

*Kitāb al-Tawḥeed*

كِتَابُ التَّوْحِيدِ

*The Basis of Islam  
and the Reality of Monotheism*

Vol. 1

By Professor Muḥammad ibn Abdullah al-Massari

# Volume 1

## *The Foundations of Deen and its Fundamental Maxims*

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and peace of Allah be upon him, was the Messenger of Allah sent to all of humanity.<sup>30</sup>

From 'Ikrimah from Ibn 'Abbās, he said I heard Ibn 'Abbās may Allah be pleased with him saying, 'Indeed Allah the Almighty has favoured Muḥammad, peace and blessings be upon him, over the inhabitants of the heavens and over the Prophets.' They asked, 'O Ibn 'Abbās, in what way has he been favoured over the other Prophets?' He, may Allah be pleased with him said: 'Verily, Allah the Almighty said: *We have never sent a Messenger who did not use his own people's language to make things clear for them*' Allah the Almighty sent him to the *Jinn* and mankind.<sup>31</sup>

Indeed all of these are authentic chains of transmission narrated on the authority of a large number of *Ṣaḥāba*, including: Jābir ibn Abdullah, Abu Hurayrah, Abu Dharr Al-Ghifārī - the most truthful from among creation; the trustworthy Abdullah ibn 'Abbās; Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aās who wrote the honourable words of the Messenger peace and blessings be upon him, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari and Abu Umāmah - may Allah be pleased with all of them. These *aḥādīth* were recorded in books of *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Sunan*, *Musnad*, *Muṣṣanaḥ* and *Mu'jam* and even in books of *Tafsīr*, literature and Arabic language. As a collective they are taken as definite evidence, whosoever denies this collective body of evidence is a *kāfir*. There are also other a large amount of other narrations from other companions that prove that the Messenger of Allah peace and blessings be upon him was sent to all mankind and that he was preferred and distinguished by that; every Prophet and Messenger was just sent to his own nation or locale.

Undoubtedly Allah has bestowed great virtue upon Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him. Notwithstanding this though, the fundamental point which is to be taken forward is that the aforementioned matters are established principles of the Islamic doctrine and creed; it is mandatory to believe in them; to deny any of them would take one outside the fold of Islam.

<sup>30</sup> *Tafsīr* Ibn Kathīr [Vol. 3, p. 489]. The verse quoted by Ibn Kathīr is at 3: 20, although this quotation appears in the *Tafsīr* of 7: 158. The Arabic edition of *Tawhīd* block-quotes up to page 491, essentially reiterating the *aḥādīth* already mentioned by recounted by Ibn Kathīr.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* [Vol. 6, p. 518]. The verse quotes is from 14: 4, although the entry in the *Tafsīr* is from 34: 28.

### 3. All previous Prophetic laws are abrogated

It was proved by overwhelming evidence, the denial of which is *kufīr* (disbelief), that the previous Prophets and Messengers were just sent to their own specific tribes, peoples, locales or nations. Similarly, it was also proved that unlike previous Prophets and Messengers the Prophet Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him was sent to all of mankind. To argue that the previous nations or peoples still exist presently seems incredulous. By the passage of time they have perished; long ceasing to be considered as distinct nations addressed by a particular Prophet or Messenger. In fact, they are now considered as a part of Muḥammad's nation. That is to say, each previous nation lost its description as a specific nation as well as its independent identity and became just individuals, groups, tribes, or peoples included in the nation of Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him.

The call of previous Prophets now has no legal significance, because the law they were sent with would address those who are no longer existent. Nobody in the present world is ordered to follow the law which was brought by Musa, Moses peace be upon him, although there are existing individuals and tribes descended from the original Children of Israel. However, the nation of Musa peace be upon him, described once as a nation of divine message, is long gone; it has vanished through the passage of time. In a similar manner, nobody is required to follow the specific laws which were brought by Esa, Jesus peace be upon him.

One can reasonably ask, so what has happened to those previous messages? Have the commands and prohibitions that Allah gave to those previous peoples evaporated entirely? Allah forbid! What has happened is

that these specific laws and injunctions were *abrogated* in totality by Him, Exalted be His names. The precise moment of abrogation was the moment revelation descended upon the final Messenger sent to all of mankind, namely Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him. By Allah saying that he has sent Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him as a Prophet and Messenger to *all* of mankind, by necessity, he has thereby abrogated all the previous messages, since the people they specifically addressed no longer exist. All the laws and detailed rulings that were applicable to the previous nations via their Prophets and Messengers have been abrogated totally. Every injunction that applied previously whether that be an obligation or prohibition, no longer applies anymore. Yet it is more than this – it is not merely the fact that they no longer apply, but it is prohibited to seek to apply them now following the advent of Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him.

Each of the previous Prophets and Messengers were not sent to us, nor have they addressed us in any manner, thus it is inconceivable that the specific laws that they brought could in some manner now apply to us. Following an abrogated religion and leaving the abrogating one is a major crime, it constitutes an annulment of the commands of Allah and rebellion against his sovereignty. Those that would purport to argue for the dictum of *Shara' min qablina shara' lanā* - 'the law of the previous Prophets is our law too' are presiding over an absurdity. Whatever may appear to be similar in our present divine law brought by Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him to that brought by previous Prophets or Messengers should not be construed as being in any way an affirmation or continuance of that legislation. How could it be the case that Allah abrogated all of the previous divine laws and at the same time re-legislated them as being 'Islamic laws' now?

The incredulity of the saying 'the law of the previous Prophets is our law too' should be evident by the fact that Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him was sent to all mankind and even the *jinn*. His followers from amongst mankind are considered as being one *Ummah* subsuming all different races, tribes and nations on earth. As it is described as one nation, it therefore has only one creed and one law. While each one of the previous Prophets used to be sent to specific peoples, locales or nations, each of whom had a law and a method that differed from the others, even if they were under the same rule. Whoever claims that these laws are ours, he must do the following:

- Implement *all* of these laws at the same time from the same view and consideration; that is, to gather between opposing contrasts; which is an impossible matter to occur from both the reasonable and legal point of view.
- Make every law connected with a specific nation that would be followed by this *Ummah* only and not by any other nation from among mankind. If applied, by rights, anyone from the Far East – for example Japan, would be able to argue that this is the law sent to Israel – it cannot be obligatory now since I was not addressed with it originally. Even if present at the time of Musa, peace be upon him, it wouldn't have been obligatory to follow as he wasn't sent to the Japanese! Consequently, how could it ever apply now after the advent of Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him?

From the Islamic legal point of view, this is impossible, as it contradicts the universality of the Muḥammad's message, peace and blessings be upon him and the unity of his *Ummah*, whereas both matters were proved through definite and absolute proofs. Common people and scholars, Muslims and *mushrikeen* know these two matters in Islam as an acknowledged fact, as we mentioned earlier; this is but an additional proof put forward here. Some have tried to escape from this quandary by arguing with the following: 'The law of the previous Prophets becomes ours too, but only if it is mentioned in the Qur'ān or the *Sunnah*.' In reply we would posit that this line of argument is of no use. If it is mentioned in the present revelation it is by way of a report. If it is mentioned in the form of an address to the believers now, then it becomes a new law, however similar it may appear to that which has gone previously. The newly enacted law becomes mandatory to follow not because of anything that has gone previously, but because we are commanded with it now in the present revelation. It is prohibited to say now 'the law of the previous Prophets is our law too' or that it somehow 'becomes part of our laws'. One could say though that this is a new law for us, which appears similar to that previously revealed; legally that is tenable.

#### A sharp view from Islamic Spain

Writing in *al-Muḥalla bil athār*, the grand Imām of Andalusia, Ibn Ḥazm lucidly argued as follows:

*Sharī'ah* of the previous Prophets: It is not permissible to follow any *Sharī'ah* of a Prophet (that came) before our Prophet (Muḥammad), peace and blessings be upon him. As the Exalted has said:

لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا

*We have assigned a law and a path to each of you.*<sup>1</sup>

حدثنا أحمد بن محمد بن الجسور حدثنا وهب بن مسرة حدثنا محمد بن وضاح حدثنا أبو بكر بن أبي شيبة حدثنا هشيم أخبرنا سيار عن يزيد الفقير أخبرنا جابر بن عبد الله أن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال أعطيت خمسا لم يعطهن أحد قبلي: نصرت بالرعب مسيرة شهر، وجعلت لي الأرض مسجدا وطهورا، فأبما رجل من أمتي أدركته الصلاة فليصل، وأحلت لي الغنائم ولم تحل لأحد قبلي، وأعطيت الشفاعة، وكان النبي يبعث إلى قومه خاصة وبعثت إلى الناس عامة

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Jasour narrated to us Wahb ibn Massara narrated to us Muḥammad ibn Waḍḍāḥ narrated to us Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shayba narrated to us Hushaym narrated to us Sayyār reported to us from Yazeed al-Faqir, Jābir ibn Abdullah reported to us that the Prophet peace and blessings be upon him said: *I have been given five (things) that have not been given to anybody before me: I have been supported with horror for a distance of one month; the whole earth has been made a masjid and purified for me; anyone from my Ummah, man or woman, can pray wherever they are; the spoils of war have been permitted to me whereas they were not for previous nations; I have been given the intercession, and every previous Prophet has been sent to his own people whereas I have been sent to all of mankind.*<sup>2</sup>

Since these Messengers have been sent to their own specific people they are not addressing us – so how can their *Sharī'ah* apply or even be obligatory upon us? What makes our current *Sharī'ah* applicable is that we have been addressed with it. Whoever denies this, would therefore deny this *ḥadith* and the special *faḍeelah* (blessing) that has been given to Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him.<sup>3</sup> Whoever

<sup>1</sup> Qur'ān, 5: 48

<sup>2</sup> Muṣṣanaḥ Ibn Abi Shayba, [Vol. 17, no. 32299]. The *ḥadith* is not only narrated by Jābir but by as many as seven or eight *Ṣaḥāba*. It is *mutawātir* and to be found in many collections, for example in Bukhārī, Muslim and others. Inclusive is Ibn Ḥazm's *isnād* to Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shayba

<sup>3</sup> In other words, being sent to all mankind abrogates all previous *Sharī'ah*'s.

says that the laws of the previous Prophets apply to us now given the advent of the Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) who is sent to all of mankind is lying. And with Allah is all success.<sup>4</sup>

Hats off to Ibn Ḥazm for furnishing us with this deep, thoughtful analysis! We also formally adopt this viewpoint and to it add the following dictum – that all previous divine laws were abrogated with the advent of the last Prophet, who was sent to all of mankind, namely Muḥammad ibn Abdullah peace and blessings be upon him. The abrogation was absolute. Hence, that is why is it unlawful to try and implement or follow a previous *Sharī'ah* to begin with.

All rulings sent to us after the revelation of the first word of the Qur'ān word - *Iqra'* (read!) is a new law even if it appears to be similar to that previously issued or even if it is identical.<sup>5</sup> Without doubt the reality of the matter is that it is new, so is absolutely unlawful to say that it is an acknowledgment of a previous law, as that which is abrogated becomes necessarily void and non-existent. Its return is the establishment of a new law not a confirmation of a previous one that still exists and applies. The glorious Qur'ān and the honourable *Sunnah* are full of proofs which confirm this reasoning, for the words of Allah and that revealed to his Messenger peace and blessings be upon him are never in contradiction to one another.

أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا

*Will they not think about this Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have found much inconsistency in it.*<sup>6</sup>

'Muhaymin'

Allah the Exalted and Majestic says:

<sup>4</sup> Ibn Hazm, *al-Muḥalla*, [Vol. 1, no. 102, p. 84]. We have undertaken a full translation of this section from *al-Muḥalla*, it is available in paperback and kindle format, entitled: *Foundational Islamic Principles*.

<sup>5</sup> Qur'an 96: 1

<sup>6</sup> Qur'an 4: 82

وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شُرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لَيَبْئُوتَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

We sent to you [Muhammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them: so judge between them according to what Allah has sent down. Do not follow their whims, which deviate from the truth that has come to you. We have assigned a law and a path to each of you. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you, so race to do good: you will all return to Allah and He will make clear to you the matters you differed about.<sup>7</sup>

Contained within the aforementioned verse is the Arabic word ‘*al-Muḥaymin*’ [المهيمن] which is one of the ninety-nine names of Allah and is often translated as ‘The Protector’. Many interpretations have been given to this word including: ‘the witness and trustworthy, the faithful, the vigilant guardian’. But the foremost interpretation seems to be on two distinct levels, firstly, meaning the dominated controller who has the power over everything and whose commands are decisively accomplished; secondly this word refers to one who undertakes the responsibility of ruler and disposes all affairs. In *Fath al-Bāri* al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar tried to summarise these interpretations and said the following:

They said regarding the word ‘*Muḥaymin*’ that the Qur’ān is trusted over all the books that preceded it. As cited by Abu Ḥātim from the channel of Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥa from Ibn ‘Abbās in relation to the statement of Allah ‘and *muḥaymin* over it’ he said the Qur’ān is trusted over all the books that preceded it. Furthermore as reported by ‘Abd Ibn Ḥumayd from the channel of Arbada al-Tamimi from Ibn ‘Abbās in relation to the statement of Allah ‘and *muḥaymin* over it’ he said ‘entrusted over it’. Ibn Qutayba and others followed by the majority said: knowing it is trusted.

Some postulate it as being *mu’aymin*, the *ha* (هـ) being read as a *hamza* (ء); *mu’aymin* means the one who offers peace and security. That is rejected because that is not the preponderant meaning, given

<sup>7</sup> Qur’an 5: 48

that it is from amongst the names of Allah the Exalted and not simply reduced to that. The truth is that its root has the meaning that he is superseded by something. ‘*al-Haymana*’ to protect and watch over, that is why it is said when a man watches over something and protects it he has ‘*haymana*’ over it. (Or) a man dominates a man if he becomes his watcher, hence he is *muḥaymin*. Abu ‘Ubayda said: it didn’t come in the speech of the Arabs on this construction except four words: *mubayṭar*, *musayṭir*, *muḥaymin* and *mubayṭar*.<sup>8</sup>

On the same subject in *Fath al-Bāri*, al-Ḥāfiẓ continues:

al-Bayhaqy mentioned, ‘This explanation of the scholars of *Tafsir* with regard to the term ‘*al-mahaymin*’ is that it means ‘supervisor’. He then cites a narration from al-Taymi on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās in reference to the verse, ‘(he is) *muḥaymin* over it.’ Ibn ‘Abbās states that it means ‘protector’; in another narration from Ali ibn ‘Abi Ṭalḥah, Ibn ‘Abbās is reported to say that ‘*al-Muḥaymin*’ means ‘supervisor’. In yet another narration from Mujāhid, Ibn ‘Abbās is reported to say, ‘*al-Muḥaymin*’ means the witness. It is said that ‘*al-Muḥaymin*’ means the observer over an object and guardian of it. It is also said that *al-haymanah* is to be in authority over something as a poet once said:

‘Is it not that the best of the people after their Prophet is their next *muḥaymin* guiding them towards the good and the bad? The one in authority over the people wants to protect them even after his time has passed.’

It is therefore correct that this poetry implies that he wants security for them and what has been mentioned is in accordance with this.<sup>9</sup>

I would submit that al-Bayhaqy struck the point in his interpretation of the word ‘*al-muḥaymin*’ with it being based upon the ‘people care for them.’ Not taken advantage of the poetic lines which is mentioned, the understanding of the sense of ‘*al-ḥākim*’ the ruler and ‘*al-musayṭir*’ the dominant. While the meanings of witness and trustee are there they are not derived from the word itself. From the requirements of the *Shari’* meaning it can be discerned to

<sup>8</sup> al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Ḥajar al-Asqalāni, (2000), *Fath al-Bāri bi-Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Dār al-Salām: Riyadh), [Vol. 8, p. 340]

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. [Vol. 13, p. 448]



encompass that the trusted ruler watching over affairs, or else failing in that would be considered treacherous or even criminal. This is similar to what has come in *Lisān al-Arab*: ‘In the *ḥadith* of ‘Ikrimah – I know Ali peace be upon him was from amongst the ‘*muḥaymināt*’; any issues of dominance, which is the thing to do, to make her act is headed to matters such custodians.’ As for Imām al-Ṭabari although he provides a lengthy and beautiful comment, he doesn’t necessarily approach the intended meaning with his interpretation.

Imām Ibn Kathir was closer to the mark in seeking to flesh out the meaning of the word ‘*muḥaymin*’ in his *Tafsir*. He writes:

He said ‘*muḥaymin* over it’: Sufyān al-Thawri and other than him said: from Ibn Ishāq from al-Tamimi from Ibn ‘Abbās (who said) entrusted over it. And it’s said from Ali ibn Abi Ṭalḥa from Ibn ‘Abbās – *al-muḥaymin* is the trustworthy, the Qur’ān is trusted over all the books that preceded it. As well it has been reported from ‘Ikrimah, Sa’eed ibn Jubayr, Mujāhid, Muḥammad ibn Ka’b, ‘Aṭiya, al-Ḥasan, Qatādah, ‘Aṭā al-Khurasāni, al-Suddi and Ibn Zayd about this. Ibn Jurayj said: the Qur’ān is trustworthy over the books that preceded it. Therefore, whatever disagrees with the Qur’ān is false. al-Wālabi said that Ibn ‘Abbās said that *muḥayminan* means ‘witness.’

Similar was said by Mujāhid, Qatādah and al-Suddi. al-‘Awfi said that Ibn ‘Abbās said that *muḥayminan* means dominant over the previous scriptures. These meanings are similar, as the word *muḥaymin* includes them all. Consequently, the Qur’ān is trustworthy, a witness and dominant over every scripture / book that preceded it. This glorious book which Allah revealed as the last and final book of all times. The Qur’ān includes all the good aspects of previous scriptures and even more, which no previous scripture ever contained. This is why Allah made it trustworthy, a witness and dominant over them. Allah promised that he will protect the Qur’ān and swore by his most honourable self when doing so. Verily Allah the Exalted says: *Surely we have revealed the Dhikr and we will most surely be its guardian.*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Ibn Kathir [Vol. 3, p. 127/128]. The end verse quoted is from 15: 9. Ibn Kathir’s comment comes in relation to the *Tafsir* of the verse at 5: 48.

The comments from Ibn Kathir are good indeed. But it’s unfortunate that the majority of exegetes simply regurgitated the interpretation of Ibn ‘Abbās regarding word *al-muḥaymin* as being a witness, then a trustee or entrusted which only slightly fits into the overall context unlike the ruling concerning it. Ultimately this is due to *taqlēd* (imitation), laziness about being diligent and having independent thought. We have found in the book of history written by Imām al-Ṭabari, regarding the death of Abu Shurayḥ, some lines of poetry which serve to provide some elaboration upon the linguistic meaning of this word:

[al-Walīd] wrote to wrote to Uthmān about [these young men] and he wrote back to put them to death. Thus, [al-Walīd] executed them at the gate of the Official Palace [*al-qaṣr*] in the square [*al-raḥabah*]. Concerning this [event] ‘Amr b. ‘Āsim al-Tamīmī said:  
*Never feed on your neighbours immoderately, O dissolute men, in the reign [mulk] of Ibn ‘Affān*  
*For Ibn ‘Affān, whom you have put to the test, has cut off thieves by the well-established law of [our] salvation*  
*Without fail he acts in accordance with the Book, keeping close watch over every neck and fingertip among them.*<sup>11</sup>

It would appear from these verses that the meaning relates to control. But control and dominance appears in the word of ‘*muḥaymin*’, as stated in *al-Iṣāba fī Tamīyiz al-Ṣaḥāba* by al-Ḥāfiz Ibn Ḥajar; during the biography of al-Fāria’ ibn Abi al-Ṣalt may Allah be pleased with her, sister of Umayyah ibn Abi al-Ṣalt, the famous poet. The following stanzas are from his *qaṣīdah*:

*To you is all praise, all blessings, all favours, our Lord. There is nothing higher than you at all, neither is there a more absolute muḥaymin or majestic king upon the throne of the heavens. Your power humbles masses and causes them to prostrate.*

In my opinion, there is no meaning for ‘*muḥaymin*’ here except that it means the one who decrees and controls, who possesses absolute authority, and who

<sup>11</sup> al-Ṭabari *History of Prophets and Kings*, [Vol. 2 p. 439 (Arabic)]; the English is taken from the translation, *The Crisis of the Early Caliphate*, [Vol. 15, p. 46]

is in ultimate disposal of all affairs. And this is what circulated among the tongues of the people from all levels in the later centuries. Therefore, if it is said *al-Haymanah al-'Ajnabiyyah* then all listeners understand this term as 'dominance, control, or foreign occupation' and nothing else – this is the correct opinion *alḥamdulillah*.<sup>12</sup> This is what Allah has meant by the term – that '*muḥaymin*' means the one who decrees and controls, who possesses absolute authority, and who is in ultimate disposal of all affairs – nothing else is meant by it.

Perhaps there is also the reasonable alternative meaning of the word [قَيِّمًا] denoting 'straight', as it appears in the beginning of *Surah al-Kahf*. The following is an explanation as provided by al-Shanqīṭi:

And He says in this noble verse [قَيِّمًا] 'straight,' which is to say, uprightness, without swerving or deviation. What is mentioned here regarding [قَيِّمًا] is also mentioned elsewhere, like where He says: *Those who disbelieve among the People of the Book and the idolaters were not about to change their ways until they were sent clear evidence; a Messenger from Allah, reading out pages [blessed with] purity, containing true scriptures* [98: 1/3].

*This Qur'an does indeed show the straightest way* [17: 9].

*Nor could this Qur'an have been devised by anyone other than Allah.*

*It is a confirmation of what was revealed before it and an explanation of the Scripture – let there be no doubt about it – it is from the Lord of the Worlds* [10: 37].

*There is a lesson in the stories of such people for those who understand. This revelation is no fabrication: it is a confirmation of the truth of what was sent before it; an explanation of everything; a guide and a blessing for those who believe* [12: 111].

*This is the Scripture in which there is no doubt, containing guidance for those who are mindful of Allah* [2: 1].

*Alif Lam Ra [This is] a Scripture whose verses are perfected, then set out clearly, from One who is all wise, all aware* [11: 1].

*But we made it a light, guiding with it whoever We will of Our servants* [42: 53], and also to other verses.

<sup>12</sup> *Haymanah* is the root word of the term '*muḥaymin*'.

And this is what we have interpreted the saying of the Almighty (where He says) [قَيِّمًا] 'straight'; (it is established) by the majority and the apparent meaning. It affirms the meaning too for where He says, '*did not make in it any crookedness*' [18: 1], because something may outwardly appear straight and upstanding, while not being devoid of crookedness in reality. Hence, Allah combines the negation of crookedness with an affirmation of straight uprightness.

Concerning where He says [قَيِّمًا] 'straight,' two further aspects of *Tafsir* are pertinent. Firstly, that the meaning of [قَيِّمًا] 'straight,' is that He confirms what was previously revealed in earlier books, that is to say, [مُهِيمِن] *muḥaymin* over it. Similar in meaning to His saying: *We sent to you [Muhammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them* [5: 48]. (Naturally) because of His dominance of previous books – *Truly, this Qur'an explains to the Children of Israel most of what they differ about* [27: 76]; and *Say, 'Bring the Torah and read out [the relevant passage] if you are telling the truth* [3: 93], and *People of the Book, Our Messenger has come to make clear to you much of what you have kept hidden of the Scripture* [5: 15].

Secondly, this aspect to the meaning of [قَيِّمًا] 'straight,' is that He establishes the religious and worldly interests of creation. In actuality, the second aspect implying the first.<sup>13</sup>

The Qur'ān is not considered '*muḥaymin*' in other words, *ḥākīm* – controlling or dominating over the previous books unless and except in the sense of it abrogating them. It cannot imitate or be subservient to them, either rationally or legally in terms of what Allah has commanded or prohibited. This is because essentially they are of one rank, originating ultimately from the same source, namely Allah the Mighty and Sublime. Thus it is not an issue of the last revelation dominating or controlling those previous to it; it is *nāsikh* (abrogating) and that is *mansukh* (abrogated) by necessity. This will not be its condition or place. It cannot be imagined except as this. Yet it is another proof concerning the matter of the previous laws being abrogated in totality and that we are not originally addressed by them. To reiterate again, the

<sup>13</sup> al-Shanqīṭi, *Aḍwā' al-Bayān*, [Vol. 3, p. 193]. Given the multiple successive quotation of Qur'ānic verses, these are embedded into the quote rather than being separated off by footnotes.



argument that the ‘law of the previous Prophet’s is our law too’ is invalid and a great lie. Should one realise the ramifications of such a statement and still adhere to it, one would fall into *kufir* (disbelief). He the Mighty and Sublime said:

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*Then we have made you follow a course in the affair, therefore follow it, and do not follow the low desires of those who do not know.*<sup>14</sup>

The Prophet peace and blessings be upon him had his own independent specific law that differs from other previous ones. This law was revealed to him from the very beginning of his call, when he was at Mecca, as attested by the aforementioned verse, which is Meccan in origin according to the majority of scholars. That was why he did not ask any of the people of the book about any of their rules or judgments. In fact, this was forbidden, as it will be mentioned soon. Perhaps some people hated that, in particular the Jews, but Allah let them know after a while when they were at Medina that his steady, stable tradition was to make a specific law for every nation. Every such law is a law of Allah, in its time and for its nation among which it was legislated; applying it at its time is considered an act of obedience to Allah. The important point is to rush headlong toward good deeds and strive like in a race towards all virtues, rather than becoming bogged down in the technicalities of the specific law. If a certain divine law is abrogated, the new one will also be a law of Allah; obeying it is an obligation, while disobeying it is prohibited. Allah the Exalted and Glorious outlines this meaning when He says:

وَأَنزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ فَاحْكُم بَيْنَهُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ عَمَّا جَاءَكَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَكِنْ لِّيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعُكُمْ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْتَلِفُونَ

*We sent to you [Muhammad] the Scripture with the truth, confirming the Scriptures that came before it, and with final authority over them: so judge between them according to what Allah has sent down. Do not follow their whims, which deviate from the truth that has come to you. We have assigned a law and a path to each of you. If Allah had so willed, He would have made you*

<sup>14</sup> *Qur’ān* 45: 18

*one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you, so race to do good: you will all return to Allah and He will make clear to you the matters you differed about.*<sup>15</sup>

According to the majority this *Surah, al-Mā’ida*, was revealed in Medina. A large number of *ḥadith* exist also to corroborate the points that we have made thus far, that the argument of the law of the previous Prophets being part of our present law is totally invalid. The Prophet peace and blessings be upon him said: ‘*If Musa were alive among you today and you followed him, leaving me, you would have gone astray.*’ Musa, Moses peace be upon him was a Prophet and an infallible Messenger who did not disobey Allah’s orders. If alive today, he would have no other choice than to follow Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him, otherwise he would be acting in disobedience to Allah. It is known by necessity that the law of Musa has now been totally abrogated, so if he was to be resurrected now it would be impermissible for him to follow any other than Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him; to do so would make him sinful, Allah forbid! This *ḥadith* is yet another evidence that proves all the previous religions and laws have been totally abrogated; we are not addressed by them at all. Hence the statement, ‘the law of the previous Prophets is our law too’ is not simply false or an absurdity, it stands in open opposition to the express statement of Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him.

One individual tried belatedly to conclusively address this problem. He was the Imām Abul’Farj Nur-al-Deen ibn Burhān al-Deen Ali ibn Ibrāhīm Aḥmad al-Ḥalabī. His solution though, wasn’t much of a solution. Writing in the *al-Seerah al-Ḥalabiyah* he said:

Thus, know, that he peace and blessings be upon him was sent to all the Prophets and their nations, in accordance with his presence in his time. This is because Allah, the Almighty took a covenant from them, and their nations to believe in him and support him while maintaining their Prophethood to their respective nations. His Prophethood and Message are more comprehensive and all-encompassing. His law during those times, concerning those nations, is in accordance with what their own Prophets brought, as judgments and laws differ with

<sup>15</sup> *Qur’an* 5: 48

different individuals and times, as al-Subki stated. That is, all the Prophets and their nations, among them being his nation, peace be upon him. He peace be upon him said to Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb – ‘By him in whose hand my soul rests, if Moses were alive he would follow me.’<sup>16</sup>

### The Night Journey

Another demonstrable proof regarding the invalidity of the laws of the previous Prophets, is the fact that the Prophet Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him led in prayer all the other Prophets during his blessed night journey to *Bayt al-Maqdis*. The previous Prophets were resurrected for him, they moved one another to lead the prayer, then they made him at the front or Jibreel, Gabriel, peace be upon him did so. Thus, Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him led them in the prayer, which proved that their manner of prayer was abrogated, as they prayed according to his prayer. Prayer is considered the main pillar of religion; other previous acts of worship were abrogated *a fortiori*. This is the fifth piece of evidence, which proves that all previous laws and religions have been abrogated, and that we are not addressed by them at all. Yet again it shows the absurdity of the statement ‘the law of the previous Prophets is our law too’; it is false statement and its use is forbidden. The primacy of the Prophet peace and blessings be upon him and his law can also be ascertained from a number of narratives that have reached us. As recorded by Imām Muslim:

وحدثني زهير بن حرب حدثنا حجين بن المثنى حدثنا عبد العزيز وهو بن أبي سلمة عن عبد الله بن الفضل عن أبي سلمة بن عبد الرحمن عن أبي هريرة قال قال رسول الله، صلى الله عليه وسلم لقد رأيته في الحجر وقريش تسألني عن مسراي فسألتني عن أشياء من بيت المقدس لم أثبتها، فكربت كربة ما كربت مثله قط، قال فرفعه الله لي أنظر إليه ما يسألوني عن شيء إلا أنبأتهم به، وقد رأيته في جماعة من الأنبياء فإذا موسى قائم يصلي فإذا رجل ضرب جعد كأنه من رجال شنوءة، وإذا عيسى بن مريم عليه السلام قائم يصلي أقرب الناس به شبهها عروة بن مسعود الثقفي، وإذا إبراهيم عليه السلام قائم يصلي أشبه الناس به صاحبكم يعني نفسه، فحانت الصلاة فأمامتهم، فلما فرغت من الصلاة قال قائل: (يا مُحَمَّد هذا مالك صاحب النار فسلم عليه، فالتفت إليه فبدأنى بالسلام

And Zuhayr ibn Ḥarb narrated to me Ḥujeen ibn al-Muthanna narrated to us ‘Abd al-Aziz and he is ibn Abi Salama narrated to us from

<sup>16</sup> al-Ḥalabi *al-Seerah al-Ḥalabiyah* [Vol. 1, p. 330]. al-Ḥalabi d. 1044AH.

Abdullah ibn al-Faḍl from Abu Salama ibn ‘Abdar-Raḥman from Abu Hurayrah he said the Messenger of Allah peace and blessings be upon him said: *I found myself in Hijr and the Quraysh were asking me about my night journey. I was asked about things pertaining to Bayt al-Maqdis which I could not preserve (in my mind). I was very much vexed, so vexed as I had never been before. Then Allah raised it (Bayt al-Maqdis) before my eyes. I looked towards it, and I gave them the information about whatever they questioned me I also saw myself among the group of Messengers. I saw Moses saying prayer and found him to be a well-built man as if he was a man of the tribe of Shanu’a. I saw Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him) offering prayer, of all men he had the closest resemblance with ‘Urwa ibn Mas’ud al-Thaqafi. I saw Ibrāhim (peace be upon him) offering prayer; he had the closest resemblance with your companion amongst people. When the time of prayer came I led them. When I completed the prayer, someone said: Here is Mālik, the keeper of the Hell; pay him salutations. I turned to him, but he preceded me in salutation.*<sup>17</sup>

In the *Sunan* of al-Nasā’i there is the following as part of a long *ḥadith*:

أخبرنا عمرو بن هشام قال حدثنا مخلد عن سعيد بن عبد العزيز قال حدثنا يزيد بن أبي مالك قال حدثنا أنس بن مالك أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: أتيت بدابة فوق الحمار ودون البغل، خطوها عند منتهى طرفها، فركبت ومعي جبريل عليه السلام فسرت إلى أن قال: ثم دخلت بيت المقدس فجمع لي الأنبياء عليهم السلام فقدمني جبريل حتى أمامتهم، ثم صعد بي إلى السماء الدنيا.

‘Amr ibn Hishām reported to us he said Makhlad narrated to us from Sa’eed ibn ‘Abd al-Aziz he said Yazeed ibn Abi Mālik narrated to us he said Anas ibn Mālik narrated to us that the Messenger of Allah peace and blessings be upon him said: *I was brought an animal that was larger than a donkey and smaller than a mule, whose stride could reach as far as it could see. I mounted it, and Jibreel was with me, and I set off [sic. until when he said] - Then I entered Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) where the Prophets peace be upon them were assembled*

<sup>17</sup> *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* [Vol. 1, no. 172]. The narration is also in *Sunan al-Kubra* of Imām al-Nasā’i, the chain though is slightly different, reported as: Muḥammad ibn Rāfi’ reported to us he said Ḥubayn ibn al-Muthanna narrated to us ‘Abd al-Aziz ibn Abi Salama narrated to us the specific channel and text to its end.

*for me, and Jibreel brought me forward to lead them in prayer. Then I was taken up to the first heaven.*<sup>18</sup>

The narration is widespread, being recorded in many other collections.<sup>19</sup> In *Mu'jam al-Awsaṭ* al-Ṭabarānī records a long narration:

حدثنا علي بن سعيد الرازي قال حدثنا الحسين بن عيسى بن ميسرة الرازي قال حدثنا هارون بن المغيرة قال حدثنا عنيسة بن سعيد عن ابن أبي ليلى عن أخيه عيسى عن أبيه عبد الرحمن بن أبي ليلى أن جبريل أتى النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم، بالبراق فحمله بين يديه وجعل يسير به؛ فساق الحديث حتى قال حتى أتينا بيت المقدس فإذا هو بنفر جلوس فقالوا حين أبصروه مرحبا بمُحمَّد النبي الأمي وإذا في النفر الجلوس شيخ فقال محمد، صلى الله عليه وسلم: من هذا؟ قال: أبوك إبراهيم، ثم سأله فقال: من هذا؟ قال: موسى، ثم سأله من هذا قال: هذا عيسى ابن مريم، ثم أقيمت الصلاة فتدافعوا حتى قَدَمُوا مُحمَّدًا، صلى الله عليه وسلم،... الخ

Ali ibn Sa'eed al-Rāzi narrated to us he said al-Ḥussein ibn Esa ibn Maysara al-Rāzi narrated to us he said Hārūn ibn Mughira narrated to us he said 'Anbasa ibn Sa'eed narrated to us from Ibn Abi Layla from his brother Esa from his brother 'Abdar-Raḥman ibn Abi Layla that Jibreel came to the Prophet peace and blessings be upon him with *al-Burāq* carrying him along making him walk [quoting the *ḥadith* until he said] Until he came to *Bayt al-Maqdis* where there happened to be a gathering and they said 'welcome Muḥammad the unlettered.' So he greeted the gathering and a man said: 'Muḥammad peace and blessings be upon him, who is this?' He said: Your father Ibrāhīm; then he asked and said who is this? He said Musa. Then he asked and said who is this? He replied: Jesus son of Mary. Then the time of prayer came, so they moved one another until they let Muḥammad (peace be upon him) led the prayer, etc.

I would submit that Ibn Abi Layla is Muḥammad ibn 'Abdar-Raḥman ibn Abi Layla who has weakness of memory; it is with this, *mursal*. In *al-Zawā'id*, al-Haythamy said: 'It is narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ*, it is *mursal*. We don't know of this report except from this *isnād* by Ibn Abi Layla with *irṣāl* in it; Muḥammad ibn 'Abdar-Raḥman ibn Abi Layla and he is *ḍaef* (weak).' However, as it appears in *Fath al-Bāri Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, where an

<sup>18</sup> *Sunan al-Nasā'i* [Vol. 1, no. 450]

<sup>19</sup> Four additional references are provided for, among them: al-Ṭabarānī, *Mu'jam al-Kabir* [Vol. 10, no. 9976], *Musnad al-Shāmiyān* [Vol. 1, no. 341] and *Musnad Abu Ya'la* [Vol. 8, no. 5036]

alternate is mentioned: 'And in the *ḥadith* of Abu Umāmah as per al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* then he mentioned prayer until the coming of Muḥammad.' But there is a citation provided in *al-Durr al-Manshur* which has: 'And it is reported by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Awsaṭ* and Ibn Mardawayh from the channel of Muḥammad ibn 'Abdar-Raḥman ibn Abi Layla from his brother Esa from his father 'Abdar-Raḥman from his father Abi Layla that Jibreel peace be upon him.'<sup>20</sup> Perhaps it is *mawṣul* via Ibn Mardawayh and Allah knows best.

On a final note to conclude this matter, the Arabs of Najd and Ḥijāz, who were mostly Adnānī, they were upon the law of Ismā'il albeit with many distortions prior to the advent of the Prophet peace and blessings be upon him. With the advent of the new law which he peace and blessings be upon him brought, that which was being followed by the Arabs was repealed one by one. For example, a girl being owned by her father and married off, this was repealed; the idea that women were not allowed to inherit, was repealed and many more like this. It is noteworthy that many of the great Imām's of *fiqh* missed these points.

<sup>20</sup> al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manshur* [Vol. 4, p. 272]