</sup> Because anyway according to majority of jurists such an action is considered kufr; so, even by a non-standard opinion, he cannot escape the ruling.

consider all other faiths to be wrong, but understand that anybody is free to believe what they want. Allāh táālā says:<sup>288</sup>

And say, that Truth is from your Lord. Then, whosoever wishes to believe, may believe in it; and whosoever wants can disbelieve.

Verily, We have prepared flames for the oppressors, [in a pit] encircled<sup>289</sup> by walls of fire. If they ask for drink to quench their thirst, they shall be given boiling water like molten alloy,<sup>290</sup> that shall scald their faces. What an evil draught, and what an ugly station!

وَقُلِ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ فَمَنْ شَاءَ فَلْيُؤْمِنْ وَمَنْ  
شَاءَ فَلْيُكْفُرْ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ نَارًا أَحَاطَ  
بِهِمْ سُرَادِقُهَا وَإِنْ يَسْتَعِينُوا يُوَسَّوْا بِمَاءٍ  
كَالْمُهْلِ يَشْوِي الْوُجُوهَ بِئْسَ الشَّرَابُ وَسَاءَتْ  
مُرْتَقَاً

Allāh táālā has informed humans of the torment that awaits them if they do not become Muslims. Now, some people may scoff and sneer at it – for them, it is their choice. If they do not want to believe in it, then it is up to them. Isn't it strange that they disbelieve in this hell, and are still offended if Muslims say that is where they will be going? They disbelieve in our paradise, but they still do not want to be denied a place there. If they are not bothered about going there, why should they be offended? In any case, considering other religions as valid is not an Islamic belief and a person becomes a kāfir if he believes so.

I have mentioned a few fiqh rulings only to highlight the enormity of his actions – the ugliness of which is aggravated by his audacious claim that such an act is a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ. We now include an istifta (based on the clips, not on the Wembley event itself) which should to be forwarded to Muftis for a legal opinion. We seek the protection and forgiveness of Allāh táālā and beseech Him to keep us on the straight path.

*wa billahi't tawfiq.*



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<sup>288</sup> Sūrah Al-Kahf, 18:29.

<sup>289</sup> *surādiq*: according to Ibn Ábbās, walls of fire. Ibn Kathīr says that *surādiq* is a pit of fire.

<sup>290</sup> *al-muhl*: Ibn Ábbās said that it is thick and squalid like rancid oil; Mujāhid said that it is a cocktail of blood and vomit; Ibn Masúūd said that that is like a molten alloy.

## ISTIFTĀ

**Background:** Zayd claims to be an Islamic scholar. He organises an event advertised as an interfaith gathering contains “**Muḥammad ﷺ – the Merciful**” boldly in the title. In this event performers and leaders of various religions are invited and allowed to conduct their religious prayers, chants and rituals. In one item, Zayd asks members of various faiths to stand in a line and expressly tells them to proclaim the name of ‘their’ own god in their own traditions. The audience, including Muslims cheers and claps at all these chants.

- Hindus sing bhajans, among which are Hare Ram, Hare Krishna, Om Namah Shivayah etc.
- Sikhs sing their kirtans
- Christians say ‘Father God’
- Buddhists say: Namō Budhdhaya
- And Muslims say: La Ilaha Illa Allāh.

Thereafter, people criticize Zayd for this irreligious act. Zayd justifies his actions and says:

1. This act is not just *bidāh ḥasanah*, but rather a *sunnah*.
2. The Prophet ﷺ allowed Najrān Christians to stay in the Mosque, and when the time of their prayer arrived, they asked his permission to pray and he gave them permission and said: “You are allowed to pray according to your tradition, in my Mosque.”
3. Zayd says that the Prophet ﷺ declared in the Constitution of Madīnah that Jews and Muslims are one nation.
4. Zayd acknowledges that he asked disbelievers to pray and claims that prayer is not worship item.
5. Zayd says: this is the demonstration of freedom of religion and expression given by Almighty God and Prophet ﷺ.

Concerning Zayd’s justification, we ask respected Muftis to please elucidate and issue a ruling concerning:

1. hold a gathering, invite people of various faiths to utter unislamic and polytheistic chants?
2. to tell people of other faiths to call upon their god (or what they consider as god) in their own tradition?
3. to ask/encourage people of other faiths to pray to whatever they consider as gods in their own tradition?
4. to join in a multi-faith prayer with disbelievers with the intention that ‘let each of us call our own god’?
5. to term this action as a Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ?
6. Was RasūlAllāh ﷺ ever asked, and did he ever give express permission to Christians to pray in their own tradition, in his Mosque?

وبالله التوفيق والله سبحانه وتعالى أعلم وعلمه جل مجده أتم وأحكم  
عافانا الله الكريم من بلائه ووفقنا الله لتتزيه السنن وتعظيم شعاره بجاه حبيبه صلى الله عليه وعلى آله وسلم



Appendix A  
**ACCURACY CHECKLIST**

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Fiction	Distortion	Garbled	Fact
<b>CLIP ONE</b>					
1	The companions came and they asked, Ya RasulAllah ﷺ, allow us to serve them, why are you performing this service? He said: No, <b><i>innahum kanu li as'Habina mukrimin</i></b>				●
2	when my people came to...went to Habasha, their king, Najashi, himself served them, so I want to repay for that. I will serve with my own hands, these are my guests.				●
3	This was the stance and position of the non-Muslims in the eyes of the Prophet of Islam.	◆			
4	Then a delegate of 14 Christians came from Najran,				●
5	Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them again to stay in the mosque.	◆			
6	This happened between the battle of Badr and the battle of Uhud, maybe in the 2nd year of the Hijrah.	◆			
7	14 Christians delegate, consisting, delegate came, Holy Prophet allowed them to stay in mosque of Madi..., the Holy Prophet's mosque,	◆			
8	then the time of their worship arrived,				●
9	they asked: Can we worship according to our own religion?	◆			
10	Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Yes, you are allowed to worship according to your own religion in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawi.	◆			
11	And they performed their worship according to their religion facing towards East,				●

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Fiction	Distortion	Garbled	Fact
12	opposite side of Kábah.	◆			
13	And this was performed in al-Masjid-un-Nabawī by the permission of Holy Prophet ﷺ.	◆			
14	Such level of religious freedom was granted to non-Muslims in the days of Holy Prophet.	◆			
15	He stood in front of the gate of the Kábah and he delivered his lecture and he said, asked: O People of Makkah! What do you expect, what kind of behaviour do you expect from me today?				●
16	Everybody was silent, they were feeling no courage to say single word, and they were thinking,			***	
17	one of the companions stood up and said: <b>al yawma yamu' l malhamah</b> . This day is the day of killing, we want to take revenge from each and every individual who have been committing violence on Prophet Muhammad and our families.		○		
18	Holy Prophet ﷺ became angry when he answered with loud voice	◆			
19	he said, "no, <b>al yawma yawmu' l marhamah</b> , this day is the day of mercy and forgiveness." This is the day of mercy and forgiveness				●
20	Then he said: <b>la tathriba álaykumu' l yawm idh'habū fa antumu't tulaqā</b> – all of you, Oh Makkans! Today there is no revenge on you, all of you are liberated. You are free. You are free.				●
21	At that time the biggest enemy of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, at that time, was Abu Sufyan and his two sons.			***	
22	Holy Prophet ﷺ declared the house of the biggest enemy, Abu Sufyan and two sons, house of amn. He said: whosoever will enter his house, he will also get amn and security. This was his generosity, this was his kindness.				●
23	Then the sons of Abu Lahab, the greatest enemies of holy Prophet, who had been torturing him throughout, torturing him, the whole family,		○		

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Fiction	Distortion	Garbled	Fact
24	his two sons, under the fear of being killed, they run, they ran away				●
25	and they were hiding under the covering of Kábah. Under the curtains of Kábah, covering of Kábah and they were fearing as if they would be killed.	◆			
26	Holy Prophet ﷺ saw them, he went to them, he took the curtain up, he hol...he held both of them, brought them out and he smiled and he said: today you have been forgiven, go away.	◆			
27	There is no revenge from any enemy.				●
28	In the same way, there are hundreds of Aĥadīth, reported by Sayyadina Ali,	◆			
29	Sayyadina Ali, he said: <b>idhā qatala'l muslimu an-naşraniyyah qutila bihi</b> . If a Muslim kills a Christian, the Muslim will be killed in retaliation. The blood of both is equal.			○	
30	Imam Abū Ĥanīfah, he says: <b>diyyatu'l yahudiy wa'n naşraniy wa'l majūsiy mislu diyyatu ĥurri'l muslim</b> . It is reported by Imam Shaybani in <i>Kitabu'l Ĥujjah</i> , Ibn Abi Shayba in <i>Muşannaf</i> : Imam e Aázam Abū Ĥanīfah says: that the <i>diyah</i> , blood money, of a Muslim and of a Jew and of a Christian and Majusi, all blood money, each and every person is equal, there is no difference between them.			○	
<b>CLIP TWO</b>					
31	it was not worship item, it was just praying item for peace.	◆			
32	So this act which we have done, and I allowed and I arranged it in London, this is not a <i>bidáh ĥasanah</i> , this is Sunnah.	◆			
33	This is not related to the scope of silent, Quran and Sunnah is not silent on it, rather there is holy Prophet ﷺ own practice on it which establishes that this is permissible through the Sunnah of holy Prophet.	◆			
34	There is a ĥadīth and a very famous event of the history				●

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Fiction	Distortion	Garbled	Fact
35	A very big delegation of the Christians from Najran, 60 people, a delegate of 60 leaders, religious leaders, Christian religious leaders, arrived in Madīnah from Najran.				●
36	And they were asked, companions asked holy Prophet ﷺ where they should be allowed to stay.	◆			
37	Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to stay in al-Masjid an-Nabawī.	◆			
38	His own mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī al-Sharif. Al-Haram, he allowed them to stay in his mosque.	◆			
39	So the 60 Christian leaders were allowed to stay there, they stayed there.	◆			
40	After that and it did not happen once, other time, a very big Christian delegate came from Ethiopia, Abyssinia, and holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them also to stay in the mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif.		○		
41	And they were served the food and all services there.	◆			
42	So during their stay, the delegate of Najran, they asked that their time of worship arrived.	◆			
43	They wanted to worship according to their own religion. Companions again came to holy Prophet ﷺ to ask, Ya RasulAllah, now they want to worship,	◆			
44	So they asked, where should we allow them to worship because they would worship according to their own religion and their own religious tradition that is not according to tawhid.	◆			
45	So companions asked holy Prophet and holy Prophet ﷺ answered, they are allowed to worship according to their own religion in my mosque of Madīnah.	◆			
46	So holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their Christian faith and Christian tradition in al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif.	◆			

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Fiction	Distortion	Garbled	Fact
47	So they prayed there as they used to pray in their own churches.				●
48	Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their own religion and tradition in the Masjid al-Nabawi	◆			
49	So this is the Sunnah of holy Prophet ﷺ.	◆			
50	so people belonging to any faith and any denomination and any culture, they have to practice their own way and they have to pray in their own tradition.		○		
51	So this is the collectivity of Islam and this is the beauty of Islam in diversity and this has been practiced by holy Prophet ﷺ.	◆			
52	That's why in Madīnah when holy Prophet wrote the document, the constitution of Madīnah, he wrote down in article 28, he wrote down, <b>inna yahuda wa'l awf ummatun máa'l mu'minin</b> . The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation.		○		
53	Everybody is free to practice his own religion, we can't stop, <b>lā ikraha fi'd dīn</b> , when you get together,		○		
54	this is the demonstration of freedom of religion and expression given by Almighty God and Prophet ﷺ.	◆			

Appendix B

**CONTEXTUAL ACCURACY**

	Prof. Tahir's Statements	Context
<b>CLIP ONE</b>		
1	The companions came and they asked, Ya RasulAllah ﷺ, allow us to serve them, why are you performing this service? He said: No, <b><i>innahum kanu li as'Habina mukrimin</i></b>	The ḥadīth is mentioned to illustrate the lofty character of the Prophet ﷺ, and his humility; and that he ﷺ was the foremost in returning kindness and honouring those who were loyal to him.
2	when my people came to...went to Habasha, their king, Najashi, himself served them, so I want to repay for that. I will serve with my own hands, these are my guests.	Secondly, Najāshī was a Muslim before he sent any of the delegations, and RasūlAllāh ﷺ led his funeral prayer in absentia, when he died. Najāshī was a Muslim ﷺ.
3	This was the stance and position of the non-Muslims in the eyes of the Prophet of Islam.	According to one narration, the delegation accepted Islām; and according to another, they were already Muslims when they arrived in the service of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.
4	Then a delegate of 14 Christians came from Najran,	The fourteen nobles were in a group of sixty Christians who came to RasūlAllāh ﷺ.
5	Holy Prophet allowed them again to stay in the mosque.	Fiction.
6	This happened between the battle of Badr and the battle of Uhud, maybe in the 2nd year of the Hijrah.	This happened in the ninth or tenth year after Hijrah.
7	14 Christians delegate, consisting, delegate came, Holy Prophet allowed them to stay in mosque of Madi..., the Holy Prophet's mosque,	Fourteen nobles among sixty delegates came to Madīnah. There is no report of them staying in the Mosque.
8	then the time of their worship arrived,	Muslims had just prayed Áshr according to the most commonly repeated report, when they entered the masjid and it coincided with their prayer time.
9	they asked: Can we worship according to our own religion?	They did not ask. They simply started praying.

10	Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Yes, you are allowed to worship according to your own religion in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī.	Fiction.
11	And they performed their worship according to their religion facing towards East,	Accurate. A few pebbles of honesty and truth among rocks of untruth.
12	opposite side of Kábah.	Makkah is to the south of Madīnah; thus, opposite side of Kábah would be the north.
13	And this was performed in al-Masjid-un-Nabawī by the permission of Holy Prophet ﷺ.	They began praying without asking; however the Prophet ﷺ did not stop them.
14	Such level of religious freedom was granted to non-Muslims in the days of Holy Prophet.	Fiction.
15	come with me and see. Holy Prophet ﷺ, who was forced to emigrate to Madīnah, who was forced by the Meccans, because of their violence, because of their cruelty, because of their tyranny, because of their bad behaviour, because of their terrorism, because hundreds of swords, they had encircled holy Prophet with their swords, they wanted to kill him collectively, and then at this event he was forced to leave his beloved city of birth.	While it is anecdotally true, the migration of RasūlAllāh ﷺ was not merely on account of persecution of the Meccans. It should be noted that the professor does not call them Meccan disbelievers or Meccan polytheists; as it is convenient for his justification.
16	and every year the Meccans used to attack on Madīnah	According to historians, the Battle of the Trench or the Battle of Confederates took place in fourth or fifth year after Hijrah. And the Prophet ﷺ said after this war: <b>"The Quraysh will never again fight you after this year."</b> This is cited by Bayhaqī in <i>Dalāyī' an-Nubuwwah</i> 3/458 and <i>Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah</i> 1/247.
17	he fought just a war of defence.	Not exactly true. Prof. Tahir needlessly tries to satisfy the ideals of freethinkers. The Prophet ﷺ waged wars, but they were just wars. According to many scholars, The Victory of Makkah is considered as a war won by force. It is true, that there was almost no bloodshed, but that was because of the overwhelming force with which Muslims entered Makkah. This slavish and dishonest statement is to ingratiate himself with post-modernist liberals and trying to appease those who demonise Jihad.
18	Where the war of trench – Ghazwat-ul-Ahzab – where this war was fought? On the border of Madīnah, where holy Prophet ordered the companions to make a trench. All these main wars occurred on the border of Madīnah	The Prophet also participated in the wars that took place in the following relatively distant locations <b>Makkah</b> (400 km from Madīnah) <b>Khaybar</b> (170 km from Madīnah) <b>Tāyif</b> (450 km from Madīnah) <b>Ĥunayn</b> (130 km from Madīnah)

19	and holy Prophet ﷺ spent his life just to defend the city of Madīnah, he never, he was never an aggressive, he never allowed his community to be aggressive, to be violent and to be tyrant.	<p>It is true that the Prophet ﷺ did not allow his community to be violent and tyrant, but it is not true that he spent his life only to defend Madīnah.</p> <p>The Prophet ﷺ himself set out for 27 wars and fought in 9 of them. He also ordained 47 minor campaigns.</p> <p>Prof. Tahir tries to paint a hesitant and unassertive picture of Muslims, and of the Prophet ﷺ, one reads in orientalist literature churned out to discredit Islām. While the Prophet ﷺ commanded Muslims to be timid and peace-loving, he acted decisively and fearlessly against tyrants and oppressors; against traitors and back-stabbers.</p>
20	He stood in front of the gate of the Kábah and he delivered his lecture and he said, asked: O People of Makkah! What do you expect, what kind of behaviour do you expect from me today?	True, the Prophet asked Meccans (polytheists and disbelievers) thus.
21	Everybody was silent, they were feeling no courage to say single word, and they were thinking,	Untrue. The Meccans said: "You are an honourable kinsman (lit. brother) and the son of an honourable kinsman."
22	one of the companions stood up and said: <b>al yawma yamu'l malhamah</b> . This day is the day of killing, we want to take revenge from each and every individual who have been committing violence on Prophet Muhammad and our families.	<p>The companion said this before entering Makkah and this was said, when Abū Sufyān was still beholding the huge army of Muslims. The companion said so taunting Abū Sufyan.</p> <p>It was not in the Prophet's ﷺ presence.</p>
23	Holy Prophet ﷺ became angry when he answered with loud voice	Fiction.
24	he said, "no, <b>al yawma yawmu'l marhamah</b> , this day is the day of mercy and forgiveness." This is the day of mercy and forgiveness	When Abū Sufyān complained to the Prophet ﷺ, he allayed his fears by assuring him in these words. This was a different event and not said in the speech in front of the Kábah.
25	Then he said: <b>la tathrība álaykumu'l yawm idh'habū fa antumu't tulaqā</b> – all of you, Oh Makkans! Today there is no revenge on you, all of you are liberated. You are free. You are free.	Accurate. But this was said in response to the expectation of forgiveness expressed by the Meccans.
26	At that time the biggest enemy of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, at that time, was Abu Sufyan and his two sons. Holy Prophet ﷺ declared the house of the biggest enemy, Abu Sufyan and two sons, house of amn.	Abū Sufyān had already become a Muslim and was no longer the enemy of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ gave him this honour as a new Muslim.
27	He said: whosoever will enter his house, he will also get amn and security. This was his generosity, this was his kindness.	
28	Then the sons of Abu Lahab, the greatest enemies of holy Prophet, who had been torturing him throughout, torturing him, the whole family,	Abū Lahab and his other son Útaybah are known to be abusive enemies of the Prophet ﷺ.

29	his two sons, under the fear of being killed, they run, they ran away	His two other sons – Muáttib and Útbah – fled Makkah on that day, but they were not the torturing ones.
30	and they were hiding under the covering of Kábah. Under the curtains of Kábah, covering of Kábah and they were fearing as if they would be killed.	Fiction. The two sons fled and were found and brought back from the plains of Árafát by Sayyidunā Ábbās.
31	Holy Prophet ﷺ saw them, he went to them, he took the curtain up, he hol...he held both of them, brought them out and he smiled and he said: today you have been forgiven, go away.	Fiction and dramatisation. Rather, Ibn Khaṭṭal was found hiding in the curtains and was ordered to be executed.
32	In the same way, there are hundreds of Aḥādīth, reported by Sayyadina Ali,	Hundreds is an exaggeration.
33	Sayyadina Ali, he said: <b>idhā qatala'l muslimu an-naṣraniyyah qutila bihi</b> . If a Muslim kills a Christian, the Muslim will be killed in retaliation. The blood of both is equal.	Yes, but that is about a non-Muslim in a covenant with Muslims, in Muslim lands.
34	Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, he says: <b>diyatu'l yahudiy wa'n naṣraniy wa'l majūsiy mislu diyatu ḥurri'l muslim</b> . It is reported by Imam Shaybani in <i>Kitabu'l Ḥujjah</i> , Ibn Abi Shayba in <i>Al-Muṣannaf</i> : Imam e Aázam Abū Ḥanīfah says: that the <i>diyah</i> , blood money, of a Muslim and of a Jew and of a Christian and Majusi, all blood money, each and every person is equal, there is no difference between them.	Accurate. But this equality is about the rights concerning property and lives of non-Muslims; not about religion. The difference of religion starkly remains.
<b>CLIP TWO</b>		
35	This was a collective peace prayer. The question arises that the people belonging to other faith, they came there and they supplicated and there...it was not worship item, it was just praying item for peace. So they supplicated or they prayed for peace for mankind but in their own traditional way according to their own religion. And they raised the name of their own God as they used to say.	It is ignorance or dishonesty to claim that prayer is not a worship item. Prayer to ask for something is indeed a form of worship – and Duáā, in ḥadīth is mentioned to be the very essence of worship. Secondly, the prayers of disbelievers are in vain, as the Qur'ān tells us in the verse of Sūrah Ar-Raád 13:14.
36	So this act which we have done, and I allowed and I arranged it in London, this is not a <i>bidáh ḥasanah</i> , this is Sunnah.	Fiction. It is an enormity and disbelief.
37	This is not related to the scope of silent, Quran and Sunnah is not silent on it, rather there is holy Prophet ﷺ own practice on it which establishes that this is permissible through the Sunnah of holy Prophet.	Fiction. There is nothing in the Qur'ān or Sunnah that permits a Muslim to organise a gathering to advertise religious activities of non-Muslims.
38	And they were asked, companions asked holy Prophet ﷺ where they should be allowed to stay.	They did not ask; they began praying without asking.

39	Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to stay in al-Masjid an-Nabawī.	We do not know of any report that says the Prophet ﷺ allowed them to stay.
40	His own mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī al-Sharif. Al-Haram, he allowed them to stay in his mosque.	Fiction.
41	So the 60 Christian leaders were allowed to stay there, they stayed there.	Fiction. Rather, the most famous report of this event says that the Najrān Christians went away after the Prophet ﷺ did not speak to them.
42	After that and it did not happen once, other time, a very big Christian delegate came from Ethiopia, Abyssinia, and holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them also to stay in the mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif.	There are two Ethiopian delegations mentioned; one that came to Makkah, and the other to Madīnah. Both became Muslims after meeting with RasūlAllāh ﷺ. In the second case, to which the professor refers, they were either Muslims, or became Muslims afterward.
43	And they were served the food and all services there.	Imaginative details.
44	So during their stay, the delegate of Najran, they asked that their time of worship arrived.	Fiction.
45	They wanted to worship according to their own religion. Companions again came to holy Prophet ﷺ to ask, Ya RasulAllah, now they want to worship,	Fiction.
46	So they asked, where should we allow them to worship because they would worship according to their own religion and their own religious tradition that is not according to tawhid.	Fiction.
47	So companions asked holy Prophet and holy Prophet ﷺ answered, they are allowed to worship according to their own religion in my mosque of Madīnah.	Fiction.
48	So holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their Christian faith and Christian tradition in al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif.	Fiction.
49	So they prayed there as they used to pray in their own churches.	The Christians from Najrān began praying in the Masjid without asking; they had just arrived and Muslims had just finished their afternoon prayer. Muslims wanted to stop them, but RasūlAllāh ﷺ asked Muslims to leave them be.
50	Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their own religion and tradition in the Masjid al-Nabawī	Fiction.

51	So this is the Sunnah of holy Prophet ﷺ.	Fantasy.
52	so people belonging to any faith and any denomination and any culture, they have to practice their own way and they have to pray in their own tradition.	Prof. Tahir's own idea, nothing to do with Sunnah.
53	So this is the collectivity of Islam and this is the beauty of Islam in diversity and this has been practiced by holy Prophet ﷺ.	False and ugly charge levelled at the Prophet of Islām ﷺ who spent his life preaching, practising and spreading the one true religion and who fearlessly proclaimed it even under the shadow of swords, that there is only One True God.  For more details, read the explanation of the Qur'ānic verse: " <b>Verily, religion [accepted] near Allāh tāālā is only Islām.</b> " [Sūrah Aāl Īmrān, 3:19]  This verse was revealed in the refutation of the Najrān Christians who argued with RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and denied that they were infidels.
54	That's why in Madīnah when holy Prophet wrote the document, the constitution of Madīnah, he wrote down in article 28, he wrote down, <b>inna yahuda wa'l awf ummatun maa'l mu'minin.</b>	Half truth. The 'Constitution of Madīnah' was written in the first year of Hijrah – uniting all tribes who became Muslims as one nation. Jews were also included as a gesture of goodwill in the covenant. However, this is only one half of the statement; the immediate clause that follows this statement is: " <b>li'l yahūdi dīnuhum wa li'l muslimina dīnuhum.</b> " The Jews can follow their religion and Muslims shall follow their own.  The Jews broke the covenant and betrayed the Prophet ﷺ, which resulted in wars with them and resulted in their expulsion from Madīnah in the following years.
55	The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation.	Wrong translation and dishonest interpretation.  It should be: "The Jews of Bani Áwf shall be considered as citizens <b>alongside</b> Muslims."  The word "one ummah" is used for Muslims and not for Jews as their mention comes later in the same narration.
56	Everybody is free to practice his own religion, we can't stop, <b>lā ikraha fi'd dīn</b> , when you get together,	True, there is no compulsion in religion; but neither is there a compulsion for Muslims to invite non-Muslims to advertise their religious practices and customs.
57	this is the demonstration of freedom of religion and expression given by Almighty God and Prophet ﷺ.	Freedom of religion means, people are free to practice what they choose. This does not give a carte blanche to a Muslim to encourage non-Muslims to remain kafirs or show approval of their beliefs.

## Appendix C

### PROF. TAHIR'S SPEECH – CLIP ONE

The companions came and they asked, Ya RasulAllah ﷺ, allow us to serve them, why are you performing this service? He said: No, *innahum kānū li aṣ-ḥābinā mukrimin* – when my people came to...went to Habashah, their king, Najāshī, himself served them, so I want to repay for that. I will serve with my own hands, these are my guests. This was the stance and position of the non-Muslims in the eyes of the Prophet of Islam.

Then a delegate of 14 Christians came from Najrān, Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them again to stay in the mosque. This happened between the battle of Badr and the battle of Uhud, maybe in the 2nd year of the Hijrah. 14 Christians delegate, consisting, delegate came, Holy Prophet allowed them to stay in mosque of Madi..., the Holy Prophet's mosque, and then the time of their worship arrived, they asked: Can we worship according to our own religion?<sup>291</sup> Holy Prophet ﷺ said: Yes, you are allowed to worship according to your own religion in my mosque, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī. And they performed their worship according to their religion facing towards East, opposite side of Kābah. And this was performed in al-Masjid-un-Nabawī by the permission of Holy Prophet ﷺ. Such level of religious freedom was granted to non-Muslims in the days of Holy Prophet.

I would like to take you to the day of conquest of Makka, come with me and see. Holy Prophet ﷺ, who was forced to emigrate to Madīnah, who was forced by the Meccans, because of their violence, because of their cruelty, because of their tyranny, because of their bad behaviour, because of their terrorism, because hundreds of swords, they had encircled holy Prophet with their swords, they wanted to kill him collectively, and then at this event he was forced to leave his beloved city of birth. He left with the heavy heart, spent 10 years in Madīnah and every year the Meccans used to attack on Madīnah. Those who say that Islam spreaded by sword or those who say that Islam is in favour of war, they should concentrate on the history, that all wars which took place during the 10 years of Madīnah, were, which were the places of the occurrence of wars? In battle of Badr, it was a attack of Meccans on Madīnah which holy Prophet defended 80 miles out of the city of Madīnah. The battle of Uhud was not fought on the borders of Makkah, it was fought on the borders of the city of Madīnah, attacked by the non-Muslims and holy Prophet ﷺ he fought just a war of defence. Where the war of trench – Ghazwat-ul-Ahzab – where this war was fought? On the border of Madīnah, where holy Prophet ordered the companions to make a trench. All these main wars occurred on the border of Madīnah and holy Prophet ﷺ spent his life just to defend the city of Madīnah, he never, he was never an aggressive, he never allowed his community to be aggressive, to be violent and to be tyrant.

The eyes of the human history has never seen a person peaceful like Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the eyes of mankind has never seen a religion peaceful like the religion of Prophet Muhammad, al-Islam. So in these conditions when holy Prophet enters in Makkah as a conquerer, in the conquest of Makkah, he was a conquerer today, and the Meccans had already surrender in front of him, there were 10,000 military people with him, 10,000, and there was a complete surrender without any bloodshed, Makkah was taken over, was captured.

Now, the Meccan non-Muslims, they were shivering, trembling, they had a fear that each, every person of them would be killed, will be slaughtered, will be murdered as a revenge of that day when Prophet Muḥammad was pushed out from the city of Makka. Holy Prophet ﷺ, let our life be sacrificed on the personality of Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, O Ya RasūlAllāh! He stood in front of the gate of the Kābah and he delivered his lecture and he said, asked: O People of Makkah! What do you expect, what kind of behaviour do you expect from me today? Everybody was silent, they were feeling no courage to say single word, and they were thinking, one of the companions stood up and said: *al yawma yamu'l*

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<sup>291</sup> Here, the professor looks around smugly – to emphasise his viewpoint.

**malhamah.**<sup>292</sup> This day is the day of killing, we want to take revenge from each and every individual who have been committing violence on Prophet Muhammad and our families. Holy Prophet ﷺ became angry when he answered with loud voice, he said, “no, **al yawma yawmu’l marhamah**, this day is the day of mercy and forgiveness.” This is the day of mercy and forgiveness. Look at the great character of Prophet Muhammad, look at the great model of perfection given by the merciful behaviour of Prophet Muhammad, give and look at the peaceful behaviour of Prophet Muhammad, look at the peaceful message of Prophet Muhammad, look at the loving message of Islam.

He said, this day is the day of mercy and forgiveness. Then he said: **la tathriba alaykumu’l yawm idh’habu fa antumu’t tulaqa** – all of you, Oh Makkans! Today there is no revenge on you, all of you are liberated. You are free. You are free. At that time the biggest enemy of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, at that time, was Abu Sufyan and his two sons. Holy Prophet ﷺ declared the house of the biggest enemy, Abu Sufyan and two sons, house of amn.<sup>293</sup> He said: whosoever will enter his house, he will also get amn and security. This was his generosity, this was his kindness. Then the sons of Abu Lahab, the greatest enemies of holy Prophet, who had been torturing him throughout, torturing him, the whole family, his two sons, under the fear of being killed, they run, they ran away and they were hiding under the covering of Kábah. Under the curtains of Kábah, covering of Kábah and they were fearing as if they would be killed. Holy Prophet ﷺ saw them, he went to them, he took the curtain up, he hol...he held both of them, brought them out and he smiled and he said: today you have been forgiven, go away. There is no revenge from any enemy.

This was the conduct given by holy Prophet ﷺ. In the same way, there are hundreds of Aḥadīth, reported by Sayyadina Ali, he said: **idhā qatala’l muslimu an-naṣraniyyah qutila bihi**. If a Muslim kills a Christian, the Muslim will be killed in retaliation. The blood of both is equal. Imam Abū Ḥanīfah, he says: **diyyatu’l yahudiy wa’n naṣraniy wa’l majūsiy mislu diyyatu ḥurri’l muslim**. It is reported by Imam Shaybani in *Kitabu’l Ḥujjah*, Ibn Abi Shayba in *Al-Musannaf*: Imam e Aázam Abū Ḥanīfah says: that the *diyyah*, blood money, of a Muslim and of a Jew and of a Christian and Majusi, all blood money, each and every person is equal, there is no difference between them.

Hazrat Ámr bin al-Áās, he was governor of Egypt, he gave a...an illegal punishment to a non-Muslim, illegal punishment to a non-Muslim, the case was referred to the Khalifa...



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<sup>292</sup> Thus it is said in the clip.

<sup>293</sup> Sic. amn = peace, safety.

## Appendix D

### PROF. TAHIR'S SPEECH – CLIP TWO

**Questioner: The second question concerns an incident which took place at the peace for humanity conference recently...**

Prof. Tahir: At Wembley Arena, yeh...

**Questioner: In Wembley, in the United Kingdom. And part of the programme involved a...representatives of different faiths who came on stage and were doing dhikr. So there is a question from several people who want to know an explanation for this, InShaAllah.**

Prof. Tahir: Alhamdulillah [after sipping his drink]. This was peace for humanity conference and very important item in this conference was, the event was, collective peace prayer. The interfaith collective peace prayer. All people belonging to all faiths and religions, they were invited and they were asked to pray for world peace according to their own religious tradition. And ask your Go...and ask God in your supplication so that He may provide the whole mankind and the whole world with peace and security, as your own religious tradition allows.

So it was allowed to everyone and finally the Muslims did the same and then after that there was zikr of **la ilāha illAllāh** in the end and all people standing there, including all people of all faith, then finally we ended up on **la ilāha illAllāh** and Allāh Allāh and Qasidah Burdah.

This was a collective peace prayer. The question arises that the people belonging to other faith, they came there and they supplicated and there...it was not worship item, it was just praying item for peace. So they supplicated or they prayed for peace for mankind but in their own traditional way according to their own religion. And they raised the name of their own God as they used to say.

So what is the position according to the Shariah of this act? So this act which we have done, and I allowed and I arranged it in London, this is not a *bidāh ḥasanah*, this is Sunnah. This is not related to the scope of silent, Quran and Sunnah is not silent on it, rather there is holy Prophet ﷺ own practice on it which establishes that this is permissible through the Sunnah of holy Prophet.

There is a ḥadīth and a very famous event of the history that a very big delegation of the Christians from Najran, 60 people, a delegate of 60 leaders, religious leaders, Christian religious leaders, arrived in Madīnah from Najran. And they were asked, companions asked holy Prophet ﷺ where they should be allowed to stay. Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to stay in al-Masjid an-Nabawī. His own mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid-un-Nabawī al-Sharif. Al-Haram, he allowed them to stay in his mosque. So the 60 Christian leaders were allowed to stay there, they stayed there. After that and it did not happen once, other time, a very big Christian delegate came from Ethiopia, Abyssinia, and holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them also to stay in the mosque of Madīnah, al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif. And they were served the food and all services there. So during their stay, the delegate of Najran, they asked that their time of worship arrived. They wanted to worship according to their own religion. Companions again came to holy Prophet ﷺ to ask, Ya RasulAllah, now they want to worship, knowingly and everybody should know, that there is no new development in their aqida, in their faith, after the raising, after the time of holy Prophet ﷺ. Whatever they believe in now, this was their faith in time of holy prophet, the time of the revelation of holy Quran.

Because they believed in trinity at that time. They believed in God concept of being as God and son of God because these things were rebutted and refuted in holy Quran. **la taqūlū thalathah**. The verses were revealed in rebuttal of this aqida, everthing was there in their áqidah.

So they asked, where should we allow them to worship because they would worship according to their own religion and their own religious tradition that is not according to tawhid. Holy Prophet although

they believed, they say we believe in one God, but their interpretation according to us is not correct, they say one in three and three in one, this is trinity and unity, we don't accept this definition or this interpretation.

So companions asked holy Prophet and holy Prophet ﷺ answered, they are allowed to worship according to their own religion in my mosque of Madīnah.

*[Slogan of takbir and risalah from the crowd].*

So holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their Christian faith and Christian tradition in al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif. So they prayed there as they used to pray in their own churches. So I think the Wembley Arena and my gathering was never more sacred than Masjid al-Nabawī al-Sharif of holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Holy Prophet ﷺ allowed them to worship according to their own religion and tradition in the Masjid al-Nabawī so why we as inter-faith harmony and showing our solidarity with all faiths of mankind, why we would not allow them to say peace prayer according to their own religious tradition? So this is the Sunnah of holy Prophet ﷺ.

Now your third question.

We should keep our hearts, our minds, our lives open without compromising on our basic principles of faith. Without compromising on our principles of faith. but when you get together, so people belonging to any faith and any denomination and any culture, they have to practice their own way and they have to pray in their own tradition. So this is the collectivity of Islam and this is the beauty of Islam in diversity and this has been practiced by holy Prophet ﷺ.

That's why in Madīnah when holy Prophet wrote the document, the constitution of Madīnah, he wrote down in article 28, he wrote down, ***inna yahuda wa'l awf ummatun māa'l mu'minīn***. The Jews of Bani Awf today, along with the Muslims, comprise and constitute a single ummah and nation. But they would be practicing their religion and we would practice our religion. Everybody is free to practice his own religion, we can't stop, ***lā ikraha fi'd dīn***, when you get together, this is the demonstration of freedom of religion and expression given by Almighty God and Prophet ﷺ.



Appendix E  
**TRANSLITERATION KEY**

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	English Equivalent
أ ء	a	أمير	amīr	amazing
ب	b	باب	bāb	basket
ت ة	t	تاج	tāj	(soft)
ث	th	ثابت	thābit	thing
ج	j	جسد	jasad	jam
ح	ḥ	حسن	ḥasan	<b>guttural, deep like hose no english equivalent</b>
خ	kh	خبر	khabar	<b>similar to german munich guttural ch; no english equivalent</b>
د	d	دار	dār	(soft)
ذ	dh	ذكر	dhikr	there
ر	r	راشد	rāshid	rose
ز	z	زكي	zakī	zebra
س	s	سهل	sahl	solid
ش	sh	شباب	shāb	shock
ص	ṣ	صبر	ṣabr	<b>full rounded, like somber no english equivalent</b>
ض	ḍ	ضياء	ḍiyā'a	<b>close to daughter no english equivalent</b>
ط	ṭ	طب	ṭibb	<b>full rounded, soft t no english equivalent</b>
ظ	ẓ	ظلم	ẓulm	<b>full rounded, soft d no english equivalent</b>
ع	á, í, ú, ý	عرب علم عمر عيد	árab ílm úmar ýid	<b>guttural a no english equivalent</b>
غ	gh	غار	ghār	<b>guttural g no english equivalent</b>
ف	f	فجر	fajr	flower
ق	q	قريب	qarīb	<b>guttural k no english equivalent</b>
ك	k	كتاب	kitāb	kin
ل	l	لباس	libās	late
م	m	مال	māl	morning
ن	n	نار	nār	noon
ه	h	هدى	hudā	house

Arabic Letter	Latin Character	Arabic Example	Transliteration	English Equivalent
و	w	وزير	wazīr	word
ي	y	يد	yad	yellow
إ	i	إدام	idām	insight
آ	a	أتم	atam	advent
ل	ā	باب	bāb	father
سـ	ī	سريـر	sarīr	tree
و	ū	طور	ṭūr	boot
عـا	āā	عـالم	āālim	-
عـي	īī	عـيد	īīd	-
عـو	ūū	عـود	ūūd	-
شـ	sh'sh sh-sh	الشمس	ash'shams ash-shams	-
أـ	a' or a-	مأسور	ma'sūr	-
بـئس	i'y or i-y	بئس	bi'ysa bi-ysa	-
لؤلؤ سؤلؤل	u' or u-	لؤلؤ سؤلؤل	lu'lu' su-lika	-
		أصحاب تكحيل أسهر	aṣ'hāb tak'hīl as'hār	to separate letters to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
		أصحاب تكحيل أسهر	aṣ-hāb tak-hīl as-hār	to separate letters to distinguish between sounds represented by letter pairs
	superscript	من	mi <sup>n</sup>	to indicate an elision
	-	كتابة	ka-ābatil manẓar	to break down words when like sounding letters appear with sukun

## Appendix F

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52. *Kitāb at-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Saād al-Zuhrī (d. 230 AH/845 CE)
53. *Madārijū'n Nubuwwah*, Shaykh Ābd al-Ḥaq Muḥadith al-Dihlawī, (d. 1052 AH / 1642 CE)
54. *Al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, Imām Aḥmed ibn Muḥammad al-Qaṣṭallānī (d. 923 AH)
55. *Nasīm ar-Riyāḍ Sharḥ al-Shifā Qāḍī Īyād*, Shihab al-Din al-Khafājī (d. 1069 AH/1659 CE)
56. *Al-Rawḍ al-Unuf*, Imām Ābd ar-Raḥmān al-Suhaylī (508-581 AH)
57. *Sharḥ al-Mawāhib al-Ladunniyyah*, Imām Muḥammad ibn Ābd al-Bāqī al-Zarqānī (1055-1122 AH)
58. *Sharḥ al-Shifā Qāḍī Īyād*, Ālī ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad al-Qārī (d. 1014 AH/1605 CE)
59. *Sīratu'n Nabawīyyah*, Imām Ābdul' Malik ibn Hishām al-Ḥimyarī (d.213 or 218 AH)

## G. Histories

60. *Al-Bidāyah wa'n Nihāyah*, Ḥāfiḥ Īmād al-Dīn Abū 'l-Fīḍā' Ismāy'il ibn Ūmar ibn Kathīr (d. 774 AH/1373 CE)
61. *Al-Kāmil fi't Tārīkh*, Abū'l Ḥasan Muḥammad Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī (d.630 AH)
62. *Nihāyatu'l Arab*, Shihābuddīn Aḥmed ibn Ābd al-Wahhāb Al-Nuwayrī (d.733 AH)
63. *Tārīkh al-Islām al-Kabīr*, Shamsuddīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dimashqī al-Dhahabī (d. 1348 CE)

## H. Others

64. *Aḥkām Ahl al-Dhimmah*, Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr also known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 AH/1350 CE)
65. *Al-Iṣābah fi Tamīz aṣ-Ṣaḥābah*, Imām Shihābuddīn Aḥmad ibn Ālī ibn Ḥajar al-Āsqalānī (d. 852 AH/1449 CE)
66. *Al-Jawāb al-Ṣaḥīf li man Baddala Dīn al-Masīḥ*, Abū'l Ābbās Aḥmad ibn Ābd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyyah al-Ḥarrānī(d.1328 CE)
67. *Al-Maḥajjatu'l Mu'tamanah fi Āyati'l Mumtaḥanah*, Āālahāzrat Imām Aḥmed Ridā Khān (d.1340 AH / 1921 CE)
68. *Hadīyyatu'l Ḥayārā fi Ajwibatī'l Yahūda wa'n Naṣārā*, Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 AH/1350 CE)
69. *Mārifatu's Ṣaḥābah*, Abu Nu`aym Aḥmad ibn Ābd Allāh ibn Aḥmad ibn Ishāq al-Mihrānī al-Asbahānī al-Shāfiyī (d. 430 AH/1038 CE)
70. *Usdu'l Ghābah fi Māārifati's Ṣaḥābah*, Īzzuddīn ibn al-Athīr Abū'l Ḥasan Ālī bin Muḥammad al-Jazarī (d. 630 AH)
71. *Zād al-Māād*, Muḥammad ibn Abū Bakr ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 751 AH / 1350 CE)

## I. Lexicons

72. *Īyrābu'l Qur'an*, Abū Jāfar Aḥmad Bin Muḥammad Bin Ismāy'il Al-Murādi Al-Naḥwī (d. 338 AH)
73. *Tāj al-Ārūs*, Imām Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1205 AH/ 1790 CE)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Abu Hasan is a student of Islamic sciences and translates bits and pieces from classical texts. Hanafī, Maturidi, aspirant to the Qadiri path and an ardent admirer and follower of Imam Ahmed Rida Khan al-Baraylawi رحمته اللہ علیہ, he is keen to pursue intermediate and higher studies in the coming years, *in shā Allāh wa bi tawfiqih*.





*Masjid Qiblatayn, Madinah*