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MULLĀ JĪWAN’S METHODOLOGY IN HIS QUR’ĀN COMMENTARY *AL-TAFSĪRĀT AL-AḤMADIYYAH*

Kamil Zia Uddin*

Abstract: This article outlines the Ḥanafī subcontinent contribution to the field of *tafsīr*. More specifically, it provides a synopsis of Ḥanafī books on the genre of *aḥkām al-Qur’ān* (legal verses of the Qur’ān). Aḥmad b. Abū Sa’īd al-Junfūrī (d. 1717), more commonly known as Mullā Jīwan, was an Indian jurist and celebrated teacher of the Mughal Emperor Alamgir (d. 1707). Given he was a teacher of a Mughal emperor, his writings potentially had the capability to practice and influence *fiqh* at state level. In his introduction, Mullā Jīwan states three types of derivations from the selected *āyāt*: juristic rulings (*aḥkām fiqhiyyah*), Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and issues of creed (*masā’il al-‘aqīdah al-sunniyyah*). I use examples of *āyāt* for each derivation to highlight and identify the *manhaj* (methodology) of his *tafsīr*. Other sciences are mentioned in his *tafsīr*—like *naḥw* (grammar) or *taṣawwuf* (Sufism)—but they are not the salient objectives mentioned in his introduction nor are they as common as the abovementioned points. Mullā Jīwan is most known for his commentary on Abū al-Barakāt al-Nasafī’s (d. 1311) text on jurisprudence, *al-Manār*, titled *Nūr al-anwār sharḥ al-manār* (Light of Lights, Commentary on the Enlightened). Prior to writing that commentary, Mullā Jīwan wrote a juristic exegesis of the Qur’ān titled *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah fī bayān al-āyāt al-shar’iyyah* (Aḥmad’s Exegeses in Explaining Legal Verses). It was the first complete juristic exegesis written in the subcontinent. In this *tafsīr*, he presents each *mas’alah* (case study) based on the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī school of thought. Like much *aḥkām al-Qur’ān* literature, he did not organise the issues in accordance with juristic chapters; rather, he lists the issues in the order they occurred in the Qur’ān. He also cited the major works he used in his introduction. Mullā Jīwan selected about 500 *āyāt* from 63 *sūrah*s to elaborate on 276 issues of jurisprudence and creed.

Keywords: *Mullā Jīwan, tafsīr, fiqh, subcontinent, Ḥanafī, Māturīdī, Mughal*

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BRIEF HISTORY OF *TAFSĪR* IN THE SUBCONTINENT

Tafsīr (Qur'ānic exegesis) literature has existed in written form in the Indian subcontinent since the 15th century. Muḥammad Salim Kidwai, in his book *Hindustānī mufasssīrīn aur un kī 'arbī tafsīray* (Indian Exegetes and their Arabic Exegeses), lists Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Tahānaysarī Gujrātī's (d. 1417) work, titled *Kāshif al-ḥaqā'iq wa qāmūs al-daqa'iq* (Unveiler of Realities and Concordance of Subtleties), as the first Arabic *tafsīr* produced in the subcontinent.¹ However, Muḥammad Ṭāhir Panjapīrī (d. 1907), in his bio-bibliographical work on Qur'ānic exegetes, gives an entry on 'Alī b Aḥmad al-Urmawī, also known as al-Muhā'imī, and lists his death as 1310, although others give it as 1432. He wrote a *tafsīr* titled *Tabṣīrat al-Raḥmān wa taysīr al-Mannān* (The Enlightenment of the All-Merciful and the Facilitation of the Benefactor). Another widely accepted *tafsīr*, but written in Persian, is *Fath al-'Azīz* (Opening of the Mighty), also known as *Tafsīr 'Azīzī*, by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz (d. 1824). Many scholars show severe remorse at the fact that a large portion of this *tafsīr* was lost due to the political instability of the time, but what has remained is unique and unparalleled.² According to Ḥājji Rafī' al-Dīn Fārūqī Murādabādī, Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz's *tafsīr* had certain characteristics that transformed the work into a unique *tafsīr* contribution; some of these were the exceptional classification of subjects through headings and discussions on mutual connections between different *āyāt* (verses).³ There were also more focused *tafsīr* produced like *al-Fath al-qudsī fī tafsīr Āyat al-Kursī* (The Sacred Opening regarding the Exegesis of the Throne Verse) by Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Qādir (d. 1629) and *Shajarat al-tūr fī sharḥ Āyat al-Nūr* (The Tree of the Mountain regarding the Explanation of the Verse of Light) by Muḥammad 'Alī b. Abi Ṭālib b Abdullah (d. 1766).⁴ Even derivative *tafsīr* in the rich form of commentary (*hāshiyah/sharḥ*) like Wajīh al-Dīn Gujrātī's (d. 1590) super-commentary on *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*, Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī's (d. 1601) commentary on *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*⁵ and Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥaqq b Shāh's (d. 1914) commentary on *Tafsīr al-Nasafī*. Other antecedental genres of *tafsīr* like Shāh Walīullah's (d. 1762) contribution to *uṣūl al-tafsīr* (principles of exegesis), *gharīb al-Qur'ān* (Qur'ānic vocabulary) and the translation of the Qur'ān's meanings also existed and thrived in the subcontinent.

This article focuses on a Mughal-era jurist, Mullā Jīwan and his methodology in *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, which is the first complete work from the genre of *aḥkām al-Qur'ān* (legal verses of the Qur'ān) produced in the subcontinent. Regarding Mullā Jīwan, his work on Islamic jurisprudence, *Nūr al-Anwār* (Light of Lights), has received much scholarly attention,

¹ Muḥammad Salim Kidwai, *Hindustānī mufasssīrīn aur un kī 'arbī tafsīray* [Indian Exegetes and their Arabic Exegeses] (New Delhi: Maktabah Jāmi'ah Limited, 2011), 24.

² Khalid Mahmood, *Āthār al-Tanzīl* [Impacts of Revelation] (Lahore: Daftar Dār al-Ma'ārif, n.d.), vol. 2, 383.

³ Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz: Puritanism, Sectarian, Polemics, and Jihād* (Lahore: Suhail Academy, 2004), 106. Rizvi was quoting from Mawlawi Ḥājji Rafī' al-Dīn Fārūqī Murādabādī, *Risalah al-nazar 'ala tafsīr al-Azīzī* (Rampur MS), f. 22b.

⁴ See the index of *Hindustānī Mufasssīrīn* for a more exhaustive list of Arabic *tafsīr* produced in the subcontinent.

⁵ Mullā 'Alī al-Qārī, though he lived most of his life in Makkah, was born in Herat (modern day Afghanistan), so can be included as part of the subcontinent legacy.

but his Qur'ān commentary has received very little⁶ and is in great need of a *tahqīq* (scholarly edit).⁷ The reason and benefits of studying this work are discussed below.

Aḥmad b. Abū Sa'īd al-Junfūrī (d. 1717), more commonly known as Mullā Jīwan, was an Indian jurist and celebrated teacher of the Mughal Emperor Alamgir (d. 1707) whose lengthy reign was from 1658 to 1707. Some even claim that the lineage of this influential exegete goes back to the first Caliph Abū Bakr, Allah be pleased with him.⁸ Given his scholastic relationship with the emperor, his writings had the potential for practical application at the national level. This scholarly relationship between exegetes and emperors was not new; previously Emperor Jahangir (d. 1627) had delegated Sayyid Muḥammad Riḍawī (d. 1644) with the task of translating the Qur'ān into Persian. More recently, the Afghanistan government funded the widely read Urdu *tafsīr* of Mawlānā Shabbir Aḥmad 'Uthmān (d. 1949), which was initiated by his teacher Shaykh al-Hind Mawlānā Maḥmūd Ḥasan (d. 1920), to be translated into Persian and published in three volumes by the government.⁹

MULLĀ JĪWAN AS A *MUFASSIR* (EXEGETE)

A man endowed with a great memory, Mullā Jīwan is most renowned for his commentary on Abū al-Barakāt al-Nasafī's (d. 1311) text on the principles of Islamic jurisprudence, *al-Manār* (The Enlightened), titled *Nūr al-anwār sharḥ al-manār*. This text in Islamic jurisprudence is a staple in Dars-i-Nizami curriculums.¹⁰ Prior to writing that commentary, Mullā Jīwan wrote a juristic exegesis of the Qur'ān titled *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah fī bayān al-āyāt al-shar'īyyah* (Aḥmad's Exegeses in Explaining Legal verses).¹¹ Mullā Jīwan states he began writing the juridical exegesis in 1654 at the young age of 16 while he was still studying various books in *uṣūl* (jurisprudence) and *manṭiq* (logic). He finished writing it in 1658 at the age of 21. However, he did not immediately publish the work. In 1664, at the age of 27, he

⁶ Most of the secondary literature on *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah* is in Arabic or Urdu, as the reader will see from the references and footnotes. However, some works are in English, like SherAli Tareen's article titled "South Asian Qur'ān Commentaries and Translations: A Preliminary Intellectual History," and even a Turkish thesis "Molla Civen ve Et-Tefsīratu'l-Ahmediyye Adli Ahkam Ayetleri Tefsiri" [Mullā Jīwan and his Legal Commentary Tafsīrāt Aḥmadiyyah] by Murat Chomaev that highlight the importance of this *tafsīr*.

⁷ The Dār Nūr al-Ṣabāh edition of this work provides a detailed overview of the political, social and intellectual spheres during Mullā Jīwan's era. It also provides an accurate biography of him and his methodology in jurisprudence. Abū Sa'īd Aḥmad Mullā Jīwan, *Nūr al-anwār fī sharḥ al-Manār* [Light of Lights, Commentary on the Enlightened] (Damascus: Dār Nūr al-Ṣabāh & Maktabah Amīr, 2015).

⁸ Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Sibḥat al-marjān fī āthār Hindustān* [Beads of Pearls on the Relics of India], ed. Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Ṭurayḥī (Beirut: Dār al-Rāfidain, 2015), 151-152.

⁹ Mahmood, *Āthār al-Tanzīl*, vol. 2, 383.

¹⁰ For a more detailed overview of the Dars-i-Nizami curriculum and its historical significance, see Mulla Saaleh, "A Reckoning with the Dars-i-Nizami," Darul Qasim, accessed March 23, 2022, <https://darulqasim.org/dars-i-nizami/>.

¹¹ Jamīl Aḥmad lists the complete title as *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah fī bayān al-āyāt al-shar'īyyah ma'a ta'rīfāt al-masā'il al-fiqhiyyah* in his book *Ḥarakat al-ta'līf bi al-lughah al-'Arabiyyah fī iqlīm al-Shimālī al-Hindī fī al-qarnayn al-thāmin 'ashar wa al-tāsi' 'ashar* [Movement of Writing in the Arabic Language in Northern India in the 18th and 19th Centuries] (Damascus: Wizārat al-thaqafah wal-irshād al-qawmī, 1977), 21.

reviewed and edited the work, subsequently making it available after completing his commentary on *al-Manār*.¹²

As stated earlier, it was the first complete juristic exegesis written in the subcontinent. Al-Kawtharī in his introduction to al-Bayhaqī's (d. 1066) *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* states the most influential Ḥanafī works in this genre were written by: 'Alī b Mūsā al-Qummī (d. 961), Abū Ja'far al-Ṭahāwī (d. 971), Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ (d. 980), Jamāl al-Dīn b. Sirāj al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 771) and Mullā Jīwan. Despite this *tafsīr* being the shortest of the aforementioned works, al-Kawtharī states it is still beneficial.¹³ 'Allāmah Khalid Mahmood (d. 2020), a polymathic product of Deoband, adds two other works to this genre that can be traced back to the subcontinent: Qāḍī Thanāullah Pānīpatī's *Tafsīr al-Madharī* (d. 1810)¹⁴ and an *aḥkām al-Qur'ān* work written under the supervision of Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī Thanwī (d. 1943).¹⁵

In this *tafsīr*, Mullā Jīwan presents each *mas'alah* (case study) based on the Ḥanafī/Māturīdī school of thought. Like most *aḥkām al-Qur'ān* literature, he did not organise the issues according to juristic chapters; rather, he lists the issues in the order they occur in the Qur'ān. He also cites the major works he used in his introduction. Mullā Jīwan selected about 500 *āyāt* from 63 *sūrahs* to elaborate on 276 issues of jurisprudence and creed. The selection of 500

¹² Sa'īd Ḥasan al-Nadwī states the review occurred in 1085, but all three editions of the book that I had access to, as well as the manuscripts, list it as 1075. Sa'īd Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī Nadwī, *al-Maktabah al-Qur'āniyyah fī al-Hind fī al-qarn al-thānī 'ashar al-hijrī al-maṭbū' minhā wa-al-makhtūṭ* [The Qur'ānic Corpus in India during the 12th Century Hijri: Printed Works and Manuscripts] (Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2017), 151.

¹³ Al-Kawtharī, *Muqaddimāt al-Imām al-Kawtharī* [Introductions of Imam al-Kawtharī] (Karachi: HM Saeed Company, n.d.), 469.

¹⁴ This *tafsīr* is named after his shaykh Mirza Mazhar Jan-e-Janan Dehlawi (d. 1699). It is not limited to juridical and legal discussions, but the author, who was also a student of Shāh Waliullah, was known as the Bayhaqī of his time; thus, his *tafsīr* is encyclopaedic in content. See Thanāullah Pānīpatī's *Tafsīr al-Mazharī* [Mazharī's Exegesis] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2019) vol. 1, 5.

¹⁵ There were four original authors for this project. Mawlānā Zafar Aḥmad al-'Uthmānī (d. 1974) was assigned from the beginning to the end of Sūrat al-Nisā', which were published in volumes 1 and 2 by Idārat al-Qur'ān. He was also assigned from Sūrat al-Mā'idah to Sūrat al-Tawbah but died before completing it. The second author was Mufti Muḥammad Shafī' (d. 1976), and he was assigned from Sūrat al-Shu'arā' to Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt and is presented in volumes 3 and 4 by the same publisher. The third author was Ml. Muḥammad Idrīs al-Khandlāwī (d. 1974) and was assigned from Sūrat Qāf to the end of the *muṣḥaf*. What he was able to complete is published in volume 5. The five volumes were published by Idārat al-Qur'ān. See Zafar Aḥmad al-'Uthmānī, Muḥammad Shafī' and Muḥammad Idrīs al-Khandlāwī *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān* [Legal Verses of the Qur'ān] (Karachi: Idārat al-Qur'ān, 1987). Further details can also be found in Aḥmad Ḥusayn Ismā'īl Ḥusayn, *Manhaj talāmīdh Ḥakīm al-Ummah al-shaykh Ashraf 'Alī al-Tahānawī fī al-tafsīr: kitāb aḥkām al-Qur'ān namūdhajā* [Methodology of Ashraf Ali Thanvi's Students in *Tafsīr*: A Case Study of their Work on *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān*] (Amman: Dār al-Faṭḥ lil-Dirāsāt wa-al-Nashr, 2011).

The remaining volumes were completed by Mawlānā Jamīl Aḥmad al-Thānwī (d. 1994) and Mufti Abd al-Shakūr al-Tirmidhī. The former was assigned from Sūrat Yūnus to Sūrat al-Furqān, and the latter completed the unfinished portions. Their portions were published in 13 volumes (volumes 6-18) separately by Idārat Ashraf al-taḥqīq. See 'Abd al-Shakūr al-Tirmidhī, Jamīl Aḥmad al-Thānwī, *Aḥkām al-Qur'ān 'alā daw' mā afādahu Ḥakīm al-Ummah Ashraf 'Alī al-Thahānawī* [Legal Verses of the Qur'ān in Light of what was Benefitted from Mawlānā Ashraf 'Alī al-Thānwī] (Lahore: Idārat Ashraf al-taḥqīq, 2016).

legal verses of the Qur'ān was made famous by al-Ghazālī (d. 1111) in his work on theoretical jurisprudence titled *al-Mustasfā*.¹⁶

MAIN SOURCES OF AL-TAFSĪRĀT AL-AḤMADIYYAH

Sources cited by Mullā Jīwan in his introduction are listed below.

Source genre	Author	Title
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī (d. 1144)	<i>al-Kashshāf</i>
<i>Tafsīr</i>	al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1292)	<i>Anwār al-Tanzīl</i>
<i>Tafsīr</i>	al-Nasafī (d. 1310)	<i>Madārik al-Tanzīl</i>
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Kāshifī (d. 1500)	<i>Tafsīr Ḥusaynī</i> ¹⁷
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan al-Zāhidī (d. 1154)	<i>Laṭā'if al-tafsīr</i> also known as <i>Tafsīr Zāhidī</i>
<i>Tafsīr</i>	al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505)	<i>al-Itqān</i>
<i>Tafsīr</i>	Zaḥīr al-Sharī'ah al-Gawrī (d.?) ¹⁸	?
<i>Fiqh</i>	Ṣadr al-Sharī'ah al-Maḥbūbī (d. 1347)	<i>Sharḥ al-wiqāyah</i> and its commentaries
<i>Fiqh</i>	Al-Marghīnānī (d. 1197)	<i>al-Hidāyah</i> and its commentaries
<i>Fiqh</i>	Rukn al-Dīn b. Ḥussām al-Dīn al-Nākūrī (d.?) ¹⁹	<i>al-Fatāwā al-Ḥammādiyyah</i>
<i>Uṣūl</i>	Fakhr al-Islam Ali b. Muḥammad al-Bazdawī (d. 1010)	<i>Uṣūl al-Bazdawī</i>
<i>Uṣūl</i>	'Abd al-'Azīz al-Bukhārī (d. 1329)	<i>Kashf al-Asrār</i>
<i>Uṣūl</i>	'Alā' al-Dīn al-Bukhārī (d. 1330)	<i>Muntakhab al-Ḥusāmī</i> along with its commentary <i>Kitāb al-Taḥqīq</i>
<i>Uṣūl</i>	Ṣadr al-Sharī'ah al-Maḥbūbī (d. 1347)	<i>al-Tawḍīḥ</i> along with its commentary <i>al-Talwīḥ</i>
<i>Uṣūl</i>	Jamāl al-Dīn Ibn al-Ḥājjib al-Mālikī (d. 1249)	<i>Mukhtaṣar uṣūl Ibn al-Ḥājjib</i>
<i>Kalām</i>	al-Taftāzānī (d. 1390) along with the commentary of al-Khayālī (d. 1457)	<i>Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id</i>
<i>Kalām</i>	'Aḍud al-Dīn al-lījī (d. 1355) with its commentary by al-Jurjānī (d. 1414)	<i>al-Mawāqif</i>

¹⁶ Abū Ḥamīd Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Al-Mustasfā min 'ilm al-uṣūl* [The Pure from Islamic Jurisprudence], ed. Ḥamzah ibn Zuhayr Ḥāfiẓ (Madinah Munawwarah: Shirkat al-Madinah al-Munawwarah li-ṭibā'ah, 1992), vol. 4, 6.

¹⁷ *Kashf al-zunūn* lists the title of this work as *al-Mawāhib al-'Aliyyah*. Dr. 'Allamah Khalid Mahmood mentions this work was previously studied by *ḥadīth* scholars in Delhi. See Mahmood, *Āthār al-Tanzīl*, vol. 2, 383. The author seems to be more famous for his work on ethics: *Anvar-i suhayli* [Lights of Suhayl].

¹⁸ I have come across six occasions where this author is mentioned in the text. They are pages 24, 67, 92, 6626, 642 and 664 in the DKI edition. However, I have yet to find details on the author and his text.

¹⁹ *al-Fatāwā al-Ḥammādiyyah* is a book written by Rukn al-Dīn b. Ḥussām al-Dīn al-Nākūrī (d. ?). He was a mufti from the Gujrat area. He wrote this work by the order of a judge named Ḥammād al-Dīn b. Muḥammad Akram al-Gujrātī. In his introduction he lists the 120 sources he used, which ranged from *fiqh*, *uṣūl*, *ḥadīth* and *tafsīr*. See Muḥammad Ḥifẓ al-Raḥmān al-Kumillā'ī, *Al-Budūr al-muḍī'ah fī tarājim al-Hanafīyyah* [Illuminated Moons on the Biobibliographies of the Hanafites] (Dhakarta: Dār al-Ṣāliḥ, 2018), vol. 7, 308. A manuscript of this work is available.

Other books quoted in the text but not mentioned in the *muqaddimah* (introduction):

- *Al-Fatāwā al-Tātārkhāniyyah* by Farīd al-Dīn (d. 1384)
- *‘Awārif al-ma‘ārif* by Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ ‘Umar b. Muḥammad al-Suhrawardī (d. 1234)
- *Dhakhīrat al-mulūk* (Persian) by ‘Alī b. Shihāb al-Dīn al-Hamadānī (d. 1384)
- *Al-Muṭawwal sharḥ al-talkhīs* by al-Taftāzānī
- *Sharḥ al-maqāsid* by al-Taftāzānī
- *Ṭawālī ‘al-anwār fī uṣūl al-dīn* by al-Bayḍawī

Since the clearest path to understanding the methodology of an exegete is to read large portions of his *tafsīr*, I have carefully selected examples to highlight and analyse his methodology. I am using the examples as a platform to discuss the finer points of his *tafsīr* and his overall contribution to this field.

EXAMPLES OF *AḤKĀM FIQHĪYYAH* (LEGAL RULINGS)

Example 1: Case Study on not Fleeing from Infectious Diseases and Plagues

Sūrat al-Baqarah, āyah 243: Have you not considered those departed from their dwellings while they were *‘ulūf* (in thousands), ***ḥadhar al-mawt* (fearful of death)** whereupon Allah said to them: Die all of you! And, thereafter, brought them back to life? Indeed, Allah is ever bountiful to people. But most people do not give thanks for the plenty Allah gives them.²⁰

Mullā Jīwan starts this entry by stating there are numerous *āyāt* on the topic of not fleeing from death. This is the first one in the order of the *muṣḥaf*, thus he chooses to explain this case. This is a consistent part of his methodology, which is also found for the case of *al-mi‘rāj* (ascension) mentioned in the beginning of *Sūrat al-Isrā’* without a separate entry for the case in *Sūrat al-Najm*. This statement also shows us he wrote this *tafsīr* in the order of the *muṣḥaf*, which is not the case for many other exegetical works like *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* by al-Rāzī (d. 1209) and *Irshād ‘aql al-salīm* by Abū al-Su‘ūd Efendi (d. 1574). He then goes on to discuss the background circumstances detailing the location of reference in the *āyah* and the possible angels and prophet involved quoting from *Tafsīr Ḥusaynī*.

After mentioning different interpretations for what *‘ulūf* could mean, he mentions a criticism that al-Zamakhsharī had against those who state *ulūf* as the plural of *ālīf* (intimate companion). Al-Zamakhsharī states it is not established that *ulūf* is plural of *ālīf*. However, that does not mean there is no linguistic connection between the two words, as al-Rāzī clarifies in his *tafsīr*.²¹

²⁰ The base translation of all *āyāt* is from Ahmad Zaki Hammad’s translation of the Qur’ān. However, I edited the translation as needed to be in line with what Mullā Jīwan intended.

²¹ For details, see al-Ḥusayn ibn Muḥammad Ṭībī, *Futūḥ al-ghayb fī al-kashf ‘an qinā’ al-rayb: wa-huwa ḥāshiyat al-Ṭībī ‘alā al-Kashshāf* [Openings of the Unseen in Unveiling the Mask of Doubt: A Marginalia on al-Kashshāf] (Dubai: Jā’izat Dubayy al-Dawaliyyah lil-Qur’ān al-Karīm, 2013).

After mentioning other opinions, Mullā Jīwan mentions the main common denominator stating *wa 'alā kulli taqdīr* (regardless of who or what is specifically intended) the main objective of the *āyah* is to alert the listeners of what happened not necessarily to whom it happened. The legal ruling derived is that it is prohibited to enter a land in which a plague is occurring, which is established from a previous *āyah* from the same *sūrah*, *āyah* 195, “And thus shall you spend in the path of Allah. Yet do not cast your souls, by your own hands, into *tahluka* (destruction). Rather do good to one and all. Indeed Allah loves those who excel in good.” This *āyah* establishes the prohibition of leaving a land in which a plague occurred.

Mullā Jīwan then goes on to discuss an apparent contradiction with other *āyāt*, namely *Sūrat al-Jumu'a āyah* 8, “Indeed, death from which you flee, shall, most surely, encounter you.” The apparent contradiction is how can one implement all three *āyāt* at the same time. Mulla Jīwan synthesises the application of the *āyāt* keeping in line the principle that there is no *ta'arūḍ* (contradiction) in the Qur'ān. He concludes by substantiating this legal ruling from *ḥadīth*. Prophet Muḥammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “The one who flees from a plague is like the one who flees from his military duty (*al-zahf*).”²²

Example 2: Case Study on Disbelievers (*Kuffār*) not having any Legal Authority (*Wilāyah*) over Believers

Sūrat al-Nisā', āyah 141: Those who await misfortune to befall you; but if there is for you a victory from Allah, they say: Were we not with you? But when the disbelievers have a measure, they say: Did we not have the advantage over you and shield you against the believers? Indeed, Allah shall judge between you all on the Day of Resurrection. **And never will Allah make a way for the disbelievers to overcome the believers.**

Mullā Jīwan lived during Mughal rule of India, which was a ruling minority at the time. Thus, it is interesting to see him extrapolate this *āyah*.

Mullā Jīwan establishes a principle (*aṣl*) from this *āyah*, which is that Allah has not given legal authority to the disbelievers over the believers. He then goes on to mention, by way of example, consequent cases in which this principle is applied. For example:

1. The testimony of a disbeliever against a Muslim
2. The guardianship of a disbeliever in a marriage contract
3. Inheriting from a Muslim
4. Purchasing a Muslim slave
5. Lack of possession of a Muslim's wealth after capturing (*istīlā'*) it
6. Impermissibility for the disbelievers to establish their own militia, government, etc.

Mullā Jīwan mentions there are many other cases that are developed and substantiated based on this principle, which can be found in the more voluminous works of jurisprudence. He concludes by asserting this is not the only *āyah* that discusses this concept; rather, *āyah* 28 of

²² *Musnad of Aḥmad*, bāb musnad Jābir b. 'Abdullah, *ḥadīth* no. 14568. See Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad Lil-Imām Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ḥanbal*, al-Ṭab'ah 2, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1946).

Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān²³ and *āyah* 57 of Sūrat al-Mā’idah²⁴ also discuss this concept emphatically as well as other *āyāt*.

Example 3: Case Study on the Prohibition of Music (*al-Taghannī*)

Sūrat Luqmān, āyah 6: Yet among humankind, there are those **who traffic in *lahw al-ḥadīth* (idle tales)**, without knowledge, so as to lead astray from the path of Allah...

Mullā Jīwan states this issue is one of the most controversial due to the seemingly contradictory *āyāt* and *aḥādīth*. There are also numerous assertions made by various scholars that add to the confusion of the issue at hand.

This is one of the longer entries in this book and shows how Mullā Jīwan addresses apparent inconsistencies among jurists. He starts by mentioning the possible causes of revelation (*sabab al-nuzūl*), as these, along with the wording of the *āyah*, play a large role on the range of derivation and application of rules. In this entry, we also see him use the phrase “*al-Imam al-Zāhid*,” and there seems to be confusion on to whom he is referring. Sa‘īd Ḥasan al-Nadwī claims it is referring to al-Zamakhsharī, the author of *al-Kashshāf*; however, after tracing the references in the book to what is mentioned in *al-Kashshāf*, it becomes clear that this ascription is not accurate.²⁵ For example, in Sūrat al-Mumtaḥinah, *āyah* 12, he quotes “*al-Imām al-Zāhid*” and “*Ṣāhib al-Kashshāf*” in back-to-back lines. Later in the same entry, he quotes “*al-Imām al-Zāhid*” and “*al-Ḥusaynī*” in consecutive order as well, so that excludes the often-quoted Persian exegete from that reference. The same can be said for “*Zahīr al-Sharī‘ah al-Ghawrī*,” who is mentioned consecutively with the enigmatic “*al-Imām al-Zāhid*” in Sūrat al-Baqarah, *āyah* 43.²⁶ It is obviously not referring to al-Suyūṭī’s *al-Itqān* due to the type of content quoted from and attributed to “*al-Imām al-Zāhid*.”²⁷ I mention these exclusions because editors of this work and even its Urdu translation²⁸ do not accurately represent how many books of *tafsīr* he quoted in the introduction. After much research and manuscript cross-referencing, I was able to identify that the enigmatic “*Zāhid*” being referred to is Abū Naṣr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan Darwāzaqī Zāhidī.²⁹ Intriguingly enough, Mullā Jīwan does not mention him once by name, nor does he mention the title *Laṭā‘if al-tafsīr*. He does mention that such and such was mentioned in *al-Zāhidī* but does not specifically say *Tafsīr Zāhidī*. Additionally, it seems

²³ “Let not the believers take the disbelievers as allies instead of the believers. And whoever does this has nothing from God—except if you are safeguarding against a genuine fear from them. And God warns you to beware of Him. For to God is the ultimate destiny.”

²⁴ “Oh you who believe! You shall not take as allies those who take your religion for mockery and play, from those who have been given the scripture before you, or the disbelievers. And fear God, if, Indeed, you are believers.”

²⁵ Nadwī, *al-Maktabah al-Qur‘āniyyah*, 157.

²⁶ Aḥmad b. Abī Sa‘īd Mullā Jīwan, *Al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah fī bayān al-āyāt al-shar‘iyyah* [Aḥmad’s Exegeses in Explaining Legal Verses] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2010), 688.

²⁷ To substantiate it, he also mentions them consecutively in *Sūrat al-Baqarah*. See Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 29.

²⁸ Aḥmad bin ‘Alī Sa‘īd. *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah: fī bayān al-āyāt al-shar‘iyyah* [Urdu Translation of Tafsīrāt Aḥmadiyyah], trans. Muḥammad Sharaf al-Dīn (Lahore: Diyā’ al-Qur‘ān Publications, 2006).

²⁹ I was able to acquire a complete manuscript of *Tafsīr Zāhidī* from Raza library in Rampur. It is written in Arabic and Persian. Details can be found in Travis Zadeh, *The Vernacular Qur‘ān: Translation and the Rise of Persian Exegesis* (London: Oxford University Press, 2012), 572-573.

editors and translators of this work misread his introduction due to its vagueness and usage of rhyme, which is why I inserted the table above. For Mullā Jīwan to quote Zāhidī the way he did, this *tafsīr* must have been widely read and taught during his time.

The Ḥanafī bio-bibliographical works³⁰ do not give much information about Zāhidī except that he was a teacher of a person named al-‘Uqaylī. However, ‘Alī Shawwākh Ishāq, in his encyclopaedic work on Qur’ān literature, mentions Zāhidī wrote this *tafsīr* in 1125 and lists the places where its manuscripts can be found in Iran, Turkey and the subcontinent.³¹

EXAMPLES FOR PRINCIPLES OF ISLAMIC JURISPRUDENCE (*UṢŪL AL-FIQH*)

Example 1: Case Study on Permissibility (Ibāḥah) being the Default in all Things

Sūrat al-Baqarah, āyah 29: He is the one who created *lakum* (for you) all that is in the earth. Then He directed Himself toward the heaven, and He fashioned it into seven heavens. He is all knowing of all things.

Mullā Jīwan’s entries on Islamic legal theories show how he has proven certain *uṣūlī* concepts through *āyāt*, thus showing the cogency and consistency of Qur’ānic exegesis. After acknowledging that Sūrat al-Fātiḥah is the source and summary of juristic rulings, jurisprudence and issues of creed, he starts the first entry of the book discussing the default (*aṣl*) state of things. He goes on to present opposing views and what would be the juridical results of the different opinions (*thamarat al-khilāf*). Quoting al-Karkhī (d. 1545) and Abū Bakr al-Rāzī [al-Jaṣṣāṣ] (d. 1511) he states that the *āyah* “He created *for* you” (*khalāqa lakum*) proves that if things are suitable for deriving benefit, then the default will be permissibility. He then proceeds to discuss the crux of the issue by stating,

al-Imām Fakhr al-Islam [al-Bazdawī, d.493/1100] states under the discussion of apparent contradiction [of textual evidence] that when permitter (*mubīḥ*) and prohibitor (*muḥarrim*) contradict one another, the prohibitor will be preferred due to it being the ensuing ruling derived by [inferred] indication. If permissibility is the default case, then the prohibitor must have appeared later to abrogate it. However, if we implement permissibility [in the above case] and state that permitter is the ensuing implemented ruling, then that would mandate multiple abrogations. This is since permissibility is the default, and thus the prohibitor abrogated it. Then the accidental (*‘arīḍī*) (meaning non-essential) permitter would have abrogated the prohibitor.³²

³⁰ Al-Kumillā’ī, *Al-Budūr al-muḍī’ah*, vol. 2, 300; ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Qurashī, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍī’ah* [Illuminated Pearls] (Giza: Dār Hijr, 1993), vol. 1, 156.

³¹ ‘Alī Shawwākh Ishāq, *Mu’jam muṣannafāt al-Qur’ān al-Karīm* [Encyclopedia of Qur’ānic Publications] (Riyadh: Dār al-Rifā’ī, 1983), vol. 2, 190-191.

³² Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 22.

Due to the complexity and difficulty of the English translation, I have included the Arabic text.

وذكر الإمام فخر الإسلام في بحث المعارضة أنه إذا تعارض المبيح والمحرم ترجح المحرم لتأخره دلالة، فإن الإباحة لما كانت أصلية في الأشياء كان المحرم لتأخره ناسخاً للمبيح. وأما إذا عَمَلْنَا بالمبيح وجعلناه مؤخرًا تكرر النسخ؛ لأن الإباحة لما كانت أصلية في كل شيء كان المحرم ناسخاً له، ثم كان المبيح العارضي ناسخاً للمحرم

Al-Bazdawī goes on to discuss how this default is not an original designation due to it contradicting *āyah* 36 from Sūrat al-Qiyāmah, “Does man think that he is to be left to no end?” Rather, this became the default during the transitional period (*fatrah*) between Prophet ‘Īsā and Prophet Muḥammad (may Allah bless them and grant them peace). He then goes on to show this default state does not mean that everything is permissible; rather, it shows the spectrum of legal rulings is dependent on the range of proofs.³³

Mullā Jīwan ends the entry by discussing the issue of *istiwā’*. He also negates the attribution of place and direction to the Divine. The entry ends with asking and answering questions related to which was created first, the skies or the earth, and how many skies and earths exist.³⁴

Example 2: Case Study on Consensus (Ijmā’) being a Legal Proof

Sūrat al-Baqarah, āyah 143: And so it is that We have made you *umma wasaṭa* (the Community of the Midmost Way) to stand as witnesses before all people, and for the Messenger, to be a witness before you.

Consensus of qualified scholars (mujtahids) has been used as a legal device in many cases. The objective of Mullā Jīwan is to demonstrate that *ijmā’* has epistemological basis in the Qur’ān. Among the scholars that use this *āyah* for this justification are Abū Mansūr al-Māturīdī (d. 944). In the exegesis of this *āyah*, Mullā Jīwan quotes al-Māturīdī through al-Nasafī’s *Madārik*³⁵ but in other places he seems to quote him directly.³⁶

He concludes the entry by mentioning two other *āyāt* that prove the juristic legality of *ijmā’*, Sūrat Al Imran *āyah* 110³⁷ and Sūrat al-Nisā’ *āyah* 115.³⁸ In the former *sūrah*, he mentions additional details regarding *ijmā’* and determines the *āyah* in Sūrat al-Nisā’ is definitive (*muḥkamah*) for proving consensus. There he also discusses certain types of *ijmā’* and whose opinion would qualify for consideration. In previous cases (like the case of the plagues or ascension), we saw Mullā Jīwan skip the discussions of the same topic when it comes elsewhere in the Qur’ān; however, in this case, one would have to read multiple sections of the book to see the full contribution to the topic of *ijmā’*.

Example 3: Case Study on Cases of Ijtihād

Sūrat al-Anbiyā’, āyah 78-79: And David and Solomon when they rendered judgement in the tillage. Behold! The sheep of a people foraged in it. Thus to their judgments, We bore

³³ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 22-23.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 48.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 39, 602.

³⁷ “You are the best Community ever brought forth for humankind: You enjoin what is right. And you forbid what is wrong. And you believe in God. Yet if only the People of the Scripture had believed! It most surely would have been better for them. Among them, there are believers. But most of them are ungodly.”

³⁸ “But whoever rebels against the Messenger after the guidance has become clear to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We shall turn him over to that which he has turned. And We shall roast him in Hell, and what an evil destination it is.”

witness. Yet We caused Solomon **to understand it**. And to each one We gave wisdom, as well as knowledge.

In his second and last entry of *Sūrat al-Anbiyā'*, Mullā Jīwan presents a lengthy discussion on using legal aptitude. His initial analysis of the *āyah* is to fill in the blanks so the immediate intent can be understood. He then gets into the background story derived from *tafsīr* sources that used Judeo-Christian (*isrā'iliyyāt*) reports. He also quotes al-Jaṣṣāṣ, who is a primary precedent in the field of Ḥanafī juristic exegesis. He discusses the implications of *ijtihād* and how that may apply to two prophets who were “given *ilm* and *ḥukm*” and how it is justifiable to have four schools of thought.³⁹

Throughout this entry, Mullā Jīwan employs a methodology termed in Arabic as *uslūb al-fanqalah*, meaning if you, as an antagonist, assert this, then I will respond with this. For example, “If you say that the truth (*al-ḥaqq*), in matters of dispute, can only be with one, then how do you justify the four schools of thought? I would respond by saying...”⁴⁰ Another example he gives is,

If an antagonist were to say that why should we follow Abū Ḥanīfa if Allah and His Messenger never commanded us to do so? On top of that, Abū Ḥanīfa himself never asked to be followed. I would respond by saying...⁴¹

He answers these and other lingering questions in a way, he argues, no one before him has done.⁴² He concludes by stating,

This is a lengthy chapter, but we shall suffice with this amount. These gallant discussions and refined benefits, the spider of my heart has webbed them together and the water of my well has graced you with it. None have preceded me [in producing] its like. The core issue, even though it is common amongst the jurists, it has not been proven through substantiated and validated evidences. It is upon you to reflect and be just. Allah knows best what is correct.⁴³

Mullā Jīwan, throughout his *tafsīr*, attempts to represent the correct conclusion on these pressing issues but also re-presents them to his audience in a convincing way.

EXAMPLES OF SUNNI CREEDAL ISSUES (*MASĀ'IL AL-'AQĪDAH AL-SUNNIYYAH*)

Example 1: Case Study on Oneness (al-Tawḥīd) and Divine Attributes (al-Ṣifāt)

Sūrat al-Baqarah, āyah 255 (Āyat al-Kursī): Allah! There is no god but Him, the All-Living, the Self-Subsisting. Slumber does not overtake Him, nor does sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens, and all that is in the earth. Who is it that shall intercede with Him, except by His permission? He knows what lies before them and what lies behind them. And

³⁹ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 502, 503.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 504.

⁴¹ Ibid, 504.

⁴² Ibid., 504-508.

⁴³ Ibid., 508.

they do not comprehend anything of His knowledge—except that which He wills. His Seat (*kursiyuhu*) encompasses the heavens and the earth, and preserving them does not fatigue Him. For He is the Ever-Exalted, the Magnificent.

Many *āyāt* could be chosen for this topic. However, Mullā Jīwan’s methodology of choosing certain *āyāt* over others is addressed at the beginning of this entry. He chooses *āyāt* that are universal but remarkably select and complete the main parameters of the topic. This means he could have chosen many *āyāt* to discuss *al-tawhīd* and *al-ṣifāt*, but he has chosen *Āyat al-Kursī* for this topic. He defines the main Divine Names mentioned and compares this *āyah* with one from Sūrat al-Mā’idah, *āyah* 120, “To Allah belongs all dominion over the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. And He ‘alone’ is powerful over all things,” and identifies this *āyah* as more encompassing.

While explaining “His Seat (*kursī*) expands the heavens and the earth,” Mullā Jīwan explains the range of Sunnī interpretations; one of which could be imagery for His grandeur or mere representation (*tamthīl mujarrad*). Other interpretations include that the Seat could be a metaphor for knowledge, authority or power. He also mentions the discussion of whether the Seat and the Throne (*al-‘Arsh*) are the same. Interestingly, Mullā Jīwan mentions what astronomers (*al-ḥukamā’*) have to say about the *kursī*. They state it refers to the orbit of the constellations (*falak al-burūj*). Here, Mullā Jīwan mentions their position without any objection. However, he does respond to their fallacies when they try to rationalise *āyāt* in a way that is not in line with theology (*‘ilm al-kalām*) and principles of exegesis (*uṣūl al-tafsīr*). For example, when he mentions astronomers have other opinions on the seven skies (*sab‘ samāwāt*) and seven earths (*min al-arḍ mithlahunn*), he rejects their position.⁴⁴ He notes their denial of the Ascension (*al-Mi‘rāj*) due to them denying miracles in general and the possibility of traversing into the heavens in particular. He also mentions the term *al-ḥukamā’* in the next example,⁴⁵ but in that context it seems to be referring to philosophers.

He concludes this entry by speaking about the virtues (*faḍā’il*) of this *āyah*, such as when to read it and the spiritual benefits associated with those timings. Some *tafsīr* literature like al-Bayḍāwī and al-Zamakhsharī, especially in the content presented at the conclusion of *sūrahs*, contain *mawḍū‘āt* (fabricated narrations), which he avoids. Mullā Jīwan combines his rational approach with authoritative sound narrations in this *tafsīr*. Additionally, these types of virtues are found in books of liturgies (*awrād*). Mullā Jīwan has written one titled *al-Ādāb al-Aḥmadiyyah fī awrād al-Ṣūfiyyah* (Aḥmad’s etiquettes on Sufī liturgies), which he refers to at the end of the entry.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Ibid., 23.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 501.

⁴⁶ He also refers to this book at the end of Sūrat al-Muzzammil, p. 716, and in Sūrat al-Baqarah, *āyah* 185, p. 71. As far as I know, this book has not been printed nor have I come across it in manuscript form.

Example 2: Case Study on the Infallibility (‘Iṣmah) of Angels

Sūrat Anbiyā’, āyah 26-27: Yet they have said: The All-Merciful has taken offspring. Highly exalted is He! **Rather, they are honored servants! They do not precede Him in speech. Rather, they do by His command.**

As he does with most of his entries, Mullā Jīwan begins with background information of the *āyah*. Understanding the historical context allows readers to make a seamless connection to the *aḥkām* (rulings) derived. As the famous legal maxim states, the ruling of a case is an extension of its correct conceptualisation (*ḥukm al-shay’ far’ an taṣawwurih*).⁴⁷ Mullā Jīwan states many exegetes do not explicitly mention this *āyah* as proof for the creedal belief of angelic infallibility but *‘aqīdah* texts, like *Sharḥ al-‘aqā’id* (by al-Taftāzānī), do. He then explains away possible objections like the story of Hārūt and Mārūt (Sūrat al-Baqarah Q. 2:102) as well as the claim that Iblīs (Satan) was an angel. He then summarises the difference of opinions regarding the intrinsic virtue (*afḍaliyyah*) between humans and angels and which species is more virtuous and why. Lastly, he concludes by referencing the work *Ṭawālī’ al-anwār fī uṣūl al-dīn* (by al-Bayḍāwī) for those who want more detail.

Example 3: Case Study on the Second Coming of Prophet ‘Īsā (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)

Sūrat al-Zukhruf, āyah 61: But he (‘Īsā) shall most surely be a portent (‘ilm) of the imminence of the Hour. So have no doubt in this! Thus, follow me. This is a straight way.

For Muslims, there is no contradiction in any part of revelation, whether it is recited revelation (*waḥy matlū’*) or revelation that is not recited (*waḥy ḡhayr matlū’*) like *ḥadīth* literature. The latter contains many narrations that highlight the description of the descent of ‘Īsā (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his second coming. Mullā Jīwan summarises these narrations under this entry. However, he opens the entry, as he usually does, by stating the initial and apparent intent of the *āyah*. He explains the two variations of reading this *āyah* are compatible with one another. “Indeed, he is knowledge (‘ilm) of the Hour” meaning, through his descent, it will be known that the Hour has drawn close. “Indeed, he is a sign (‘alam) for the Hour” is the *shādhdh* (weak) recitation,⁴⁸ which he attributes to Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 687) (may Allah be pleased with him). This is one of the ways latter exegetes would identify a *shādhdh* recitation from a *mutawātir* one, by attributing it to a companion rather than one of the imams. Mullā Jīwan sometimes mentions the status of a recitation like he did for *āyah* 185

⁴⁷ Muḥammad Amān Al-Jāmī, *Ḥukm al-shay’ far’ an taṣawwurih* [The Ruling of a Case is an Extension of its Correct Conceptualisation] (Cairo: Dār al-Minhāj, 2004).

⁴⁸ This *qirā’ah* is among the four most quoted *shādhdh* recited and is attributed to al-A‘mash (d. 765). Muḥammad Fahd Khārūf, *Al-Muyassar fī al-qirā’āt al-arba’ ‘asharah* [The 14 Readings Made Easy] (Beirut/Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 20014), 94. For the technical definition of *shādhdh*, see Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr fī al-qirā’āt al-‘ashr* [The Spread on the 10 Readings] (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 2016).

for Sūrat al-Baqarah⁴⁹ under the entry of *āyah* 89⁵⁰ of Sūrat al-Mā'idah,⁵¹ which discusses the expiation of oaths. In this entry, he also highlights the Ḥanafī principle of treating two sound (*mutawātir* or *mashhūr*) recitations as separate *āyāt*; thus, it becomes necessarily implemented (*wājib al-'aml*). This rule does not extend to *shādhah* recitations.⁵²

Since this *āyah* in Sūrat al-Zukhruf is not explicitly clear on the issue of 'Īsā's return, Mullā Jīwan does mention that al-Taftāzānī and others do not use this *āyah* to substantiate this creedal belief. Some have either misread and misunderstood the position of those scholars when it comes to his second coming, or they project their own rejection of this creed by trying to substantiate it with intentional misrepresentation of al-Taftāzānī and others. Mullā Jīwan chooses his words carefully when he says, "al-Taftāzānī and others do not establish [the creed] of 'Īsā's descent (*nuzūl 'Īsā*) with [this *āyah*] and thus it is imperative to explain here the narrative of the descent."⁵³ Rather, al-Taftāzānī clearly states the combination of reports on the appearance of al-Mahdī and return of 'Īsā are *āḥād*.⁵⁴ However, the narrations specifically on the descent (*nuzūl*) of 'Īsā are *mutawātir al-mā'nā* (*mutawātir* in meaning) as proven by another great Indian intellectual exegete, Mawlānā Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī (d. 1933) in his collection titled *al-Taṣrīḥ bi mā tawātara fī nuzūl al-Masīḥ*.⁵⁵

EXAMPLE OF GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL IMPLICATIONS

Sūrat al-Raḥmān, āyah 68: In them are fruits, **and** date palms, **and** pomegranates.

A large part of Islamic jurisprudence is understanding how to derive laws based on grammatical implications. This *āyah* is an example of such derivation. Mullā Jīwan brings a hypothetical case that jurists derive from this *āyah*. The scenario is that someone took an oath that they would not eat fruit (*fākihah*), then they ate dates (*nakhl*) and pomegranates (*rummān*). Have they violated their oath and thus must expiate it? According to Abū Ḥanīfa, he has not violated his oath. This is because the particle of conjunction, *wāw*, mandates distinction

⁴⁹ "It was the month of Ramadan in which the Quran was sent down as guidance for all people, having clear proofs of guidance and the criterion. So whoever among you bears witness to the month shall then fast it. Yet if one among you is sick or is on a journey 'such a person shall then fast' the same number of other days. God intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship. Rather, 'He wills' for you to complete the number 'of prescribed days'—and that you shall extol God for which He has guided you, so that you may give thanks."

⁵⁰ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Taḥfāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 342.

⁵¹ "God will not hold you accountable for unintended vows in your oaths. But He will hold you accountable for what you have bound yourselves to by oaths, the atonement of which is feeding ten indigent people with the average of what you feed your own families; or clothing them; or freeing a human being from bondage. But if one does not find 'such means,' then fast three days. That is the atonement for your oaths, when you swear 'and break them.' So guard your oaths. Thus does God make clear to you His signs, so that you may give thanks."

⁵² For more information, see Mullā Jīwan, *Al-Taḥfāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 342.

⁵³ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Taḥfāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 636.

⁵⁴ See Sa'd al-Dīn Al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Amīrah (Cairo: Al-Maktabah al-Azhariyyah, 2016), vol. 5, 312-314.

⁵⁵ Muḥammad Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī and Muḥammad Shafī', *Al-Taṣrīḥ bi mā tawātara fī nuzūl al-Masīḥ* [Clarity on the Explicit Narrations regarding the Descent of the Messiah], ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Abū Ghuddah (Karachi: Maktabah Dār al-'Ulūm, 2002).

(*mughāyarah*) between the word it connects (*ma 'ṭūf* and *ma 'ṭūf 'alayh*), whereas Abū Ḥanīfa's two companions, Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad al-Shaybānī, state this person has violated his oath. They state the conjunction is due to the inherent virtue (*faḍl*) of dates and pomegranates over other fruits, which is why they are treated as if they are not fruits; rather, they are two other types of food. The two Companions (Abū Yūsuf and Muḥammad al-Shaybānī) also state this phenomenon occurs in Sūrat al-Baqarah *āyah* 98 where Jibrīl and Mikāl are mentioned with the same particle after angels were mentioned. This does not mean Jibrīl and Mikāl are not angels, but they are singled out due to their virtue over other angels.⁵⁶

Another angle that Mullā Jīwan explores to validate Abū Ḥanīfa's position is through the lexical connotations of the word *fākihah*. He says this word connotes seeking pleasure (*tana 'um*), meaning fruit is a type of food that is not sufficient for nourishment nor is it suitable for medication, while dates are consumed for nourishment and pomegranates for medicinal reasons. Thus, the lexical designations of the word *fākihah* are not applicable to dates and pomegranates because they are more than just pleasure (*tafakkuh*). Again, this type of reasoning is a secondary procedure, which he calls *al-sirr* (a secret).⁵⁷ It is not used to override established principles and methodologies. I mention it here simply to show the range of Mullā Jīwan's exegetical analyses.

EXAMPLE OF ESOTERIC INTERPRETATIONS

Mullā Jīwan does not usually quote Ṣūfī works or figures in this juridical exegesis unless it has legal consequences. For example, in Sūrat al-A'raf *āyah* 204,⁵⁸ he quotes them vaguely by using the terms *Ṣūfiyyah* (Sufis) and *ahl al-sulūk* (people of the Sufi path/wayfaring)⁵⁹ due to the issue at hand being related to recitation behind the imam and remembering (*dhikr*) Allah audibly or inaudibly. Another example is in Sūrat Yūnus *āyah* 87,⁶⁰ where Ṣūfī books are alluded to because of the topic of performing prayers and supplications in isolation within the confines of one's home are lauded. The *āyah* states, "And make your homes a direction (*qiblah*)" and, even though the immediate context is in reference to Prophet Mūsā and Prophet Hārūn (may Allah bless them and grant them peace), Mullā Jīwan states the jurists have used this *āyah* to substantiate what they have termed *maṣjid al-bayt* (mosque of the home). They do this using the principle that lessons are according to the general wording, not the specific cause (*al-'ibrah bi-'umūm al-laḥẓ la bi-khuṣūṣ al-sabab*).⁶¹

⁵⁶ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 667.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ "So when the Quran is recited, listen to it, and give heed, so that you may be shown mercy."

⁵⁹ Mullā Jīwan, *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, 401.

⁶⁰ "Thus We revealed to Moses and his brother: Settle your people in Egypt in dwellings. Moreover, make your dwellings a prayer niche, and establish the Prayer. And give glad tidings to the believers."

⁶¹ See al-Suyūṭī's *al-Itqān* 45th *naw'* titled *ft' āmmihi wā khāṣṣihi* for more details. Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān ft' ulūm al-Qur'ān* [Perfection on the Qur'ānic Sciences] (Karachi: Qadīmī Kutub Khāna, n.d.), vol. 2, 30-35.

He is also critical of certain divergent Ṣūfī beliefs, like the acceptance of the Pharoah's belief at the time of drowning in Sūrat al-Nisā', *āyah* 17-18.⁶²

CONCLUSION

This article presents the methodology of Mullā Jīwan in his *al-Tafsīrāt al-Aḥmadiyyah*, which is the first aḥkām al-Qur'ān work produced in the subcontinent. Mullā Jīwan selected about 500 *āyāt* from 63 *sūrahs* to elaborate on 276 cases of jurisprudence and creed. Based on my enumeration, 186 of the cases are based on juristic rulings (*aḥkām fiqhiyyah*), 42 on Islamic jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) and 48 on issues of creed (*masā'il al-'aqīdah al-sunniyyah*).⁶³ Though this commentary is primarily juristic in style, Mullā Jīwan's erudition traverses other antecedent fields like creed, grammar and esoterism. For much of his exegesis, he adopts the classical method of interpretation. The value of this work is in his representation of his primary sources, some of which we do not have direct access to today, and in his abridgement of those sources, coupled with his unique selection and re-presentation for his audience. One hopes a critical edition of this work will be published with modern typesetting, annotations and indexing that may facilitate descriptive commentaries to highlight the type of contributions in *tafsīr* produced in the subcontinent. This genre of work would be especially important to show how Mughal '*ulamā'* (scholars) affected the social, intellectual and legal milieu of their time.

⁶² “Yet there is ‘acceptance of’ repentance with God only for those who do evil out of ignorance then repent soon after. It is to such as these whom God will grant repentance. And ever is God all-knowing, all-wise. But there is no repentance for those who do sins- until, when death approaches one of them, he says: I do, Indeed, repent now! Nor for those who die while they are disbelievers. For such as these, We have made ready a most painful torment.”

⁶³ Some cases overlap more than one field.

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