

ESOTERIC ISLAM

A Hermetic Perspective on Islamic Traditions



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'ESOTERIC ISLAM' includes the interpretation of Islamic traditions by use of the hermetic arts of Astrology and Alchemy.

To the seeker of hermetic wisdom, who follows the limitless path of light, and whose spirit ignites the sparks of Truth.

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Preface

The history of man bears witness to his great struggle for discovering the right formula to conduct affairs in various aspects of his life. Time and again, men devised ideas of religious, political, or cultural nature that have continually brought solace from the ignominy of senseless conflicts that afflicted their mode of existence, and thereby they grew spiritually through those experiences and trials. The wisdom of the ancients is not actually based on absolute principles, rather on the relative conditions proportional to the problems at hand. The nature of wisdom has never been to bind humans to a fixed legal structure by restricting their movements at every level of growth, but to enshrine them about the common connections between different parts of the existing whole. Therefore, the laws serve best when they carry the wisdom of preventing the disasters than dealing with them afterwards, and the wisdom serves best when it abides by the principles of redemption and growth. True wisdom forms the very essence of all the magical ideas that have transformed man's primeval existence into a responsible creature capable of serving the divine plan. The path of this growth had never been easy because the ideas of wisdom always required sacrifices of ego and vanity in order to counter the challenges posed by human mind to accept the necessary changes. Eventually, wisdom represents the agency responsible for the unfoldment of human potential to embody the divine archetype.

Man in his consciousness carries the weight of eternity that ever haunts him in the form of 'conscience'. Thus, conscience is the territory where all the angelic and demonic entities of human experiences reside, and their influence effects the character of an individual. The sages of many cultures throughout history had acquired a connection to communicate with this deep and dark region of human consciousness in the form of mystery teachings. Just like a child that learns the language of his environment as his capacities of perception increases with the growth of his mental faculties in the due course of time, the unravelling of mysteries to consciousness is similarly a natural process if not inhibited by external disturbances. Such external disturbances may include the conflicts of perception such as the use of many languages in the immediate environment of the child. For instance, if the father speaks Italian and the mother speaks French whilst the countrymen are English, then the acumen of that child would surely be challenged leading to reticent and confusing behaviours. Therefore, the mystery teachings of the ancient sages tend to communicate to these bewildered and perplexed children of mankind, the wise precepts of conscience so as to help them become aware of themselves and thereby realize their great potentials. A Zen teacher once said, "Before enlightenment; chop wood, carry water. After enlightenment; chop wood, carry water." — Zen Kōan; thereby suggesting that the goal of man is not to procure a permanent state of pleasure in his enlightenment, but to transform the pains of ignorance in fulfilling the traditions of people to the pain of wisdom and conscience in fulfilling the divinity in himself.

The great ideals of wisdom were incorporated into the mystery teachings of ancient Egyptians in the form of hermeticism. That is why the hermetic ideas outline the tenets of all the major philosophies in the world that include objectivity and resolution in the exercise of their traditions. The Quran is considered as the book of divine guidance by Muslims whose main subject constitutes 'man'. From a hermetic standpoint, the Quranic mysteries carry a great deal of

connection to the hermetic arts of astrology and alchemy. Here, I have attempted to explain the manner in which symbolism of the hermetic precepts are used to define the notions of highest aspirations in man's ethical behaviour by the Islamic traditions.

The book **Esoteric Islam** includes the interpretation of Islamic traditions by use of the hermetic arts of Astrology and Alchemy. It discusses the mystical teachings of Quran from the standpoint of ancient mysteries and modern metaphysics. It attempts to understand the message of Quran in its structural designs alongside the principle tenets so as to unravel the mystique of this very impressive literature.

The Mystery Letters of Quran (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)

Introduction



This thesis attempts to investigate the mystery letters of Quran called the “Huroof-al-Muqattaat”. Here, the hermetic arts of astrology, alchemy, and symbolism are employed to decipher their meanings, and potential significance for the human spiritual growth.

The extraordinary perfection in the design of universe has flabbergasted human intelligence since time immemorial. Notwithstanding the immense complexity of living organisms in nature, the indefatigable human spirit of enquiry led to the comprehension of definite principles for satiating the need for clarity in their affairs; because out of all creatures, humans have always wanted to be the smartest by grasping the knowledge of everything, and thereby controlling the very gist of existence. But not everyone in the family of human race were either talented or heroic enough to be raised at the level of consciousness that those creative agencies of cosmos acted with, and hence their languages got divided into ‘exoteric’ and ‘esoteric’ expressions or terminologies. The adepts throughout ages often used encoded symbols and hieroglyphs in their communications to transmit the insights to posterity in order to guard them from self destructive human behaviours. The realization of extremely intricate and fragile existence of life on planet Earth, which is also the home to humanity, not only made it necessary to act with utmost responsibility for keeping the natural balance, but also to embrace a role of directing the course of humanity towards best consequences.

Like many ancient texts that were meant for guidance to humanity, the Quran seems to be a book designed for the specific purpose of raising consciousness in human beings. There are definite evidences of esoteric teachings in the texts of Quran, and despite of it being studied through a millennium, many of those teachings still evade proper explanation. An example of such texts is the ‘Mystery Abbreviated Letters’ of the Quran, popularly known as the “Huroof-al-Muqattaat”. Therefore, in this article I have endeavoured to describe their meanings in the context of Quranic teachings.

The Mystery Abbreviated Letters (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)

ا = Alif (Aries)	ل = Lam (Taurus)	م = Mim (Gemini)
ص = Sad (Cancer)	ر = Ra (Leo)	ك , ق = Kaf , Qaf (Virgo)
ح , ه = Ha (Libra)	ي = Ya (Scorpio)	ع = Ain (Sagittarius)
ط = Ta (Capricorn)	س = Sin (Aquarius)	ن = Nun (Pisces)

Quranic Order of Mystery Letters

These mystery letters comprise of the Arabic alphabets mentioned in the table, and though they do not appear in the alphabetical order in the Quran, but are actually stated as prefixes to certain chapters of the book. Throughout the Muslim history, there have been many theories proposed to justify their existence in Quran. A few had suggested that they were initials of the scribes who had written down the dictation of those chapters, whilst others commented on them to be of some especial mystical significance which is known only to God himself. The Letters appear in Quran successively in the following fashion.

Alif, Lam, Mim @ Chapters 2, 3, 29, 30, 31, 32.

Alif, Lam, Mim, Sad @ Chapter 7.

Alif, Lam, Ra @ Chapters 10, 11, 12, 14, 15.

Alif, Lam, Mim, Ra @ Chapter. 13.

Kaf, Ha, Ya, Ain, Sad @ Chapter 19.

Ta, Ha @ Chapter 20.

Ta, Sin, Mim @ Chapters 26, 28.

Ta, Sin @ Chapter 27.

Ya, Sin @ Chapter 36.

Sad @ Chapter 38.

Ha, Mim @ Chapters 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46.

Ha, Mim, Ain, Sin, Qaf @ Chapter 42.

Qaf @ Chapter 50.

Nun @ Chapter 68.

The most prominent Muslim scholar on the interpretation of the Quran, Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali, had explained about these abbreviated letters in his commentary that,

“Certain Surahs have certain initials prefixed to them, which are called the 'Abbreviated Letters'. A number of conjectures have been made as to their meaning. Opinions are divided as to the exact meaning of each particular letter or combination of letters, and it is agreed that only Allah knows their exact meaning.

Their presence is not inconsistent with the character of the Quran as a 'plain book'. The book of nature is also a plain book, but how few can fully understand it? Everyone can get out of the Quran's plain guidance for his life according to his capacity for spiritual understanding. As his capacity grows, so will his understanding grow. The whole Book is a record for all time. It must necessarily contain truths that only gradually unfold themselves to humanity.” (Appendix 1. Commentary on Quran by Allama Abdullah Yusuf Ali)

There are 29 chapters of the Quran that mention the abbreviated prefixes. The 14 letters out of 28 alphabets of Arabic language are used in different combinations in those prefixes among which two pairs are homophonic, i.e. different glyphs with the same sounds; hence making them 12 sound characters in total because each of the homophonic pair of letters here act as one character. I propose in the ensuing discussions that these 12 characters appear in a definite order in the Quran which corresponds to the 12 astrological signs, and such that the features of prefixed signatures as astrological signs form the subject of discussion in the associated chapters. In other words, these abbreviated prefixes summarize the chapters themselves, and letters in the order of appearance in Quran represent the 12 astrological signs. These letters are indicated in the attached table alongside their corresponding signs.

The Letter 'Alif' (Aries)



The letter 'Alif' appears as a prefix in the beginning of the second chapter of the Quran, and therefore, it is the first letter of the Quranic sequence. Astrologically it refers to the sign of Aries, as it signifies the subject of warfare in the Quran. Also, the fighting of wars was proclaimed for the first time in this chapter of the Quran, which is akin to the archetype of the sign of Aries. The Quran says,

“Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not.” (2, 216)

A scholar of Quran, Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall has written the following in his commentary on this chapter.

“All suggestions to the contrary notwithstanding, it seems probable that the whole of this surah was revealed during the first four years after the Hijrah, and that by far the greater portion of it was revealed in the first eighteen months of the Prophet’s reign at Al-Madinah-that is to say, before the battle of Badr.

The possible necessity of fighting had been foreseen in the terms of the oath, taken at Al-Aqabah by the Muslims of Yathrib before the flight, to defend the prophet as they would their own wives and children, and the first commandment to fight was revealed to the prophet before his flight from Mecca; but there was no actual fighting by the Muslims until the battle of Badr. Many of them were reluctant, having before been subject to a rule of strict non-violence. It was with difficulty that they could accept the idea of fighting even in self-defense, as can be seen from several verses in this surah.” (The Meaning of the Glorious Koran, an explanatory translation by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall)

The letter Alif is also mentioned in the chapter 3 of the Quran, where it says,

And remember when thou settest forth at daybreak from thy housefolk to assign to the believers their positions for the battle, Allah was Hearer, Knower. (3, 121)

In verse (3, 121), the mention of ‘daybreak’ and ‘positions for the battle’ are the allegorical references to the astrological sign of Aries. Similar messages are also presented with the letter ‘Alif’ in the verses (3, 13), (3, 153), (3, 156–158), and (3, 167–175) of the Quran.

The Letter ‘Lam’ (Taurus)



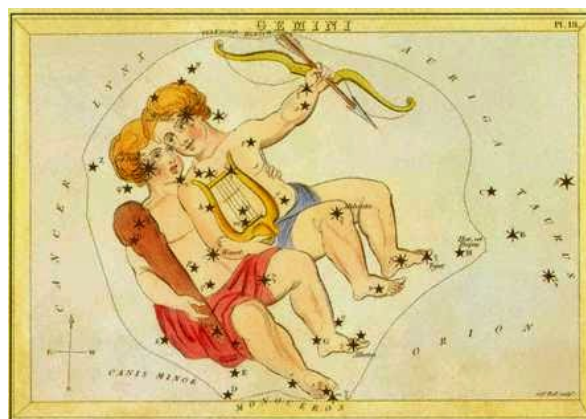
The letter ‘Lam’ depicts the sign of Taurus in the Quran. The astrological symbol of Taurus is the ‘bull’, and its characteristics include material wealth and abundance. Whilst dealing with the archetypal Taurus, the Quran teaches humans to control their desires of amassing material goods, and use their wealth in the service of some nobler objectives. The following verses give excellent descriptions of the sign.

And when Moses said unto his people: Lo! Allah commandeth you that ye sacrifice a cow, they said: Dost thou make game of us? He answered: Allah forbid that I should be among the foolish! They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us what (cow) she is. (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith, Verily she is a cow neither with calf nor immature; (she is) between the two conditions; so do that which ye are commanded. They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us of what colour she is. (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith: Verily she is a yellow cow. Bright is her colour, gladdening beholders. They said: Pray for us unto thy Lord that He make clear to us what (cow) she is. Lo! cows are much alike to us; and lo! if Allah wills, we may be led aright. (Moses) answered: Lo! He saith: Verily she is a cow unyoked; she plougheth not the soil nor watereth the tilth; whole and without mark. They said: Now thou bringest the truth. So they sacrificed her, though almost they did not. (2, 67-71)

In verse 67, Moses asked his people to metaphorically forgo the practices of accumulating wealth by sacrificing a cow, which would symbolize the characteristics of Taurus; but in verse 68, the people of Moses contended to defend their practices by asking questions that were meant to examine Moses' knowledge of the sign of Taurus. Those people were contending that Moses himself had no wealth, so how could he know the pain of forsaking it. Moses answered that in verse 68 by describing the position of Taurus in the zodiac by saying that the cow of Taurus was neither with a calf (twin characteristic of Gemini), nor immature (Aries characteristic); rather the sign had to be in between of the 'Gemini' and 'Aries'. In verse 69, the yellow colour of the cow was described because of it being the colour of the metal copper of Taurus. Furthermore it is mentioned there, "Bright is her colour, gladdening beholders.", because Taurus is the sign of spring season, as this time also bears blooming and colourful flowers to gladden the beholders. But still the attachment of people with their wealth was so strong that they contended for more clues, and so were answered with the explanation of the element Earth of Taurus in the verse 71. It said that the cow was unyoked, meaning Taurus to be a sign of spring season; it did not labour on earth because the earth was already fertile; and without mark meant that it was a fixed sign that could not be influenced by the changing patterns of the seasons. Such were the descriptions of Taurus that people of Moses were left with no option but to reluctantly sacrifice the cow.

The prefixes with letter 'Lam' also appear in other chapters of the Quran, dealing with the archetypal properties of Taurus such as wealth management, usury, cow worship, greed, and materialism in the verses (2, 54), (2, 57), (2, 61), (2, 168), (2, 271- 276), (3, 130), (3, 180), (7, 130), (7, 148), and (7, 152).

The Letter 'Mim' (Gemini)



The Letter 'Mim' is used here to indicate the sign of Gemini in the Quranic chapters. The prefix appears in many chapters, but for the sake of illustration of the archetypal Gemini character, the following ritual has been commanded to be performed in the given verses.

Lo! (the mountains) Al-Safa and Al-Marwah are among the indications of Allah. It is therefore no sin for him who is on pilgrimage to the House (of God) or visiteth it, to go around them (as the pagan custom is). And he who doeth good of his own accord (for him), Lo! Allah is Responsive, Aware. (2, 158)

The mountains named 'Al-Safa' and 'Al-Marwah' mentioned here are allegorical representations of Gemini twins, Castor and Pollux. Whilst on the pilgrimage to Mecca, Muslims are required to run between those two mountains seven times for performing the ritual known as 'Sai'. The story related to the origin of this ritual says that Abraham had left his wife Hagar with his infant son Ishmael as a spiritual trial for them in the desert. When Ishmael got thirsty and started to cry, Hagar ran from one mountain top to another mountain top in order to catch sight of some passing caravan so as to procure drinking water. This she repeated seven times before getting back to Ishmael, thereby she found that a spring had broken forth from the place where the crying baby kicked the sand with his feet. Interestingly, Ishmael is also mentioned in Quran to describe the sign of Sagittarius, which is opposite to Gemini. Also, the rapid movement of Hagar between the two mountains is very characteristic of Mercury, the ruling planet of Gemini.

The Gemini properties with the prefix 'Mim' are also expressed in the verses (2, 102), (2, 221), (3, 61), (3, 195), (7, 127), (7, 141), (7, 189–190), (42, 11), (43, 12), (44, 58), (43, 3), and (41, 44).

The Letter 'Sad' (Cancer)



The astrological Sign of Cancer corresponds to the letter 'Sad' in the Quran. Cancer begins at summer solstice, and is ruled by the luminary planet Moon. In astrology, the Sun and the Moon represent King and Queen respectively, and therefore, Cancer is also one of the two royal signs. Here, the Quran talks about the ideals to be found in good governments by citing the example of king David.

And hath the story of the litigants come unto thee? How they climbed the wall into the royal chamber; How they burst in upon David, and he was afraid of them. They said Be not afraid (We are) two litigants, one of whom hath wronged the other, therefore judge

aright between us; be not unjust; and show us the fair way. Lo! this my brother hath ninety and nine ewes while I had one ewe; and he said: Entrust it to me, and he conquered me in speech. (David) said : He hath wronged thee in demanding thine ewe in addition to his ewes, and lo! many partners oppress one another, save such as believe and do good works, and they are few. And David guessed that We had tried him, and he sought forgiveness of his Lord, and he bowed himself and fell down prostrate and repented. (38, 21-24)

The two litigants of verse 21, who had broken into the royal chamber, allegorically represent the signs of Aries and Libra. The verse 22 says that the king David (Cancer) got afraid of the litigants (Aries and Libra), because those two signs were making a square angle to him. In verse 23, the ewes metaphorically represent the sign of Capricorn (opposite Cancer); and the litigant with the ninety nine ewes is Aries, whilst the one with a single ewe is Libra. The Aries with its assertive and aggressive attitudes was trying to rob Libra even of a single ewe that it possessed. In verse 24, David (Cancer) used his royal authority to admonish Aries with regards to his behaviour, and also recognized the importance of the responsible use of power from this episode.

The characteristics of Cancer corresponding to the letter 'Sad' are also present in the verses (7, 94–102), (7, 106–108), (7, 145–146), (7, 157), (7, 160), (38, 2), (38, 5), (38, 17–20), (38, 25–26), and (38, 30).

The Letter 'Ra' (Leo)



The letter 'Ra' of Arabic language depicts the sign of Leo in the Quran. The sign of Leo is ruled by the Sun, as the choice of the word 'Ra' here is interesting since it is also the name of the ancient Egyptian solar deity. This word appears in connection to the story of Joseph in the Quran. The story says that Joseph was the brightest among his brothers, who out of jealousy were inclined to place him in the pit. The Quran says,

When Joseph said unto his father: O my father! Lo! I saw in a dream eleven planets and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves unto me. He said: O my dear son! Tell not thy brethren of thy vision. lest they plot a plot against thee. Lo! Satan is for man an open foe. (12, 4-5)

In the verses 4–5, Joseph (Leo) tells his father (Sun) that he saw ‘eleven planets’ that metaphorically represented eleven astrological signs (his brothers) besides Leo (himself). It is good to note here that in Greek mythology, the Sun god Apollo had been attributed with the characteristics of prophecy and vision. Apollo was known to be an oracular god, and as a patron of Delphi was responsible for the ‘Delphic Oracle’. Thus, the following visionary attributes of Joseph are also mentioned in the Quran.

O my Lord! Thou hast given me (something) of sovereignty and hast taught me (something) of the interpretation of events, Creator of the heavens and the earth! Thou art my Protecting Friend in the world and the Hereafter. Make me to die submissive (unto Thee), and join me to the righteous. (12, 101)

Also, the ability of Joseph to impart vision in darkness is described in the following verse.

Go with this shirt of mine (Joseph) and lay it on my father’s face, he will become (again) a seer; and come to me with all your folk. (12, 93)

Then, when the bearer of glad tidings came, he laid it on his face and he (Joseph’s father) became a seer once more. He said: Said I not unto you that I know from Allah that which ye know not? (12, 96)

Joseph became a lord in Egypt, which was acknowledged as an archetypal land of the kings at that time. Once together again with his father, he realized that his earliest dream had come to its realization.

And when they came in before Joseph, he took his parents unto him, and said: Come into Egypt safe, if Allah will! And he placed his parents on the dais and they fell down before him prostrate, and he said: O my father! This is the interpretation of my dream of old. My Lord hath made it true, and He hath shown me kindness, since He took me out of the prison and hath brought you from the desert after Satan had made strife between me and my brethren. Lo! my Lord is tender unto whom He will. He is the Knower, the Wise. (12, 99-100)

The Letter ‘Kaf’ or ‘Qaf’ (Virgo)



The letter 'Kaf' corresponds to the sign of Virgo, and is expressed in the Quran with a classic allegory of the mutable signs. 'Mary' in the following story of the Quran represents Virgo, as being a virgin she is responsible for the immaculate conception of Jesus.

And make mention of Mary in the Scripture, when she had withdrawn from her people to a chamber looking East. And had chosen seclusion from them. Then We sent unto her Our spirit and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man. She said: Lo! I seek refuge in the Beneficent One from thee, if thou art God fearing. He said: I am only a messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a faultless son. She said: How can I have a son when no mortal hath touched me, neither have I been unchaste! He said: So (it will be). Thy Lord saith: It is easy for Me. And (it will be) that We may make of him a revelation for mankind and a mercy from Us, and it is a thing ordained. And she, conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a place. And the pangs of childbirth drove her unto the trunk of the palm tree. She said: Oh, would that I had died ere this and had become a thing of naught, forgotten! Then (one) cried unto her from below her, saying: Grieve not! Thy Lord hath placed a rivulet beneath thee. And shake the trunk of the palm tree toward thee, thou wilt cause ripe dates to fall upon thee. So eat and drink and be consoled. And if thou meetest any mortal, say: Lo! I have vowed a fast unto the Beneficent, and may not speak this day to any mortal. (19, 16-26)

The verse 16 of the above passage indicates that this story is regarding the sign of Virgo at the time when it rises at the eastern horizon. The trunk of the palm tree in the verse 23 is a metaphorical reference to the 'mutable cross' comprising of the signs of Virgo, Gemini, Pisces, and Sagittarius. In the verse 24, 'one cried unto her from below her' is Sagittarius, 'rivulet beneath' is Pisces, 'ripened dates' of the verse 25 is a reference to the sign of Gemini, whilst 'Mary' herself is a metaphor for the sign of Virgo. Also in the verse 26, the Mary (Virgo) gets her food from Gemini, her water from Pisces, and her consolation from Sagittarius.

The letter 'Kaf' or 'Qaf' is also described with the Virgo characteristics in the verses (42, 20), (42, 27), (42, 37), (50, 6), and (50, 9-10) of the Quran.

The Letter 'Ha' (Libra)



The letter 'Ha' expresses the Libra archetype of justice and good behaviour in the Quran. It is emphasized very strongly at many places as the most important and indelible principle in nature. Usually, the iniquitous are admonished of a blazing 'fire' as their punishment, which is the element of the opposite sign of Aries.

And (make mention of) the day when the enemies of Allah are gathered unto the Fire, they are driven on. Till, when they reach it, their ears and their eyes and their skins testify against them as to what they used to do. And they say unto their skins: Why testify ye against us? They say: Allah hath given us speech Who giveth speech to all things, and Who created you at the first, and unto Whom ye are returned. Ye did not hide yourselves lest your ears and your eyes and your skins should testify against you, but ye deemed that Allah knew not much of what ye did. (41, 19-22)

The verses 19–22 is an example of the self evident demonstration of the divine justice in nature. Furthermore, the verse 19 of the Quran by mentioning the phrase 'enemies of Allah' is also making a political standpoint against those collectivist groups who use ideologies or slogans to indoctrinate the ignorant masses of people. These masses than act as a mammoth creature (a state) with its own currency (blood), and social structure (body). Once the head of this creature gets drugged, than the body can be compromised or paralyzed, and therefore those body parts act as witnesses against the head. The themes of justice are also expressed in the verses (42, 32–34), (42, 40–43), (40, 46–50), and similarly in the following verses.

Whoso doeth right, it is for his soul, and whoso doeth wrong, it is against it. And afterward unto your Lord ye will be brought back. (45, 15)

Whoso doeth right it is for his soul, and whoso doeth wrong it is against it. And thy Lord is not at all a tyrant to His slaves. (41, 46)

The Letter 'Ya' (Scorpio)



SCORPIO PARTY
Saturday, November 19th

Come celebrate sex, vengeance, courage, and all things Scorpio.

\$1.00 well drinks and beers if your birthday is on November 19th or 20th.

DJ Tomas Diablo
9:30pm-2:00am

Hosted by the birthday boy
Skippack Slim

CATALYST COCKTAILS

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The sign of Scorpio is depicted in the Quran with the letter 'Ya'. Astrologically, Scorpio on the one hand deals with the extreme human behaviours such as sex, subversion, death, and destruction; whilst on the other hand it embodies the principles of regeneration, rejuvenation, reproduction, and a sanguine existence. Quran describes the sign of Scorpio in the following style.

And a token unto them is that We bear their offspring in the laden ship. And have created for them of the like thereof whereon they ride. And if We will, We drown them, and there is no help for them, neither can they be saved. Unless by mercy from Us and as comfort for a while. When it is said unto them: Beware of that which is before you and that which is behind you, that haply ye may find mercy (they are heedless). (36, 41-45)

The verses 41–44 can be called as the euphemistic descriptions of human sexuality. In verse 41, the 'laden ship' is a metaphor for a mother's womb; the verse 42 says that babies inside the mother are in the same state as on a sailing ship; and the verses 43–44 state that due to the watery environment of the mother's womb, the babies could also be made to drown. The verse 45 relates the guidance for humans to be aware of the Scorpio attitudes in life. Quran also says,

Hath not man seen that We have created him from a drop of seed? Yet lo! he is an open opponent. And he hath coined for Us a similitude, and hath forgotten the fact of his creation, saying: Who will revive these bones when they have rotted away? Say: He will revive them Who produced them at the first, for He is Knower of every creation. (36, 77-79)

In verses 77–79, the positive attributes of Scorpio as being a sign of rebirth and regeneration is emphasized. The sign is also allegorically mentioned in the verses (36, 47), (36, 36–40), (36, 51–52), and (36, 66–68).

The Letter 'Ain' (Sagittarius)



The letter 'Ain' in the Quran represents the sign of Sagittarius. The symbol of Sagittarius in astrology is that of a celestial archer who shoots an arrow towards the heavens. Thus, Sagittarius characteristics include exploration of the universe by travelling to exotic areas, and experiencing novelty in lifestyles. Sagittarius is also keen to participate in the intellectual discoveries and philosophical endeavours. The Quran describes the sign by mentioning its attributes in the following fashion.

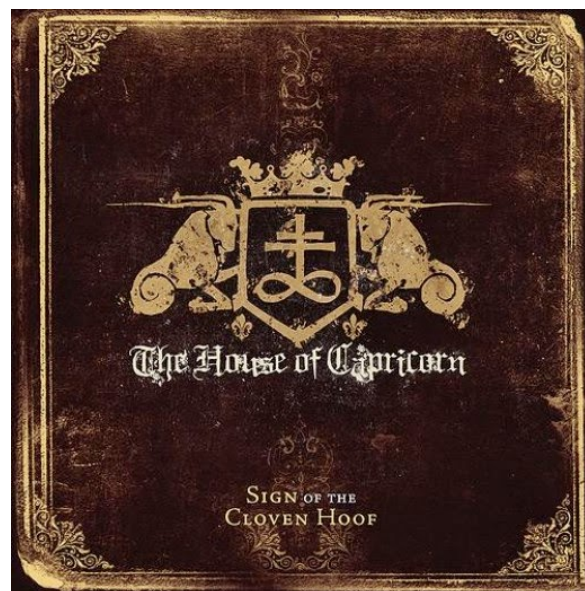
And make mention in the Scripture of Ishmael. Lo! he was a keeper of his promise, and he was a messenger (of Allah) a Prophet. He enjoined upon his people worship and alms giving, and was acceptable in the sight of his Lord. And We raised him to high station. (19, 54-56)

The character of Ishmael is a metaphor for Sagittarius in the Quran. Even in Judeo-Christian traditions, Ishmael son of Abraham is described as an 'archer' or 'hunter', which symbolically befits the sign of Sagittarius. In the verse 55, 'the sight of his Lord' is mentioned in connection to Ishmael, which is not stated regarding any other prophet. Also, in the verse 56 'high station' should represent the higher consciousness, which is the very emblem of Sagittarius. Similarly, the talent of observation is stated in the following verses.

Allah increaseth in right guidance those who walk aright, and the good deeds which endure are better in thy Lord's sight for reward, and better for resort. Hast thou seen him who disbelieveth in Our revelations and saith: Assuredly I shall be given wealth and children! Hath he perused the Unseen, or hath he made a pact with the Beneficent? (19, 76-78)

And how many a generation before them have We destroyed! Canst thou (Muhammad) see a single man of them, or hear from them the slightest sound? (19, 98)

The Letter 'Ta' (Capricorn)



The letter 'Ta' depicts the sign of Capricorn in the Quran. Capricorn starts at the winter solstice, and therefore, it is the sign where the royalties struggle, as it is also opposite to the sign of Cancer. Furthermore, there is a relationship between the letters 'Sad' of Cancer, and 'Ta'

of Capricorn; because the hieroglyph of letter 'Sad' seems like that of a snake with its head above the tail, whilst the hieroglyph of letter 'Ta' is that of a snake with its tail above the head. In the ancient Egypt, the straight cobra was known as 'Uraeus', and it used to symbolize the sovereignty, royalty, and divine authority. That is why it appears on the foreheads of ancient Egyptian royalties in their pictures and statues. In Quran, the story of Capricorn is stated in the following fashion.

And what is that in thy right hand, O Moses? He said: This is my staff whereon I lean, and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and wherein I find other uses. He said: Cast it down, O Moses! So he cast it down, and Lo! it was a serpent, gliding. He said: Grasp it and fear not. We shall return it to its former state. And thrust thy hand within thine armpit, it will come forth white without hurt. (That will be) another token. That We may show thee (some) of Our greater portents. Go thou unto Pharaoh! Lo! he hath transgressed (the bounds). (20, 17-24)

In the verse 18, Moses described his staff that was used by him as a tool for helping him in the struggles of life. In verse 20, the staff which was used for menial tasks became a serpent, showing that Moses had talents for the greater works, but he was rather wasting his life out in drudgery. In the verse 21, Moses got encouragement to realize his talents, and not be afraid of himself. The white hand in the verse 22 is a metaphorical reference to the 'Moon'. Symbolically, these verses are saying that Moses was the true lunar royalty (Cancer), but due to his lack of self realization, Pharaoh had taken over the government, and was acting like a tyrant because of his undeserved status. Therefore, the verse 24 commanded Moses to strive in order to reclaim his lost reign. Also in the Quran, wherever letter 'Ta' appears, the mention of Moses and his affairs always follow.

The Letter 'Sin' (Aquarius)



The letter 'Sin' represents the sign of Aquarius in the Quran. Aquarius is opposite Leo, which is the sign ruled by the Sun, and therefore, Aquarius receives the least amount of light or minimal attention. As a result, it is the least formal of all the signs, because formality in a

behaviour results from the impression one may make on others. Since in Aquarius there is no light/attention, hence formality is basically out of question here. Aquarius is the sign of an individual who finds himself free from cultural restrictions to express his uniqueness in the best possible way. It is the sign of the anonymous individuals because they do not need any identity to exist; as opposed to Leo which is the sign of the king who would require to chart his whole ancestral lineage to express his personality. The Quran says the following regarding this sign.

Coin for them a similitude: The people of the city when those sent (from Allah) came unto them; When We sent unto them twain, and they denied them both, so We reinforced them with a third, and they said; Lo! we have been sent unto you. They said: Ye are but mortals like unto us. The Beneficent hath naught revealed. Ye do but lie! They answered: Our lord knoweth that we are indeed sent unto you. (36, 13-16)

And there came from the uttermost part of the city a man running. He cried: O my people! Follow those who have been sent! Follow those who ask of you no fee, and who are rightly guided. (36, 20-21)

Ah, the anguish for the bondmen! Never came there unto them a messenger but they did mock him! (36, 30)

In the verse 13, 'the people of the city' is a reference to the sign of Leo, and 'those sent (from Allah)' is a reference to Aquarius. It is saying here that when city people who were used to the traditional attitudes, had come across the anonymous individuals with significantly radical or revolutionary information, they rejected them on account of their cultural values, and formality based behaviours. The verse 14 says that the information of those two individuals got further confirmed by a third anonymous individual. In the verse 20, 'man from uttermost part of the city' is a reference to the least formal member of that city who could judge the message of those individuals in an unbiased fashion. The verse 30 indicates that formality and traditional attitudes among people (bondmen) stymie the human progress towards the higher goals.

The Letter 'Nun' (Pisces)



The letter 'Nun' represents the sign of Pisces in the Quran. Astrologically, Pisces is the sign of rest, recuperation, and healing. Therefore, it embodies the behaviours of selflessness,

generosity, and goodness. It is the sign of spiritual mystics who would dance to the tune of the cosmos by submitting themselves to the natural flow of currents. It is also the sign of the intuitive type intelligent people who would never make decisions only on the basis of logic or analyses, but rather give their hearts the go at everything. Here, Quran explains the good attributes of Pisces by stating a story of the anti-Pisces behaviours.

Lo! we have tried them as We tried the owners of the garden when they vowed they would pluck its fruit next morning. And made no exception (for the will of Allah); Then a visitation came upon it while they slept. And in the morning it was as if plucked. And they cried out one unto another in the morning. Saying: Run unto your field if ye would pluck (the fruit). So they went off, saying one unto another in low tones: No needy man shall enter it today against you. They went betimes, strong in (this) purpose. But when they saw it, they said: Lo! we are in error! Nay, but we are desolate! The best among them said: Said I not unto you: Why glorify ye not (Allah)? They said: Glorified be our Lord! Lo! we have been wrong doers. Then some of them drew near unto others, self reproaching. They said: Alas for us! In truth we were outrageous. (68, 17-31)

In the above story, the consequences of selfishness, greed, and narrow-mindedness is described. It also explains that there is always more to the human lives than the mere materialistic tendencies, and those who fail to recognize the essential human values deserve due criticism. The Quran also says,

On the day when it befalleth in earnest, and they are ordered to prostrate themselves but are not able. With eyes downcast, abasement stupefying them. And they had been summoned to prostrate themselves while they were yet unhurt. (68, 42-43)

In verses 42–43, the rigidity in human attitudes is severely rebuked. It is saying that when people are asked to adopt a good behaviour whilst they are capable of it, they usually choose the wrong side. Once their option gets to be expired, and they can see the tragic consequences of their choices than they are unable to make amends. But still there are few who catch the light before it is too late, as explained in the following verses.

But wait thou for thy Lord's decree, and be not like him of the fish, who cried out in despair. Had it not been that favour from his Lord had reached him he surely had been cast into the wilderness while he was reprobate. But his Lord chose him and placed him among the righteous. (68, 48-50)

In the verse 48, 'like him of the fish' is referred to Jonah, but actually it is a metaphor for the sign of Pisces. The verses 49–50 are actually saying that the archetypal behaviour of Pisces can deliver one from the conditions of despair.

The End Note

That was my thesis on the mystery letters of the Quran. I hope you would have enjoyed reading the article as much as I enjoyed composing it. I would like to conclude here by quoting the following verses from the Quran.

Read: In the name of thy Lord who createth. Createth man from a clot. Read: And thy Lord is the Most Bounteous. Who teacheth by the pen. Teacheth man that which he knew not. (96, 1–5)

The Mystery of ALIF LAM MIM in Surah Al-Baqarah (The Cow)

Introduction

This article specifically deals with the function of the mystery letters 'Alif-Lam-Mim' in connection to the Surah Al-Baqarah of the Quran. It attempts to further the concepts mentioned in my previous article "The Mystery Letters of Quran (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)" by elucidating them in detail with respect to the textual contents of the Surah.

ا = Alif (Aries)	ل = Lam (Taurus)	م = Mim (Gemini)
ص = Sad (Cancer)	ر = Ra (Leo)	ك , ق = Kaf , Qaf (Virgo)
ح , ه = Ha (Libra)	ي = Ya (Scorpio)	ع = Ain (Sagittarius)
ط = Ta (Capricorn)	س = Sin (Aquarius)	ن = Nun (Pisces)

Quranic Order of Mystery Letters

The initial synopsis for deciphering the mystery abbreviated letters is presented in my article "The Mystery Letters of Quran (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)", which I would strongly recommend the readers to first go through in order to have the background understanding of the following discussion. Here I would interpret the 2nd chapter of Quran to establish the role of its mystery letters 'Alif-Lam-Mim' as the symbolic summary of this chapter, and to discuss the hermetic allegories involved in the context of these letters as the predominant theme of its subject.

The Letters 'Alif-Lam-Mim' (Aries, Taurus, Gemini)

The signs of Aries, Taurus, and Gemini together form the first astrological quadrant of the zodiac. This quadrant represents the spring season, and the birth of a new astrological cycle which culminates at the summer solstice in the sign of Cancer. These three signs cause the conditions that prepare human consciousness for the rest of the cycle. Therefore, they act as a school whereby the talents of potential candidates are modulated and streamlined to serve the grand plan of nature. As a consequence, human beings rise to their individual excellence through self-empowerment, conducive environment, and integrated behaviour. Also, the apparent objective of this chapters is to train humans to play a constructive role in the dissemination of justice, equity, and order in a society.

The Letter 'Alif' (Aries)

Aries is the first sign of the astrological zodiac, and appropriately so this chapter starts with an attitude of the sign of Aries. It says in the verse (2),

2. This is the Scripture whereof there is no doubt, a guidance unto those who ward off (evil).

The sign of Aries demonstrates clarity of thoughts necessary to undertake effective actions. It is also the cardinal (initiatory) sign of the spring season, and therefore in astrological traditions it represents warlike proactive attitudes to initiate a new cycle of life in existence. Aries is ruled by the astrological planet Mars, which is known for causing the attributes of enterprising self-confidence and aggressiveness in its influence on human minds. Thus, the chapter begins by shedding away the attitudes of doubt in regards to its message, which it proposes to be of a positive nature. The chapter says regarding the significance of the sign of Aries,

238. Be guardians of your prayers, and of the midmost prayer, and stand up with devotion to Allah.

The midmost prayer in the verse (238) is a metaphor for the sign of Aries, as it begins at the vernal equinox point when the day/night duration is exactly the same. The Muslims observe the 'Noon prayers (Zuhr)' to signify this as a daily ritual. It is relevant because the equinox point forms the mid-point in the North-South movement of the Sun, whilst Noon represents the mid-point in its East-West movement. Aries ushers into the birth of a new cycle of life on earth because duration of the daylight here gets greater than the night darkness, and therefore the Quran symbolizes it with a change of altar or prayer direction (the qiblah). It says,

142. The foolish of the people will say: What hath turned them from the qiblah which they formerly observed? Say: Unto Allah belong the East and the West. He guideth whom He will unto a straight path. 143. Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you. And We appointed the qiblah which ye formerly observed only that We might know him who followeth the messenger, from him who turneth on his heels. In truth it was a hard (test) save for those whom Allah guided. But it was not Allah's purpose that your faith should be in vain, for Allah is Full of Pity, Merciful toward mankind. 144. We have seen the turning of thy face to heaven (for guidance, O Muhammad). And now verily We shall make thee turn (in prayer) toward a qiblah which is dear to thee. So turn thy face toward the Inviolable Place of Worship, and ye (O Muslims), wheresoever ye may be, turn your faces (when ye pray) toward it. Lo! Those who have received the Scripture know that (this revelation) is the Truth from their Lord. And Allah is not unaware of what they do.

It is interesting to note that the term 'middle nation' in the verse (143) by symbolizing the vernal equinox point of the zodiac suggests that people who work for a positive change act as witness against mankind because they are responsible for a new cycle of life. The Aries is also a sign of war, and therefore we find commandments of fighting the holy war (Jihad) in this chapter. It says,

190. Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors. 191. And slay them wherever ye find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for persecution is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers.

216. Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not.

244. Fight in the way of Allah, and know that Allah is Hearer, Knower.

The reasons for taking up an arms fight is further explained in the chapter that it should only be for self-defence and retaliation.

178. O ye who believe! Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the murdered; the freeman for the freeman, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female. And for him who is forgiven somewhat by his (injured) brother, prosecution according to usage and payment unto him in kindness. This is an alleviation and a mercy from your Lord. He who transgresseth after this will have a painful doom. 179. And there is life for you in retaliation, O men of understanding, that ye may ward off (evil).

In the following verses, the Quran makes it clear that the practice of right directives is in the best interests of mankind because such actions would result in the fulfilment of the Divine plan. Nevertheless, human beings also have their options to exercise the free-will, which is actually the test of humans for the worth of their intelligence.

154. And call not those who are slain in the way of Allah “dead.” Nay, they are living, only ye perceive not.

256. There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejecteth false deities and believeth in Allah hath grasped a firm handhold which will never break. Allah is Hearer, Knower. 257. Allah is the Protecting Guardian of those who believe. He bringeth them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities. They bring them out of light into darkness. Such are rightful owners of the Fire. They will abide therein.

In the verse (257), the movement in the direction of light is attested to be the right direction, and the consequences of failing to follow this direction would result in the consumption by the element of Aries, i.e. 'Fire'.

The Letter 'Lam' (Taurus)

Taurus is the fixed sign of spring, and the second sign of zodiac. Astrologically, Taurus represents the luxury that results from the abundance of material wealth and resources. The fruits here are ripe in the trees and the spring has come into its full bloom, which makes Taurus to be ideally suited for the celebratory tendencies of nature. This chapter of Quran speaks extensively on the issues related to food, wealth, and resources that directly make subjects of discussion for the sign of Taurus. I had briefly dealt with Taurus in my previous article on the mystery letters from the standpoint of the Moses story, due to which this chapter is named 'the Cow'; and indeed there are many more instances in this chapter of Quran with regards to the stories of the children of Israel like worship of the golden calf, and foods in the form of Manna and quails descending from the heaven etc. But here I shall be referring to the verses of archetypal Taurus character that are concerned with the business activities in a Muslim society. The Quran says,

172. O ye who believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided you, and render thanks to Allah if it is (indeed) He Whom ye worship. 173. He hath forbidden you only carrion, and blood, and swineflesh, and that which hath been immolated to (the name of) any other than Allah. But he who is driven by necessity, neither craving nor transgressing, it is no sin for him. Lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.

In the verse (172), humans are encouraged to partake of the good things, whilst the verse (173) suggests the names and attributes of the unclean foods. At the same time, flexibility is permitted in the case of extreme necessities in order to render these laws for the utmost benefits of human beings.

215. They ask thee, (O Muhammad), what they shall spend. Say: that which ye spend for good (must go) to parents and near kindred and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer. And whatsoever good ye do, lo! Allah is Aware of it.

In the verse (215), the method of spending ones wealth is prescribed with an emphasis on the social uplift of standards and well being by supporting the people who are desperately in need of them.

155. And surely We shall try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and crops; but give glad tidings to the steadfast,

The verse (155) tells humans to be wary of the dangers of luxury, because extravagant lifestyles of total dependence on the material wealth may lead to severe trials at times of scarcity. And in order to prevent that condition from happening, the Quran suggests 'fasting' in the verse (183),

183. O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those before you, that ye may ward off (evil);

In the following verses, the Quran suggests that humans should bequeath their wealth and properties to the near-relatives.

180. It is prescribed for you, when death approacheth one of you, if he leave wealth, that he bequeath unto parents and near relatives in kindness. (This is) a duty for all those who ward off (evil).

The Quran further guides about the mode of business in a society by condemning the practice of usury in the following verses.

276. Allah hath blighted usury and made almsgiving fruitful. Allah loveth not the impious and guilty. 278. O ye who believe! Observe your duty to Allah, and give up what remaineth (due to you) from usury, if ye are (in truth) believers. 279. And if ye do not, then be warned of war (against you) from Allah and His messenger. And if ye repent, then ye have your principal (without interest). Wrong not, and ye shall not be wronged. 280. And if the debtor is in straitened circumstances, then (let there be) postponement to (the time of) ease; and that ye remit the debt as almsgiving would be better for you if ye did but know.

The Quran also encourages the wealthy to practice charity without involving the vanity in it by spending for the general good of human society.

271. If ye publish your almsgiving, it is well, but if ye hide it and give it to the poor, it will be better for you, and will atone for some of your ill-deeds. Allah is Informed of what ye do. 272. The guiding of them is not thy duty (O Muhammad), but Allah guideth whom He will. And whatsoever good thing ye spend, it is for yourselves, when ye spend not save in search of Allah's Countenance; and whatsoever good thing ye spend, it will be

repaid to you in full, and ye will not be wronged. 273. (Alms are) for the poor who are straitened for the cause of Allah, who cannot travel in the land (for trade). The unthinking man accounteth them wealthy because of their restraint. Thou shalt know them by their mark: They do not beg of men with importunity. And whatsoever good thing ye spend, lo! Allah knoweth it. 274. Those who spend their wealth by night and day, by stealth and openly, verily their reward is with their Lord, and their shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.

In the following verses, the Quran suggests that spending of wealth in the right way would result in great personal, social, and spiritual benefits to the humans.

195. Spend your wealth for the cause of Allah, and be not cast by your own hands to ruin; and do good. Lo! Allah loveth the beneficent.

207. And of mankind is he who would sell himself, seeking the pleasure of Allah; and Allah hath compassion on (His) bondmen.

254. O ye who believe! spend of that wherewith We have provided you ere a day come when there will be no trafficking, nor friendship, nor intercession. The disbelievers, they are the wrong-doers.

261. The likeness of those who spend their wealth in Allah's way is as the likeness of a grain which growth seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allah giveth increase manifold to whom He will. Allah is All--Embracing, All--Knowing.

264. O ye who believe! Render not vain your almsgiving by reproach and injury, like him who spendeth his wealth only to be seen of men and believeth not in Allah and the Last Day. His likeness is as the likeness of a rock whereon is dust of earth; a rainstorm smiteth it, leaving it smooth and bare. They have no control of aught of that which they have gained. Allah guideth not the disbelieving folk. 265. And the likeness of those who spend their wealth in search of Allah's pleasure, and for the strengthening of their souls, is as the likeness of a garden on a height. The rainstorm smiteth it and it bringeth forth its fruit twofold. And if the rainstorm smite it not, then the shower. Allah is Seer of what ye do. 266. Would any of you like to have a garden of palm-trees and vines, with rivers flowing underneath it, with all kinds of fruit for him therein; and old age hath stricken him and he hath feeble offspring; and a fiery whirlwind striketh it and it is (all) consumed by fire. Thus Allah maketh plain His revelations unto you, in order that ye may give thought. 267. O ye who believe! Spend of the good things which ye have earned, and of that which We bring forth from the earth for you, and seek not the bad (with intent) to spend thereof (in charity) when ye would not take it for yourselves save with disdain; and know that Allah is Absolute, Owner of Praise. 268. The devil promiseth you destitution and enjoineeth on you lewdness. But Allah promiseth you forgiveness from Himself with bounty. Allah is All--Embracing, All--knowing.

The Letter 'Mim' (Gemini)

Gemini is the first 'mutable sign' of the zodiac which astrologically represents symbols and languages used for communication purposes between two distinct entities. The symbol of this sign is 'the twin' imagery that describes the duality of every phenomena in material/physical existence despite of having essentially the same form common in each one of them. The Gemini therefore, recognizes the inherent universe in the multiverse, the macrocosm in the

microcosm, the heaven in the earth, the consciousness in the space, and the logic in the chance. The sign of Gemini is the one which makes the mystery possible by analyzing the unknown, and the argument possible by questioning the facts; also it makes the hearsay possible by creating the hysteria, and the vanity possible by hiding the truth. Over everything else, it causes the identification complex in human psychology that makes one to associate with the image of his personality and to categorize others on the basis of past experiences. Therefore, the Gemini archetype though being advantageous in a number of ways, also causes dissent, duplicitous behaviours, and hypocrisy. The Quran says,

213. Mankind were one community, and Allah sent (unto them) prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth that it might judge between mankind concerning that wherein they differed. And only those unto whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come unto them, through hatred one of another. And Allah by His Will guided those who believe unto the truth of that concerning which they differed. Allah guideth whom He will unto a straight path.

The verse (213) suggests that conflicts in the community of man is caused by the spiritual corruption which occurs when human beings refuse to take guidance from the heaven. It says that egotism and hatred of humans have led to their ignorance of acknowledging the truth of a spiritual unity of all beings whose purpose is far higher than troubles caused by the materialistic tendencies. Also, the Quran believes in the concept of monotheism which simply implies that everything in existence is effected by the same Divine principle, and that principle being the heaven has to be always supreme. The Quran explains this by an allegory of the mount in this chapter,

63. And (remember, O Children of Israel) when We made a covenant with you and caused the mount to tower above you, (saying): Hold fast that which We have given you, and remember that which is therein, that ye may ward off (evil).

The mount in verse (63) is a metaphor for the heaven, which is illuminated by the path of the Sun from the rising point on its way to the top, till its descent at the setting place. This path covers the ecliptic of the zodiac, and thus forming the zodiac signs that give impetus for life on the earthly existence. Now the life can be full of conflicts and corruptions, or it can be orderly and constructive according to the Divine plan. But in order for it to have a meaningful existence, the humans will have to rise above their self-destructive animal behaviours, and embrace an attitude of higher consciousness. The covenant with the children of Israel in verse (63), is the very divine trust which must be embodied in the human lives for the fulfilment of human potentials. The darkness of hypocrisy and corruption has to cease in order for the light of truth to impart its glory. The Quran further explains,

8. And of mankind are some who say: We believe in Allah and the Last Day, when they believe not. 9. They think to beguile Allah and those who believe, and they beguile none save themselves; but they perceive not. 10. In their hearts is a disease, and Allah increaseth their disease. A painful doom is theirs because they lie. 11. And when it is said unto them: Make not mischief in the earth, they say: We are peacemakers only. 12. Are not they indeed the mischief-makers? But they perceive not. 13. And when it is said unto them: believe as the people believe, they say: shall we believe as the foolish believe? are not they indeed the foolish? But they know not. 14. And when they fall in with those who believe, they say: We believe; but when they go apart to their devils they

declare: Lo! we are with you; verily we did but mock. 15. Allah (Himself) doth mock them, leaving them to wander blindly on in their contumacy.

77. Are they then unaware that Allah knoweth that which they keep hidden and that which they proclaim?

Since the sign of Gemini deals with symbols that are used for communication purposes, the Quran emphasizes upon the realization of the sanctity of Divine scriptures and laws. It admonishes humans that if they trifle with the celestial ordinances, then they would face the Divine justice.

78. Among them are unlettered folk who know the Scripture not except from hearsay. They but guess. 79. Therefore woe be unto those who write the Scripture with their hands and then say, "This is from Allah," that they may purchase a small gain therewith. Woe unto them for that their hands have written, and woe unto them for that they earn thereby.

44. Enjoin ye righteousness upon mankind while ye yourselves forget (to practise it)? And ye are readers of the Scripture! Have ye then no sense?

101. And when there cometh unto them a messenger from Allah, confirming that which they possess, a party of those who have received the Scripture fling the Scripture of Allah behind their backs as if they knew not, 102. And follow that which the devils falsely related against the kingdom of Solomon. Solomon disbelieved not; but the devils disbelieved, teaching mankind magic and that which was revealed to the two angels in Babel, Harut and Marut. Nor did they (the two angels) teach it to anyone till they had said: We are only a temptation, therefore disbelieve not (in the guidance of Allah). And from these two (angles) people learn that by which they cause division between man and wife; but they injure thereby no-one save by Allah's leave. And they learn that which harmeth them and profiteth them not. And surely they do know that he who trafficketh therein will have no (happy) portion in the Hereafter; and surely evil is the price for which they sell their souls, if they but knew.

The verse (102) is very significant with respect to the metaphorical symbolism used in the context of Gemini. It is related to Gemini because the verse (101) talks about the duplicitous behaviour of people in regards to the scriptures or messages, and further it says that such people follow the two angels of Babel, Harut and Marut. Now Babel is a symbolic allegory of the celestial city which metaphorically refers to the zodiac, and Harut/Marut are the two twins of zodiac in the sign of Gemini called Castor and Pollux. The verse (102) is actually implying here that the Gemini twins are responsible for teaching the languages to humans, and the treacherous or insidious usage of languages are responsible for the divisions and conflicts of the world (man and wife). Therefore, any activity that utilizes the languages for subversive purposes shall be strongly dealt with by the Divine laws. The Quran says regarding the authenticity of its message,

23. And if ye are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto Our slave (Muhammad), then produce a surah of the like thereof, and call your witness beside Allah if ye are truthful.

135. And they say: Be Jews or Christians, then ye will be rightly guided. Say (unto them, O Muhammad): Nay, but (we follow) the religion of Abraham, the upright, and he was not of the idolaters.

146. Those unto whom We gave the Scripture recognise (this revelation) as they recognise their sons. But lo! a party of them knowingly conceal the truth.

The Gemini characteristics are best expressed in communications when there is decency, clarity, and intelligence in the speech. For instance, the Quran says the following regarding the mode of communication.

104. O ye who believe, say not (unto the Prophet): “Listen to us” but say “Look upon us,” and be ye listeners. For disbelievers is a painful doom.

171. The likeness of those who disbelieve (in relation to the messenger) is as the likeness of one who calleth unto that which heareth naught except a shout and cry. Deaf, dumb, blind, therefore they have no sense.

186. And when My servants question thee concerning Me, then surely I am nigh. I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he crieth unto Me. So let them hear My call and let them trust in Me, in order that they may be led aright.

221. Wed not idolatresses till they believe; for lo! a believing bondwoman is better than an idolatress though she please you; and give not your daughters in marriage to idolaters till they believe, for lo! A believing slave is better than an idolater though he please you. These invite unto the Fire, and Allah inviteth unto the Garden, and unto forgiveness by His grace, and expoundeth His revelations to mankind that haply they may remember.

In the verse (221), the difference between believers and idolaters is mentioned in the backdrop of Gemini (Twin) archetype. By idolaters it refers to those people who would consider the communication symbols to be real, and vanity to be the truth. Therefore, the company of such folks would be based on illusory or idealistic relationships, rather than constructive and fruitful conditions. Thus, humans are admonished of the associations that do not contribute to their spiritual growth and well being, but rather they should seek the connection with the Divine, even if that does not offer materialistic objectives.

The End Note

The world is a school for the spiritual growth of human beings, though it carries an illusion due to which it appears to be a place of permanent residence. This growth cannot occur in the presence of hypocrisy, materialism, and conflicts that are all contrary to the Divine plan of human excellence in the universe, and therefore these fallacies must perish. I should end this article by quoting the following verse from the Quran.

Bethink thee of him who had an argument with Abraham about his Lord, because Allah had given him the kingdom; how, when Abraham said: My Lord is He Who giveth life and causeth death, he answered: I give life and cause death. Abraham said: Lo! Allah causeth the sun to rise in the East, so do thou cause it to come up from the West. Thus was the disbeliever abashed. And Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk. (2, 258)

The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran — Introduction

Introduction

The history of man bears witness to his great struggle for discovering the right formula to conduct affairs in various aspects of his life. Time and again, men devised ideas of religious, political, or cultural nature that have continually brought solace from the ignominy of senseless conflicts that afflicted their mode of existence, and thereby they grew spiritually through those experiences and trials. The wisdom of the ancients is not actually based on absolute principles, rather on the relative conditions proportional to the problems at hand. The nature of wisdom has never been to bind humans to a fixed legal structure by restricting their movements at every level of growth, but to enshrine them about the common connections between different parts of the existing whole. Therefore, the laws serve best when they carry the wisdom of preventing the disasters than dealing with them afterwards, and the wisdom serves best when it abides by the principles of redemption and growth. True wisdom forms the very essence of all the magical ideas that have transformed man's primeval existence into a responsible creature capable of serving the divine plan. The path of this growth had never been easy because the ideas of wisdom always required sacrifices of ego and vanity in order to counter the challenges posed by human mind to accept the necessary changes. Eventually, wisdom represents the agency responsible for the unfoldment of human potential to embody the divine archetype.

The great ideals of wisdom were incorporated into the mystery teachings of ancient Egyptians in the form of hermeticism. That is why the hermetic ideas outline the tenets of all the major philosophies in the world that include objectivity and resolution in the exercise of their traditions. Here, I have attempted to explain the manner in which symbolism of the hermetic precepts are used to define the notions of highest aspirations in man's ethical behaviour by the Islamic traditions.

The Function of Mysteries in Wisdom



Man in his consciousness carries the weight of eternity that ever haunts him in the form of 'conscience'. Thus, conscience is the territory where all the angelic and demonic entities of human experiences reside, and their influence effects the character of an individual. The sages of many cultures throughout history had acquired a connection to communicate with this deep

and dark region of human consciousness in the form of mystery teachings. Just like a child that learns the language of his environment as his capacities of perception increases with the growth of his mental faculties in the due course of time, the unravelling of mysteries to consciousness is similarly a natural process if not inhibited by external disturbances. Such external disturbances may include the conflicts of perception such as the use of many languages in the immediate environment of the child. For instance, if the father speaks Italian and the mother speaks French whilst the countrymen are English, then the acumen of that child would surely be challenged leading to reticent and confusing behaviours. Therefore, the mystery teachings of the ancient sages tend to communicate to these bewildered and perplexed children of mankind, the wise precepts of conscience so as to help them become aware of themselves and thereby realize their great potentials.

The Hermetic Depiction of Quranic Mysteries

The Quran is considered as the book of divine guidance by Muslims whose main subject constitutes 'man'. From a hermetic standpoint, the Quranic mysteries carry a great deal of connection to the hermetic arts of astrology and alchemy. The mystery letters of Quran form the fundamental touchstone in the demonstration of the esoteric teachings of Quran as I had mentioned in my articles on Huroof-al-Muqattaat. The astrological theme for indicating the Quranic doctrine on various matters is also strongly symbolized in the Quran. For instance, the chapter 52 of Quran symbolizes the zodiac in this manner.

By the Mount, (1) And a Scripture inscribed, (2) On fine parchment unrolled, (3) And the House frequented, (4) And the roof exalted, (5) And the sea kept filled, (6)

All of the above mentioned verses of Quran describe the zodiac in a symbolic way. The Mount represents the arch shaped vault of the sky between the two horizons, and the inscribed Scripture on the fine unrolled parchment portrays the zodiac signs of the ecliptic as they are constantly visited by the seven planets; and also the zodiac is exalted in the roof which looks like blue water of the sea. The signs of the zodiac with their essential archetypal characteristics constitute the subject of discussion in the Quranic chapters that begin with the mystery letters called "Huroof-al-Muqattaat". This method helps to converge the archetypal properties of zodiac to deal with the problems of every kind according to their prospective scope, and thereby making the applied solutions both relative as well as universal. The consequence of such a wisdom is transformation of man into a higher and healthier consciousness that is not afflicted by any suffering on account of the evolutionary processes of existence. If the transformation causes the scars of pain in the human soul during the achievement of its objectives then the most insidious aspects of lust and power become imprinted in that mind, causing it to lose the divine spirit and beauty of its consciousness. Therefore, this method for the transformation of man into a divine being also depicts the hermetic doctrine which says, "As above, so below; and as below, so above".

The mystery letters of Quran appear in the following given sequence. They metaphorically represent the twelve signs of the zodiac as explained in this website's article on "The Mystery Letters of Quran (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)", where I had treated them individually to demonstrate the reasons and modalities of their connections with the zodiac signs. I had not explained the function of these mystery letters in that article as a group when they appear in the prefix of a Quranic chapter, which I intend to accomplish in the current series of articles on "The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran".

The mystery letters of Quran in order of their occurrence in the Quranic chapters.

Alif, Lam, Mim @ Chapters 2, 3, 29, 30, 31, 32.

Alif, Lam, Mim, Sad @ Chapter 7.

Alif, Lam, Ra @ Chapters 10, 11, 12, 14, 15.

Alif, Lam, Mim, Ra @ Chapter. 13.

Kaf, Ha, Ya, Ain, Sad @ Chapter 19.

Ta, Ha @ Chapter 20.

Ta, Sin, Mim @ Chapters 26, 28.

Ta, Sin @ Chapter 27.

Ya, Sin @ Chapter 36.

Sad @ Chapter 38.

Ha, Mim @ Chapters 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46.

Ha, Mim, Ain, Sin, Qaf @ Chapter 42.

Qaf @ Chapter 50.

Nun @ Chapter 68.

ا = Alif (Aries)	ل = Lam (Taurus)	م = Mim (Gemini)
ص = Sad (Cancer)	ر = Ra (Leo)	ك , ق = Kaf , Qaf (Virgo)
ح , ه = Ha (Libra)	ي = Ya (Scorpio)	ع = Ain (Sagittarius)
ط = Ta (Capricorn)	س = Sin (Aquarius)	ن = Nun (Pisces)

Quranic Order of Mystery Letters

The mystery letters of Quran according to their individual zodiac signs and astrological properties.

Alif => Aries = Conflict

Lam => Taurus = Wealth

Mim => Gemini = Speech

Sad => Cancer = Authority

Ra => Leo = Community

Kaf => Virgo = Tactic

Ha => Libra = Justice

Ya => Scorpio = Commitment

Ain => Sagittarius = Vision

Ta => Capricorn = Action

Sin => Aquarius = Rebellion

Nun => Pisces = Patience

The mystery letters of Quran according to their combined astrological influence as they appear in the prefixes of chapters as groups.

Alif Lam Mim = The Conflicts about Wealth and Speech

Alif Lam Mim Sad = The Conflicts about Wealth, Speech, and Authority

Alif Lam Ra = The Conflicts about Wealth and Community

Kaf Ha Ya Ain Sad = The Tactics for Justice, Commitment, Vision, and Authority

Ta Ha = The Action for Justice

Ta Sin Mim = The Action of Rebellion and Speech

Ta Sin = The Action of Rebellion

Ya Sin = The Commitment of Rebellion

Sad = The Authority

Ha Mim = The Speech for Justice

Ha Mim Ain Sin Qaf = The Speech for Justice, Vision, Commitment, and Tactics

Qaf = The Tactics

Nun = The Patience

The End Note

This article is meant to serve as an introduction to the hermetic wisdom contained in the Quran. I shall attempt to explain the details in the article series of "The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran". I should conclude this article by quoting the following verses from Quran.

(Moses) said: My Lord! relieve my mind. And ease my task for me; And loose a knot from my tongue, That they may understand my saying. (20, 25–28)

The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran — Part 1 (Joseph)

Introduction

The lore of Joseph is narrated in the twelfth chapter of Quran, which in contrast to any other chapter deals entirely with the sequential biography of Joseph, the son of Jacob. He is the protagonist around whom much of the wisdom and heroism of the narrative revolves. Also, the hermetic symbolism associated with the style and characters of this story is truly remarkable in the depiction of astrological archetypes. The Quran says in this chapter,

We narrate unto thee (Muhammad) the best of narratives in that We have inspired in thee this Qur'an, though aforetime thou wast of the heedless. (12, 3)

The Redemptive Principle of Love



In the article “The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran—Introduction”, I had explained about the mystery letters of Quran as they appear in the prefixes of certain Quranic chapters. This chapter begins with the mystery letters of “Alif Lam Ra (Aries Taurus Leo)”, that can be allegorically interpreted as “The conflicts about wealth and community”, thus forming the main theme of this chapter. Joseph represents here the archetype of Leo, the brightest sign of the zodiac ruled by the Sun expressing the redemptive and renovative powers of the heart. Jacob, the father of Joseph and his eleven brothers, metaphorically represents the Sun whose rhythmic movements from northern to southern portions of the ecliptic gives birth to the twelve zodiacal signs. In this story, Jacob (the Sun) is in love with Joseph (the sign of Leo) because that is where it feels most comfortable in the zodiac due to the brightness and brilliance of the mid-summer sign. But Joseph in order to deserve this esteemed position with his father, has to earn it by surviving the conflicts of his brothers about ‘wealth’ and ‘community’, the two major attributes of the fixed zodiac signs. The Sun in alchemy represents ‘gold’, therefore Joseph has to undergo transmutation in the alchemical crucible of the zodiac into the consciousness of gold in order to prove himself worthy of the love of his father. The Quran says,

When Joseph said unto his father: O my father! Lo! I saw in a dream eleven planets and the sun and the moon, I saw them prostrating themselves unto me. He said: O my dear son! Tell not thy brethren of thy vision, lest they plot a plot against thee. Lo! Satan is for man an open foe. Thus thy Lord will prefer thee and will teach thee the interpretation of events, and will perfect His grace upon thee and upon the family of Jacob as He perfected it upon thy forefathers, Abraham and Isaac. Lo! thy Lord is Knower, Wise. (12, 4–6)

In these verses, the eleven planets of the dream of Joseph are metaphorical for the eleven signs of the zodiac besides Leo; represented here by the eleven brothers of Joseph whilst the Sun and Moon stand for the father and mother respectively. 'The interpretation of events', mentioned here seems to indicate the sensitive or receptive property of the heart to recognize the motives behind all kinds of activities by understanding the perspective of the other side, and thereby treating all actions as per their intentions. The narrative continues,

When they said: Verily Joseph and his brother are dearer to our father than we are, many though we be. Lo! our father is in plain aberration. (One said): Kill Joseph or cast him to some (other) land, so that your father's favour may be all for you, and (that) ye may afterward be righteous folk. One among them said: Kill not Joseph but, if ye must be doing, fling him into the depth of the pit; some caravan will find him. (12, 8–10)

The above verses demonstrate that the fundamental roots of all conflicts in human communities are in the quantitative value judgement of its people. The brothers of Joseph got envious on account of his beauty which is essentially a qualitative factor, they were inclined to justify their malignant intentions due to the ill perception of the father who could not see the reason of appreciating the strength of numbers. This also led to the self deception that righteousness could actually be achieved by undertaking the necessary evil actions, or one might still get the promotion though being failed in the examination. It further says,

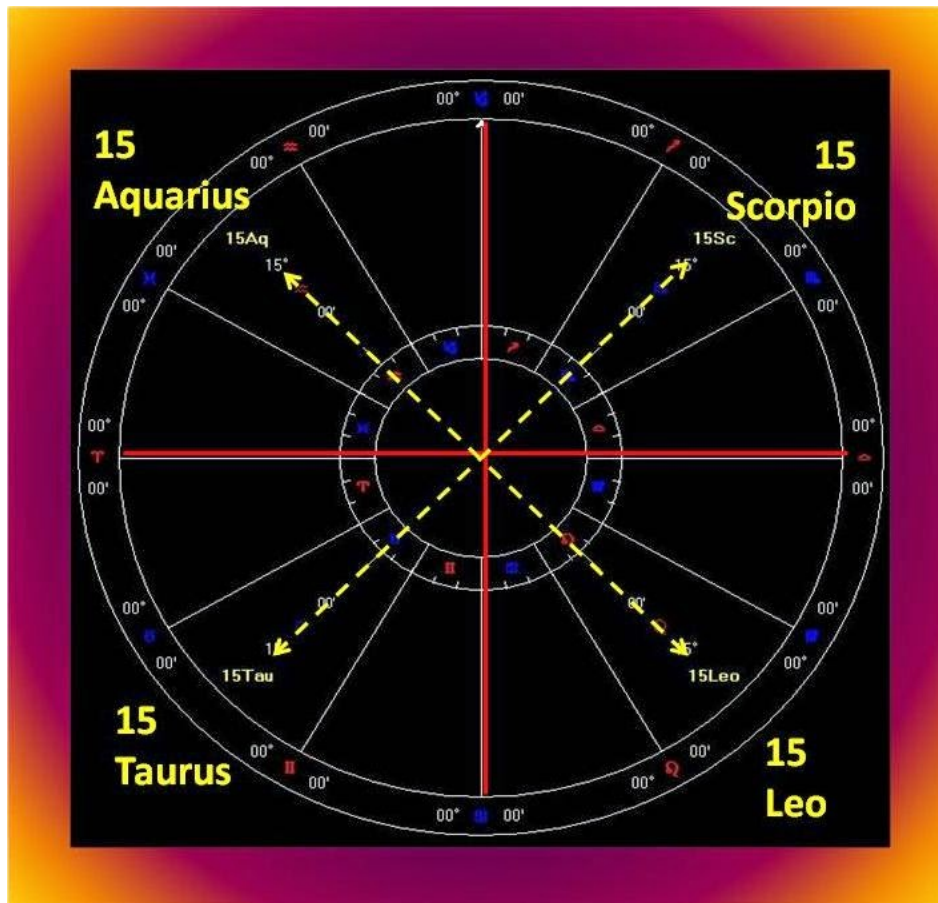
They said: O our father! Why wilt thou not trust us with Joseph, when lo! we are good friends to him? Send him with us to-morrow that he may enjoy himself and play. And lo! we shall take good care of him. He said: Lo! in truth it saddens me that ye should take him with you, and I fear lest the wolf devour him while ye are heedless of him. They said: If the wolf should devour him when we are (so strong) a band, then surely we should have already perished. Then, when they led him off, and were of one mind that they should place him in the depth of the pit, We inspired in him: Thou wilt tell them of this deed of theirs when they know (thee) not. And they came weeping to their father in the evening. Saying: O our father! We went racing one with another, and left Joseph by our things, and the wolf devoured him, and thou believest not our saying even when we speak the truth. And they came with false blood on his shirt. He said: Nay, but your minds have beguiled you into something. (My course is) comely patience. And Allah it is Whose help is to be sought in that (predicament) which ye describe. (12, 11–18)

This part of the story shows such levels of depravity as can afflict human consciousness so as to blatantly beguile an individual or group to achieve some devious ends. The major psychological part played here is by arousing the instinctual temptations for pleasures such as enjoyment and game, which is the province of the sign of Aquarius (opposite Leo). The 'wolf' symbol is also often associated with the sign of Aquarius due to the animal's wild and independent nature, and its ability to endure extreme cold. The suggestion of a Leo child (Joseph) being devoured by a wolf in the unprotected wild seems rather reasonable only if the child is not purely true to its purpose or archetype. But the father Jacob is not easily deceived in

this matter because of his awareness of the true potential of Joseph which he would realize after passing through the trials of 'community' and 'wealth'. Furthermore, the faith of Joseph in his ability to grow and transform into a more commanding state by learning the wisdom offered by the trials and spiritual experiences keeps him continent in that hour.

And there came a caravan, and they sent their waterdrawer. He let down his pail (into the pit). He said: Good luck! Here is a youth. And they hid him as a treasure, and Allah was Aware of what they did. And they sold him for a low price, a number of silver coins; and they attached no value to him. And he of Egypt who purchased him said unto his wife: Receive him honourably. Perchance he may prove useful to us or we may adopt him as a son. Thus we established Joseph in the land that We might teach him the interpretation of events. And Allah was predominant in His career, but most of mankind know not. And when he reached his prime We gave him wisdom and knowledge. Thus We reward the good. (12, 19–22)

The 'waterdrawer' in the above passage symbolizes Aquarius, which is the sign popularly depicted as the man carrying a pitcher of water. Joseph is not much valued by the opposite sign of Aquarius, but he receives an honourable welcome in Egypt because the land of Egypt is a metaphor for the sign of Taurus. There Joseph learns the art of conducting profitable business and the intelligent use of material resources to their best effects. Once educated in the affairs of civilization, Joseph undergoes the spiritual trials meant to determine his purity of intent and purpose in the life.



The Conflict about Community



And she, in whose house he was, asked of him an evil act. She bolted the doors and said: Come! He said: I seek refuge in Allah! Lo! he is my lord, who hath treated me honourably. Lo! wrong-doers never prosper. She verily desired him, and he would have desired her if it had not been that he saw the argument of his Lord. Thus it was, that We might ward off from him evil and lewdness. Lo! he was of Our chosen slaves. And they raced with one another to the door, and she tore his shirt from behind, and they met her lord and master at the door. She said: What shall be his reward, who wisheth evil to thy folk, save prison or a painful doom? (Joseph) said: She it was who asked of me an evil act. And a witness of her own folk testified: If his shirt is torn from before, then she speaketh truth and he is of the liars. And if his shirt is torn from behind, then she hath lied and he is of the truthful. So when he saw his shirt torn from behind, he said: Lo! this is of the guile of you women. Lo! the guile of you is very great. O Joseph! Turn away from this, and thou, (O woman), ask forgiveness for thy sin. Lo! thou art of the sinful. (12, 23–29)

The first spiritual trial of Joseph was conducted by the fixed sign of Scorpio which tested his commitment to the community. The wife of his employer represents Scorpio who attempted to seduce Joseph into betraying his master, but Joseph resisted and tried to get away from her. Scorpio is the fixed zodiac sign that follows after Leo, and therefore if the shirt of Joseph would have been torn from the front then he would have lost his archetypal value of being a Leo. But the shirt was torn from behind, and therefore Joseph had withstood the trial successfully. He did not allow the corrupt behaviours to spoil his spiritual integrity, and thereby justified his education and stay in the land of Egypt (Taurus).

And women in the city said: The ruler's wife is asking of her slave-boy an ill-deed. Indeed he has smitten her to the heart with love. We behold her in plain aberration. And when she heard of their sly talk, she sent to them and prepared for them a cushioned couch (to lie on at the feast) and gave to every one of them a knife and said (to Joseph): Come out unto them! And when they saw him they exalted him and cut their hands, exclaiming: Allah Blameless! This is not a human being. This is no other than some gracious angel. She said: This is he on whose account ye blamed me. I asked of him an evil act, but he proved continent, but if he does not do my behest he verily shall be

imprisoned, and verily shall be of those brought low. He said: O my Lord! Prison is more dear than that unto which they urge me, and if Thou fend not off their wiles from me I shall incline unto them and become of the foolish. So his Lord heard his prayer and fended off their wiles from him. Lo! He is Hearer, Knower. And it seemed good to them (the men-folk) after they had seen the signs (of his innocence) to imprison him for a time. (12, 30–35)

The above passage from Quran indicates that though Joseph proved himself truthful, but Egypt (Taurus) could not defend itself against the vile corruption of its women (Scorpio). The cutting of hands for releasing blood is symbolically done to swear an oath or personal undertaking, and thus it seemed evident that the womenfolk of Egypt had decided to fight for their case together. Therefore, in order to contain that scandalous situation, the men thought it to be necessary to imprison the innocent Joseph nonetheless. This episode demonstrates that however a culture may prosper materially, but without spiritual integrity there can be no justice expected from it.

And two young men went to prison with him. One of them said: I dreamed that I was pressing wine. The other said: I dreamed that I was carrying upon my head bread whereof the birds were eating. Announce unto us the interpretation, for we see thee of those good (at interpretation). He (Joseph) said: The food which ye are given (daily) shall not come unto you but I shall tell you the interpretation ere it cometh unto you. This is of that which my Lord hath taught me. Lo! I have forsaken the religion of folk who believe not in Allah and are disbelievers in the Hereafter. And I have followed the religion of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. It never was for us to attribute aught as partner to Allah. This is of the bounty of Allah unto us (the seed of Abraham) and unto mankind; but most men give not thanks. O my fellow-prisoners! Are divers lords better, or Allah the One, Almighty? Those whom ye worship beside Him are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers. Allah hath revealed no sanction for them. The decision rests with Allah only, Who hath commanded you that ye worship none save Him. This is the right religion, but most men know not. O my two fellow-prisoners! As for one of you, he will pour out wine for his lord to drink; and as for the other, he will be crucified so that the birds will eat from his head. Thus is the case judged concerning which ye did inquire. And he said unto him of the twain who he knew would be released: Mention me in the presence of thy lord. But Satan caused him to forget to mention it to his lord, so he (Joseph) stayed in prison for some years. (12, 36–42)

Since the unfair incarceration of Joseph in Egypt, he had learnt the wisdom that there were three kinds of people in the world. Firstly, those who would always do the right things for right reasons, and they were the monotheist or believers in one God (like Joseph); secondly those who would do the right things for wrong reasons or intentions, and they were the idolaters or worshipers of many gods (like his prison mates); and lastly those who would do the wrong things for wrong reasons, and they were the disbelievers in God (like those corrupt women of Egypt). Thus, once Joseph learned the wisdom of discriminating people on the basis of both their actions and intentions, he found that his two companions in the prison were of the idolatrous kind. Joseph being the Leo, his two neighbours therefore were Virgo and Cancer. Joseph knew that he could not preach them the truth unless they owed him some favour; and when they asked him for the favour of interpreting their dreams, he took the opportunity to preach to them the doctrine of monotheism. The vision of Joseph was not blurred due to any conflict of mind in human nature and as a result he could not only see through his own dreams clearly in regards to what they meant, but also those of others. From their dreams Joseph recognized that the Cancer person would be crucified at the sign of Capricorn, but the Virgo

person would find redemption and thus pour out wine again. Joseph therefore asked the Virgo person to help him to secure his release from the prison, but because of the idolatrous nature of that man, his selfishness made him to forget to support Joseph.

The Conflict about Wealth



And the king said: Lo! I saw in a dream seven fat kine which seven lean were eating, and seven green ears of corn and other (seven) dry. O notables! Expound for me my vision, if ye can interpret dreams. They answered: Jumbled dreams! And we are not knowing in the interpretation of dreams. And he of the two who was released, and (now) at length remembered, said: I am going to announce unto you the interpretation, therefore send me forth. (And when he came to Joseph in the prison, he exclaimed): Joseph! O thou truthful one! Expound for us the seven fat kine which seven lean were eating and the seven green ears of corn and other (seven) dry, that I may return unto the people, so that they may know. He said: Ye shall sow seven years as usual, but that which ye reap, leave it in the ear, all save a little which ye eat. Then after that will come seven hard years which will devour all that ye have prepared for them, save a little of that which ye have stored. Then, after that, will come a year when the people will have plenteous crops and when they will press (wine and oil). (12, 43–49)

The king of Egypt is metaphorically the ruler of the sign of Taurus, which is Venus. The planets in their ruling signs are the best and strongest, but in the opposing signs they become detriment and weak. The king of Egypt alongside the high ranking officials of that country were idolatrous, and therefore could not understand the insights that came from the dreams. The person who had received the explanation of his dream from Joseph in the prison called him as "O thou truthful one", because he knew of the purity and wisdom of Joseph's mind. The seven fat cows in the above passage of Quran represent the planets in their domain (ruling signs), whilst the seven lean cows are the planets in their detriment (opposing signs). Here Joseph not only interprets the dream of the king of Egypt, but also advises him on how to deal with it. Overall, it is concerning the conflicts that arise due to the unequal distribution of resources resulting in the miseries of wars. Joseph actually advised the king to maintain the balance of resources among various classes of people in his kingdom so that all men could serve the kingdom to their best of abilities and potentials.

The End Note

I have neither quoted the whole chapter of Quran here, nor explained every bit of the symbolism present in it. Nevertheless, I hope to have gathered sufficient description of hermetic wisdom from the stand point of explaining the function of mystery letters of this chapter. Now, the reader is strongly encouraged to go through the chapter 12 of Quran in order to discover more aspects of hermetic wisdom in its contents. I should conclude this article by quoting the final verse of this chapter of the Quran.

In their history verily there is a lesson for men of understanding. It is no invented story but a confirmation of the existing (Scripture) and a detailed explanation of everything, and a guidance and a mercy for folk who believe. (12, 111)

The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran — Part 2 (The Chosen One)

Introduction

The observations made by man through his faculties have always recognized an underlying order in the systems of the universe. From atoms to the galaxies, all seem to resonate and dance to the musical frequencies that express the mode of creation with an explicit design. This design has been unfolding perpetually with a surety of purpose which has made it innate to the nature of all things in the existence. The great panorama represents the authority of the creative powers in the universal mind by describing the divine plan of truth, beauty, and order. Therefore, the civilizations of man have worshipped the creator God throughout history for appreciating the tremendous organization in the works of his creation.

In the zodiac, the archetypal creative principles are enshrined in the cardinal signs, i. e. the signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn. Together these signs form a cross figure in the zodiac called the 'cardinal cross'. When the Sun enters into one of these signs, a new season is initiated according to the characteristics of that sign. Here, I shall be mainly discussing the sign of Cancer in the backdrop of chapter 38 of Quran which begins with the prefixed mystery letter "Sa'd". I had earlier mentioned in the article "The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran—Introduction", that the mystery letter "Sa'd" stands for the astrological sign of Cancer, and it represents 'The Authority'. Since Cancer is a cardinal sign, therefore this chapter deals with the elements of authority in the mysteries of creation. With great authority, comes great responsibility; that is metaphorically demonstrated here by the trials faced by the 'Cancer Sun' for fulfilling its archetypal role, and thus becoming the 'Chosen One' who brings order to the forces of creation in the world.



It is important to note that the chapter 38 mentions the stories of David, Solomon, and Job from the Bible in a very symbolic way. The details of the stories are simply not there, but inklings of their possible connections to certain anecdotes of the Old Testament have been recognized by the Muslims as very striking in their depictions. From a hermetic perspective, I think of these stories to represent the three symbolic trials undertaken by the Cancer Sun or the Chosen One in order to authenticate its authority.

The Aries Trial

The Quran says the following allegory concerning the Aries trial of the Chosen One.

And hath the story of the litigants come unto thee? How they climbed the wall into the royal chamber; How they burst in upon David, and he was afraid of them. They said: Be not afraid! (We are) two litigants, one of whom hath wronged the other, therefor judge aright between us; be not unjust; and show us the fair way. Lo! this my brother hath ninety and nine ewes while I had one ewe; and he said: Entrust it to me, and he conquered me in speech. (David) said: He hath wronged thee in demanding thine ewe in addition to his ewes, and lo! many partners oppress one another, save such as believe and do good works, and they are few. And David guessed that We had tried him, and he sought forgiveness of his Lord, and he bowed himself and fell down prostrate and repented. (38, 21–24)

The two litigant brothers in the above story represent the signs of Aries and Libra respectively. Though Aries had already taken ninety nine percent of the shares in the creation of the world, yet it was contending for the one percent left with the Libra also. David who is the Chosen One, decides the judgement with his authority in favour of the weaker partner, i. e. Libra. The penitence of David alludes to the incident of the Old Testament where he had conspired to marry some beautiful woman. The story teaches the Chosen One (David) to control his ambitious nature (Aries) in the exercise of his authority.

The Libra Trial

The character of Solomon in the following passage represents the Chosen One.

And We bestowed on David, Solomon. How excellent a slave! Lo! he was ever turning in repentance (toward Allah). When there were shown to him at eventide light-footed coursers. And he said: Lo! I have preferred the good things (of the world) to the remembrance of my Lord; till they were taken out of sight behind the curtain. (Then he said): Bring them back to me, and fell to slashing (with his sword their) legs and necks. And verily We tried Solomon, and set upon his throne a (mere) body. Then did he repent. (38, 30–34)

There are actually two anecdotes symbolically condensed in the above passage, both expressing the desire for entertainment, leisure, and pleasure (Libra characteristics). In the first anecdote, Solomon had gotten completely absorbed into the entertaining dances of the light-footed coursers at the evening (Libra) that he forgot the track of time to keep up with his official appointments or responsibilities. Afterwards, he realized the loss of time by deforming and injuring those coursers who had taken much of his attention uselessly, and thence they would never be able to perform again. In the second anecdote, Solomon had tried to beget many sons in a very short period so that they could strengthen his kingdom by conquering the world effortlessly, and thereby he would live with ease and pleasure in the retirement. The '(mere) body' upon Solomon's throne symbolizes an ineffective progeny, and thus his scheme of possessing many sons had failed causing him to repent from the unworthy desires of life.

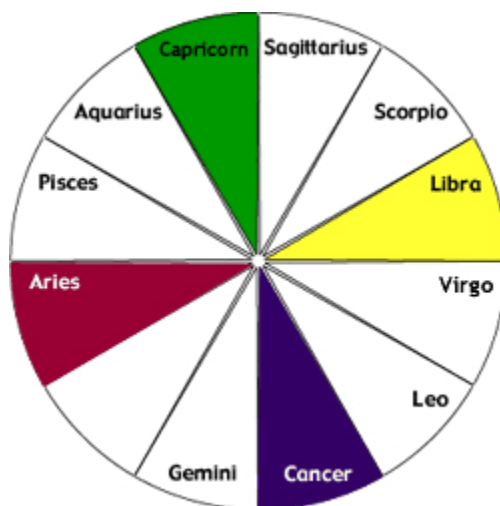
The Capricorn Trial

The personality of Job represents the Chosen One in the following anecdote.

And make mention (O Muhammad) of Our bondman Job, when he cried unto his Lord (saying): Lo! the devil doth afflict me with distress and torment. (And it was said unto him): Strike the ground with thy foot. This (spring) is a cool bath and a refreshing drink. And We bestowed on him (again) his household and therewith the like thereof, a mercy from Us, and a memorial for men of understanding. And (it was said unto him): Take in thine hand a branch and smite therewith, and break not thine oath. Lo! We found him steadfast, how excellent a slave! Lo! he was ever turning in repentance (to his Lord). (38, 41–44)

We know about the disease of Job from the Old Testament, which is symbolically mentioned here as a trial of Capricorn for the Chosen One. The affliction of Job was the trial for his ability to endure the uncontrollable circumstances by always keeping himself true to his noble purpose. Job did not surrender even under the most desperate conditions to the negativities of life, and therefore ultimately found succour from the waters of Cancer that healed him. The inability of Job to physically function properly could not make him to loose faith in his higher objectives, though his relatives had given up on him. The relatives of Job were looking for material and social benefits from him and showed neither concerns nor sympathy for his spiritual growth due to the great suffering he had endured, and hence they had to be punished for their ignoble short-sightedness. The Capricorn trial teaches the lesson of endurance to the Chosen One.

The Authority of Creation



The following is the account given in this chapter regarding the creation of a mortal man, and his exalted stature as being the inheritor of the Divine Spirit.

When thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to create a mortal out of mire. And when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My Spirit, then fall down before him prostrate. The angels fell down prostrate, every one. Saving Iblis; he was scornful and became one of the disbelievers. He said: O Iblis! What hindereth thee from falling prostrate before that which I have created with both My hands? Art thou too proud or art thou of the high exalted? He said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire, whilst him Thou didst create of clay. He said: Go forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast, And lo! My curse is on thee till the Day of Judgement. He said: My Lord! Reprieve me till the Day when they are raised. He said: Lo! thou art of those reprieved. Until the Day of the time appointed. He said: Then, by Thy might, I surely will beguile them every one. Save

Thy single-minded slaves among them. He said: The Truth is, and the Truth I speak. That I shall fill hell with thee and with such of them as follow thee, together. (38, 71–85)

The above passage mentions 'both My hands' in association with the creation of man to signify the presence of divine authority in his creation. The two hands may also metaphorically represent the two cardinal axes of Aries/Libra and Cancer/Capricorn respectively. The Iblis or Devil, who did not recognize the divine authority to create a mortal of outstanding order and surpassing harmony of elements was thus, cursed by God on account of his pride. Therefore, pride constitutes the fundamental component of all forms of disharmony and disorder that destroys the creative capacity of humans. The 'single-minded slaves' in the above passage represent the Chosen Ones who overcome all the trials and become the true authorities.

The End Note

Jesus had taught that the trees should be judged by their fruits; which does not necessarily indicate that the ends should justify the means, but rather they should be used to determine the means. One may correctly surmise that there could be an eschatological connection to the theme of this article. Since every work of creation speaks of the skill of its maker, and thus the great potential of man as the Chosen One may express the supreme authority of the perfect and ultimate Creator. I should conclude this article by citing the following verses from Quran.

And make mention of Our bondmen, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, men of parts and vision. Lo! We purified them with a pure thought, remembrance of the Home (of the Hereafter). Lo! in Our sight they are verily of the elect, the excellent. And make mention of Ishmael and Elisha and Dhu'l-Kifl. All are of the chosen. This is a reminder. And lo! for those who ward off (evil) is a happy journey's end. (38, 45–49)

The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran — Part 3 (The Cornerstone)

Introduction

This article continues the series of “The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran”, though it can be read independently without losing much sense in the context. The section of Quran I shall endeavour to interpret here is the chapter 15 called Al-Hijr, which means “The Stone”. The title of this chapter is essentially a reference for “The Cornerstone”, which in turn is symbolic of the Eclipsed Sun. The mystery involved in the chapter is quite fascinating, and is worth an enterprise of detailed description from a hermetic viewpoint. I will encourage the reader to pay particular attention to the language, tone, and overall style of this chapter as they are the key to unravelling its mysteries.

The symbol of the Cornerstone is a celebrated ancient one, pervading in about every sacred tradition of human history. The depth of the meaning associated with it is immense in its scope, but the most conclusive interpretation from a hermetic standpoint is that of representing the mystery of solar eclipse. The Cornerstone of Islamic tradition is placed in the cubic temple called Kaaba at Mecca, and in that of Jewish tradition it is the Foundation Stone placed at the temple in Jerusalem. The adherents of every sacred tradition throughout history have been offering obeisance and sacrifices to the altar of their respective Cornerstones, and defending them as the prime objects of value to their cultures. Therefore, we shall try to understand the underlying mystical wisdom in the mystery of Cornerstone expressed in the chapter 15 of the Quran.



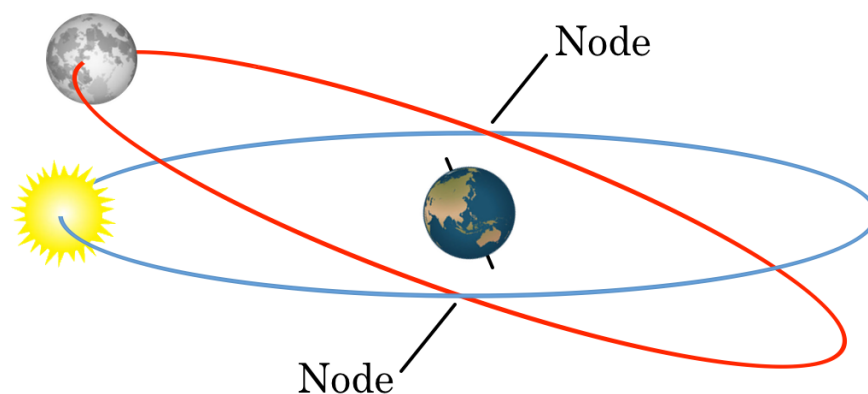
The Power and the Purpose

Before delving into the text of the Quran, I would like the reader to be aware of certain astrological concepts because they are very essential to the understanding of the symbolic language used in the Quran. As I mentioned earlier, the Cornerstone metaphorically represents the eclipsed Sun. The solar eclipses occur when the Sun and the Moon conjoin together at the axis of the Lunar Nodes. The Lunar Nodes are the intersecting points of the solar and lunar orbits in the northern and southern side of the ecliptic. The Northern intersection is called the North Node or the Dragon’s Head, whilst the Southern intersection is known as the South Node or the Dragon’s Tail. The Lunar Nodes always move opposite to each other, and in the direction reverse to the motion of Luminaries (Sun and Moon) in the sky which is why their movement is called the Retrograde motion. The Luminaries always exhibit the direct motion, while the Lunar

Nodes always the retrograde motion, but the five planets beside them that include Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn exhibit a combination of direct and retrograde motions according to their relative positions to the Earth. Meaning that the five planets individually have movements at times similar to the Luminaries, and at other times the Lunar Nodes. Now, what does it all mean astrologically?

The Luminaries are the symbols of power in astrology, whilst the Lunar Nodes are the symbols of purpose. The Luminaries represent the awareness that ushers humanity into the future with a better design and architecture to inhabit the earth, while the Nodes make them discover the original intent in their creation by the knowledge of their historical experiences from the most ancient times. The awareness of the future gives power, and the awareness of the past brings in purpose, and together they give an objective value to the human existence because their works acquire a sacred and noble nature. The movements towards the awareness of future and past, towards power and purpose is consistent with the direct and retrograde motion of the Luminaries and the Lunar Nodes. When the Luminaries that represent power come in contact with one of the Lunar Nodes that represents purpose, they produce the solar eclipse. Therefore, the solar eclipses are essentially the trials for human integrity.

Another important thing to remember here is that Sun and Moon are the Luminaries of Day and Night respectively. Sun represents the power of six day signs of the zodiac from Aries to Virgo, and Moon represents the power of six Night signs of the zodiac from Libra to Pisces. In a similar fashion, the Lunar North Node represents the purpose of the six day signs, and the Lunar South Node represents the purpose of the six night signs. Thus, the power of the Sun connects to the purpose of the North Node, and the power of the Moon connects to the purpose of the South Node. The rest of the planets when in direct motion in the day signs connect to the power of the Sun, and in retrograde motion connect to the purpose of the North Node; While in the night signs in direct motion they connect to the power of the Moon, and in retrograde motion they connect to the purpose of the South Node.



Now after this astrological understanding of the power and the purpose, we are sufficiently prepared to read the mysteries of chapter 15.

The Chapter 15, Al-Hijr (The Stone)

“The Stone” here is the term analogous to the Cornerstone. The Chapter 15 starts in the following manner, kindly note the tone of the language used.

1. Alif. Lam. Ra. These are verses of the Scripture and a plain Reading. 2. It may be that those who disbelieve wish ardently that they were Muslims. 3. Let them eat and enjoy life, and let (false) hope beguile them. They will come to know! 4. And We destroyed no township but there was a known decree for it. 5. No nation can outstrip its term nor can they lag behind. 6. And they say: O thou unto whom the Reminder is revealed, lo! thou art indeed a madman! 7. Why bringest thou not angels unto us, if thou art of the truthful? 8. We send not down the angels save with the Fact, and in that case (the disbelievers) would not be tolerated. 9. Lo! We, even We, reveal the Reminder, and lo! We verily are its Guardian.

The first verse starts with the abbreviated mystery letters Alif. Lam. Ra. which if you can refer to my introductory article of this series, they mean that this chapter is to be about the conflicts about wealth and community. The first nine verses show a derogatory attitude towards people with wealth and power who lack true purpose in their lives. It suggests that the gruesome fate awaits them because their power shall fail if not aligned with the true purpose. Also, their denouncing the prophet as a madman constitutes the deviation from the right course because their minds do not correspond with that of the prophet's, and thus shall suffer punishment of destruction. The verse nine metaphorically means that the connection between power and purpose is divinely ordained, and thus shall be protected.

13. They believe not therein, though the example of the men of old hath gone before. 14. And even if We opened unto them a gate of heaven and they kept mounting through it, 15. They would say: Our sight is wrong—nay, but we are folk bewitched. 16. And verily in the heaven we have set mansions of the stars, and We have beautified it for beholders. 17. And We have guarded it from every outcast devil, 18. Save him who stealeth the hearing, and them doth a clear flame pursue. 19. And the earth have We spread out, and placed therein firm hills, and caused each seemly thing to grow therein.

The verse 13 suggests that the course of humanity towards its destiny is like a cyclical process of trials and errors that amounts to the exploration of all possibilities for exalting the human stature. In order to understand the verses 14–19, we must acquaint ourselves with the nature of awareness. In the Quranic tradition, which we shall soon see in the verses ahead, the angels are considered extremely subtle creatures entirely constituted of light energy, the devils or jinns are creatures of heat energy (subtle but nevertheless denser than light), and humans are constituted of the earth materials (extremely dense). For the angelic knowledge or message to reach the human mind, the subtle awareness must stay intact in a very dense environment. For such a process to transpire, the earth itself will have to be transformed through moulding and crystallisation to become a transparent gem that could sustain or reflect the light perfectly without losing it. This transformation is indeed a hard process involving higher temperatures and pressures. Notwithstanding, the gemstone can carry out the work of light easily afterwards, but in doing so it usually becomes way more denser and harder than looser earth materials. And still not every hard substance on earth is a gemstone either. The point here is that heat energy being way less denser than earth material can easily subvert, manipulate, or even sabotage the subtle light communications. This it strives to accomplish by appealing to the humans in the form of their passions. Passions being the form of heat accessible to the humans.

For instance, let's investigate how could the angelic message in the above mentioned verses 14–16 be subverted by human passions. The message says that there is a path to the heaven that could be mounted, and on seeing it people would be surprised, and more so even there are mansions of the stars that are very beautiful to behold. Anyone who is prone to passions on hearing such phrases would likely react by saying, "Wow! Look God has set mansions of the

stars. How beautiful..." etc. Note that here the emphasis in the passionate reaction is more on the stars, and much less on the mansions. This is understandable also, since if I declare to someone that I have many boxes of Jewellery, then the person's focus is more likely to be on the jewellery than the boxes because mere boxes are totally valueless. The case about mansions of the stars is on the contrary different because the stars here are quite valueless and serve only as decoration pieces for the invisible but powerful mansions of the twelve zodiac signs around the ecliptic. Passions therefore, can really trick humans if they do not possess a deeper realization that God does not care much about physical beauty as compared to the beauty of the souls or human integrity.

26. Verily We created man of potter's clay of black mud altered, 27. And the jinn did We create aforetime of essential fire. 28. And (remember) when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am creating a mortal out of potter's clay of black mud altered, 29. So, when I have made him and have breathed into him of My Spirit, do ye fall down, prostrating yourselves unto him. 30. So the angels fell prostrate, all of them together. 31. Save Iblis. He refused to be among the prostrate. 32. He said: O Iblis! What aileth thee that thou art not among the prostrate? 33. He said: I am not one to prostrate myself unto a mortal whom Thou hast created out of potter's clay of black mud altered! 34. He said: Then go thou forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast. 35. And lo! the curse shall be upon thee till the Day of Judgement.

Notice that in the above verses, the phrase "potter's clay of black mud altered" has been repeated four times in eight verses because it is highly significant and symbolic. Though the creation of man has also been described with greater comprehensive detail in some other chapters of Quran, rarely has it resorted to such extraordinary terminology. So, this phrase definitely owes special attention. The words 'potter's clay' seems to denote the flexibility or malleability of material, suggesting that the stuff was pliable enough to be moulded. Secondly, the black mud should contain plenty of humus or organic substances and probably had the origin in some delta region of a river or sea. Also, the term 'altered' alongside it suggests that the material was very old and been through a lot of phases in its development of texture and chemical composition, and contained just about every element known in the periodic table. Now, when the Lord had commanded the angels to show obeisance to man, He actually placed him as the Cornerstone for His creation. The angels had very little in common with man on account of being extremely subtle, and man being extremely gross and dense, so they did not really care in their obedience of the Lord, but the jinn had some affinity with the matter because fire does tend to heat up or burn inflammable substances. The jinn refused to obey. The Lord had made man into the Cornerstone of His temple because man's very substance was formed of endless struggle, trauma, suffering, and sacrifices. Man was truly fashioned out of misery material, carrying the gravity of tremendous weight from ages of agonizing struggle from the most precarious of environments through contortions and distortions. Man was not very bright, but his material had seen it all. Therefore, in the sight of the all-knowing Lord, man was fit to be the Cornerstone, and thus deserved to be fully honoured. Unfortunately, the honour came with a price in the form of man's perpetual struggle with his passions, and his tendency to self-sabotage.

36. He said: My Lord! Reprieve me till the day when they are raised. 37. He said: Then lo! thou art of those reprieved. 38. Till the Day of appointed time. 39. He said: My Lord! Because Thou hast sent me astray, I verily shall adorn the path of error for them in the earth, and shall mislead them every one, 40. Save such of them as are Thy perfectly devoted slaves. 41. He said: This is a right course incumbent upon Me: 42. Lo! as for My slaves, thou hast no power over any of them save such of the froward as follow thee, 43.

And lo! for all such, hell will be the promised place. 44. It hath seven gates, and each gate hath an appointed portion. 45. Lo! those who ward off (evil) are among gardens and watersprings. 46. (And it is said unto them): Enter them in peace, secure. 47. And We remove whatever rancour may be in their breasts. As brethren, face to face, (they rest) on couches raised. 48. Toil cometh not unto them there, nor will they be expelled from thence. 49. Announce, (O Muhammad) unto My slaves that verily I am the Forgiving, the Merciful, 50. And that My doom is the dolorous doom.

In the verse 44, the seven gates of hell represent the abused power of the seven planets in deviation to the course of its original intent. When the power and its purpose do not sympathize, it results in gruesome consequences. But in those special cases they do work out owing to a man living with the proper course of his conscience, they result in exceedingly happy situations. The following verses in this context are very interesting.

51. And tell them of Abraham's guests, 52. (How) when they came in unto him, and said: Peace. He said: Lo! we are afraid of you. 53. They said: Be not afraid! Lo! we bring thee good tidings of a boy possessing wisdom. 54. He said: Bring ye me good tidings (of a son) when old age hath overtaken me? Of what then can ye bring good tidings? 55. They said: We bring thee good tidings in truth. So be not thou of the despairing. 56. He said: And who despaireth of the mercy of his Lord save those who are astray? 57. He said: And afterward what is your business, O ye messengers (of Allah)? 58. They said: We have been sent unto a guilty folk, 59. (All) save the family of Lot. Them we shall deliver every one, 60. Except his wife, of whom We had decreed that she should be of those who stay behind.

The news of a boy possessing wisdom, and the destruction of the guilty folk is consistent with the notion of death and rebirth associated with the solar eclipses. The weak old physical state of Abraham did not cause despair in him due to his righteousness, while the great self confidence of the guilty in their power could not save them as they were doomed. The solar eclipse had acted like a Cornerstone to order the earth according to the right course in the heaven. It served as a surgical stroke that cut off the malignancy which threatened the well being of noble lives, so that the characteristics of upright nature may survive. The goodness can truly be sustained only once the suffocating influences of the corruption are removed.

One thing I have most keenly observed in this chapter is its association with the fixed signs of the zodiac. It seems that the resilient character of the fixed signs correspond nicely with the durability of the Cornerstone. The story of Abraham receiving the good tidings of a wise son in the older age from his uninvited guests is as surprising a case as the nature of Aquarius. And the guilty folks of Sodom are definitely the corrupt representatives of the sign of Scorpio. The signs of Taurus and Leo are also mentioned in the chapter as we shall see.

61. And when the messengers came unto the family of Lot, 62. He said: Lo! ye are folk unknown (to me). 63. They said: Nay, but we bring thee that concerning which they keep disputing, 64. And bring thee the Truth, and lo! we are truth-tellers. 65. So travel with thy household in a portion of the night, and follow thou their backs. Let none of you turn round, but go whither ye are commanded. 66. And We made plain the case to him, that the root of them (who did wrong) was to be cut at early morn. 73. Then the (Awful) Cry overtook them at the sunrise. 74. And We utterly confounded them, and We rained upon them stones of heated clay. 75. Lo! therein verily are portents for those who read the signs.

The family of Lot were instructed to travel during the night, but forbidden to turn round to see anything. The question is whatever could they have witnessed in the darkness of the night, if there was indeed any darkness, because the morning or sunrise might well have been a reference to the solar eclipse. The punishment does not really have to wait till morning to transpire itself because that sort of daybreak happens everyday, unless it is symbolic of the solar renewal in the form of eclipse. The instructions of following the back of guilty people and never turning back also confirms to the astrological nature of solar eclipses whereby radical actions for cleansing oneself from the diseased remnants of the past is highly recommended. Especially considering the way destruction is described here seems rather extraordinary, as the awful cry must have been a blast of some kind, followed by the aerial bombardment of heated stones. Not just the leaders of the guilty had to perish in order to serve as examples to their people, but every single inanimate object in the area had to be demolished to make it the historical event for eternity. This demonstrates how serious the divine forces can be when it comes to the fulfilment of the divine plan, for it is not merely about dispensation of justice to them, but outright vengeance. And there are more examples of divine vengeance being meted out in the following.

78. And the dwellers in the wood indeed were evil-doers. 79. So we took vengeance on them; and lo! they both are on a high-road plain to see. 80. And the dwellers in Al-Hijr (The Stone) denied (Our) messengers. 81. And we gave them Our revelations, but they were averse to them. 82. And they used to hew out dwellings from the hills, (wherein they dwelt) secure. 83. But the (Awful) Cry overtook them at the morning hour, 84. And that which they were wont to count as gain availed them not.

The reference to 'the dwellers in the wood' is concerning the people of the city of Midian, whose practices of monetary malfeasance and greed for exorbitant profits had led them to destruction. They represent the corrupted faction of the sign of Taurus. It is also proper to term the corrupted folks of Leo to be the dwellers in Al-Hijr (The Stone), because Leo is ruled by the Sun which in eclipsed state becomes the Cornerstone of divine creation. As strong as they may have been, but could not withstand the ordinance of fate and were destroyed. Again here the morning hour metaphorically refers to the solar eclipse.

85. We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them save with truth, and lo! the Hour is surely coming. So forgive, (O Muhammad), with a gracious forgiveness. 86. Lo! Thy Lord! He is the All-Wise Creator. 87. We have given thee seven of the oft-repeated (verses) and the great Qur'an. 88. Strain not thine eyes toward that which We cause some wedded pairs among them to enjoin, and be not grieved on their account, and lower thy wing (in tenderness) for the believers. 89. And say: Lo! I, even I, am a plain warner, 90. Such as We send down for those who make division, 91. Those who break the Qur'an into parts. 92. Them, by thy Lord, We shall question, every one, 93. Of what they used to do. 94. So proclaim that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the idolaters.

It is quite astonishing the number of times we see the planets and the zodiac mentioned either directly or figuratively in this chapter. The stairway to heaven in verse 14 representing the orbits of planets, the mansions of stars in verse 16 representing the zodiac, the seven gates of hell in verse 44 representing the malevolent nature of the planets, and now in the above mentioned passage 'seven of the oft-repeated (verses)' represent the orbital movements of the seven planets whilst 'the great Qur'an' represents the zodiac. The verses 85–94 I believe are the very hallmark of hermetic texts, because these have components of comprehensibility and wholeness seldom found elsewhere. The verse 85 combines the heavens and earth and all that

is between them with truth, and the expression of truth being the Hour of destiny. The wedded pairs in verse 88 metaphorically represent the combined powers of the Sun and the Moon, the night and the day, the mind and the body, the thought and the action, the force and the movement, and the order and its strength. To make divisions in anyone of them is essentially like breaking the Quran into parts and that certainly has to be answered for. Thus, man always would require greater and greater levels of wisdom to protect himself from such divisions.

The End Note

Humans in their psychological nature try to make sense of their existence by holding on to something sacred with a fetish of adoration and devotion in order to stand together. Their common pursuits are directed and driven by the agency that binds them so strongly that it becomes the part of their very nature itself. The bondage whether accepted or imposed, never fails to transform an individual and prepares him to be dissolved in a greater whole. The rings of gemstones and markings for instance have always been traditionally used as marks of fraternity among individuals living at great distances from each other, but still striving for a common purpose based on the nature of their idealism. The Cornerstone of Islam which is the black stone placed in Kaaba serves to connect the earliest aspirations of Islam to the realization of their grand future lurking way ahead on the horizon. But the attachments also bestow a greater realization on a man, that he is a part of something bigger than himself, which frequently induces him to bring forth the best in himself. I should conclude this article by stating the following verses from Quran.

But when sight is confounded. And the moon is eclipsed. And sun and moon are united, On that day man will cry: Whither to flee! Alas! No refuge! Unto thy Lord is the recourse that day. On that day man is told the tale of that which he hath sent before and left behind. Oh, but man is a telling witness against himself, Although he tender his excuses. (Chapter 75, Verses 7–15)

The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran — Part 4 (The Communion)

Introduction

This article continues the series of “The Hermetic Wisdom of Quran”, and here it deals exclusively with the mystery of “The Communion”. There are many sections in Quran that refer to the mystery of Communion directly as well as implicitly in their teachings, and require thorough investigations through the lens of hermetic wisdom. The most prominent chapter in Quran regarding this mystery is the chapter 41, called the “Fussilat (Detailed Explanations)”. Therefore, we shall examine the features associated with the mystery of Communion and some of its esoteric aspects as described in the chapter.

The Communion essentially represents the great works performed by a person for the spiritual growth of his body and mind in the path of the Lord. The celebration of Communion rites in Christianity for instance, involves partaking of bread and wine that metaphorically refers to the body and blood of Christ demonstrating the same mystery. The mystery of bread being the solid food causing the spiritual growth of the body, and the wine being more subtle fluid causing the spiritual growth of the mind. The mystery suggests that such a growth is the very objective of living, and it can only be achieved whilst working for the Lord. In the Quran however, the Eucharist itself is mentioned in the chapter 5 (The Table Spread), but the inherent mystery of Communion is most profoundly expressed in the chapter 41; and by studying that we shall try to look into the deeper aspects of the Communion mystery.

The law of Symmetry and Proportion



The hermetic wisdom suggests that for anything to grow without getting deformed or distorted, it has to follow the law of symmetry and proportion. The pattern has to be followed in every symmetrical growth similar to the physical process of crystallization, or else deformation will occur. Therefore, in order for the body and mind of a human being to grow, it has to follow the path of the Lord. This path from the standpoint of hermetic wisdom represents the path of the Luminaries, the Sun and the Moon, representing the body and the mind respectively. The

Sun represents the body because it is always visible and prominent, and the Moon represents the mind because it can vary in its visibility from very prominent to totally invisible. But the orbits of the Luminaries (Sun and Moon) are always constant, meaning that they do not extend or stretch themselves continuously in order to grow in a symmetrical fashion. Thus, a pattern of extending the Luminary orbits according to the law of symmetry and proportion is required to be recognized and followed in order to achieve a symmetrical growth. This objective can be accomplished by following the orbital patterns of Jupiter and Saturn. There is a proportional symmetry between the paths of Sun and Jupiter because the orbit of Sun takes 12 months to revolve around the ecliptic, and the orbit of Jupiter takes 12 years to follow the same circular path. Similarly, the time period required for the Moon to revolve around the ecliptic is 29.5 days, whilst in Saturn's case it is 29.5 years. This indicates that Jupiter represents the higher symmetrical proportion of the Sun, while Saturn represents the higher symmetrical proportion of the Moon. Together in comparison though, the Sun/Jupiter proportion (month vs year) is lesser than that of the Moon/Saturn proportion (day vs year). This difference nonetheless is consistent with the notion of Sun representing the body because the growth in a human body can only occur to a lesser extent owing to its many limitations, whilst the growth in its mental faculties can be much quicker and greater with comparatively less efforts. The law of symmetry and proportion is also consistent with the mystery of the Christian Communion since partaking of the body and blood of Christ is meant to become the extension of the body and mind of Christ himself. Also in the esoteric understanding of the scriptures, the human body is usually equated to be symbolically analogous to the earth, and the human mind to that of the heaven.

The Chapter 41 of Quran, Fussilat (Detailed Explanations)

Now, we shall read the chapter 41 in the context of the Communion and the law of symmetry and proportion.

1. Ha. Mim. 2. A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful, 3. A Scripture whereof the verses are expounded, a Lecture in Arabic for people who have knowledge, 4. Good tidings and a warning. But most of them turn away so that they hear not. 5. And they say: Our hearts are protected from that unto which thou (O Muhammad) callest us, and in our ears there is a deafness, and between us and thee there is a veil. Act, then. Lo! we also shall be acting. 6. Say (unto them O Muhammad): I am only a mortal like you. It is inspired in me that your Allah is One Allah, therefor take the straight path unto Him and seek forgiveness of Him. And woe unto the idolaters, 7. Who give not the poor-due, and who are disbelievers in the Hereafter. 8. Lo! as for those who believe and do good works, for them is a reward enduring.

The chapter begins with the mystery letters 'Ha. Mim.' that can be implied to mean "The Speech for Justice". The first verses state that this chapter offers detailed explanations for the people who have knowledge, but the ignorant people turn away from it because they want to avoid the Communion. Their hearts are protected, in their ears is deafness, and in their eyes is blindness, all to keep them from the Communion. The verse 7 suggests that the charitable attitude of a person is an important constituent for the Communion, which we shall see described more specifically in the chapter again. The next few verses are very important from a symbolic standpoint.

9. Say (O Muhammad, unto the idolaters): Disbelieve ye verily in Him Who created the earth in two Days, and ascribe ye unto Him rivals? He (and none else) is the Lord of the Worlds. 10. He placed therein firm hills rising above it, and blessed it and measured therein its sustenance in four Days, alike for (all) who ask; 11. Then turned He to the

heaven when it was smoke, and said unto it and unto the earth: Come both of you, willingly or loth. They said: We come, obedient. 12. Then He ordained them seven heavens in two Days and inspired in each heaven its mandate; and We decked the nether heaven with lamps, and rendered it inviolable. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knower.

The 'two days' mentioned in the verse 9, in which God had created the earth imply the symbolic connection of the Sun/Jupiter proportion or the body part of the Communion. Similarly, the 'two days' mentioned in the verse 12, in which God had ordained the seven heavens symbolically correspond to the Moon/Saturn proportion or the mind part of the Communion. But the 'four days' of verse 10 comprise of both the Sun/Jupiter and Moon/Saturn proportions together because the 'firm hills' connect both the earth and the heaven and the life between them, thus representing the Communion of the body and the mind. There is also a very profound symbolism in the verse 12 about the phrase "and We decked the nether heaven with lamps, and rendered it inviolable." meaning the nether heaven to be consisting of the lamps like the Sun and the Moon forming the inviolable baseline from which the growth towards the higher heaven of Jupiter and Saturn might transpire. This symbolism suggests that God had created the whole process of conscious life on earth for the reason of accomplishing the Communion. The chapter further reads,

13. But if they turn away, then say: I warn you of a thunderbolt like the thunderbolt (which fell of old upon the tribes) of A'ad and Thamud; 14. When their messengers came unto them from before them and behind them, saying: Worship none but Allah! they said: If our Lord had willed, He surely would have sent down angels (unto us), so lo! we are disbelievers in that wherewith ye have been sent. 15. As for A'ad, they were arrogant in the land without right, and they said: Who is mightier than us in power? Could they not see that Allah Who created them, He was mightier than them in power? And they denied Our revelations. 16. Therefor We let loose on them a raging wind in evil days, that We might make them taste the torment of disgrace in the life of the world. And verily the doom of the Hereafter will be more shameful, and they will not be helped. 17. And as for Thamud, We gave them guidance, but they preferred blindness to the guidance, so the bolt of the doom of humiliation overtook them because of what they used to earn. 18. And We delivered those who believed and used to keep their duty to Allah.

The people of A'ad and Thamud are the only two people who are mentioned in the context of destruction in this chapter. They both were strong in their physical built, both used to carve magnificent dwelling places in the hills, and both had the great arrogance in their power. There are definite indicators from the symbolism of A'ad in the Quran suggesting that they had defied the mind part of the Communion, i. e. the Moon/Saturn proportion. Also, the A'ad were destroyed by the 'raging wind' which is the more subtle element for destruction, thus representing the mental part. The Thamud on the other hand had rejected the Sun/Jupiter proportion of the Communion, i. e. the physical body part, and consequently they were destroyed by the earthquake that seized their dwellings. Also the phrase 'from before them and behind them' in the verse 14 has occurred more than once in the chapter, and can be symbolically taken as the body and mind parts of the Communion. The approach from before effects the body of a person, whilst the approach from behind effects the mind of a person. The Thamud's betrayal is being described very beautifully in the chapter 91 of the Quran called "Ash-Shams (The Sun)". It is a relatively brief chapter but replete with exquisite symbolism, particularly describing the earth part of the Communion. Hence, in the interest of a deeper comprehension of the subject, I must quote the chapter 91 (The Sun) in the following.

1. By the sun and his brightness, 2. And the moon when she followeth him, 3. And the day when it revealeth him, 4. And the night when it enshroudeth him, 5. And the heaven and Him Who built it, 6. And the earth and Him Who spread it, 7. And a soul and Him Who perfected it, 8. And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. 9. He is indeed successful who causeth it to grow, 10. And he is indeed a failure who stunteth it. 11. (The tribe of) Thamud denied (the truth) in their rebellious pride, 12. When the basest of them broke forth, 13. And the messenger of Allah said: It is the she-camel of Allah, so let her drink! 14. But they denied him, and they hamstrung her, so Allah doomed them for their sin and razed (their dwellings). 15. He dreadeth not the sequel (of events).

The 'she-camel of Allah' mentioned in the verse 13, is the metaphorical reference to the Sun. By denying the drink of water to the she-camel of God and injuring her, the Thamud had rejected the Communion of the earth. Hence, the earthquake destroyed them. The following set of verses from chapter 88 of the Quran are very representative of the significance of the Communion, and indicative of the strong emphasis the subject has received in the book.

17. Will they not regard the camels, how they are created? 18. And the heaven, how it is raised? 19. And the hills, how they are set up? 20. And the earth, how it is spread? 21. Remind them, for thou art but a remembrancer, 22. Thou art not at all a warder over them.

The physical outlook and attributes of a camel makes it a very interesting animal. Although a denizen of desert where the lack of sustenance is a common condition, the camel seems to stretch itself to grow higher and higher from the ground. Not only it has the great capacity to endure the severity of extreme weather conditions and scarcity of water supply, but also serves as a beast of burden for travelling in areas where no other transporting agent may survive. Its ability to stretch the limits of perseverance without breaking down makes it an ideal candidate to demonstrate the value of Communion. Even if it does happen to breakdown, it is slaughtered and consumed as a nourishing sustenance for the humans. Though there may well be many animals with outstanding talents for survival under harsh conditions, but their instincts are mostly limited to the good of their own selves. The camel is especially useful because its talents serve the humans both whilst it stands, and ultimately whence it succumbs. The Communion requires humans to serve the Lord in a fashion similar to the camel.

Another very interesting symbolism of Communion relates to the hills. Hills can be symbolically considered as the features of earth that have outgrown the earth and afterwards are eagerly trying to reach out to the heaven, and the heaven too as it appears trying to reach out to the hills as well. Thus, the hills symbolize the Communion of both the earth and the heaven in a very romantic way. Now that we have seen the basic theme of symbolism regarding the Communion, we may return to the chapter 41 for further exploration of the mystery.

34. The good deed and the evil deed are not alike. Repel the evil deed with one which is better, then lo! he, between whom and thee there was enmity (will become) as though he was a bosom friend. 35. But none is granted it save those who are steadfast, and none is granted it save the owner of great happiness.

The most essential element of Communion is to practice charitable conduct towards ones enemies. It is considered by far the most potent component because it imparts the great spiritual heights to a person by exalting his station to a level of true grandness. The nobility of attitudes in the human interactions is the prime characteristic that distinguishes the humanity to be associated with the divine essence.

37. And of His portents are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or the moon; but prostrate to Allah Who created them, if it is in truth Him Whom ye worship. 38. But if they are too proud—still those who are with thy Lord glorify Him night and day, and tire not. 39. And of His portents (is this): that thou seest the earth lowly, but when We send down water thereon it thrilleth and groweth. Lo! He Who quickeneth it is verily the Quickener of the Dead. Lo! He is Able to do all things.

The verse 37 is very significant because by describing 'the sun and the moon' as portents of God, it turns them into the instruments of human growth. In other words, the physical and mental talents of humans are not there to be worshipped or celebrated but to be used for their spiritual growth. A strong beautiful person does not have to be appreciated for his wonderful body, but for the wonderful works his body gets to accomplish for the good of humanity. Being a human is a privilege that needs to be earned through constant application and hard work, so that humankind may not linger in stasis but unfolds its tremendous potential of growth. As I had observed earlier that the orbits of Sun and Moon only serve as a baseline, a solid ground for humans to launch themselves into the universe, but they by no means represent the great human destiny. It is the growth of humankind guided by the law of symmetry and proportion that will determine the human destiny.

51. When We show favour unto man, he withdraweth and turneth aside, but when ill toucheth him then he aboundeth in prayer. 52. Bethink you: If it is from Allah and ye reject it—Who is further astray than one who is at open feud (with Allah)? 53. We shall show them Our portents on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth. Doth not thy Lord suffice, since He is Witness over all things? 54. How! Are they still in doubt about the meeting with their Lord? Lo! Is not He surrounding all things?

The process of growth is actually a hard experience. A person has to use a strong will to move against the gravity, against the friction, and against the slope. The hedonistic attitudes only lead to the spiritual destruction of a human being, and never lead to his spiritual growth. The verse 53 explains the hermetic law of symmetry and proportion in a very comprehensive and thorough manner by connecting the grand macrocosm with its microcosmic essence, the humanity. Thus, humans must find their ascension to the plane of Communion through indomitable will and indefatigable efforts to realize their true potential.

The End Note

We may be living in the world of vanity and deception, but the deception can only last for so long before the reality reasserts itself. I have noticed that in those magical moments of reassertion of reality, one may discover for oneself the most ecstatic state of Communion. I should conclude this article with the following statements of Quran from chapter 18.

109. Say: Though the sea became ink for the Words of my Lord, verily the sea would be used up before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even though We brought the like thereof to help. 110. Say: I am only a mortal like you. My Lord inspireth in me that your Allah is only One Allah. And whoever hopeth for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and make none sharer of the worship due unto his Lord.

Islam, the Great Hermetic Tradition

Introduction

In this article, I have attempted to decipher the hermetic background of the teachings of Islam, and to elucidate the connections of its traditions, holy personalities, and fundamental rituals by the use of astrological symbolism.

Though many cultures of the ancient past had endeavoured to create a reflection of heaven on earth through their ideologies, mythologies, theologies, traditions, and rituals; but the more recent ones have sought after ways to adjust and advance their cultures by improving upon the ideologies, rituals, and archetypal personalities offered to their folks from their ancient forebears. Islam being a relatively modern version of numerous older traditions, has adopted a fascinating outlook in its teachings from hermeticism. Therefore, this article is an attempt to decode the Islamic doctrine and traditions from the astrological and alchemical perspectives.

The Islamic Traditions and Archetypal Personalities

The rituals and personalities mentioned in the above table are the most cherished in Islamic teachings. Out of many diverse 'schools of thoughts' among Muslims, all are at consensus in embracing the authority and sanctity of them.

#.	Astrological Archetype	Islamic Tradition	Muslim Archetype	Islamic Day
1.	Moon	Salaat	Mohammed	Monday
2.	Saturn	Sawm	Ali	Saturday
3.	Venus	Hajj	Fatima	Friday
4.	Jupiter	Zakat	Hassan	Thursday
5.	Mars	Jihad	Hussein	Tuesday
6.	Mercury	Taharah	Gabriel	Wednesday
7.	Sun	Tawaf	Imam	Sunday

Most of the mentioned 'Islamic traditions' are commonly considered as the "Pillars of Islam". Some Muslim sects like 'Ismailism' assert Islam of having seven pillars based on the authority of the descendants of prophet Muhammad; while 'Sunni' Muslims claim Islam to be composed of five pillars. Nevertheless, all of these traditions or rituals are practiced with much enthusiasm by everyone of the Muslim groups alike. The Muslim archetypal personalities are taken here from the "Panjetan-e-Pak" (Five Pure Ones). These are considered to be the prime among the prophet Muhammad's family members called 'Ahl-al-Bayt', and are entitled to be "Ahl-al-Kisa" (People of the Cloak). The Quran says,

And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as (was) the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give zakat and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity (of sin), O people of the (Prophet's) household, and to purify you with (extensive) purification. Al-Quran (33:33)

It has been reported by many authentic narrators of Islam that the above verse of the Quran was revealed to prophet Muhammad when he had covered himself under his cloak along with

Ali, Fatima, Hassan, and Hussain; and pronounced them as his household. Thus, the above verse was revealed to express their holiness and infallibility. Therefore, my objective here is to relate the characteristics of the major Islamic rituals with the heroic legacies of the most influential Muslim personalities; and to compare them with the traditional archetypal planets of astrology.

The Moon



The Astrological Moon

Astrologically, Moon is a luminary who brings guidance and comfort for humans in the dark. Moon being ruler of the water sign of Cancer, heralds the emotional well being and freedom associated with the summer season. Studies have shown that phases of the Moon influence ebb and flow of the tides, and thereby human emotions; since 70% of the human body comprises of water. Thus, human heart beat, blood pressure, flow of bodily fluids, and emotions are affected by the phases and movement of the Moon.

The Islamic Ritual of Salaat

Salaat is very much akin to the astrological Moon, on account of many reasons. Firstly, the physical postures followed by Muslims during this ritual seem similar to the different phases of the Moon. Also, Salaat is offered by Muslims with regular intervals during the day, which actually forms an exercise to bend and stretch the body for optimizing blood pressure and hormonal systems. The ritual Salaat in its performance is accompanied by the chanting of prayers alongside verses from the Quran, resulting in emotional link of worship to the deity. The constant practice of standing, bowing, and prostrating during the Salaat can have powerful psychological effects, which when performed in a congregation with discipline could create strong emotional connection with the community. Thus, the practice of Salaat ritual acts both on an individual as well as social level of significance, and strongly embodies astrological effects of the Moon among Muslims.

Muhammad

The Quran says,

The Hour has come near, and the Moon has split (in two). Al-Quran (54:1)

It is narrated by Muslims that the above verse was revealed to prophet Muhammad as a consequence of an important miracle which was performed by Muhammad at the insistence of his pagan adversaries of Mecca. In the miracle, prophet is reported to have split the Moon into

two halves. Also, Muhammad used to perform Salaat regularly at midnight on account of a specific command in the Quran directed toward him.



And from (part of) the night, pray with it (i.e., recitation of the Quran) as additional (worship) for you; it is expected that your Lord will resurrect you to a praised station. Al-Quran (17:79)

Apart from the obligatory Salaat rituals, the midnight Salaat was made compulsory for prophet Muhammad, but optional for Muslims. This might be on account of Muhammad serving as the light of guidance (Moon) during darkness of nights. Also, Muhammad used to observe fasts on every Monday. The following narration relates the anecdote.

Abu Qatada Ansari reported that Allah's Messenger (Muhammad) was asked about fasting on Monday, whereupon he said: It is (the day) when I was born and revelation was sent down to me. (Sahih Muslim: 2606)

Mondays are ruled by the astrological planet 'Moon'. Thus, Muhammad being born on Monday, received the revelation on Monday, observed fasts to consecrate every Monday, practiced Salaat regularly at midnight, and performed a miracle to split the Moon on demand of the Arabs; are obvious references to his archetypal association with the Moon.

The Saturn

The Astrological Saturn

Saturn is astrologically considered the most difficult planet to entertain, since it rules the signs opposite to the luminaries where darkness and cold prevails throughout its tenure. Saturn imposes restrictions, boundaries, discipline, hard-work, and forces ones transformation into a new avatar. It is the principle of contraction in nature, as in mythologies it represents old age, and time. Saturn makes one lean and mean, tramp and scant, battered and bruised, trimmed and streamlined, and also bold and strong by presenting challenges that makes or breaks, and reduces one to his barebones. Therefore, it embodies the utmost struggle to overcome the

hardest challenges of life in existence through constancy of a person's dedication to grow in spirit and courage.

The Islamic Tradition of Sawm (Ritual Fast)

The Quran mentions ritual fasts in the following verse,

O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint. Al-Quran (2:183)

The Islamic rules prescribed for keeping fasts indicate complete abstinence from any food, drink, or sex. Some Muslims also consider any sort of audio-visual entertainment to be prohibited during fasts. The duration for the fasts lasts from Sunrise till Sunset. The apparent wisdom of promulgating this timing seems likely to prepare the Muslims during the light hours of days, for the following dark hours of nights. It would be same as storing the goods in summers, to be available for winters. The Jewish Sabbath traditions also observes strict austerities on Saturdays (Saturn's day), and are akin to the ascetic Sawm ritual of the Muslims. Fasts are obligatory for Muslims in the Islamic month of Ramadan, which lasts for 29.5 days. The wisdom of this month long fasting ritual could be to attend a lunar cycle with such utmost exercise of austerities by psychologically stretching its duration through restrictions and trials, so as to be ready for the 29.5 years long Saturn's cycle.

Ali

Muhammad was an elder cousin to Ali, and had given him this name. The name Ali is akin to 'El' (Saturn), about which Eusebius in 'Praeparatio Evangelica' has mentioned as the chief deity of the Phoenicians. Ali is reputed to be the only person ever to be born inside the walls of the holy shrine called 'Kaaba'. The Kaaba's architecture is designed in the form of a 'black cube', which also symbolizes Saturn. Add to this, Ali's lifestyle also expresses extreme asceticism and austerity. Following are the quotes attributed to Ali in his earliest biographical collection called 'Nahj al-Balagha' (The Way of Eloquence).

"To sever attachments with the wicked world is the greatest wealth; piety is the best weapon of defence." Ali

"The best kind of wealth is to give up inordinate desires." Ali

"Anyone who loves us must be ready to face a life of austerity." Ali

"Greed is permanent slavery." Ali

Ali's garment was very old with patches on it. When somebody drew his attention towards it, he replied, "Such dresses, when worn by men of status make them submissive to Allah and kind-hearted towards others, and the faithful Muslims can conveniently follow the example. Vicious pleasures of this world and salvation are like two enemies, or two roads running in opposite directions." Ali

Ali is also often recalled by Muslims as an exemplary figure with regards to his fasting habits, patience, and perseverance; especially in challenging times of scarcity or poverty by the title of "Mushkil Kusha", meaning 'saviour in difficulties'.

The Venus

The Astrological Venus

Venus has been astrologically interpreted as very favourable, being the third brightest orb in the heaven. Venus rules the signs of Taurus and Libra, which gives it control over material wealth and relationships. Therefore, the function of Venus is that of harmony, gentleness, material riches, justice, and goodness. Venus is particularly important to Muslims on account of Islam's community based teachings of social justice, good mannerism, human dignity, and nobility in conduct. Muslims also celebrate Fridays (the day of Venus) as holidays dedicated to the congregational sermons and prayers.

The Islamic Tradition of Hajj (Pilgrim's Festival)



Hajj is considered the most important festival, and a pillar of Islam. It comprises of a congregation of millions of pilgrims from around the world gathering at the Kaaba (Mecca).

And pilgrimage to the House (Kaaba) is a duty unto Allah for mankind, for him who can find a way thither. Al-Quran (3:97)

It is the great meeting of Muslims from all racial, linguistic, and social backgrounds which culminates in their stay at the plains of Mount Arafat.

The pilgrimage is (in) the well-known months, and whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage. Al-Quran (2:197)

When ye press on in the multitude from 'Arafat', remember Allah by the sacred monument. Al-Quran (2:198)

Muslims are required to station together in a specific area called the plains of Mount Arafat for an afternoon; and this sojourn is proclaimed as the indispensable part of their pilgrimage. Then on the next day, pilgrims are supposed to sacrifice an animal in commemoration of the Abraham's story of attempted 'filicide' of his son; and afterwards they distribute and consume the food among themselves.

The sacrificial camels we have made for you as among the symbols from Allah: in them is (much) good for you: then pronounce the name of Allah over them as they line up (for sacrifice): when they are down on their sides (after slaughter), eat ye thereof, and feed such as (beg not but) live in contentment, and such as beg with due humility: thus have We made animals subject to you, that ye may be grateful. Al-Quran (22:36)

Thus, the Hajj festival of Islam represents a comprehensive expression of archetypal Venus; in order to create a lasting sense of harmony and well being among the fellow Muslims.

Fatima

Fatima was the daughter of prophet Muhammad, and the only one who gave him descendants. She received the title of 'Al-Zahra' (the shining one) by her father. Incidentally, the word 'Zahra' is akin to the word 'Zohra', which in Arabic language means 'the planet Venus'. Fatima was the wife of Ali, and mother of the prophet's grandsons; Hassan and Hussain. The prophet had also given her the title of "Leader of the women of the worlds".

One particular anecdote is interesting regarding her care for children; which says that on the day of her demise, and despite of being ill and infirm herself, she personally prepared food for her children and instructed the maid not to inform the children of her physical condition, until they have taken the meal. This shows her deep and unwavering sense of care and affection toward her children, notwithstanding her own health.

The Jupiter

The Astrological Jupiter

Jupiter controls the astrological signs that bring an end to autumn and winter, and thus is deemed to bring hope and optimism. It is considered the most benign and fortunate influence resulting in a gracious disposition of generosity, expansion, and goodwill by causing relieve from poverty, misery, and illness. Jupiter rules Thursday, due to which the Maundy alms giving custom, and other services of the Holy Thursday celebrations are derived. Therefore, philanthropic and altruistic attitudes form the hallmark of astrological Jupiter.

The Islamic Tradition of Zakat (Alms Giving or Generosity)



The tradition of Zakat forms a pillar of Islam and is considered the most basic teaching of 'Equity' in Islam. According to this tradition, Muslims who own properties above a specific limit are required to pay 2.5% of that property's value as alms to the poor members of their community. It is fascinating to note that in the Quran, whenever Zakat is ordered in any verse, the Salaat ritual is also mentioned in it. Here, I quote the following verses for reference.

Lo! those who believe and do good works and establish worship (Salaat) and pay the poor-due (Zakat), their reward is with their Lord and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve. Al-Quran (2:277)

He only shall tend Allah's sanctuaries who believeth in Allah and the Last Day and observes proper worship (Salaat) and pays the poor-due (Zakat) and fears none save Allah. For such (only) is it possible that they can be of the rightly guided. Al-Quran (9:18)

And they are ordered naught else than to serve Allah, keeping religion pure for Him, as men by nature upright, and to establish worship (Salaat) and to pay the poor-due (Zakat). That is true religion. Al-Quran (98:5)

The same trend can also be found in the rest of the Quran. For instance, the verses (2:3), (2:43), (2:83), (2:110), (2:177), (4:77), (4:162), (5:12), (5:55), (9:5), (9:11), (9:71), (19:31), (19:55), (21:73), (22:41), (22:78), (24:37), (24:56), (27:3), (31:4), (33:33), (58:13), and (73:20).

The astrological reason behind this could be the sign of Cancer, which is ruled by the Moon and where the Jupiter is exalted. From this, one can also surmise reason for the '2.5% value' on alms due; since the Moon takes 2.5 days to transit the sign of Cancer as compared to the Jupiter's one year, and also it takes 2.5 years interval between two consecutive 'Blue Moons'.

Hassan

In Arabic language, the word Hassan means 'Benefactor', which is the role of Jupiter in astrology. Hassan was the eldest grandson of the prophet, who named him at the behest of angel Gabriel. Hassan is mostly credited in the history of restoring peace among the early Sunni and Shia factions of the Muslims by entering into an agreement with his father's (Ali's) adversaries. This is very reminiscent of the Zeus's takeover from the Titan Kronos in Greek mythology; and in astrology, it is the ending of Saturn's rule after the winter season at the sign of Pisces, which is ruled by Jupiter. Hassan is also reported to have been murdered subversively afterwards by the enemies of his father. There is a widely popular anecdote among the Shia Muslims that captures the mythological connotations of their history.

On Eid al-Fitr (Muslim festival), according to the hadith (narrative), Gabriel descended with a gift of new white clothes for each of the Prophet's grandsons. The Prophet said that the grandsons were used to coloured clothes. So Gabriel asked each boy what color he wanted. Hassan chose green, Hussain red. While the clothes were being dyed, Gabriel wept. He explained: Hassan's choice of green meant that he would be martyred by poisoning, and his body would turn green, and Hussain's choice of red meant he would be martyred and his blood would turn the ground red. Hassan is buried in Medina with a green banner on his mausoleum. Hussain is buried in Karbala with a red banner. (Source: Muhammad Baqir Majlesi, 1616–1698 AD)

This narrative from the accounts of a Shia Muslim cleric of the seventeenth century, strongly associates Hassan with green colour, and Hussain with red colour. Now in astrology, Jupiter's symbolic colour is green, and Mar's symbolic colour is red.

The Mars

The Astrological Mars

The red planet Mars is astrologically considered the fuel tank among planets, due to its energetic and dynamic dispositions. Mars is active, aggressive, unyielding, assertive, projective, and a race winner. Mars is associated with the rising Sun of the morning that breaks away the darkness into shreds. Mars is the soldier who always seeks after and finds victory by every means possible. Therefore, red colour has always been associated with the spirit of Mars, since it is the pure colour of carnal and sanguine life.



The Islamic Tradition of Jihad (Struggle or Fight)

Jihad is an essential component of Islamic teachings. It requires Muslims to struggle, or fight for justice and truth. The Quran expresses the importance of Jihad in the following verses.

Those who believe do battle for the cause of Allah; and those who disbelieve do battle for the cause of idols. So fight the minions of the devil. Lo! the devil's strategy is ever weak. Al-Quran (4:76)

Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and Allah is indeed Able to give them victory. Al-Quran (22:39)

Fight them! Allah will chastise them at your hands, and He will lay them low and give you victory over them, and He will heal the breasts of folk who are believers. Al-Quran (9:14)

And fight them until persecution is no more, and religion is for Allah. But if they desist, then let there be no hostility except against wrong-doers. Al-Quran (2:193)

It is quite clear from the Quran that Muslims are required to struggle and fight for the establishment of Islamic culture with whatsoever means possible.

Hussain

Hussain is the celebrated hero and martyr of the great historic 'battle of Karbala' that took place on 10th October, 680 AD. On the occasion, Hussain refused submission to a tyrannical usurper, and fought with mere seventy two men against hundreds of thousands of mercenaries. Hussain's army got butchered, but he still declined any offer of allegiance, and fought valiantly till his martyrdom. That is considered the most tragically moving episode of intrigue, subversion, and betrayal in the recorded human history; as well as of loyalty, valour, steadfastness, and courageous attitudes displayed by the household and companions of Hussain during the battle. Therefore, the battle is annually commemorated by Muslims in the Islamic month of Muharrum, with the day of Hussain's martyrdom (called Ashura) celebrated with lugubrious dirges and mournful lamentations.

The Mercury

The Astrological Mercury

Mercury in the Greek mythological motif is called Hermes, who acts as an emissary of gods to the mortals. Astrologically, Mercury deals with communication and transportation skills, whereby symbols and emblems can be used to convey profound messages or ideas. Hermes is also attributed to have taught the divine arts, gnoses, and sciences to humans. Thus the understanding of astrology, alchemy, theosophy, and other hermetic sciences are the gifts of Hermes (Mercury) to mankind. Mercury rules the sign of Gemini 'The Twins', of whom the one 'Castor' is mortal, and the other 'Pollux' is divine; thus creating the connection of a messenger between physical and spiritual dimensions. Mercury also rules the sign of Virgo, which brings to it the meticulously analytical and dexterously practical talents for undertaking every action with efficiency and perfection.

The Islamic Ritual of Wudu or Taharah (Ablution or Cleanliness)

The Islamic Wudu or Taharah is similar in principle to the Jewish 'Netilat Yadayim' or 'Tevilah', and is also akin to the Christian 'Baptism'. Actually in both Hebrew and Arabic languages the word Taharah means 'purity'. In Islam, this cleaning ritual is mandatory to be performed before observing every 'Salaat'. The Quran says,

O ye who believe! When ye rise up for prayer, wash you faces, and your hands up to the elbows, and lightly rub your heads and (wash) your feet up to the ankles. And if ye are unclean, purify yourselves. And if ye are sick or on a journey, or one of you cometh from the closet, or ye have had contact with women, and ye find not water, then go to clean, high ground and rub your faces and your hands with some of it. Allah would not place a burden on you, but He would purify you and would perfect His grace upon you, that ye may give thanks. Al-Quran (5:6)

This statement of the Quran indicates that the cleaning ritual is not just about physical cleanliness, but more essentially psychological or spiritual purity; since the alternative procedure of performing the ritual in the absence of water is also mentioned. In the same context, the spiritual baptism is stated many times in the Gospels.

John said: "I baptized you with water; but He (Jesus) will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Mark 1:8; cf. Matt. 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:33).

“John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:5).

This indicates that the wisdom behind washing rituals is to prepare the body for the impressions from the Divine. Thus ritual cleaning helps a person to be more suggestible for the spiritual messages; which is directly relevant to the astrological function of Mercury.

Gabriel (Holy Spirit)



The archangel Gabriel (Holy Spirit), is the trustworthy messenger that brings the divine revelations to the prophets. The function of Gabriel in Islam is alike when compared to Hermes in the Greek mythology. The Quran says,

Say (O Muhammad, to mankind): Who is an enemy to Gabriel! For he it is who hath revealed (this Scripture) to thy heart by Allah’s leave, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, and a guidance and glad tidings to believers. Al-Quran (2:97)

That it is indeed the speech of an illustrious messenger (Gabriel). Al-Quran (69:40)

These are verses of the Qur’an, a book that makes (things) clear. Al-Quran (27:1)

With truth have We sent it down, and with truth hath it descended. And We have sent thee as naught else save a bearer of good tidings and a warner. Al-Quran (17:105)

The Sun

The Astrological Sun

Sun is distinctive from other planets on account of possessing its own light. Astrologically, it represents the centre of existence and the driving force or will power for all concentric or focused activities. Sun rules the sign of Leo, which is the sign of the ‘King’. It also symbolizes

the theological concept of the supreme being, as it represents the centre of our solar system. Although neither the Judeo-Christian, nor the Islamic theological teachings consider Sun as God, but they use it as a sign symbolizing the ultimate Divinity. It represents the source energy, the will power, and the selfhood possessed by any self-conscious human being.



The Islamic Tradition of Tawaf (Circumambulation around Kaaba)



Tawaf is the circumambulation around Kaaba, which is considered the most sacred ritual in the Islamic teachings. Tawaf consists of circling the Kaaba seven times in an anticlockwise direction. Men are encouraged to do this three times at a hurried pace, followed by four times more closely to Kaaba at a leisurely pace. (Source: Mohamed, Mamdouh N. (1996). Hajj to Umrah: From A to Z. Amana Publications)

Here, the circular movement of masses around the centre (Kaaba) in anticlockwise direction is symbolic of the motion of planets around the Sun. The Seven times of circular motion would represent the seven visible planets; out of which the three times faster circumambulatory movement of the Muslims closer to the Kaaba should be the three faster moving planets (Moon, Mercury, and Venus); whilst four times slow movements are for rest of the four astrological planets (Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn). The Quran says the importance of this ritual in the following verses.

And when We made the House (at Makka) a resort for mankind and sanctuary, (saying): Take as your place of worship the place where Abraham stood (to pray). And We imposed a duty upon Abraham and Ishmael, (saying): Purify My house for those who go around and those who meditate therein and those who bow down and prostrate themselves (in worship). Al-Quran (2:125)

Then let them make an end of their unkemptness and pay their vows and go around the ancient House. Al-Quran (22:29)

I should explain here that earlier in the article, it was mentioned about the 'black cube' architecture of Kaaba as a symbol of Saturn; so one might ask that why do Muslims circumambulate around the Saturn symbol? The answer is that the Sun does not receive any worship offered because it only gives out the light. Therefore, Saturn being the furthest from the Sun, has to be the choice for offering worship and devotion in place of the Sun; since its traditional black colour is most susceptible to absorb and accept whatever service offered to it. Hope it clarifies the point of using the Saturn's symbol with respect to the worship which is actually meant for the Sun.

Imam or Leader

Imam is a title in Islam, which means the leader. One might wonder that why should Islamic teachings use a general title to represent the archetypal Sun. That is because the Sun represents an individual who finds his light from within, unlike other planets. The Quran says,

And who say: Our Lord! Vouchsafe us comfort of our wives and of our offspring, and make us patterns (Imams) for (all) those who ward off (evil). Al-Quran (25:74)

The Quran encourages the Muslims to pray for their self empowerment in order to become exemplary characters, so as to be the light of truth for good folks to appreciate. The Quran teaches this in another verse by citing example of the great patriarch Abraham.

And (remember) when his Lord tried Abraham with (His) commands, and he fulfilled them, He said: Lo! I have appointed thee a leader (Imam) for mankind. (Abraham) said: And of my offspring (will there be leaders)? He said: My covenant includes not wrong-doers. Al-Quran (2:124)

The End Note

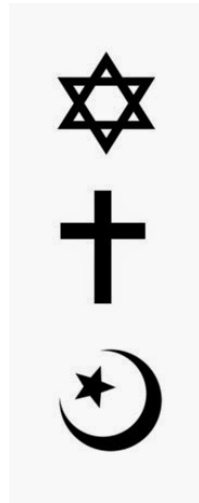
I hope that this article would help elucidate the hermetic teachings in Islam, and also create a more clear impression of the Islamic traditions. I should conclude this article by quoting a verse from the Quran.

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving. Al-Quran (17:44)

Shiva, the Great; and the Abrahamic Traditions

Introduction

The prevalent religions of the modern times have mostly received their traditions and wisdom from the ancient theologies. Here an attempt is made to decipher common-points in the histories of their formations.



Brahma, the creator god; Vishnu, the sustainer god; and Shiva, the destroyer god; constitute a trinity of godhead from the teachings of the most ancient cultures to the theologies of the modern day practised religions. Egyptians called it Osiris, Isis, Horus; Christians call it Father, Son, Holy Spirit; and this triad astrologically is denoted by the Cardinal, Fixed, and Mutable zodiacal signs. But the least understood function is the relationship of this ancient formula to the Abrahamic religions, especially to Judeo-Christianity and Islam. Although Abrahamic traditions categorically state the 'unity of Godhead' as their paramount theological foundation, however it is very interesting to explore the associations of Abrahamic traditions derived from the trinity formula of the ancients.

The Gnosis of Trinity

The formula of trinity actually defines the three modes of phenomena existent in nature. The ancients conceived that the processes of nature occurred in the stages of three. Like Sunrise, noon, and Sunset; humans are born as infants, grow up to the strength, and ultimately decline to the decrepit old state. Also, the process of taking food into the mouth, digesting it in the stomach, and afterwards which is followed by the loosening of bowels forms a parallel to the triad of processes. Similarly, all things have been constantly produced, consumed, and disposed of by the principles and forces of nature throughout the human history.

From these observations, the ancients derived a formula for spiritual relevance and significance called the 'trinity'. It can be described in three steps; 1) the process of birth in the mother's womb during gestation, being the realm of creation (the creator god); 2) air breathing humans in the active world, being the realm of sustenance (the sustainer god); 3) departure of soul/spirit from the physical body to be transformed into the ethereal body, being the realm of destruction (the destroyer god).

The creation of physical organs such as eyes, arms, and legs can only happen inside the mother's body, because that is the realm of the creator god. If the mother receives proper nourishment and care, the baby comes out to be of healthy and vibrant state; or otherwise defective in some way. Once in the world, the human body gets in the realm of the sustainer god, who makes the body to grow, enlarge, and reproduce but no new organs are added into the body at this stage. Here, according to the gnosis of trinity, this human body acts as a gestation organ similar to the mother's womb for the creation of a new 'Spirit'. Just as the creation of human body occurred during the stay in the mother's womb, the human spirit undergoes its creation during the stay in the physical world, to be finally transferred to the spiritual world. And just as carelessness on the part of mother might cause lasting defects or deformities in the child, similarly, actions based on inequity might cause permanent weaknesses in the spirit, so as to render the spirit incompatible to the higher spiritual world. Also, the child had no need for the physical organs like eyes in the mother's womb, but he still manufactured them for the next proceeding stage; and therefore, the righteous actions of a human being would bring to him the spiritual sight to exist in the spiritual realm. Thus the journey that started with the conception of a baby, ends in its integration with the divine spirit. Also, it is worth mentioning here that the 'Christian trinity' which comprises of Father (creator), Son (educator, preserver, or sustainer), and Holy Spirit (spiritual being) provides the best terminological illustration of this trinity formula.



Abraham's Stories in the Judeo-Christian and Islamic Scriptures

The stories of the great patriarch Abraham in the Bible and the Quran are very symbolic for the raising of human consciousness from the base to its ultimate spiritual, or divine transcendence. It is evident from those stories that the cherished goal of these traditions is to reach the spiritual realm. Abraham being the pioneer of both Judeo-Christian and Islamic traditions, had expounded the need to reach the higher levels of spirituality throughout his life experiences and actions. Here, firstly I should mention the story of Abraham as a youngster defying his father's gods, followed by his attempt to sacrifice his own son, and that followed by his building of the shrine at Mecca (the temple of Shiva). It is also noteworthy that according to the Abrahamic traditions, in order to reach the spiritual realm one has to defy or leave the earlier two realms of the creator, and the sustainer gods. Just as once a child has been out of the mother's womb, there is no going back in it; or once the spirit has departed from the body, there

is no coming back for the deceased. The focus on the ultimate goal with purity and totality is the major theme of the Abrahamic traditions, and the 'unity of Godhead' in this doctrine simply means that only one God of spiritual growth can be served by human beings effectively, because that alone constitutes the present need and objective of their existence.

The Story of Abraham and the Idol Shop of His Father

In the book of Genesis Rabbah, Chapter 38, the Jewish account of the affair of Abraham with his father is related. His father being the carver and seller of idols is symbolic of the worship of the creator God. But since the physical creation of Abraham's body had already been accomplished, so Abraham defied his father and his creative works. Here, I should include some quotes from the Genesis Rabbah, Chapter 38, for illustration purposes.



“The father of Abraham and Haran, was a dealer in images as well as a worshipper of them.” “Abraham taunted him (a customer of his father) with want of sound sense in calling the work of another man’s hand, produced perhaps in a few hours, his god; the man laid the words of Abraham to heart and gave up idol worship.” “Again a woman came with a handful of fine flour to offer to Terah’s idols, which were now in charge of Abraham. He took a stick and broke all the images except the largest one, in the hand of which he placed the stick which had worked this wholesale destruction.” “When he (Abraham’s father) learnt also of the customers whom Abraham had lost him during his management he became very incensed, and drove Abraham out of his house and handed him over to Nimrod.” “Nimrod, becoming weary of arguing with Abraham, decided to cast him before his god—fire—and challenged Abraham’s deliverance by the God of Abraham, but God saved him out of the fiery furnace.”

In the above texts, the business of Abraham's father of idol making, and selling was a vocation requiring creative skills, and therefore not in line with the God of destruction (Shiva). Thus, Abraham himself the worshipper of the spiritual God of destruction, breaks his father's idols in an act of defiance to the creator God. But when Abraham was cast into the fire for his crime against the creator God; the God of destruction intervenes and saves his loyal follower

from the fire of destruction. Also, Abraham was never afraid of the fire, since he was not interested in his personal creation or preservation anyway. The example illustrates that anything interfering with the sole purpose of man tires his efforts without producing constructive results because such is the nature of idol worship, and therefore it must be abandoned.



The Story of Abraham's Attempt to Sacrifice His Son



The Bible quotes this story in the following fashion,

When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied. "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son." Genesis 22 : 9–12

At the time when Abraham attempted to sacrifice his son, he was an old man and his son was his sole inheritor. This Abraham's vision of filicide makes sense only if it is symbolic to the defiance of the sustainer God. Since survival through preserving the blood lineage among descendants is the only source of continuation of a race; Abraham went through the trial of filicide to ascertain his faith to the spiritual God of destruction, in defiance to the sustainer God by overcoming his own emotional associations because of their irrelevance to the realm of spirit and redemption.

The Story of Abraham Building the Temple of God



The temple of God (Shiva) was constructed by Abraham in the land of Paran (present day Mecca), after Abraham had left the boy (Ishmael) with his consort (Hagar) in the middle of the desert. This story is mentioned in the Bible,

God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation." Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt. Genesis 21 : 17–21

The well of water mentioned in the above text is that of Zam-Zam, in Mecca. The building of the temple (Kaaba) is referred in the Quran as being built by Abraham with the assistance of Ishmael.

And (mention) when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and (with him) Ishmael, (saying), "Our Lord, accept (this) from us. Indeed, You are the Hearing, the Knowing. Al-Quran (2:127)

Our Lord, I have settled some of my descendants in an uncultivated valley near Your sacred House, our Lord, that they may establish prayer. So make hearts among the people incline toward them and provide for them from the fruits that they might be grateful. Al-Quran (14:37)

Here, the wisdom of building the cherished mosque in an uncultivated land surrounded by a desert must have been to get the followers away from the materialistic, proletarian, and bourgeois existence; and closer to the more natural, heroic, and spiritual behavior; and to inculcate the nobler and knightly attitudes in the lives of humans so as to make them grow in their spiritual significance. Also, the temple enshrines the black stone, which is essentially the symbol of Shiva (the destroyer God).

Prophets of the Abrahamic Traditions

Moses:

When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. And he took the calf the people had made and burned it in the fire; then he ground it to powder, scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it. Exodus 32: 19–20

In the text from the Bible above, Moses expresses his anger towards Israelites who had manufactured an idol of calf in his absence, and started to worship it. The Cow as a symbol of fertility is actually revered in the Hindu traditions, and also respected on account of the utilities it provides to sustain the basic features of human lives. The Cow produces milk for human children, does labour in the fields for adults, and also fertilizes the land through its dung acting as a manure for agriculture. Therefore, Cow being the best associate of humans to provide them with ease in their affairs of the world had to be sacrificed or destroyed, because the human objectives must be focused only on the spiritual realm that is beyond this world.

Jesus:

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. Matthew 12:32

In the given text, Jesus condemns every blasphemy or action against the Holy Spirit (the destroyer God) as the unforgivable sin. The text can also be implied to mean that sins against the Father (the creator), and the Son (the sustainer) can be remitted on account of their transient nature; but sins against the Holy Spirit (the destroyer) is permanent, and therefore cannot be absolved.

Muhammad:

Before Muhammad was born, his father was chosen for sacrifice to the God of Kaaba by his grandfather. This was arranged on account of a pledge which the grandfather had made to sacrifice one of his many sons by a lot. His father's sacrifice was then remitted by the sacrifice of 100 camels according to the local custom of Arabs. Therefore, Muhammad had said, "I am the son of two sacrifices" referring to the sacrifices of his father Abd Allah, and his ancestor Ishmael, son of Abraham, both of which sacrifices were prevented. This sacrifice of the two

fathers can also be equated to the Abraham's defiance of his father against the idol selling business, or the creator god. Also the Quran says,

Muhammad is not the father of (any) one of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah and seal (i.e., last) of the prophets. And ever is Allah, of all things, Knowing. Al-Quran (33:40)

According to the Muslim traditions, Muhammad had many sons; but none could live up till the age of puberty because of the God's commands in the Quran. Therefore, above verse of the Quran shows the Muhammad's defiance to the sustainer God, similar to the Abraham's attempted sacrifice of his son.

Say, "The truth has come, and falsehood can neither begin nor repeat." Al-Quran (34:49)

This above verse of the Quran, Muhammad has been reported to have repeatedly recited while breaking the idols of pre-Islamic Arabs, after the conquest of Mecca. Here, Muhammad had shown the same iconoclastic behavior peculiar to Abraham and Moses, by breaking the idols of the time, and instituting reforms in his society. The wordings of the verse (34:49) is particularly interesting, since it says that falsehood can neither begin, nor repeat; which might refer to the defiance of the creation and the preservation principles associated with the Abrahamic traditions.

The End Note

I hope this article would have contributed toward the understanding of the ancient theologies, and their relationship to the Abrahamic traditions. I should end here by quoting the following verse from Quran.

Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but he was one inclining toward truth, a Muslim. And he was not of the polytheists. Al-Quran (3:67)

The Hermetic Principle of Gender in Quran

Introduction

The gender related issues that are described in the traditions of Islam have been heavily discussed in the modern times by many scholars as well as the critics of Islam. The opinions among people concerning this subject vary greatly, ranging from 'best' to 'worst' in the topics ranging from marriage and divorce to the punishments for adultery. In this article therefore, I should investigate the laws of Islam pertinent to the matter from a hermetic standpoint, and demonstrate some of the key features of the Quranic teachings in this regard.



The Hermetic Principle of Gender

The hermetic wisdom defines gender as, “Gender represents those actions of opposing forces that result in the generation of Light”. The light here can refer to mean as the light of truth, wisdom, intelligence, or any other noble characteristic in a human being. However, before we get to the humans, let us start with animals in order to put down the groundwork for our study. The Quran says,

(Take) eight (head of cattle) in (four) pairs: of sheep a pair, and of goats a pair; say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose? Tell me with knowledge if ye are truthful: Of camels a pair, and oxen a pair; say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose?—Were ye present when Allah ordered you such a thing? But who doth more wrong than one who invents a lie against Allah, to lead astray men without knowledge? For Allah guideth not people who do wrong. (06, 143–144)

The verses (06, 143–144) I had discussed at some length in the article “The Symbolism of Animals in Quran”. Briefly I should explain here that the four types of animals mentioned in the text represent the four seasons, namely sheep (winter), goat (autumn), camel (summer), and oxen (spring). The Triad of male, female, and the unborn youngling in the text represents the cardinal, fixed, and the mutable signs of the zodiac. It is interesting to note here that out of twelve animals, only eight are counted in the text, i. e. the unborn younglings are mentioned but not counted, or they are counted as a part of the female. At another instance in the Quran the same eight animals are referred in a very symbolic manner.

He created you from one being, then from that (being) He made its mate; and He hath provided for you of cattle eight kinds. He created you in the wombs of your mothers, creation after creation, in a threefold gloom. Such is Allah, your Lord. His is the Sovereignty. There is no Allah save Him. How then are ye turned away? (39, 6)

Again in the verse (39, 6), eight animals are counted and not twelve. The “threefold gloom” is a metaphorical allusion to the triplicity of the zodiac: cardinal, fixed, and mutable. The mysterious style and the theme of the verse such as “creation after creation”, and “wombs of your mothers” suggests that the creation happens thrice for every person in the stages of cardinal, fixed, and the mutable signs. Another verse of the Quran underscores the same point.

They say: Our Lord! Twice hast Thou made us die, and twice hast Thou made us live. Now we confess our sins. Is there any way to go out? (40, 11)

The people in the verse (40, 11) are those whose creation have already happened twice in the cardinal and the fixed signs, and thus they become alive for the third time in the mutable signs. To illustrate these three stages of living, I had explained the gnosis of trinity in the article “Shiva, the Great; and the Abrahamic Traditions”. From there I should copy the following passage because of its relevance.

“The creation of physical organs such as eyes, arms, and legs can only happen inside the mother’s body, because that is the realm of the creator god. If the mother receives proper nourishment and care, the baby comes out to be of healthy and vibrant state; or otherwise defective in some way. Once in the world, the human body gets in the realm of the sustainer god, who makes the body to grow, enlarge, and reproduce but no new organs are added into the body at this stage. Here, according to the gnosis of trinity, this human body acts as a gestation organ similar to the mother’s womb for the creation of a new ‘Spirit’. Just as the creation of human body occurred during the stay in the mother’s womb, the human spirit undergoes its creation during the stay in the physical world, to be finally transferred to the spiritual world. And just as carelessness on the part of mother might cause lasting defects or deformities in the child, similarly, actions based on inequity might cause permanent weaknesses in the spirit, so as to render the spirit incompatible to the higher spiritual world. Also, the child had no need for the physical organs like eyes in the mother’s womb, but he still manufactured them for the next proceeding stage; and therefore, the righteous actions of a human being would bring to him the spiritual sight to exist in the spiritual realm. Thus the journey that started with the conception of a baby, ends in its integration with the divine spirit.”

After studying the symbolism of animals in connection to the eight cardinal and fixed signs, and before we may discuss humans at a greater depth, we must take some notes on the angels. The Quran says,

And the angels will be on the sides thereof, and eight will uphold the Throne of thy Lord that day, above them. (69, 17)

In the verse (69, 17), the eight angels that will uphold the Throne represent the noble accomplishments of the cardinal and fixed signs, and the mystery would suggest that the Throne itself represents the mutable signs because it shall be the third stage of creation. In addition, it should be fascinating to note here the depiction of ‘the Throne upheld by the eight angels’ in the emblems of many European countries and secret or sacred orders. Most pronounced depiction for it can be recognized from the eight pointed ‘Maltese Cross’ of the Order of the Knights of Malta. Specially, the Orders aspirations that are supposed to represent the eight points on the Cross actually reflect the cardinal and fixed signs in the precise astrological order. Following is the passage taken from Wikipedia stating the aspirations of the Order alongside the astrological signs in the brackets included by me.

“The eight points also symbolize the eight obligations or aspirations of the knights:

to live in truth [Spring, Cardinal, Aries]

to have faith [Spring, Fixed, Taurus]

to repent of one’s sins [Summer, Cardinal, Cancer]

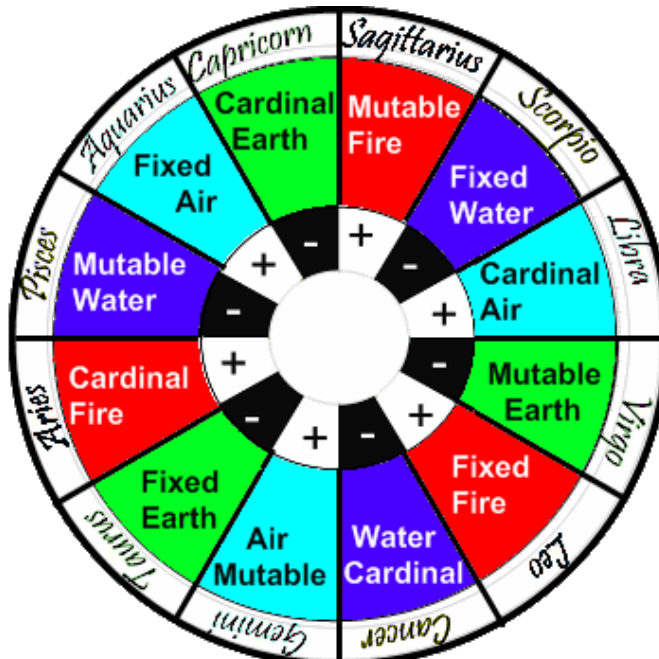
to give proof of humility [Summer, Fixed, Leo]

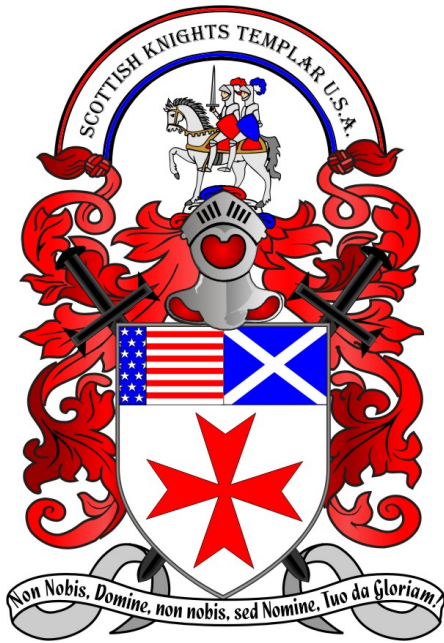
to love justice [Autumn, Cardinal, Libra]

to be merciful [Autumn, Fixed, Scorpio]

to be sincere and wholehearted [Winter, Cardinal, Capricorn]

to endure persecution [Winter, Fixed, Aquarius]”





The Active and Passive Principles

The mystery of the active and passive principles can be investigated from the chapter 89 (The Dawn) of Quran. It says,

1. By the Dawn. 2. And ten nights, 3. And the Even and the Odd, 4. And the night when it departeth, 5. There surely is an oath for thinking man.

The Dawn of the verse 1 occurs after the ten nights of the verse 2. The Even and the Odd in the verse 3 are the numbers One and Ten, because in the hermetic wisdom it is the number Ten and not the number Two that represents the Even for the Odd number One. The reason being that the number Two symbolizes Duality, whilst the number One symbolizes Unity, and thereby they cannot serve as Active (Odd) and Passive (Even) for each other. One and Two do not have any common grounds to stand together, and therefore the number Ten which is Even and also symbolizes unity because $10 = 1+0 = 1$, serves as the Passive or Even number for the Odd or Active number One. Also, the relationship between the Ten Nights and the One Dawn following them accentuates their characteristics as being Active and Passive for each other. It is worth noting that from a philosophical standpoint, the Passive does not mean Inaction but rather the Desire for Action. Just like a persistent hunger and thirst may create a powerful desire for eating and drinking, the persistence of Passive characteristic similarly shall cause a stronger desire for the relevant Action. The quality of Passive in other words only results in the reinforcement of the Active, and thus supports the active through its presence. The Ten being

the Passive for One, implies that all the multiples and exponents of Ten like 20, 30, 40... and 100, 1000, 10000... respectively serve as the Passives for One to even a greater extent on account of their magnitude. Moreover, since we are talking about gender here, I think it was at least the original intent behind the use of fashion and cosmetics by human females, but humans are known to have subverted it, just like they have been known to subvert many other natural phenomena. The chapter 97 of Quran conveys a very powerful message,

1. We have indeed revealed this (Message) in the Night of Power: 2. And what will explain to thee what the night of power is? 3. The Night of Power is better than a thousand months. 4. Therein come down the angels and the Spirit by Allah's permission, on every errand: 5. Peace!... This until the rise of morn!

The verse 3 indicates that one night with the message of Quran may create a hunger for truth and a thirst for knowledge that can surpass the work of a thousand months. The verse 5 communicates that the actions ensuing from its message would be truly grand in their potential to produce an enlightened world. The Quran further says,

The likeness of those who spend their wealth in Allah's way is as the likeness of a grain which groweth seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allah giveth increase manifold to whom He will. Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing. (2, 261)

The Human Factor

The Quran says,

Vile women are for vile men, and vile men for vile women. Good women are for good men, and good men for good women; such are innocent of that which people say: For them is pardon and a bountiful provision. (24, 26)

It is fascinating to observe the outrightness of Quran regarding the philosophy of gender. If the gender has to function physically, it must be equally effective spiritually. The spiritual resonance of both active and passive forces is essential to generate the light that may lead their paths. Nevertheless, in the real life there are always exceptional cases, such as mentioned in the chapter 56 of Quran.

10. Allah citeth an example for those who disbelieve: the wife of Noah and the wife of Lot, who were under two of Our righteous slaves yet betrayed them so that they (the husbands) availed them naught against Allah and it was said (unto them): Enter the Fire along with those who enter. 11. And Allah citeth an example for those who believe: the wife of Pharaoh when she said: My Lord! Build for me a home with thee in the Garden, and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from evil-doing folk; 12. And Mary, daughter of 'Imran, whose body was chaste, therefor We breathed therein something of Our Spirit. And she put faith in the words of her Lord and His scriptures, and was of the obedient.

The wives of Noah and Lot in the verse 10 did not commit adultery or any such act, and thus had not violated the Active and Passive Principles. However, they did violate the Hermetic Principle of Gender, or in a simpler language, they had betrayed the Mutable Signs of zodiac. The Pharaoh's wife in the verse 11 had not violated either of the principles, but her husband had betrayed the mutable signs. In the case of Mary, she did not have a husband but was dutiful to the Mutable Signs and as a result got rewarded by the birth of the son Jesus. Therefore, the

conclusion from this passage should be that the Mutable Signs are the most essential factors in the fulfillment of the gender roles. In the Christian trinity, the Holy Spirit metaphorically represents the Mutable Signs. Therefore, it should be worth quoting the following verse from the New Testament.

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. Matthew 12:32

What happens to those who would violate all the principles? The following verses from chapter 24 speak of such cases.

2. The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge ye each one of them (with) a hundred stripes. And let not pity for the twain withhold you from obedience to Allah, if ye believe in Allah and the Last Day. And let a party of believers witness their punishment. 3. The adulterer shall not marry save an adulteress or an idolatress, and the adulteress none shall marry save an adulterer or an idolater. All that is forbidden unto believers. 4. And those who accuse honourable women but bring not four witnesses, scourge them (with) eighty stripes and never (afterward) accept their testimony—They indeed are evil-doers -

The punishment for violating the Active and Passive Principles shall be the scourging with a hundred stripes; hundred being the double exponent of Ten. And the punishment for betraying the Mutable signs shall be the restriction from marrying the righteous people because those people can only live with sinful people in a sinful environment. The verse 4 mentions the kind of people who would spread bad rumours or stories against honourable women, and find some sort of prideful gratification in sinful conversations completely disregarding the moral values by debasing the women in their absence. Such type of persons has no integrity, and though they might not be guilty of physical harm to others, but their evil mentality and vile nature creates a very negative atmosphere for human dignity. Therefore, they must be scourged with eighty stripes because eighty is the multiple of eight and ten, i. e. eight for betraying the Mutable Signs, and Ten for violating the Active and Passive Principles.

This should be enough for the punishments for now. Let us cheer up by reading a story of Moses from the chapter 28 of Quran.

22. And when he turned his face toward Midian, he said: Peradventure my Lord will guide me in the right road. 23. And when he came unto the water of Midian he found there a whole tribe of men, watering. And he found apart from them two women keeping back (their flocks). He said: What aileth you? The two said: We cannot give (our flocks) to drink till the shepherds return from the water; and our father is a very old man. 24. So he watered (their flock) for them. Then he turned aside into the shade, and said: My Lord! I am needy of whatever good Thou sendest down for me. 25. Then there came unto him one of the two women, walking shyly. She said: Lo! my father biddeth thee, that he may reward thee with a payment for that thou didst water (the flock) for us. Then, when he came unto him and told him the (whole) story, he said: Fear not! Thou hast escaped from the wrongdoing folk. 26. One of the two women said: O my father! Hire him! For the best (man) that thou canst hire is the strong, the trustworthy. 27. He said: Lo! I fain would marry thee to one of these two daughters of mine on condition that thou hirest thyself to me for (the term of) eight pilgrimages. Then if thou completest ten it will be of thine own accord, for I would not make it hard for thee. Allah willing, thou wilt find me of the

righteous. 28. He said: That (is settled) between thee and me. Whichever of the two terms I fulfil, there will be no injustice to me, and Allah is Surety over what we say.

I did not quote the Moses story merely for fun, but also to note that the two terms of Eight and Ten mentioned in the verse 27 has esoteric implications; namely that they allude to the Hermetic Principle of Gender and the Active and Passive Principles. Here again, the Hermetic Principle of Gender is compulsory, whilst the Active and Passive Principles is considered to be optional. However, the rewards of fulfilling both the principles are described in the following verses of chapter 24.

35. Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light. Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is Knower of all things. 36. (This lamp is found) in houses which Allah hath allowed to be exalted and that His name shall be remembered therein. Therein do offer praise to Him at morn and evening.

The verse 35 is truly the most beautiful verse of the Quran as it is full of metaphorical and mystical significance. The niche in the verse is the chest cavity of a human being, the lamp is the heart, and the glass represents the chest of a noble being. The verse says that this chest is like a shining star because only the most benevolent and beneficent feelings ever occur to it. The heart in this chest beats with the mirth and joy of the truth, and loves all the humanity without any bias or discrimination. The very presence of such a heart causes all good to transpire spontaneously without any need for encouragement in the forms of fame and fortune, or the fear of law enforcement. The hearts that shine with the light of God, and they embrace the presence of ever-loving God in the spiritual blessedness.

The End Note

Despite the researches of modern psychology and the application of technological devices, the humans have failed to find the right solution for gender issues through their mechanical logic because that type of logic is essentially faulty. If humanity ever has to emerge from the abyss of their own making, then they must first discover and apply the right tools. Those tools they may well find in the wisdom of the ancients, and the ever-living traditions of the wise. I shall conclude this article by stating the following verse from the Quran.

And stay in your houses. Bedizen not yourselves with the bedizenment of the Time of Ignorance. Be regular in prayer, and pay the poor-due, and obey Allah and His messenger. Allah's wish is but to remove uncleanness far from you, O Folk of the Household, and cleanse you with a thorough cleansing. (33, 33)

Saturn, the Beneficent One; Al-Quran, Chapter 43 (Az-Zukhruf)

Introduction

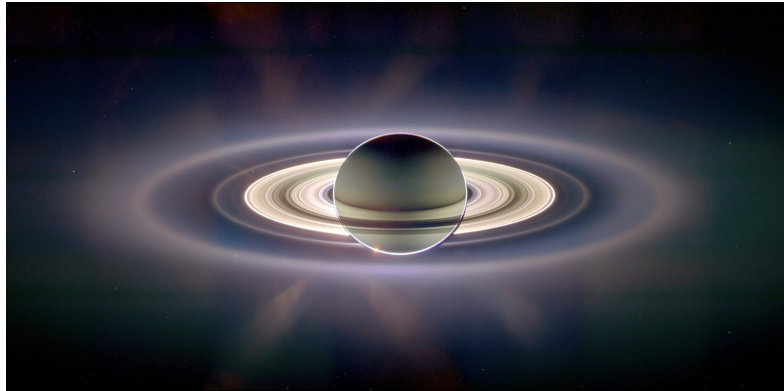
Civilizations throughout human history have attempted to study the heavenly lights (astrological planets) to derive symbolic significance for their existence. The most dreaded and dimly lit amongst those has been the planet Saturn, whose influence got associated with extreme hardships and challenging circumstances. Thus, Saturn's part in mythology is usually of a villain type character, or at least not one with cheerful attributes. Nevertheless, the adept magi of many serious, spiritual, and arcane traditions have also given glorious accounts on the magical influence of Saturn. One such tradition comes from the esoteric teachings of Quran. The term Az-Zukhruf, meaning 'ornaments of gold' and the chapter takes its name from a verse which is of great symbolic importance.

Saturn in the Quran

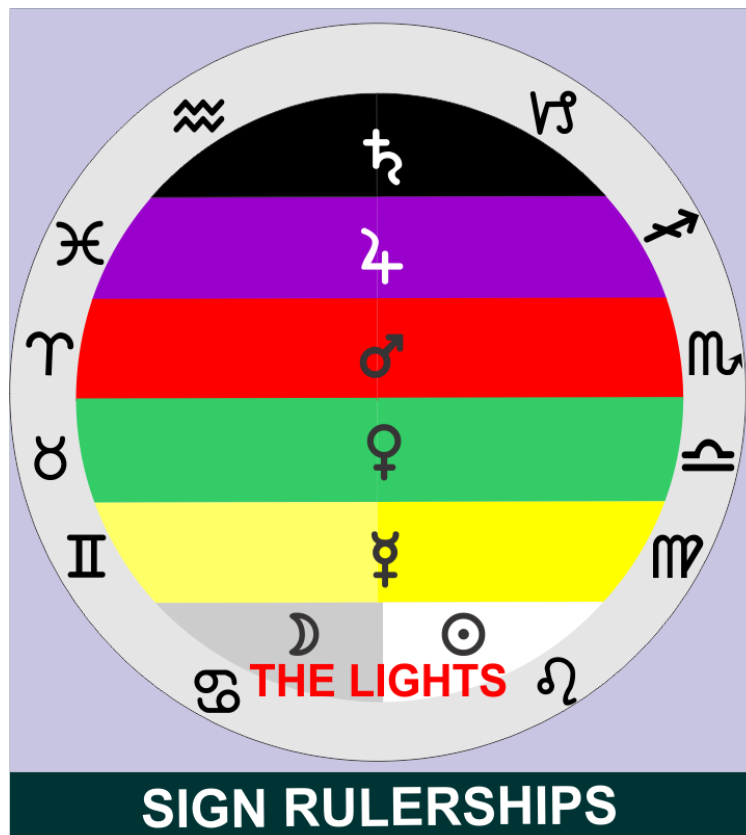
The allegorical term used in the Quran for reference to Saturn is Ar-Rahman, meaning 'the Beneficent One'. Muslims consider the Beneficent One to be the greatest attribute of Almighty Allah, and fairly so because their contemporary pagan Arabs were particularly allergic to this term. The pagan culture at Mecca was entirely based on astrology (the worship of planets), and therefore, all of their ritual practices had deep astrological significance. In the pre-Islamic times, pagans had kept 360 idols inside the temple Kaaba to represent 360 degrees of the zodiacal ecliptic, and they were also carved there for depicting every mythological archetype known to them. Since Saturn being known as the most malefic of those archetypes, albeit the most powerful, they attempted to malign the term Ar-Rahman (the Beneficent One) in a number of ways as we shall read in the chapter Az-Zukhruf of Quran. It is also worth stating here that the cubical shape and the black colour of Kaaba itself are symbols of Saturn in alchemical teachings.



Astrological Saturn



Saturn in astrology represents the ultimate oppositionist, or rebel on account of being the ruler of signs opposite to the astrological luminaries (Sun, and Moon). Sun is the King in astrology, and Moon being the Queen are the pivotal elements in status quo of our astrological system, and thereby symbolically any of the social, economic, or political systems of humanity. Therefore, the forces of status quo or elite in a society always try to undermine the rebellious or reformist forces that tend to identify themselves with the symbolic Saturn. Saturn also represents the creative and innovative forces that transform the standard of existence from traditional to progressive. In brief, it brings changes that refresh the living experiences and helps humans to adopt higher levels of consciousness in their existence. The religion of Saturn therefore demands sacrifices of vanity, materialism, and traditionalism from its adherents for them to make this leap forward.



Chapter 43 (The Ornaments of Gold)

In this chapter, the discourse is directed towards pagan Arabs who seldom showed their aversion at the mention of the Beneficent One (Saturn) because they wanted to keep their corrupt status quo intact. The chapter says,

(5) Shall We utterly ignore you because ye are a wanton folk? (6) How many a prophet did We send among the men of old! (7) And never came there unto them a prophet but they used to mock him. (8) Then We destroyed men mightier than these in prowess; and the example of the men of old hath gone (before them).

The above verses (5–8) indicated the need for cultural reform in Arabia, and also admonished the dominant elite class of the consequences of refusal.

(16) Or chooseth He daughters of all that He hath created, and honoureth He you with sons? (17) And if one of them hath tidings of that which he likeneth to the Beneficent One, his countenance becometh black and he is full of inward rage. (18) (Liken they then to Allah) that which is bred up in outward show, and in dispute cannot make itself plain?

The verses (16–18) say that pagans of Arabs had tried to mock the Beneficent One by associating His followers with a weaker gender, whilst they themselves being stronger. Also in Arab culture, males have been considered to control the ancestral line and therefore, the future prospects rested with them. So the chieftains of Arabs would gladly relate females to the Beneficent One because in their culture, females were objects of mere entertainment and had nothing to do with serious efforts such as wars. Also Arab pagans utterly disliked any female child to be born in their own families as they considered it to be an ill omen.

(19) And they make the angels, who are the slaves of the Beneficent, females. Did they witness their creation? Their testimony will be recorded and they will be questioned. (20) And they say: If the Beneficent One had (so) willed, we should not have worshipped them. They have no knowledge whatsoever of that. They do but guess.

Since it was known that the Beneficent One also commanded armies of angels beside men, so pagan Arabs in their utter insolence had also turned the imagery of mighty angels into flimsy females and started to worship them. Furthermore, they also associated their illusory behaviour to the Beneficent himself.

(21) Or have We given them any scripture before (this Qur'an) so that they are holding fast thereto? (22) Nay, for they say only: Lo! we found our fathers following a religion, and we are guided by their footprints. (23) And even so We sent not a warner before thee (Muhammad) into any township but its luxurious ones said: Lo! we found our fathers following a religion, and we are following their footprints. (24) (And the warner) said: What! Even though I bring you better guidance than that ye found your fathers following? They answered: Lo! in what ye bring we are disbelievers. (25) So We requited them. Then see the nature of the consequence for the rejecters!

Verses (21–25) describes the traditionalistic approach of pagan Arabs in which the luxurious ones or materialistic elite of the society resisted reforms by rejecting the guidance. As a consequence, they lost the rhythm to resonate with the values of nature and got destroyed.

(31) And they say: If only this Qur'an had been revealed to some great man of the two towns?

In this verse, the two towns are an allegorical reference to Cancer (the sign ruled by Moon), and Leo (the sign ruled by Sun). Due to their antipathy with the Beneficent One, pagan Arabs demanded the reforms to be conducted by their own coterie of aristocrats, and for their selfish interests.

(32) Is it they who apportion thy Lord's mercy? We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and raised some of them above others in rank that some of them may take labour from others; and the mercy of thy Lord is better than (the wealth) that they amass.

In verse (32), it is implied that the poor or suppressed people in a society are ones who find appeal in genuine reforms and lean towards any revolutionary message.

(33) And were it not that mankind would have become one community, We might well have appointed, for those who disbelieve in the Beneficent, roofs of silver for their houses and stairs (of silver) whereby to mount, (34) And for their houses doors (of silver) and couches of silver whereon to recline, (35) And ornaments of gold. Yet all that would have been but a provision of the life of the world. And the Hereafter with your Lord would have been for those who keep from evil.

The verses (33–35) are the most significant from a symbolic perspective in the chapter. Firstly in verse 33, it is mentioned that material abundance can lead to stagnancy and therefore, would hamper any form of creative approach for the spiritual growth in humans. Secondly in the successive verses, the style in which disbelievers in the Beneficent One would like to enjoy their lives is very symbolic, as they want everything made of silver and gold. Now silver is the alchemical symbol for Moon, and gold is for the Sun. Therefore, the houses and ornaments of silver and gold does not carry any sense unless they come with absolute political, economic, and cultural authority over society. Therefore, it is implied that followers of the Beneficent One detest any despotic or authoritarian culture or system, and fight against them.

(36) And he whose sight is dim to the remembrance of the Beneficent, We assign unto him a devil who becometh his comrade; (37) And lo! they surely turn them from the way of Allah, and yet they deem that they are rightly guided; (38) Till, when he cometh unto Us, he saith (unto his comrade): Ah, would that between me and thee there were the distance of the two horizons—an evil comrade!

The above verses express the irony of tyrannical elites who attempt to ignore the power of the Beneficent One. Such oppressors heed advices of ignoble sycophants and get beguiled by them. Ultimately, the despair in their affairs derive them to hate each other. Interestingly, the distance of two horizons is mentioned in the verse (38) which probably refers to the opposite signs of the Luminaries (Sun and Moon). Therefore, the greatest anguish of such autocrats would have been that they stationed themselves opposite to the Beneficent One.

The Cultural Domination

The verses below of the chapter describe the cultural domination of parents and society to subdue the creative thinking of a child with the story of Abraham. In the chapter it says,

(26) And when Abraham said unto his father and his folk: Lo! I am innocent of what ye worship (27) Save Him Who did create me, for He will surely guide me. (28) And he made it a word enduring among his seed, that haply they might return. (29) Nay, but I let these and their fathers enjoy life (only) till there should come unto them the Truth and a messenger making plain. (30) And now that the Truth hath come unto them they say: This is mere magic, and lo! we are disbelievers therein.

It is noteworthy that Arabs alongside the Jews did call themselves descendants of Abraham. They even had a painting of Abraham on the walls of Kaaba prior to Islam. In the verse (27) Abraham invokes the Creator, or the creative power to save him and guide him against the oppression of his father and traditionalistic society. Thus, the Arabs were proposed to accept the Beneficent One, in correspondence to their great progenitor Abraham.

The Political Domination

The following verses of the chapter describe the oppressive political domination of a society with the story of Pharaoh and Moses. It says,

(45) And ask those of Our messengers whom We sent before thee: Did We ever appoint gods to be worshipped beside the Beneficent? (46) And verily We sent Moses with Our revelations unto Pharaoh and his chiefs, and he said: I am a messenger of the Lord of the Worlds. (47) But when he brought them Our tokens, behold! they laughed at them.

The above verses indicate the importance of worshipping the Beneficent, and also the usual derogatory response of political despots.

(48) And every token that We showed them was greater than its sister (token), and We grasped them with the torment, that haply they might turn again. (49) And they said: O wizard! Entreat thy Lord for us by the pact that He hath made with thee. Lo! we verily will walk aright. (50) But when We eased them of the torment, behold! They broke their word.

In above verses, the political manipulations and deceptions of autocratic rulers is mentioned. Such people can extend themselves to cross every level of perjury possible to achieve their objectives.

(51) And Pharaoh caused a proclamation to be made among his people saying: O my people! Is not mine the sovereignty of Egypt and these rivers flowing under me? Can ye not then discern? (52) I am surely better than this fellow, who is despicable and can hardly make (his meaning) plain!

In verses (51–52) are mentioned the illusory pretence of authority and inordinate boasting, followed by derogatory remarks. These are the standard stratagem to gain political advantages over enemies. It is also interesting that sovereignty of Egypt is mentioned in the verse 51, since in esoteric teachings, Egypt represents the materialistic world. This was the reason why Moses after the destruction of Pharaoh's army did not stay in Egypt, but rather moved towards Jerusalem because it represents the spiritual world.

(53) Why, then, have armllets of gold not been set upon him, or angels sent along with him? (54) Thus he persuaded his people to make light (of Moses), and they obeyed him. Lo! they were a wanton folk. (55) So, when they angered Us, We punished them and

drowned them every one. (56) And We made them a thing past, and an example for those after (them).

Verse (53) again mentions gold, which is symbolic of the King (Leo). The above verses describe the nemesis of oppressive and autocratic political powers.

The Psychological Domination

Psychological dominations are the most cruel aspects from which enmity, prejudice, and hatred can be brought forth. Prophet Muhammad had to bear a great deal of diatribe from the pagan Arabs, specially on the matter of Jesus. Since the Quran used to praise Jesus in glowing terms by confirming his immaculate conception, and many other miracles including healing of the sick and raising of the dead; the pagans began to accuse him of preaching Christianity to them, and becoming a renegade of their ancestral religion. Prophet Muhammad continued to praise Jesus because their objectives of social reformation were the same. The Quran says in this chapter.

(57) And when the son of Mary is quoted as an example, behold! the folk laugh out, (58) And say: Are our gods better, or is he? They raise not the objection save for argument. Nay! but they are a contentious folk. (59) He is nothing but a slave on whom We bestowed favour, and We made him a pattern for the Children of Israel.

Also, Jesus had been a controversial personality between Jews and Christians, as Jews considered him to be an illegitimate child of Joseph and Mary, whilst Christians had accepted him to be the son of God. But Quran has a very peculiar clarification for this. It says,

(81) Say (O Muhammad): If the Beneficent One hath a son, then, I shall be first among the worshippers. (82) Glorified be the Lord of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of the Throne, from that which they ascribe (unto Him)!

Quran is actually saying that the Beneficent One cannot have a son, merely because He is not the King/Father of any sort. The difference between Gospels and Quran is that in the Gospel, God is considered a Father/King, and He has His Kingdom whose heir is Jesus. Since every father has a son, and every king needs an heir to continue his policies, ideals, and traditions; the Quran rejects this concept. Also, that is because if a tyrant is replaced by another King, albeit however a just king, sooner or later his Kingdom would become similar to the previous one, and equally tyrannical. Therefore, in the Quran God is not addressed as King/Father, rather He is addressed as the Beneficent One, and in order to prove this He cannot have an heir. Therefore, according to Quran Jesus cannot be the son of King, rather a follower of the Beneficent One. Also by hailing the Beneficent One, Quran has set the standard for goodness to be worth, and not birth.

The End Note

I must state that I have thoroughly enjoyed composing this article, and hopefully readers would find it useful as well. I should end here by mentioning some verses from the Quran,

Who hath created life and death that He may try you which of you is best in conduct; and He is the Mighty, the Forgiving. Who hath created seven heavens in harmony. Thou (Muhammad) canst see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation; then look again: Canst thou see any rifts? (Chapter 67, verses 2-3)

The Alchemy of Purification in the Quran

Introduction

The origin of man in nature has not been a matter of intense debate just because of the physical characteristics possessed by him, but the psychological attitudes that derive his life. Apparently, the power of focus that human minds possess is so stupendous that it can turn the most vague dreams or ideals into reality. Nevertheless, man still sometimes wonders if he has gotten it all, or may be something got left out. Perhaps one thing has definitely been left out from his existence; immortality!

The mortality of man defies all of his ambitions for future progress, as it renders them all vain in time. Thus, man becomes a philosopher, and tries to peek into the invisible. This need of a man's mind to explore the unlit land, to find answers that his mere sharp senses of sights and sounds could not discover, and to understand the ultimate mystery of nature; death!

All the intellectual developments that have resulted in the formation of human society have been the products of man's efforts to extend his vision into the unknown. Man has constructed microscopes and telescopes, built machines that give him insights into the atomic and molecular structures, as well as into the galaxies at infinite distances. It is this extrapolation of vision that distinguishes between strong acids and drinking water, so as to employ the two substances that though apparently look alike according to their physical appearances, but are very different in their respective chemical natures. Therefore, the destiny of man is shaped by the depths of vision he possesses, and guided by his efforts to constantly further the dimensions of his vision. The destiny of man is the product of an alchemical process, which essentially constitutes the subject of this article.

The ancient teachers of mankind had various interpretations for describing the role of human lives in the physical world, but some of them also considered the impact of this world on human beings because of their sojourn on earth. Those were the ancient prophets and mystics who considered the earth to be a stage for the development and ascension of human soul to a greater level of glory. Here, I shall discuss the teachings of Quran from the standpoint of human destiny, and attempt to explain those mystical teachings by using hermetic wisdom.

Saturn, Time, and Death

Amongst the seven astrological planets known from ancient times, Saturn occupies the seventh orbit. It is the farthest, slowest, and the dimmest planet known to them on account of which it rules the darkest hours of winter seasons. The Greeks called it 'Cronos', because it symbolized time and death. The Phoenicians of ancient Mesopotamia called it 'El', their chief deity and therefore, it can also be considered the prototype for the almighty God of Hebrews and Arabs.

Saturn represents Time, which is itself the greatest symbol of God. The time is always an independent factor in relation to any other dimension or quantity, and that is the very reason why it is kept on the X-axis of independent coordinates in all scientific studies. Time controls everything; and nothing controls, defeats, or escapes time. Time exalts persons into heroes, and also it is the time that abases heroes into dust by operating as the inevitable function of all activities in existence. Time is the all powerful, all mighty, all sublime, and whatever symbolizes

time symbolizes God, since only the existence of God can be as eternal as the time. The Quran says,

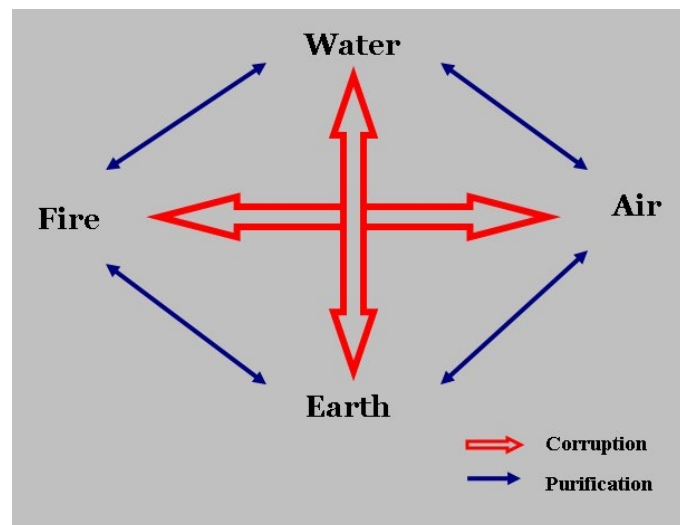
By the time. Verily man is in loss. But not those who believe and work righteous deeds, and enjoin upon each other the truth and enjoin upon each other steadfastness. (103, 1–3)

Everyone that is thereon will pass away; There remaineth but the Countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory. (55, 26–27)

Saturn also symbolizes death because it represents the extreme dark and cold of winter. In the Judaic traditions, Saturday (the day of planet Saturn) is the Holy Sabbath which gets celebrated by fasting and other restrictive behaviours. Now, what dies with Saturn? In order to understand this, we shall have to study the hermetic principle of polarities.

The Hermetic Principle of Polarities

The polarities in nature constitute the properties of substances that may vary in their degrees. For instance, the air temperatures can rise or fall, producing thereby hot or cold. The extent of hot or cold would therefore, determine the level of polarity in the property of air temperature. Similarly, the altitudes of mountains or valleys can be measured as high or low in relation to the standard of sea level, and thus the polarity in terms of height between two physical features of land can be determined. In other words, wherever a range can be applied regarding quantitative differences between a single state, property, or dimension; polarity exists in those cases. There cannot be any relationship of polarity between temperature and height, because they represent different classes or dimensions of a state, and are qualitatively different from each other.



There are four hermetic elements in nature i.e., fire, water, air, and earth. The astrological signs of fire are always opposite that of the air signs, and the water signs are opposite the earth signs. That is because in hermetic wisdom, water and earth are the polar opposites comprising of the same properties but different polarities, and the same applies to fire and air. But fire and water are incompatible, and so as earth and air. According to hermetic wisdom, the compatible elements such as fire and air always tend to corrupt each other, whilst the incompatible elements such as fire and water always tend to purify each other. This has been depicted in the figure about the interaction of hermetic elements.

This hermetic wisdom is actually based on science as well as common sense. We know that fire would boil the water and thus purify it by causing the rains, and fire would also purify the earth by burning the refuse from it, but at the same time fire shall corrupt the air by producing the toxic smoke resulting in the air pollution. Similarly, water in the form of rains would purify the air, but in the conditions of floods would destroy the landscape and at the same time become dirty and impure itself. The results of these interactions of elements are quite obvious especially when the elements are present in great proportions as is often the case in nature, but if they are made to coexist with a meticulous and subtle judgement of their proportions then such interactions can also produce very favourable consequences to support the formation and existence of life on earth. Water and earth could produce plant life, whilst fire and air could provide necessary heat to further the growth and evolution of life. But where should this judgement of proportions come from? It is Saturn!

Saturn and the Day of Judgement

Why should the judgement be only from Saturn? Why not any of the other planets like Venus, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Luminaries (Sun, Moon)? In order to understand this, we shall have to see the arrangement of zodiac signs that are ruled by the seven planets.



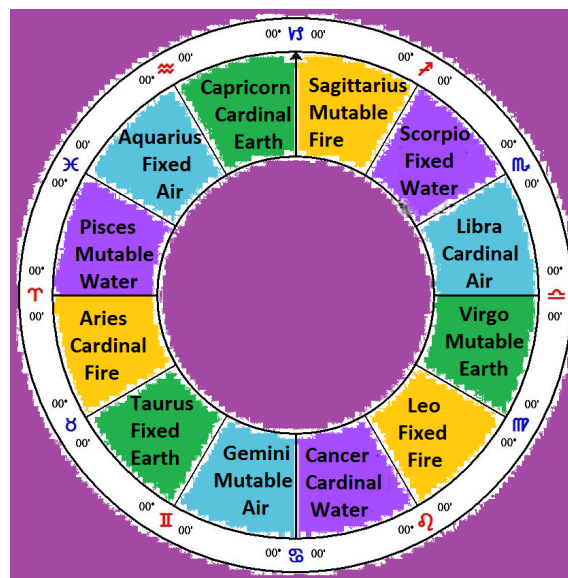
Mars for instance, rules Aries (the fire sign) and Scorpio (the water sign). So if Aries which is ruled by Mars were to corrupt its opposite sign of Libra (air), then adjacent to Libra happens to be the water sign of Scorpio also ruled by Mars that would purify the air sign of Libra due to its proximity. Similarly, if Taurus (the earth sign ruled by Venus) should corrupt the opposite water sign of Scorpio, then the next door sign Libra (ruled also by Venus) would purify the water of Scorpio. Therefore, because of this proximity factor the problems become reversible, and get resolved automatically.

In the Mercury/Jupiter case, the angular cross pattern of the signs ruled by each planet purifies the corruption. For instance, if Gemini causes trouble in Sagittarius, then Virgo comes to the rescue; and if Pisces corrupts Virgo, then Sagittarius due to the square angle with the sign

of Virgo becomes activated and resolves the situation. Mutable planets rule the signs that form the mutable cross, and in their case the angular relationship of the signs make automatic and effective response to the problems by restoring them to normal conditions, and thus rendering them also reversible.

How about the case of Saturn versus Luminaries? Here there can be no redemption because the Luminaries (Sun and Moon) individually rule only one sign each. Therefore, neither proximity nor any angular arrangement can resolve the corruptions if that may occur with the signs of Saturn, and thus making the situations totally irreversible and utterly dismal. Luminaries being the brightest and Saturn the dimmest make it all the more difficult to strike a balanced perspective in relation to ambitions, power dynamics, materialism, and pride. Thus, it ultimately leads to worst forms of spiritual decadence because when light in the outside world is at the brightest, then the spiritual light from within becomes the dimmest, and consequently the balance is totally lost. When a person searches for the spiritual light of truth from within, then the presence of darkness in the world of outside is far more conducive and illuminating. Therefore, the case of Saturn brings about the activity of judgement in its affairs by becoming the lord of the 'Day of Judgement', which is symbolically the Saturday, or the seventh day of the week.

Zodiac Signs and Their Elements



Also, one may ask that if the water of Cancer corrupts the earth of Capricorn then why it should not get purified by boiling with the fire of Aries. Well, the answer is that these elements are of archetypal nature, and the fire of Aries comes from Mars, not Moon. The corruptions caused by the element of Moon must therefore be taken care of by the Moon itself, which is not possible here. So, if Moon being a Luminary is bright and powerful, then with power should also accept the responsibility for its use, for otherwise the damage will be irreparable. Still, it does not mean that the fire of Aries will not boil the water of Cancer, actually it will! because of its archetypal nature to heat the water, but it shall just not be successful in purifying it. And therefore, it shall keep heating the water of Cancer perpetually due to its archetypal urge to purify it, and thus providing the indefinite supply of impure hot drinking water for the dwellers of Hell. Whenever the mention of hot boiling water, scorching winds, and roasting of bodies is mentioned for the dwellers of Hell in the Quran, it refers to the same archetypal principle of judgement. The Quran says,

And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days—and His Throne was upon the water—that He might try you, which of you is best in conduct. Yet if thou (O Muhammad) sayest: Lo! ye will be raised again after death! those who disbelieve will surely say: This is naught but mere magic. (11, 7)

Say: Who is Lord of the seven heavens, and Lord of the Tremendous Throne? (23, 86)

In the verse (11, 7), the heavens are plural whilst the earth is singular. This pattern is actually repeated at many places in the Quran referring to the archetypal character of the heavens, whilst the earth has to be a space for their combined impact or activity. In the same verse, the 'Throne' means the zodiac which is upon the water, or metaphorically on the blue sky. The Blue sky and clear sea water can be used symbolically for each other because the water on the surface of earth simply acts as a reflector or a mirror for the image in the sky. Thus, reflecting here the invisible image of the zodiac. Also, the mention of tests or trials for humans is very symbolic of the nature of Saturn as a tester of judgement. Again in the verse (23–86), the mention of seven heavens represents the seven planetary orbits, and the Tremendous Throne means the zodiac whilst the Lord of the Tremendous Throne is the reference to Saturn. The Quran further says,

The Beneficent One, Who is established on the throne. (20, 5)

Lo! your Lord is Allah Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days, then mounted He the Throne. He covereth the night with the day, which is in haste to follow it, and hath made the sun and the moon and the stars subservient by His command. His verily is all creation and commandment. Blessed be Allah, the Lord of the Worlds! (7, 54)

Say (O Muhammad, unto the idolaters): Disbelieve ye verily in Him Who created the earth in two Days, and ascribe ye unto Him rivals? He (and none else) is the Lord of the Worlds. He placed therein firm hills rising above it, and blessed it and measured therein its sustenance in four Days, alike for (all) who ask; Then turned He to the heaven when it was smoke, and said unto it and unto the earth: Come both of you, willingly or loth. They said: We come, obedient. Then He ordained them seven heavens in two Days and inspired in each heaven its mandate; and We decked the nether heaven with lamps, and rendered it inviolable. That is the measuring of the Mighty, the Knower. (41, 9–12)

The symbolic name which is used for denoting the archetype of Saturn in the Quran is "Ar-Rahman", meaning 'The Beneficent One'. I had earlier written an article "Saturn, the Beneficent One; Al-Quran:43 (Az-Zukhruf)" to describe the basic tenets of Saturn's character. The verse (20, 5) implies that the Beneficent One rules the Throne, or Saturn judges the zodiac.

The six days of creation are mentioned in the verse (7, 54) that are also archetypal in their character because of if we compare it to the total of eight days of creation in the verses (41, 9–12), then we find that there is a discrepancy of two days. We can never reconcile the two day discrepancy in these Quranic verses unless we accept that the days mentioned are qualitative in their nature rather than quantitative. Therefore, these days do not represent the duration of time with respect to a fixed quantitative standard of measurement, but the type of activity performed during whatsoever period of time, and thus the days of creation are actually archetypal. Also, after the six days of creation in the verse (7, 54) and mounting of the throne, the Lord covers the archetypal days with their respective nights that are also archetypal in their character; and then controls the sun, the moon, and the stars to be of service to His commandments which altogether means that humankind exists at the moment in the archetypal

nights of the six archetypal days of creation. But at the end of these archetypal nights, there shall come the dawn of the seventh day of creation, the Day of Judgement.

And when the heaven splitteth asunder and becometh rosy like red hide—(55, 37)

Lo! the Day of Decision is a fixed time, (78, 17)

The verse (55, 37) is very symbolic because it mentions the archetypal dawn of the new day (the seventh day), for the heaven splits and becomes rosy only at the time of the dawn, which one can observe at early mornings anywhere on earth. The verse (78, 17) suggests that the new archetypal day shall occur at a fixed time.



The Event of purification



The Quran says,

When the event befallerh—There is no denying that it will befall—Abasing (some), exalting (others); When the earth is shaken with a shock. And the hills are ground to powder. So that they become a scattered dust. And ye will be three kinds: (First) those on the right hand; what of those on the right hand? And (then) those on the left hand; what of those on the left hand? And the foremost in the race, the foremost in the race: Those are they who will be brought nigh. (56, 1–11)

In verses (56, 1–11), the Quran talks about the Event of Purification, or the Day of Judgement. This event is actually about the separation of people on the basis of their spiritual merits or judgements. The Quran says that the humanity shall be divided into three groups: Firstly, those who have only done the purification and nothing of corruption, they shall be the foremost in the race; Secondly, those who have accomplished more purification than corruption, they shall be on the right side; and lastly those who have achieved more corruption than purification; they shall be on the left side. This shall be the state of the world on the Judgement Day, for the corruption must be purified from noble essence of humanity. The Quran says,

He created man of clay like the potter's, And the jinn did He create of smokeless fire. (55, 14–15)

And when We said unto the angels: Fall down prostrate before Adam and they fell prostrate all save Iblis, he said: Shall I fall prostrate before that which Thou hast created of clay? He said: Seest Thou this (creature) whom Thou hast honoured above me, if Thou give me grace until the Day of Resurrection I verily will seize his seed, save but a few. He said: Go, and whosoever of them followeth thee—lo! hell will be your payment, ample payment. And excite any of them whom thou canst with thy voice, and urge thy horse and foot against them, and be a partner in their wealth and children, and promise them. Satan promiseth them only to deceive. Lo! My (faithful) bondmen—over them thou hast no power, and thy Lord sufficeth as (their) guardian. (17, 61–65)

O ye who believe! Lo! among your wives and your children there are enemies for you, therefore beware of them. And if ye efface and overlook and forgive, then lo! Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (64, 14)

The verses (55, 14–15) indicate that man was made from pure earth, i. e. the earth without any contamination of water; whilst the jinn was made from smokeless fire (the heat), or the fire without any contamination of air. In verses (17, 61–65), the angels who are essentially the light creatures did what they were commanded, but Iblis who according to Quran was of the jinn kind, he refused to do so. The verses (17, 61–65) and (64, 14) are very significant because they indicate that the moral principles are inoperable in this world. The devil can belong among a person's relatives and not even easily recognized because the physical bodies that a person may possess does not reflect his judgement. The bodies we possess here are a gift from the heavens, and in no way represent our personal merits or achievements. Here, a person may touch fire and burn his skin, but he shall be perfectly well off by lying and cheating to others. The rules of ethics are not reflected by the physical state of a person but that of the spiritual condition, and therefore will become evident on the day of judgement when a person's body could only be the image of his spiritual earnings. The Quran says,

We created you. Will ye then admit the truth? Have ye seen that which ye emit? Do ye create it or are We the Creator? We mete out death among you, and We are not to be outrun, That We may transfigure you and make you what ye know not. And verily ye know the first creation. Why, then, do ye not reflect? Have ye seen that which ye cultivate? Is it ye who foster it, or are We the Fosterer? If We willed, We verily could make it chaff, then would ye cease not to exclaim: Lo! we are laden with debt! Nay, but we are deprived! Have ye observed the water which ye drink? Is it ye who shed it from the raincloud, or are We the Shedder? If We willed We verily could make it bitter. Why then, give ye not thanks? Have ye observed the fire which ye strike out; Was it ye who made the tree thereof to grow, or were We the grower? We, even We, appointed it a memorial and a comfort for the dwellers in the wilderness. Therefore (O Muhammad), praise the

name of thy Lord, the Tremendous. Nay, I swear by the places of the stars—And lo! that verily is a tremendous oath, if ye but knew—That (this) is indeed a noble Qur’an. In a Book kept hidden. Which none toucheth save the purified, A revelation from the Lord of the Worlds. Is it this Statement that ye scorn, And make denial thereof your livelihood? Why, then, when (the soul) cometh up to the throat (of the dying). And ye are at that moment looking—And We are nearer unto him than ye are, but ye see not—Why then, if ye are not in bondage (unto Us), Do ye not force it back, if ye are truthful? Thus if he is of those brought nigh, Then breath of life, and plenty, and a Garden of delight. And if he is of those on the right hand, Then (the greeting) “Peace be unto thee” from those on the right hand. But if he is of the rejecters, the erring, Then the welcome will be boiling water. And roasting at hell-fire. Lo! this is certain truth. Therefore (O Muhammad) praise the name of thy Lord, the Tremendous. (56, 57–96)

The verses (56, 57–59) very much summarize the whole process of judgement and purification in all of its aspect. If viewed from the perspective of hermetic wisdom, then one can consider these verses to be the ideal formula for human spiritual growth. The principle of polarity is evident from all the physical and natural laws of the universe, and is the ideal alchemical mode for the separation and purification of both matter and spirit. The Quran says,

He hath loosed the two seas. They meet. There is a barrier between them. They encroach not (one upon the other). Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny? There cometh forth from both of them the pearl and coral-stone. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny? His are the ships displayed upon the sea, like banners. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny? Everyone that is thereon will pass away; There remaineth but the Countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory. (55, 19–27)

The verses (55, 19–27) clearly indicate the principle of polarity working in its most meticulous ways in the nature. Whenever two different rivers or seas come together, due to the variations in the mineral and salt components they carry till the meeting point, their levels of polarities differ sufficiently enough to cause the separation between them. One can observe the two masses of water with different colours or shades running for hundreds of miles without merging into one another, thus providing a fascinating sight of nature. Similarly, the ships though are very small as compared to the sea do not get drowned by it due to the lesser specific gravity or density value of water preventing it from getting drowned. Here, it is important to note that both the polarity index of water and its specific gravity are the measures of the qualitative state of water, and have nothing to do with its quantity. In other words, the lesson is that in any affair quantity must never impose itself upon the quality, but rather the two things should stay distinguished from each other. The numbers may perish, but the archetypal principles of the glorious ‘Countenance of Lord’ will continue to exist. The Quran says,

Say: Have ye thought: If (all) your water were to disappear into the earth, who then could bring you gushing water? (67, 30)

By the sun and his brightness, And the moon when she followeth him, And the day when it revealeth him, And the night when it enshroudeth him, And the heaven and Him Who built it, And the earth and Him Who spread it, And a soul and Him Who perfected it. And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. He is indeed successful who causeth it to grow, And he is indeed a failure who stunteth it. (91, 1–10)

The verses (91, 1–10) suggest that the perfection in the works of nature and the attitudes of noble human beings are always directed towards the attainment of judgement and purification.

The End Note

Well, this really is my personal observation that all of the humanity whether consciously or unconsciously is constantly seeking some sort of judgement. Students read so as to find good grades, people use all kinds of cloths and cosmetics to impress each other, politicians seek the popular confidence to win elections, corporations perpetually tend to acquire more customers in order to enhance their profits, and generally everyone has a interest in improving the present state of existence as if the urge for improvement has been hardwired into the human psyche. So, I ask why they are all constantly seeking judgement. Because they understand that whether they look for it or not, they will surely find it. Judgement will happen nonetheless, and if it is so inevitable a fact then I should definitely consider it to be wise to stay a little prepared. I shall conclude this article by stating the following verses from the Quran.

He is Allah, than Whom there is no other God, the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible. He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. He is Allah, than Whom there is no other God, the Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, Peace, the Keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Superb. Glorified be Allah from all that they ascribe as partner (unto Him). He is Allah, the Creator, the Shaper out of naught, the Fashioner. His are the most beautiful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Him, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59, 22–24)

The Esoteric Evolution, Surah Ar-Rahman (The Beneficent)

Introduction

The 55th Chapter of Quran is Ar-Rahman, meaning the Beneficent. The term 'Beneficent' carries a profound esoteric connotation in Quran because it relates to the mysteries of planet Saturn. I had succinctly discussed some of them in my previous articles, 'Saturn, the Beneficent One; Al-Quran Chapter : 43 (Az-Zukhruf)' and 'The Alchemy of Purification in the Quran'. However, the symbolic theme of chapter 55 has the mysteries of Saturn written all over itself, which I shall be attempting to cover in this article. The chapter 55 consists of 78 verses, whilst 31 of those are a refrain, "Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?". The refrain metaphorically relates to the 31-year cycle of Saturn with reference to the lunar calendar because Muslims have traditionally preferred the lunar calendar in their religious rites and festivals. Furthermore, there is a symmetrical pattern between the orbits of Saturn and Moon due to the periodicity of these planetary cycles; Saturn's 29.5 solar years cycle versus Moon's 29.5 solar days cycle. These facts and the embedded esoteric contents of this chapter make it an ideal study for deciphering the hermetic mysteries associated with the planet Saturn.

It is also noteworthy that the prophet Muhammad had attributed many distinctions to the chapter 55 such as, 'the beauty of Quran', 'the bride of Quran', and the 'adornment of Quran'. The titles seem justifiable especially in the light of the opportunities this chapter affords to employ the natural sciences alongside the occult sciences for its mystical interpretation. From a hermetic standpoint, it constitutes a strong and symbolically rich statement whose mysteries may keep unravelling indefinitely depending upon the potential of the seeker.

Saturn, the Limits (Law) and the Polarity (Wisdom)

Astrologically, the influence of Saturn is usually associated with limits and boundaries of a challenging situation. This does not mean that every limitation faced by human beings is due to the influence of Saturn; rather Saturn represents only those limits that are indispensable for the moral standards and quality of a human life.

In the study of physical sciences, there are qualitative or intensive properties of matter such as density, temperature, pressure, or velocity. These properties have the presence of limiting parameters within them that are very specific and considered as the identifiers for various substances. In the case of density, volume limits the mass of a substance; in pressure, the force is limited by the area; and in velocity, the distance is limited by the time duration of a locomotive. Therefore, the quantitative properties such as mass, force, and distance cannot vary without the complimentary variations in the associated limiting parameters that form the qualitative properties of a substance. The limiting parameters or laws of Saturn are not there to cause hindrances to human beings, as their only function is to preserve the human integrity. Thus, a person that enjoins many limiting parameters in life gets to attain higher levels of quality in his individual characteristics. Similarly, the refrain of chapter 55 symbolically represents the 31 limiting parameters or laws of Saturn that according to Quran form the significant moral constituents for the fulfilment of human integrity.

The limiting parameters of the quantitative properties (mass, force, distance) produce the qualitative properties (density, pressure, velocity); and likewise the polarity of a physical substance is the limit imposed by different qualitative properties of that substance on each

other. For example, the density of a liquid decreases with the rise in temperature, but if the temperature rises too high so as to reach the boiling point of the liquid, then the liquid shall lose all of its density and turn into the gas phase. Therefore, the threshold points beyond which the variation in one qualitative property completely nullifies the existence of other qualitative properties represent the range of polarity. Metaphorically, it represents the extent of adherence to a moral creed whereby any coherent natural existence could be viable, and the human integrity would have any meaning at all. For instance, it should be morally appropriate to seek warmth and to preach the code of obtaining heat in extremely cold regions of the world, but to exemplify the same code as the word of God in extremely hot areas ought to be a gross misappropriation of morality. The significance of moral values or teachings is relative to the immediate working environment of the practitioner, and therefore morality must always guide humanity according to the principles of polarity. I had also noticed a subtle connection of the principles of polarity with the refrain of chapter 55 in the explanatory notes of Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. The note says,

[In the refrain: “Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?” ye and the verb are in the dual form, and the question is generally believed to be addressed to mankind and the Jinn.]

I find it very fascinating because the mention of ‘mankind’ and ‘Jinn’ in the text metaphorically does refer to the polarity. Therefore, the mystery of this refrain is very special as it symbolically suggests the presence of both the limiting parameters (law) and the principles of polarity (wisdom).



The planet Saturn occupies the highest orbit among the seven visible planets, and is symbolically indicative of the final stage of a human life. At the stage of Saturn, the full record of a human life expresses itself with all of its accomplishments and failures distinctly recounted and measured for their values. Hence, in comparison to the innocence of childhood, archetype of Saturn represents the full-blown maturity in the experiences of life. The journey of becoming something or other ends at Saturn, but this journey might not be in vain if it upheld throughout its course the limiting parameters and the principles of polarity. Conclusively, the esoteric evolution of humans can only be possible under the best influence of Saturn, the Beneficent.

The Jinn Phenomenon



Whatever I am about to discuss in this passage is not for the faint-hearted or weak-minded persons! At any other situation, I would have simply avoided this subject because it deals with hardcore occult concepts, but in the case of chapter 55 the anxious undertaking seems inevitable. The reason being that chapter 55 concerns itself as much with the Jinn as it does with the Man. Therefore, I think it befits the scope of our study that we know about the Jinn from an objective standpoint by stating plain facts about them and their relationship dynamics with humans. In fact, the fundamental concepts of 'esoteric evolution' and the 'mysteries of Saturn' can be exclusively associated with the relationship dynamics of Jinn with humans.

Jinn are the intelligent spirit beings whose essence of creation is 'energy'. Humans on the other hand have 'matter' as their essence of creation. Therefore, the relationship dynamics between Man and Jinn is very similar to that of matter and energy. For instance, modern science has conclusively proven that matter and energy are not mutually exclusive of each other. Science has determined that Energy is the sublimated form of matter, whilst matter is the condensed or precipitated form of energy. Therefore, the association of man and Jinn is very much within the domain of possibility.

The Jinn population always number many times more than human population at any given moment, and they can appear in the human form. When in the human form, the elderly Jinn appear as young children and younger Jinn appear as old men. The digestive system in human bodies extracts energy from the food and discards the unnecessary material, whilst the very reverse of this condition exists in the digestion process of Jinn as it extracts material and discards the energy. Moreover, contrary to the humans who live on the earth's surface, the Jinn prefer to live under it.

From the standpoint of occult, the humans consisting mainly of 'matter' is the reason why their vital drive tend to be always directed towards energy and that allows the Jinn to act as consorts to human beings. The occult implies that men and women may only support each other as mediums or connection points for the invocation of the spirits of Jinn. The relationship dynamics here are actually far deeper and subtle because according to the occult wisdom, the children that are born with humans have their original connection with the Jinn, while the children of the actual human origin find themselves effectively transferred to the ethereal dominion of the Jinn.

It occurs because the humans in their material state can only find a life possessing drive towards the more sublime energetic form and hence, their true children end up entering the realm of Jinn. Conversely, the Jinn naturally precipitate themselves from energy into matter and as a result, their children find the place of welcome among humans. In addition to that, the older Jinn tend to find greater appeal towards young humans, while the young Jinn prefer older humans. This preference is due to the energy resonance factor; the older Jinn have higher energy levels in their essence very similar to the young human beings that possess more energy, while younger Jinn have relatively lower energy in them similar to the older humans. Unlike humans, the Jinn do not feel vitality in the excess of energy; rather they experience exhaustion from it, and enjoy strength with matter. Another fascinating point about the Jinn is that the occult societies of humans are quite fond of the Jinn phenomenon. They deliberately use weird sex rituals in their ceremonies and parties in order to influence the Jinn population of the ethereal sphere to do their bidding. Now that we have learnt something about the Jinn, we shall get on with our study of chapter 55.

The Chapter 55, Ar-Rahman (the Beneficent)

In the following, I shall be explaining the chapter 55 of Quran by using the concepts from our preceding discussions in the article.

- 1. The Beneficent.**
- 2. Hath made known the Qur'an.**
- 3. He hath created man.**
- 4. He hath taught him utterance.**

'The Beneficent' in the verse 1 represents the influence of Saturn. The verse 2 says that Quran expounds the best guidance of the law (limiting parameters) and wisdom (polarity), and reveals the greatest expressions of Saturn's archetype. The verses 3–4 indicate that man is the most evolved among the God's creatures due to the sophistication and improvisations in his behaviours towards life. The most special part of humanity is the use of complex languages for conducting the business affairs of life. The human languages have the potential to transform the animalistic sort of existence into an altogether new level of living experience. Many of the insecurities and other self-conscious instincts are simply broken up with the advent of complex modes of communication. A strong culture of well being becomes possible owing to the sharing of noble idealism among humans through the medium of languages. The appropriate use of languages can literally cause the life on this planet to thrive and prosper.

- 5. The sun and the moon are made punctual.**
- 6. The stars and the trees prostrate.**
- 7. And the sky He hath uplifted; and He hath set the measure,**
- 8. That ye exceed not the measure,**
- 9. But observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof.**

The disciplined compliance of Sun and Moon in the verse 5 reflects the authority of Saturn. The planet Saturn rules the astrological signs that are opposite to the Luminaries (Sun and Moon), and thus it imposes the discipline upon them. Astrologically, Sun is the Luminary of day and Moon is the Luminary of night. Sun and Moon act as consorts to each other since metaphorically they are the King and Queen of the zodiac. The characteristics of Sun and Moon actually represent the range of polarity that shall symbolically recur many times in the chapter 55. The light of Moon diminishes as it moves closer to the Sun, and increases as it moves away from the Sun. The Moon at one end of polarity acts as a microcosmic seed of light for the Sun to nourish, nurture, and magnify that light to a dazzling state. Therefore, the perfect polarity establishes itself at the opposite ends of the spectrum of cosmic lights. In the verse 6, stars and trees form the same range of polarity because stars cover the heaven just as trees cover the earth. The verses 7–9 emphasize the need to respect the limiting parameters and the polarity for the observance of Divine authority in human affairs.

10. And the earth hath He appointed for (His) creatures,

11. Wherein are fruit and sheathed palm-trees,

12. Husked grain and scented herb.

13. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

The verses 11–12 refer to the two additional qualities of consorts. The sheath of the palm-trees helps protect the fruit because of their relationship. The husked grains and scented herbs are very different types of plant products; yet they act as consorts because the husked grain serves the need for food whilst the scented herb has the medicinal properties.

14. He created man of clay like the potter's,

15. And the jinn did He create of smokeless fire.

16. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

Here Quran talks about the real consorts, namely Man and Jinn. They are the greatest manifestation of the symbolic relationship dynamics of Matter and Energy. However great they may be, still they have to observe the 'limiting parameters' and the 'principles of polarity' in order to continue in the path of 'esoteric evolution'.

17. Lord of the two Easts, and Lord of the two Wests!

18. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

The 'two Easts' mentioned in the verse 17 are the two seasons of spring and summer. The days are longer than nights during these seasons and as a result astrologically they follow the ruler of day, the Sun. The 'two Wests' mentioned in the verse 17 refers to the two seasons of autumn and winter. As the nights become longer than days during these seasons, so accordingly they follow the ruler of night, the Moon. The 'Lord' of Easts and Wests in the verse 17 refers to the authority of Saturn and its power to control all the seasons and keep them in their proper characters.

19. He hath loosed the two seas. They meet.

20. There is a barrier between them. They encroach not (one upon the other).

21. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

22. There cometh forth from both of them the pearl and coral-stone.

23. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

These verses very nicely expound the principles of polarity through the examples of fresh-water seas and salt-water seas. There is a slight difference of density and polarity between the two types of water. Both density and polarity being the qualitative properties, and cause the two waters in sufficiently massive amount to maintain their physical constitution by creating boundaries for keeping their flows separate. It is like an invisible wall that symbolizes respect between the two very similar liquid substances. This example teaches that consorts should not lose a respectful distance despite the closeness of their souls; because on losing the individual respectability, they shall not be able to function as consorts anymore!

The verse 22 is also very significant because the symbolism of pearl and coral-stone here refers to Moon and Sun respectively. Both pearl and coral-stone are biological products that come from the sea, and therefore if the sea represents the zodiac, then the pearl (Moon) should rule the darker half of the zodiac, and coral-stone (Sun) should rule the brighter part of it. This symbolism would make even more sense in the next verses.

24. His are the ships displayed upon the sea, like banners.

25. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

26. Everyone that is thereon will pass away;

27. There remaineth but the Countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.

28. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

The ships can travel on the sea due to the specific gravity (qualitative property) of water keeping them afloat as well as sailing. The sea is a very appropriate metaphor for the zodiac because the water of sea reflects the above sky like a mirror. Additionally, when the ships sail on the sea they do not leave any tracks behind them as evidences of their journey, like the planets do not leave markings whilst passing through the zodiac. The verses 26–27 convey a similar logic that everything is constantly in the process of transformation towards the ultimate 'esoteric evolution', which in itself is the realization of Divine Plan resulting in the full expression of the Divine Countenance. We must notice that the Divine Countenance has two components to it; Might to punish the wrongdoer, and Glory to reward the righteous. These two characteristics of the Divine Countenance also have the relationship dynamics of consorts that shall become apparent ahead in our study.

29. All that are in the heavens and the earth entreat Him. Every day He exerciseth (universal) power.

30. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

31. We shall dispose of you, O ye two dependents (man and jinn).

32. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

33. O company of jinn and men, if ye have power to penetrate (all) regions of the heavens and the earth, then penetrate (them)! Ye will never penetrate them save with (Our) sanction.

34. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

35. There will be sent, against you both, heat of fire and flash of brass, and ye will not escape.

36. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

The verse 31 calls Man and Jinn as the 'two dependents' because they are still students in the school of 'esoteric evolution' and have not properly learnt the relationship dynamics yet. The word 'sanction' in the verse 33 refers to the 'limiting parameters (laws)' and 'principles of polarity (wisdom)'. The verse 33 is actually saying that Men and Jinn cannot penetrate, populate, or explore all the regions of heavens and earth, and employ all the mysteries of the universe to their advantage unless they first abide by the true notions of morality. Fail the test, and they will experience the punishments from the 'heat of fire' (energy) and the 'flash of brass' (matter). This means that the very essence of a person works against him in the state of degeneracy.

37. And when the heaven splitteth asunder and becometh rosy like red hide—

38. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?—

39. On that day neither man nor jinni will be questioned of his sin.

40. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

41. The guilty will be known by their marks, and will be taken by the forelocks and the feet.

42. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

43. This is hell which the guilty deny.

44. They go circling round between it and fierce, boiling water.

45. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

I had described the symbolism of verse 37 as the Dawn of the Saturn's Day in a previous article, 'The Alchemy of Purification in the Quran'. The Saturn's day is a metaphor for the event of purification that shall purge the corruption in all of its forms from humanity. The reference to Man and Jinn in the verse 39 clearly suggests that they are consorts to each other in every action including crimes. The verse 41 further interprets the relationship dynamics of consorts by associating them with the example of hands and feet. Just as hands and feet work together for achieving the goals of a person, the consorts always act for their common purpose.

There are many significant symbols in the verse 44. The 'boiling water' can contain plenty of heat energy without losing the quenching characteristic of water. This can be a strong punishment for Man and Jinn, as the process of precipitation for the Jinn would become

impossible due to the excessive energy of water, and the process of sublimation for the humans shall become impossible as well because of the quenching property of water. The depiction of guilty circling round between the hell and the fierce boiling water conveys the idea that both the suffering and witnessing of punishments shall happen simultaneously. Consequently, both the physical and mental forms of pain shall become consorts to the guilty. The verses 37–45 actually depict the “Might” aspect of the Divine Countenance that would impart punishments to the wrongdoers.

46. But for him who feareth the standing before his Lord there are two gardens.

47. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

48. Of spreading branches.

49. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

50. Wherein are two fountains flowing.

51. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

52. Wherein is every kind of fruit in pairs.

53. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

54. Reclining upon couches lined with silk brocade, the fruit of both the gardens near to hand.

55. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

56. Therein are those of modest gaze, whom neither man nor jinni will have touched before them.

57. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

58. (In beauty) like the jacinth and the coral-stone.

59. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

60. Is the reward of goodness aught save goodness?

61. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?

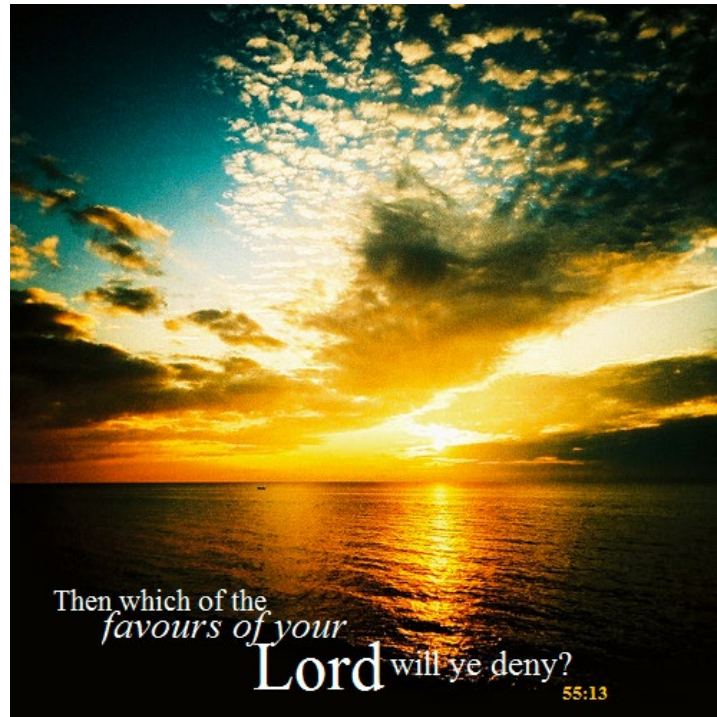
The ‘two gardens’ of verse 46 refer to the positive influence of spring and summer seasons. The ‘spreading branches’ of verse 48 reflect the availability of the sunlight, which is normal for these seasons. The ‘two flowing fountains’ of verse 50 are symbolic of the good relationship dynamics of matter and energy. They represent the two processes; precipitation (for Jinn) and sublimation (for Man). The phrase ‘every kind of fruit in pairs’ of verse 52 represents the good auspices of spring and summer. Trees produce all kinds of fruits during these seasons due to the presence of sunlight. The verse 56 really communicates the ‘esoteric evolution’ by emphasizing at the novelty of consorts. It means that the interactions among consorts will be very stimulating and full of passions and excitements that shall lead to the ‘esoteric evolution’. In verse 58 ‘the jacinth and the coral-stone’ means that the people of those gardens shall have

the influence of the Sun due to the spring and summer seasons. The coral-stone is a biological product formed in the seas, thus very much akin to the humans. On the other hand, the jacynth crystal forms deep inside the molten earth under extreme heat and pressure, which makes it akin to the Jinn. Both jacynth and coral-stone are red and that makes them akin to the Sun. They may also represent the tanning or pigmentation of skin that can produce darker shades on constant exposure to the sunlight. In any case, Man and Jinn in the gardens of spring and summer shall become consorts like jacynth and coral-stone.

- 62. And beside them are two other gardens,**
- 63. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 64. Dark green with foliage.**
- 65. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 66. Wherein are two abundant springs.**
- 67. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 68. Wherein is fruit, the date-palm and pomegranate.**
- 69. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 70. Wherein (are found) the good and beautiful—**
- 71. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?—**
- 72. Fair ones, close-guarded in pavilions—**
- 73. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?—**
- 74. Whom neither man nor jinni will have touched before them—**
- 75. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 76. Reclining on green cushions and fair carpets.**
- 77. Which is it, of the favours of your Lord, that ye deny?**
- 78. Blessed be the name of thy Lord, Mighty and glorious!**

The 'two other gardens' of verse 62 metaphorically refer to the autumn and winter seasons. In contrast to the 'spreading branches' of the earlier gardens, in verse 64 we have gardens that are 'dark green with foliage'. Because the gardens of autumn and winter do not get much sunlight and the leaves are mainly for decorations and ornamentation of those gardens. The 'date palm' and 'pomegranate' of verse 68 is again in contrast to the 'every kind of fruit in pairs' of the previous gardens due to the lack of variety in the fruit productions during autumn and winter seasons. The verse 72, "Fair ones, close-guarded in pavilions -" is truly fascinating; Fair ones, with no tanned or skin pigmentation representing the lack of sunlight, and furthermore, 'close-guarded in pavilions -' because it is dark and cold outside. Nevertheless, the verse 74 clarifies that the relationship dynamics between the consorts in autumn and winter gardens are

no less warmer compared to those of spring and summer gardens. Finally, in verse 78 the Divine Name now is 'Mighty' and 'Glorious', which means that neither the Countenance nor the Name really matters as these are just modes of communications for human understanding. What really matters is for the creatures to observe the Divine Law and Wisdom, whilst the Divinity to exercise the Divine Attributes of Might and Glory.



The End Note

I found a very peculiar fact about the verses of this chapter that deal with rewards and punishments. The punishment portion comprises of the verses 37–45, a sum of 8 verses; whilst the reward portion comprises of verses 46–78, a sum of 32 verses. Therefore, the Glory aspect of Divine Attribute is probably four times greater than that of the Might aspect, and that definitely is something to celebrate. I should conclude this article with the following statement of Quran.

O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware. (49, 13)

Navigation through the Zodiac; Al-Quran, Chapter 53 (The Star)

Introduction

I bring you an astrological interpretation of the 53rd chapter of Quran, called "The Star". It has the most profound guidelines for humans to navigate through the twelve signs of zodiac; and besides that, this chapter envelops the fundamental teachings of Islam in its entirety.



The chapter 53rd of Quran is called "An-Najm", meaning 'The Star'. The most fascinating aspect of this chapter is that it flows with seemingly unconnected subjects, but with a profound rhythm and symbolic esoteric meaning. The verses of this chapter in a descending order represent allegorical description of the successive signs of astrological zodiac. Thus, it creates the most beautiful symphony of spiritual and psychological relevance to the reader wherein, the profound guidance it delivers through the esoteric undertones are the hallmark of this chapter. Here, I have attempted to unravel its meanings by using hermetic principles of astrology.

Aries

(1) By the Star when it setteth, (2) Your comrade erreth not, nor is deceived; (3) Nor doth he speak of (his own) desire. (4) It is naught save an inspiration that is inspired, (5) Which one of mighty powers hath taught him, (6) One vigorous; and he grew clear to view (7) When he was on the uppermost horizon.

The setting of star mentioned in verse (1) refers to the position of star Sirius at the moment of Aries rising. Sirius is one of the brightest stars, and has also been mentioned by name later in

this chapter because it was considered to be a dear object of worship by pagan Arabs. When Aries rises, Sirius is situated at the bottom most position called Imum Coeli or IC in the sign of Cancer. Therefore, Quran is saying in verse (2) that a star as bright as Sirius may set, but the rising of Aries cannot be hindered. Due to this, it has characteristics of life, energy, strength, dynamism, self-confidence, and a dauntless attitude. In verse (7) 'the uppermost horizon' represents Aries, because of it being the first sign in zodiac.

Taurus

(8) Then he drew nigh and came down. (9) Till he was (distant) two bow's length or even nearer, (10) And He revealed unto His slave that which He revealed. (11) The heart lied not (in seeing) what it saw. (12) Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he seeth? (13) And verily he saw him yet another time (14) By the lote-tree of the utmost boundary, (15) Nigh unto which is the Garden of Abode. (16) When that which shroudeth did enshroud the lote-tree, (17) The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold. (18) Verily he saw one of the greater revelations of his Lord.

Taurus always follows the sign of Aries, and so is below Aries, as mentioned in verse (8). The distance of two bow's length in verse (9) allegorically refers to the space between the bull's horns in the constellation of Taurus. Astrologically, the sign of Taurus is concerned with security through material support, which primarily means food and shelter. Therefore, in these verses one might easily spot the theme of well being and reassurance due to the mention of gardens and trees. Also, notice the 'lote tree' in verse (14) which is an ever green tree stationed at the highest place in heavens. In Taurus, the spring season gets firmly established with trees producing flowers and fruits in abundance, bringing about affluence on Earth. The verse (17) is important here because it expresses the ethical perspective of Taurus in contrast to the opposite sign Scorpio. It says that the eye of Taurus is neither timid, nor overconfident due to being devoid of lustfulness (Scorpio Trait).

Gemini

(19) Have ye thought upon Al-Lat and Al-Uzz'a (20) And Manat, the third, the other? (21) Are yours the males and His the females? (22) That indeed were an unfair division! (23) They are but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which Allah hath revealed no warrant. They follow but a guess and that which (they) themselves desire. And now the guidance from their Lord hath come unto them.

Gemini is represented by 'the twins' symbol in astrology, which refers to duality in every form of human activity. Human beings are affected by it because they use languages and symbols for communication purposes, which when taken literally can be very misleading. This duality leads to superficiality, and that in turn leads to vanity; because some symbols eventually become idols, and the mind gets conditioned by social environments to live perpetually under its self-deceiving hypnosis. The sign of Gemini gives mankind languages and symbolism that has its own utility, but to consider this function to be 'the truth', is like considering reference symbols to be as actual reality, or words to be the real things. Therefore, in these verses of Quran (19–23), whilst referring to the sign of Gemini, Quran condemns the symbolism of idols such as al-laah, al-Uzza, and Manaah because those are deceptive. Also, the twin symbolism of Gemini is emphasized in verses (21–22) by stating that there should be no unjust division, partiality, or difference between activities meant for materialistic desires, and that for spiritual life. The Quran also strongly reprimands superficiality, vanity, and assumptions; but supports working with tangible facts of existence.

Cancer

(24) Or shall man have what he coveteth? (25) But unto Allah belongeth the after (life), and the former. (26) And how many angels are in the heavens whose intercession availeth naught save after Allah giveth leave to whom He chooseth and accepteth. (27) Lo! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter who name the angels with the names of females. (28) And they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and lo! a guess can never take the place of the truth. (29) Then withdraw (O Muhammad) from him who fleeth from Our remembrance and desireth but the life of the world. (30) Such is their sum of knowledge. Lo! thy Lord is best aware of him who strayeth, and He is best aware of him whom goeth right.

Cancer is astrologically considered as the sign of home, relaxation, comfort, ease, happiness, and emotional freedom. Here everyone is flexible, casual, and understanding. It is a place where mistakes usually go unnoticed, because formality and laws are normally ignored. It is the start of Summer, where all bode well under the high Sun. At this time, the laws are of utmost importance for development of the human spirit. Therefore, verses (24–25) suggest that a person should not totally be devoted to the fulfilment of his desires by undermining law and order. And since the angels were known to be law enforcement agents of God, the pagans in verses (26–28) had turned them into females so as to mitigate the punishments, because they considered females to be more compassionate and forgiving towards criminals. The verses (29–30) suggest that these are the times when humans need to act with discipline and walk their talk, for if they do not, then what they shall sow in summer, will reap in winter. In brief, the Quran says that one can make the most out of good times by acting in lives with nobility and discipline.

Leo

(31) And unto Allah belongeth whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, that He may reward those who do evil with that which they have done, and reward those who do good with goodness.

In the above verse, the sign of king (Leo) is admonished of conducting any acts of tyranny in a language so regal and grandeur that befits only to be spoken by a true sovereign. Because summers have firmly set themselves in during this time, therefore astrologically, it is the sign of high and the great. Here, Quran not only informs about the best times that humans ever experience, but also warns them that any form of ingratitude or defiance at these times will be severely dealt with.

Virgo

(32) Those who avoid enormities of sin and abominations, save the unwilling offences—(for them) lo! thy Lord is of vast mercy. He is best aware of you (from the time) when He created you from the earth, and when ye were hidden in the bellies of your mothers. Therefore ascribe not purity unto yourselves. He is best aware of him who wardeth off (evil).

The sign of Virgo is symbolized by a virgin imagery, which is meant to represent perfectionist attitudes. Virgo tends to be extraordinarily meticulous, dexterous, and very specific about their lives and activities, and therefore are hereby taught a lesson of simplicity, moderatism, and contentment. Virgo is also the sign of organized religions, or religious establishments with hierarchical orders of clergy who are deeply devoted to traditionalism, and lifestyles of

inordinate perfectionism. The Quran teaches here to such folks that they do not try to be extra pure, because they are not born out of virgins; rather the only person who has ever been reported to be of Virgin birth, known as Jesus, was actually against traditionalism.

Libra

(33) Didst thou (O Muhammad) observe him who turned away, (34) And gave a little, then was grudging? (35) Hath he knowledge of the Unseen so that he seeth? (36) Or hath he not had news of what is in the books of Moses (37) And Abraham who paid his debt: (38) That no laden one shall bear another's load, (39) And that man hath only that for which he maketh effort, (40) And that his effort will be seen. (41) And afterward he will be repaid for it with fullest payment; (42) And that thy Lord, He is the goal;

Libra is the sign of justice and balance in society and human relationships. The symbol of Libra is scales of balance, making this sign an instrument of justice in nature. So, the verses (33–35) talk about importance of respecting other people, and giving value to the best creations of God on Earth, meaning human beings. In verse (36) the ten commandments of Moses are referred in order to uphold the laws of social justice, whilst in verse (37), Abraham is mentioned who is the very personification of Libra in esoteric traditions. Also, verses (38–41) epitomizes the Libra archetype of justice in its most explicit style and forceful fashion ever stated. Therefore, verse (42) suggests that one must never dismiss human beings as anything inferior or lowly, but rather should show the best ethical behaviour towards fellow-men.

Scorpio

(43) And that He it is who maketh laugh, and maketh weep, (44) And that He it is Who giveth death and giveth life; (45) And that He createth the two spouses, the male and the female, (46) From a drop (of seed) when it is poured forth; (47) And that He hath ordained the second bringing forth;

Astrologically, Scorpio is considered as the most intense and extreme sign of zodiac. There is never any middle ground with Scorpio, because it always deals in the very extremes. The major characteristics of Scorpio is sex, desires, and extreme emotional associations with ones objectives. It seldom brings about total transformation that can appropriately be characterized by a process of death and rebirth. Therefore, seen in perspective, the verses (43–47) quite comprehensively fits the archetype of Scorpio, and appreciates its significance in nature.

Sagittarius

(48) And that He it is Who enricheth and contenteth;

Sagittarius is opposite to the sign of Gemini, and whilst the theme of Gemini is duality and symmetry due to its twin symbol, Sagittarius is symbolic of depth, thoroughness, and knowledge. Sagittarius is symbolized by an imagery of hybrid creature (a satyr), who attempts to shoot targets at the heights of sky. It wants to unravel the depths of sky and its space, thus representing the best of philosophical and intellectual development. While Gemini usually enjoys trivial communications through words and symbols, with Sagittarius rests the proverbs of sages. Also, it is noteworthy that in the verse (48), Sagittarius is mentioned only in few words, which is not only consistent with the very nature of Sagittarius itself, but those few words actually express a glowing praise to the sign which resonates with the unity of cosmos. Ultimate unity of Godhead is also one of the Quran's fundamental teaching.

Capricorn

(49) And that He it is Who is the Lord of Sirius; (50) And that He destroyed the former (tribe of) A'ad, (51) And (the tribe of) Thamud He spared not; (52) And the folk of Noah aforetime, Lo! they were more unjust and more rebellious; (53) And Al-Mu'tafikah He destroyed (54) So that there covered them that which did cover. (55) Concerning which then, of the bounties of thy Lord, canst thou dispute?

The star Sirius is mentioned in verse (49), which resides in the opposite sign of Cancer. Since Capricorn starts at the winter solstice, it is easily the most dreaded sign of zodiac. It requires hard work under the most desolate and poor conditions to survive, and therefore, represents the wilderness at extremes. Here, the evil instincts of selfishness and greed by corrupt power-brokers or elite authorities in pursuit of everlasting security and political power can result in famine for the poor. Therefore, by referring to the major star in Cancer, Quran attempts to admonish the political establishments or governments with examples in verses (50–54) from the history of societies that built strong physical structures as symbols of their lasting power and glory, but afterwards they were all destroyed and brought low despite of their arrogance. The verse (55) reminds the powerful that their rule is not eternal, and their existence will be matched by similar destruction on account of their ingratitude.

Here, as a side note, I must also state that this is not the only passage in Quran where the star Sirius is mentioned. The star Sirius is also allegorically implied in the story of 'people of cave' in chapter 18 of the Quran, where sleepers of the cave are actually meant to be planets, and their watchdog who is on lookout for them is the star Sirius.

Aquarius

(56) This is a warner of the warners of old. (57) The threatened Hour is nigh. (58) None beside Allah can disclose it. (59) Marvel ye then at this statement, (60) And laugh and not weep, (61) While ye amuse yourselves?

The warner in verse (56) is an allegorical reference to Aquarius. This part of chapter is the ultimate admonition to corrupt political authorities who mainly in their autocratic and tyrannical frenzy cross all limits of propriety. One thing these despots do not get to realize is the proximity of their doom, and therefore the ultimate truth with divine power manifests itself in disclosing it. Unfortunately, the human nature at certain times tend to become so frigid, unrelenting, and dispassionate in its cruelty as though they were devoid of any heart in their bodies at all. Such people mock at any decent behaviour to absolve themselves of responsibility in the face of challenges or losses.

Pisces

(62) Rather prostrate yourselves before Allah and serve Him.

Pisces represents the depths of oceans, and it is the sign of emotional attachments with spiritual truths. Here, as was the case with Sagittarius, Quran speaks in limited but profound words to define the Pisces. As Sagittarius represented the depths of sky and space, Pisces represents the depths of waters in seas. Sagittarius occupied itself with philosophy and intellectual pursuits for recognizing truth, whilst Pisces indulges in the dance of mystics and spiritual for embracing truth. The most fundamental characteristics of Pisces is submission to

the unknown depths of mysteries, and intuitively flow with it without challenging it. Thus, the given verse of Quran sufficiently grasps the Pisces attributes, and commends its position.

The End Note

This brings us to the end of this chapter of Quran. I hope you shall find this explanation interesting and useful, and may it strengthens the truth in all of us. I should here mention a Quranic verse which says,

And He hath constrained the night and the day and the sun and the moon to be of service unto you, and the stars are made subservient by His command. Lo! herein indeed are portents for people who have sense. (16, 12)

The Doctrine of Flux; Al-Quran, Chapter 54 (The Moon)

Introduction

The 'Doctrine of Flux' is a hermetic principle that drives the spiritual existence of humanity. It is associated with the physical characteristics of the elements (air, water, earth, fire), and the extent to which those characteristics are qualitatively expressed in human lives. The doctrine is a code whose value lies in its application, and whose power lies in its ability to manifest itself. The chapter 54 of Quran mainly deals with the 'Doctrine of Flux' by demonstrating its values and powers in human existence.

The 'Doctrine' and the 'Authority'

The function of a 'Doctrine' relates to the symbolism of a seed, and the 'Authority' is the plant into which the seed grows. A particular plant requires a very specific seed, but the ground in which it is sown can vary. Thus, the choice of ground for the growth of a certain plant can be optional, but not the choice of the seed. Once the plant grows out of the seed, the climatic conditions of the land tend to affect the health of the plant. Those conditions include the availability of water, the quality of earth, the intensity of Sunlight, and the presence of humidity in the air. The intermingling of these conditions constitutes the 'Flux', and therefore Flux is the primary factor causing the manifestations of a Doctrine (seed) in the Authority (plant).

Astrologically, the Sun symbolises Doctrine and the Moon symbolises Authority. The Moon reflects the light of Sun in varying forms depending on its state and position. The Authority of the Moon fully reflects the doctrine of the Sun at the time of Full Moon, and it partially reflects the doctrine at other times. The Moon rules the sign of Cancer, which is also the sign of Authority. Hence, depending on the state of the Moon, the Authority can be legitimate only if it remains consistent with the Doctrine, or else the Authority would reflect vanity. For instance, it can be easily recognisable that the quality products of technology have to rely upon proper scientific investigations in order to be viable, as the technological devices that do not qualify the science mostly comprise of bogus and defunct products. Similarly, the Doctrine qualifies Authority to be the representative of either Truth or Vanity.

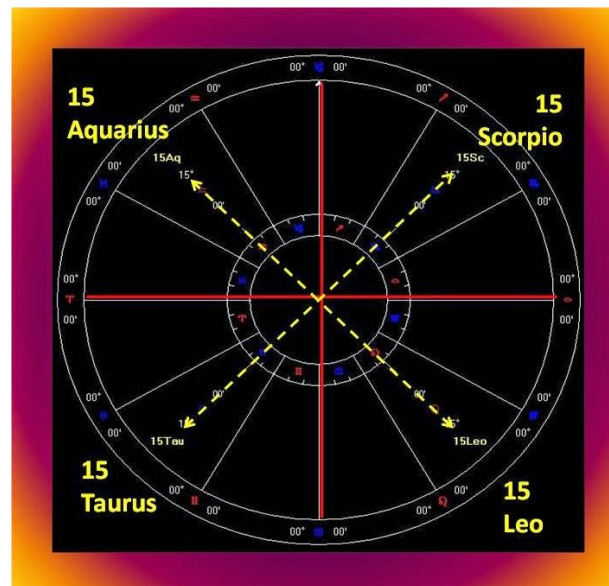
A doctrine is essentially the science that may give rise to different kinds of technologies or authorities in both constructive and destructive manners. Therefore, the 'Doctrine of Flux' is the doctrine that governs the applications of spiritual science in the realm of spiritual technology. The chapter 54 of Quran explains this doctrine by teaching its conditions to the authorities, and warns of the ensuing disasters if the humans attempt to ignore the 'Doctrine of Flux' by violating its principles.

The Fixed Signs of Astrological Zodiac

The Fixed astrological signs namely; Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius are placed in the midst of their respective seasons. These signs are special because they represent the astrological seasons in their purest elemental forms. They are the most loyal signs to their respective seasons because they connect to the seasons in a very definite way by completely defying every other influence. The purity of specific elements that each fixed signs share in their characters make them very challenging for the humans. The relationship of the elements (air, water, earth, and fire) is something that gives birth to intelligence in every kingdom (mineral, plant, animal, and human). The intelligence acquired from the understanding of the physical

properties of these four elements can resolve all kinds of problems in life. Just like plants need earth, water, air, and Sunlight in proper proportions to grow, so do the events that transpire in human lives require the involvements of these four dimensions of intelligence in an orderly fashion.

However, human beings usually find it difficult to withstand the elemental pressures of the fixed signs. It can be tough for the people who would depict the signs of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius to deal with the pressures of earth, fire, water, and air respectively. They may not manage to live in their own elements without disturbing or polluting the elements of the other fixed signs. Consequently, in order to preserve the purity of one element often the other three elements get corrupted and compromised. Therefore, the people of fixed signs must follow the Doctrine of Flux to exercise an appropriate sense of proportion in every aspect of their lives.



The Ministry of Prophet Muhammad

The major objective of the spiritual ministry of prophet Muhammad as indicated in the chapter 54 was to promulgate the Doctrine of Flux in the world. The Quran mentions the following symbolism for the affirmation of his Authority regarding this spiritual ministry.

The hour drew nigh and the moon was rent in twain. And if they behold a portent they turn away and say: Prolonged illusion. They denied (the Truth) and followed their own lusts. Yet everything will come to a decision. (54, 1–3)

The symbolism of Moon here is very significant due to the traditionally attributed appearance of Moon as the Celestial Egg. The hatching of an egg giving birth to a fledgling organism is the most miraculous event of life in nature. The birth of prophet Muhammad's ministry for the proclamation of Islam is symbolically depicted in these verses of Quran as such an event. Therefore, the cracking of the Moon would serve as a sign for the confirmation of prophet's Authority to manifest the Doctrine of Flux. The Mention of the term "Prolonged illusion" in the text seems to represent the doubts of his opponents regarding the authenticity of his mission. The Quran suggests that if the prophet's Authority represented the Truth then it would successfully reflect the Doctrine of Flux. Therefore, the following content of chapter 54 elucidates the Doctrine of Flux from the standpoint of Islam.

The Fixed Sign of Taurus, and the Ultra-Conservatives

The folk of Noah denied before them, yea, they denied Our slave and said: A madman; and he was repulsed. So he cried unto his Lord, saying: I am vanquished, so give help. Then opened We the gates of heaven with pouring water. And caused the earth to gush forth springs, so that the waters met for a predestined purpose. And We carried him upon a thing of planks and nails, That ran (upon the waters) in Our sight, as a reward for him who was rejected. And verily We left it as a token; but is there any that remembereth? Then see how (dreadful) was My punishment after My warnings! And in truth We have made the Qur'an easy to remember; but is there any that remembereth? (54, 9–17)

Taurus is a fixed sign associated with the element 'earth'. It represents solidity, stubbornness, durability, and resilience. It confers upon people the behaviours of social conformity and ethics in their persona, and it relishes the adoption of traditional outlook in their culture. In the sign of Taurus, things perpetuate their mode of existence for a very very long time. All this on the surface might appear rather nice, but it does have a tragic downside of causing utter stagnation in life. The fixed earth sign of Taurus in the zodiac opposes the fixed water sign of Scorpio. Therefore, it must learn the lessons of fluidity from the waters of Scorpio in order to find a meaningful existence.

The folk of Noah had all the shortcomings of Taurus in their lifestyle. Despite of having a very high average lifespan of about millennia, the majority of them were neither smart nor promising. Their repugnance to reproductive acts had caused a great decline in population whereby new generations were born not in years, but in centuries. Thus, it would not be surprising to find the youngest member of the family there as being only a few hundred years old. Their extra devotion to vanity and meaningless traditions had made them haughty and superficial in character. They had to learn the value of innovative movements in living because their stagnancy had altogether ossified the spiritual growth of humanity. Consequently, the divine punishment fell upon them through the element of water. The verses in the text of Quran refer to the meeting of both the waters from heaven and earth for a predestined purpose. It symbolically means that both the Doctrine as well as the Authority of the element of water had contributed together to the destruction of Noah's people. The Noah himself survived because of his intelligence and skill in building the vessel whereby he could navigate through the storms. This accomplishment actually made Noah a true Authority in the Doctrine of Flux.

The Fixed Sign of Scorpio, and the Ultra-Liberals

The folk of Lot rejected warnings. Lo! We sent a storm of stones upon them (all) save the family of Lot, whom We rescued in the last watch of the night, As grace from Us. Thus We reward him who giveth thanks. And he indeed had warned them of Our blow, but they did doubt the warnings. They even asked of him his guests for an ill purpose. Then We blinded their eyes (and said): Taste now My punishment after My warnings! And in truth the punishment decreed befell them early in the morning. Now taste My punishment after My warnings! And in truth We have made the Qur'an easy to remember; but is there any that remembereth? (54, 33–40)

Scorpio is a fixed sign associated with the element 'water'. Water is a universal solvent whose main function is dissolution and cleaning. It is also the source of life, for no life may exist without water. Water supports life by quenching the thirst of living beings and keeping them clean. Despite of its indispensable significance for life, water has some flaws in its character. It

recognises no boundaries, it carries no shape, and it can inundate anything in its way. Therefore, the main challenge of Scorpio would be to give direction and purpose to the flow of its water, and to allow its life bestowing properties to serve a productive end.

The activities of the people of Lot are both fascinating and repulsive at the same time. These people actually went Rogue in the true sense of the word. They recognised no traditions, and became dissolute beyond all limits. Their minds were constantly occupied with sexual perversions, and they would innovate every opportunity to excel in their malady. Therefore, when those people discovered that Lot had beautiful foreign boys as visitors, they intended to welcome the lads by sexually violating them. Just like any other trait, human sexuality is not ignoble as long as it serves its desirable objectives. However, when love becomes lust, and the lust crosses all boundaries then humans lose their distinction from animals or even become worse than the beasts. The people of Lot were the criminal counterparts to the people of Noah; and as the people of Noah got a storm of water, they were on the receiving end of stones. The elements of their opposite signs destroyed both the people because they did not appreciate the Doctrine of Flux.

The Fixed Sign of Aquarius, and the Ultra-Socialists

(The tribe of) A'ad rejected warnings. Then how (dreadful) was My punishment after My warnings. Lo! We let loose on them a raging wind on a day of constant calamity, Sweeping men away as though they were uprooted trunks of palm-trees. Then see how (dreadful) was My punishment after My warnings! And in truth We have made the Qur'an easy to remember; but is there any that remembereth? (54, 18–22)

Aquarius is a fixed sign associated with the element 'air'. The name and symbol of Aquarius depicting a man bearing a pitcher of water is actually an anomaly. The anomalous character of this symbol is because men traditionally never bore the water pitcher in ancient cultures, as it always had been the job reserved for women. Therefore, the symbol actually suggests that the air of Aquarius has to be so pure as not to include the traces of any other element inside it. The air of Aquarius is completely devoid of humidity, warmth, and dust particles; which makes it a cold, clean, and heartless air. The air of Aquarius tends to sustain its purity despite of efforts on the human part to pollute it.

The tribe of A'ad as mentioned in the text of chapter 54, comprised of a large tribe of people living in a cold, desolate area similar to the Arctic. They were tough and sturdy people due to the effects of extremely cold weather conditions persisting in their habitat, and were quite adapted to survive under the harsh environments. The corruption happened when they started burning the wood in massive quantities to obtain lots of heat for their luxury and convenience. Not only they started cutting down all the trees and thereby affecting the conditions of earth, but also the pure air of Aquarius became heavy and polluted. It became less of the air and more of a black smoke. Since the tribe of A'ad betrayed their own element by polluting the pure air of Aquarius, the fury of a raging wind destroyed them. They had uprooted so many trees in their drive for excessive luxuries, and as a result ended up being like the very 'uprooted trunks of palm-trees'. Even the tribe of A'ad failed to follow the Doctrine of Flux and then, suffered accordingly.

The Fixed Sign of Leo, and the Ultra-Fascists

(The tribe of) Thamud rejected warnings. For they said; Is it a mortal man, alone among us, that we are to follow? Then indeed we should fall into error and madness. Hath the

remembrance been given unto him alone among us? Nay, but he is a rash liar. (Unto their warner it was said): To-morrow they will know who is the rash liar. Lo! We are sending the she-camel as a test for them; so watch them and have patience; And inform them that the water is to be shared between (her and) them. Every drinking will be witnessed. But they call their comrade and he took and hamstrung (her). Then see how (dreadful) was My punishment after My warnings! Lo! We sent upon them one Shout, and they became as the dry twigs (rejected by) the builder of a cattle-fold. And in truth We have made the Qur'an easy to remember; but is there any that remembereth? (54, 23–32)

Leo is a fixed sign associated with the element 'fire'. The Fire is one element that can prove useful and harmful in equal measures because its primary function is always to destroy something. The fire of the fixed sign of Leo itself never dies out but keeps burning everything around it indefinitely. The fire is essentially a pure element, and it can work most beneficially for purification purposes. It requires only one person to light fire to huge piles of garbage and the stuff automatically burns to ashes. Fire also gives light in the darkness, and therefore is the element of enlightenment. Astrologically, fire symbolises individuality and authenticity because it burns down all vanity and restores the truth to its original beauty. Historically, many human cultures subjected their criminals to the test of fire in order to vindicate the accused of their judgements. Fire also serves as the most easily improvised form of energy, whose utilisation widely distinguishes the cultures of humans from animals. The controlled use of fire in every aspect of life is therefore, the hallmark of humanity.

Again, the Thamud was a large tribe of people but in contrast to the tribe of A'ad, the Thamud lived in the arid hot deserts. The heat waves caused by the high temperatures of the region would evaporate all the water reservoirs in the area, causing all creatures whether plants, animals, or humans to strive for their survival. Although, the Thamud were human beings in the possession of greater intelligence than the other creatures, they decided to use their mental prowess to keep all the water to themselves, and thereby let everyone else perish of thirst. Hence, the tribe received a symbolic test in the form of a she-camel, so that they might learn to share the limited quantity of water in a just and measured way among all the living beings. The corruption in their hearts made them fail in their test; as a result, they proved themselves weak and unworthy of the intelligence that was a privilege of humanity. They undermined themselves by rejecting the spiritual light of the fixed fire of Leo, and consequently the fire burned them to ashes. The Doctrine of Flux proved to be the nemesis for the tribe of Thamud as well.

The End Note

The Doctrine of Flux represents the intelligence about the sense of proportions that humans may rely upon for conducting every affair of their lives. The Knowledge of elements in the fixed astrological signs can be the key factor where the Doctrine of Flux may obtain the best results. The fixed signs are the most politically polarised in the zodiac, and thus require especially meticulous handling to produce beneficial outcomes. The stress and pressures of the fixed signs only exist to enhance the spiritual growth of humanity, and to accelerate the process of unveiling its hidden potential. It is a 'Game of Thrones', and it has a definite end. The Quran says,

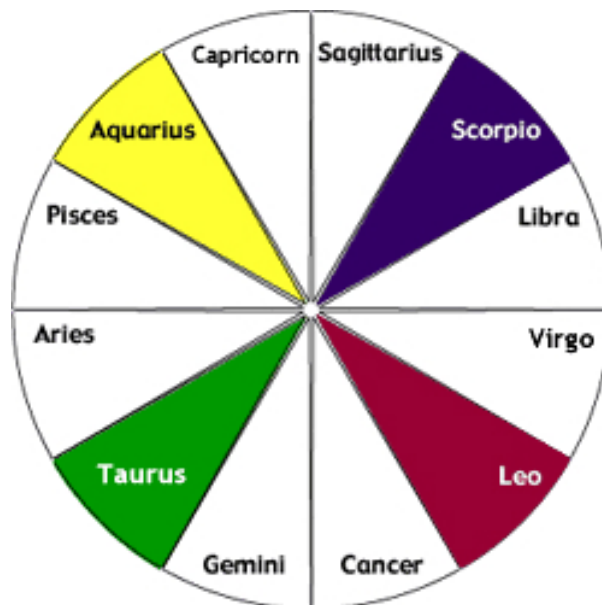
Lo! We have created every thing by measure. And Our commandment is but one (commandment), as the twinkling of an eye. (54, 49–50)

Astrotheology in Al-Quran, Chapter 18 (Al-Kahf)

Introduction

I present here the hallmark of astrotheological text found in any of the sacred book, since it offers a unique explanation of the principles of theology. Chapter 18 of the Quran, called “The Cave”, is the most comprehensive chapter on astrotheology in the Quran. In the beginning it relates the story of ‘the companions of the cave and inscriptions’, who are an allegorical reference to the zodiacal planets, whilst ‘the cave and inscriptions’ here is the reference to the zodiac. This story parallels the Christian version of the “Seven Sleepers of Ephesus” story, and is followed by the three stories that are meant to describe ‘the cardinal cross’, ‘the mutable cross’, and ‘the fixed cross’ of the signs of the zodiac. The chapter also continues intermittently with the explanation of Islamic theology, and differentiates it from idolatry (paganism, heathenism, witchcraft, etc.) by a philosophical discussion. But for the sake of interest and clarity, I shall explain the three stories here in the reverse order followed by the story of ‘the companions of the cave’.

The Fixed Cross of Zodiac in Action (18, 83–98)



‘The fixed cross’ of the zodiac consists of the signs of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius. Here is how the Quran gives a mention to this cross in the following story.

83. And they ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn (the two-horned one). Say, “I will recite to you about him a report.”

In verse 83, the Dhul-Qarnayn (the two-horned one) represents the sign of Taurus. The two horns here symbolizes the two horns of the bull of Taurus.

84. Indeed, We established him upon the earth, and We gave him to everything a way.

The verse 84 says that Taurus is the “Earth sign”, and it is rich in material wealth.

85. So he followed a way. 86. Until, when he reached the setting of the sun (i.e., the west), he found it (as if) setting in a spring of dark mud, and he found near it a people. We said, "O Dhul-Qarnayn, either you punish (them) or else adopt among them (a way of) goodness." 87. He said, "As for one who wrongs, we will punish him. Then he will be returned to his Lord, and He will punish him with a terrible punishment (i.e., Hellfire). 88. But as for one who believes and does righteousness, he will have a reward of the best (i.e., Paradise), and we (i.e., Dhul-Qarnayn) will speak to him from our command with ease."

The verses 85, 86, and 87, speak about the interaction of Taurus with the opposite sign of Scorpio. Here, Scorpio represents a spring of dark mud at the setting place of the Sun. Astrologically, the sign of Scorpio represents the extremes of behaviour, and thus we find the mention of extremes of punishments, and rewards towards the people of Scorpio in the above verses.

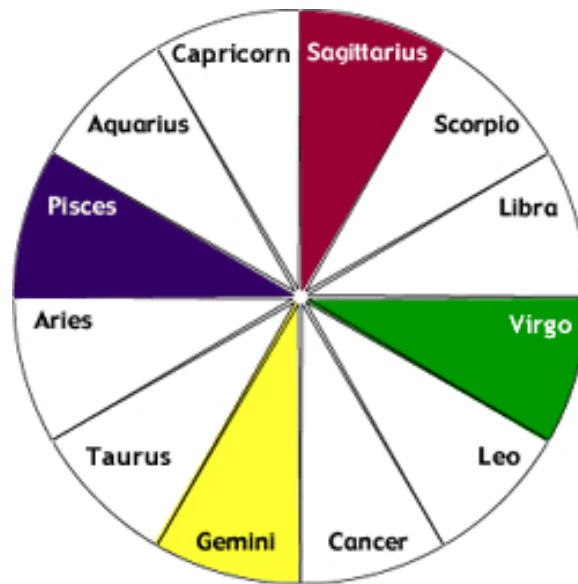
89. Then he followed a way. 90. Until, when he came to the rising of the sun (i.e., the east), he found it rising on a people for whom We had not made against it any shield. 91. Thus. And We had encompassed (all) that he had in knowledge.

Here, we find the interaction of Taurus with the sign of Leo. The rising of the Sun on people without any shelter or shield against it, represents the ruling sign of the Sun, which is Leo. Leo is also a sign of dominion, and therefore the verse 91 says the encompassing of the knowledge.

92. Then he followed a way. 93. Until, when he reached (a pass) between two mountains, he found beside them a people who could hardly understand (his) speech. 94. They said, "O Dhul-Qarnayn, indeed Gog and Magog are (great) corrupters in the land. So may we assign for you an expenditure that you might make between us and them a barrier?" 95. He said, "That in which my Lord has established me is better, but assist me with strength (i.e., manpower); I will make between you and them a dam. 96. Bring me sheets of iron"—until, when he had levelled (them) between the two mountain walls, he said, "Blow (with bellows)," until when he had made it (like) fire, he said, "Bring me, that I may pour over it molten copper." 97. So they (i.e., Gog and Magog) were unable to pass over it, nor were they able (to effect) in it any penetration. 98. (Dhul-Qarnayn) said, "This is a mercy from my Lord; but when the promise of my Lord comes (i.e., approaches), He will make it level, and ever is the promise of my Lord true."

The verse 93 states the dealings of Taurus with the sign of Aquarius. Astrologically, Aquarius is the sign of an apathetic and carefree individual, or a rebel. Thus, the mention that those people could hardly understand his speech. In verse 94, the Gog and Magog represents the people of the sign of Scorpio, who had corrupted the land, and Aquarius needed a barrier to stay away from the Scorpio. Here, it is worthwhile mentioning that Aquarius offered money to Taurus, but since Taurus itself is a sign of material wealth, so instead the Taurus demands from them the manpower (the trait of Aquarius) for the project. The verse 96, is the most fascinating verse in this story. Here, Taurus asks for the sheets of iron (the metal of Scorpio), and fills up the walls (the gap between Scorpio and Aquarius), asks the Aquarius to blow 'Air' (the element of Aquarius), until it becomes like a fire (the element of Leo), and then pours copper over it (the metal of Taurus). Thus, the barrier (the square angle) between Scorpio and Taurus gets established, which the Gog and Magog (Scorpio) could not break. Finally, in verse 98 it says that with the coming of the promise of the Lord, this barrier will be levelled. This 'promise of the Lord', is actually the advent of mutable signs, whose arrival breaks the barrier of 'the fixed cross'.

The Mutable Cross of Zodiac in Action (18, 60–82)



'The mutable cross' of the zodiac consists of the signs of Pisces, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Gemini. The Quran expounds the mutable signs in the following fashion.

60. And (mention) when Moses said to his boy (i.e., servant), "I will not cease (travelling) until I reach the junction of the two seas or continue for a long period." 61. But when they reached the junction between them, they forgot their fish, and it took its course into the sea, slipping away. 62. So when they had passed beyond it, (Moses) said to his boy, "Bring us our morning meal. We have certainly suffered in this, our journey, (much) fatigue." 63. He said, "Did you see when we retired to the rock? Indeed, I forgot the fish. And none made me forget it except Satan—that I should mention it. And it took its course into the sea amazingly." 64. (Moses) said, "That is what we were seeking." So they returned, following their footprints.

In verse 60, when Moses decides to travel to the junction of the two seas, he is really trying to reach the domain of Pisces. The symbol of Pisces is 'the two fishes' who are swimming in the contradictory currents of water because of the meeting of two rivers. The verse also suggests that Moses might have to undertake a long journey to reach the Pisces, because it is the last sign of the zodiac. In verse 61, when Moses reaches to his destination, the fish which is carried by his servant slips into the sea, acquiring freedom, also emphasizing the Pisces domain. Now in verse 62–64, Moses gets tiresome in the journey because after Pisces, there is no further sign to travel, and so he returns back to the Pisces.

65. And they found a servant from among Our servants (i.e., al-Khidhr) to whom We had given mercy from Us and had taught him from Us a (certain) knowledge. 66. Moses said to him, "May I follow you on (the condition) that you teach me from what you have been taught of sound judgement?"

In verse 65, once Moses reaches back the domain of Pisces, he finds there al-Khidhr, who is the allegorical representative of the Pisces. The verse mentions that al-Khidhr had certain knowledge from God, which is actually the Pisces psychic trait, or the knowledge of intuitive detection. In verse 66, Moses asks al-Khidhr to teach him this talent of intuitive judgement.

67. He said, "Indeed, with me you will never be able to have patience. 68. And how can you have patience for what you do not encompass in knowledge?" 69. (Moses) said, "You will find me, if Allah wills, patient, and I will not disobey you in (any) order." 70. He said, "Then if you follow me, do not ask me about anything until I make to you about it mention (i.e., explanation)."

In verse 67–70, Moses gets the acceptance as a student of al-Khidhr on a condition that he will have to be patient with the irregular and confusing actions of al-Khidhr, until al-Khidhr himself explains them to Moses.

71. So they set out, until when they had embarked on the ship, he (i.e., al-Khidhr) tore it open. (Moses) said, "Have you torn it open to drown its people? You have certainly done a grave thing." 72. (Al-Khidhr) said, "Did I not say that with me you would never be able to have patience?" 73. (Moses) said, "Do not blame me for what I forgot and do not cover me in my matter with difficulty."

In verse 71, the ship that al-Khidhr had torn open actually symbolizes the opposite sign of Virgo. Virgo or the virgin, is the entity without 'holes', and so as the ship. But Moses could not understand why al-Khidhr had marred the ship (the Virgo), and thus was rebuked by al-Khidhr. In verse 73, Moses had to apologize to al-Khidhr so as to continue with the journey.

74. So they set out, until when they met a boy, he (i.e., al-Khidhr) killed him. (Moses) said, "Have you killed a pure soul for other than (having killed) a soul? You have certainly done a deplorable thing." 75. (Al-Khidhr) said, "Did I not tell you that with me you would never be able to have patience?" 76. (Moses) said, "If I should ask you about anything after this, then do not keep me as a companion. You have obtained from me an excuse."

In verse 74, Moses again questions the action of al-Khidhr to kill a 'pure soul' (the Virgo). In verse 75, Moses gets reprimanded, and in verse 76 he apologizes.

77. So they set out, until when they came to the people of a town, they asked its people for food, but they refused to offer them hospitality. And they found therein a wall about to collapse, so he (i.e., al-Khidhr) restored it. (Moses) said, "If you wished, you could have taken for it a payment." 78. (Al-Khidhr) said, "This is parting between me and you. I will inform you of the interpretation of that about which you could not have patience.

The symbol of 'Virgo' is a virgin carrying an ear of corn in her left hand, and a staff or rod in her right hand. The Virgo represents the season of harvest at the end of summer, and therefore though it has food in store, but is very judicious in the consumption of it due to the following autumn. In verse 77, the people of town represents Virgo, who although had the food, but were very cautious in spending it. 'The wall' that was damaged and got repaired by al-Khidhr, is actually the square angle between Virgo and Gemini. Moses again could not bear with the actions of al-Khidhr, and thus was finally disowned as a student by al-Khidhr in verse 78.

79. As for the ship, it belonged to poor people working at sea. So I intended to cause defect in it as there was after them a king who seized every (good) ship by force.

In verse 79, al-Khidhr explains the reasons for his disconcerting actions, by saying that he marred the ship (Virgo), because there was a king (the sign of Leo which is beside Virgo) behind them, who was taking everything by force.

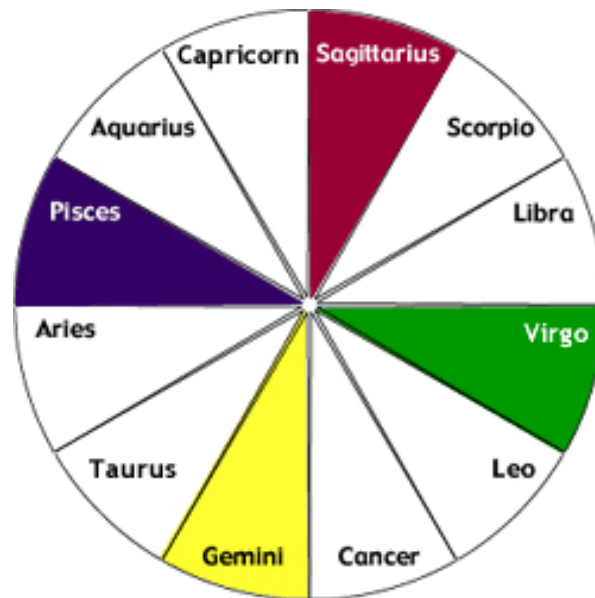
80. And as for the boy, his parents were believers, and we feared that he would overburden them by transgression and disbelief. 81. So we intended that their Lord should substitute for them one better than him in purity and nearer to mercy.

In verse 80–81, al-Khidhr says that the boy (Virgo) who looked innocent, was in fact quite mischievous. Thus had to be replaced by the one with proper etiquettes.

82. And as for the wall, it belonged to two orphan boys in the city, and there was beneath it a treasure for them, and their father had been righteous. So your Lord intended that they reach maturity and extract their treasure, as a mercy from your Lord. And I did it not of my own accord. That is the interpretation of that about which you could not have patience.”

In verse 82, the two orphan boys are the twins of the sign of Gemini. The treasure beneath the wall is the treasure of Taurus (which is the sign beside the Gemini). Here, ‘the righteous father’ of the two boys is the sign of Sagittarius (which is opposite the Gemini). And finally al-Khidhr mentions that his actions were not just of his own accord, but rather the mercy from the Lord; which means that al-Khidhr is teaching Moses that the most ideal actions are not always the right actions.

The Cardinal Cross of Zodiac in Action (18, 32–42)



‘The cardinal cross’ of the zodiac consists of the signs of Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn. The Quran in chapter 18, presents this cross with the following story.

32. And present to them an example of two men: We granted to one of them two gardens of grapevines, and We bordered them with palm trees and placed between them (fields of) crops. 33. Each of the two gardens produced its fruit and did not fall short thereof in anything. And We caused to gush forth within them a river.

In verse 32, the example of two men indicates the contention between ‘ego’ and ‘justice’. Here, the man with material wealth (Taurus, which is beside Aries), is Aries; and on the other side the man is Libra.

34. And he had fruit, so he said to his companion while he was conversing with him, “I am greater than you in wealth and mightier in (numbers of) men.” 35. And he entered his garden while he was unjust to himself. He said, “I do not think that this will perish—ever. 36. And I do not think the Hour will occur. And even if I should be brought back to my Lord, I will surely find better than this as a return.”

In verse 34, Aries tells Libra about the superiority of his wealth and power, and also boast and brags on his stature deeming it to be eternal. He also thinks in verse 36 that his worldly glory is also the indication and confirmation of the God’s favoritism towards him.

37. His companion said to him while he was conversing with him, “Have you disbelieved in He who created you from dust and then from a sperm-drop and then proportioned you (as) a man? 38. But as for me, He is Allah, my Lord, and I do not associate with my Lord anyone. 39. And why did you, when you entered your garden, not say, ‘What Allah willed (has occurred); there is no power except in Allah’? Although you see me less than you in wealth and children.

In verse 37–39, Libra calls Aries to be an ingrate and vaunting. Libra reminds Aries about his background, and also warns that it is possible that he can go back the same way.

40. It may be that my Lord will give me (something) better than your garden and will send upon it a calamity from the sky, and it will become a smooth, dusty ground.

In verse 40, the calamity which is augured by Libra is that of Capricorn (the sign of the barren wasteland).

41. Or its water will become sunken (into the earth), so you would never be able to seek it.”

In verse 41, the water becoming sunken in the earth is the reference to the sign of Cancer. The Cancer is a water sign which when Aries rises, occupies the position called Imum Coeli (IC), at the bottom of the zodiac.

42. And his fruits were encompassed (by ruin), so he began to turn his hands about (in dismay) over what he had spent on it, while it had collapsed upon its trellises, and said, “Oh, I wish I had not associated with my Lord anyone.”

The verse 42 describes the bane of Aries due to the action of Capricorn/Cancer axis in the cardinal cross.

The Story of Companions of Cave and Inscriptions (18, 9–26)

In the following story, the companions of the cave are an allegorical reference to the planets of the zodiac, while the zodiac is referred to as ‘the inscribed cave’. The Quran mentions this story in the following fashion.

9. Or have you thought that the companions of the cave and the inscription were, among Our signs, a wonder?

In verse 9, the companions of the cave are related to as the signs of God.

10. (Mention) when the youths retreated to the cave and said, “Our Lord, grant us from Yourself mercy and prepare for us from our affair right guidance.” 11. So We cast (a cover of sleep) over their ears within the cave for a number of years. 12. Then We awakened them that We might show which of the two factions was most precise in calculating what (extent) they had remained in time.

In verse 10, the planets that are called as ‘youths’, have prayed for God’s mercy for an orderly movement, or a harmonious coexistence in the zodiac. Here, it is important to understand that in Islam, orderly existence means ‘the submission to a higher source’. In other words, ‘the passive principle’ always obeys ‘the active principle’, and this is considered the right conduct or affair. The word Islam literally means ‘submission’, but it differentiates itself from pagan religions by submitting to a higher heaven, than to the earthly things (earthly creatures or idols). In Islam, the earth has to obey the dominance of the heaven through man, who is considered the God’s vicegerent on the earth. It is because only a man has the consciousness which is divine, whilst at the same time he has the earthly physical state. If the divine guidance dominates the earthly existence, then there shall be heaven’s reflection on earth and thereby making everything to work in their proper order. Otherwise, if man loses his gift of the divine intelligence then there will be darkness and chaos in his affairs, thus leading to all sorts of corruptions on the earth. Therefore, man here is supposed to obey only the heaven; and every other creatures on earth, with men as their heaven are expected to be under men’s domain in a harmonious coexistence. And the same principle applies to all of the existing creations that they have to obey and submit to their respective heaven.

In verse 11, on account of the mercy and right guidance from heaven, the companions of the cave went to sleep (a harmonious coexistence) in the cave for many years. In verse 12, they were awakened to check the level of their awareness of the peaceful coexistence.

13. It is We who relate to you, (O Muhammad), their story in truth. Indeed, they were youths who believed in their Lord, and We increased them in guidance. 14. And We bound (i.e., made firm) their hearts when they stood up and said, “Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Never will we invoke besides Him any deity. We would have certainly spoken, then, an excessive transgression. 15. These, our people, have taken besides Him deities. Why do they not bring for (worship of) them a clear authority? And who is more unjust than one who invents about Allah a lie?”

The verses 13–15, indicates the awakening of the companions to their higher divine selves, and thus they declared their submission to the heaven which had the divine authority over them, and defied the false gods and lies.

16. (The youths said to one another), “And when you have withdrawn from them and that which they worship other than Allah, retreat to the cave. Your Lord will spread out for you of His mercy and will prepare for you from your affair facility.”

In verse 16, the youths (the planets) expressed their common cause of following their heaven, and retreat to the cave (the zodiac), where they found harmony, order, and peace.

17. And (had you been present), you would see the sun when it rose, inclining away from their cave on the right, and when it set, passing away from them on the left, while they were (laying) within an open space thereof. That was from the signs of Allah. He whom Allah guides is the (rightly) guided, but he whom He leaves astray—never will you find for him a protecting guide.

In verse 17, the movement of the Sun around the cave (the zodiac) is mentioned; and it is also mentioned that these companions (the planets) were in the open space, thus further inkling towards their reality. Also, the verse says that the rightly guided ones would recognize the signs.

18. And you would think them awake, while they were asleep. And We turned them to the right and to the left, while their dog stretched his forelegs at the entrance. If you had looked at them, you would have turned from them in flight and been filled by them with terror.

The verse 18 is significant, because it says that one could easily observe them (the planets), and think that they were awake and moving towards right and left. But their dog (the star Sirius) is static and fixed. The designation often used for the star Sirius is 'alpha Canis Majoris', which means 'the large dog'. The star Sirius is astrologically found in the sign of Cancer, which inaugurates the hot summer season, for which Egyptians had called 'the dog days'.

19. And similarly, We awakened them that they might question one another. Said a speaker from among them, "How long have you remained (here)?" They said, "We have remained a day or part of a day." They said, "Your Lord is most knowing of how long you remained. So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the city and let him look to which is the best of food and bring you provision from it and let him be cautious. And let no one be aware of you. 20. Indeed, if they come to know of you, they will stone you or return you to their religion. And never would you succeed, then—ever."

In verse 19, the companions find themselves awakened from their peaceful slumber, and then question each other of its duration; but could not find much clue to it. This indicates that when one is in a state of submission to the truth, the times does not have any deleterious effects on him, to such an extent that he remains forever spiritually fresh and alive. Furthermore, one of the companions is sent to the market to fetch provisions, still being fearful of the city people who had refused the heaven. Here, the Quran points out the vanity of material pursuits by hinting that the more materialistic one becomes, the more wasteful he becomes; while the more heavenly one becomes, the more preserved one becomes.

21. And similarly, We caused them to be found that they (who found them) would know that the promise of Allah is truth and that of the Hour there is no doubt. (That was) when they disputed among themselves about their affair and (then) said, "Construct over them a structure. Their Lord is most knowing about them." Said those who prevailed in the matter, "We will surely take (for ourselves) over them a masjid."

In verse 21, people of the city become aware of the miracle of the companions of the cave, and thus the heavenly superiority dawns upon them. But still they disputed among themselves, showing their materialistic background. Ultimately, the opinion that prevailed was to consecrate that space for worship.

22. They (i.e., people) will say there were three, the fourth of them being their dog; and they will say there were five, the sixth of them being their dog—guessing at the unseen; and they will say there were seven, and the eighth of them was their dog. Say, (O Muhammad), "My Lord is most knowing of their number. None knows them except a few. So do not argue about them except with an obvious argument and do not inquire about them among (the speculators) from anyone."

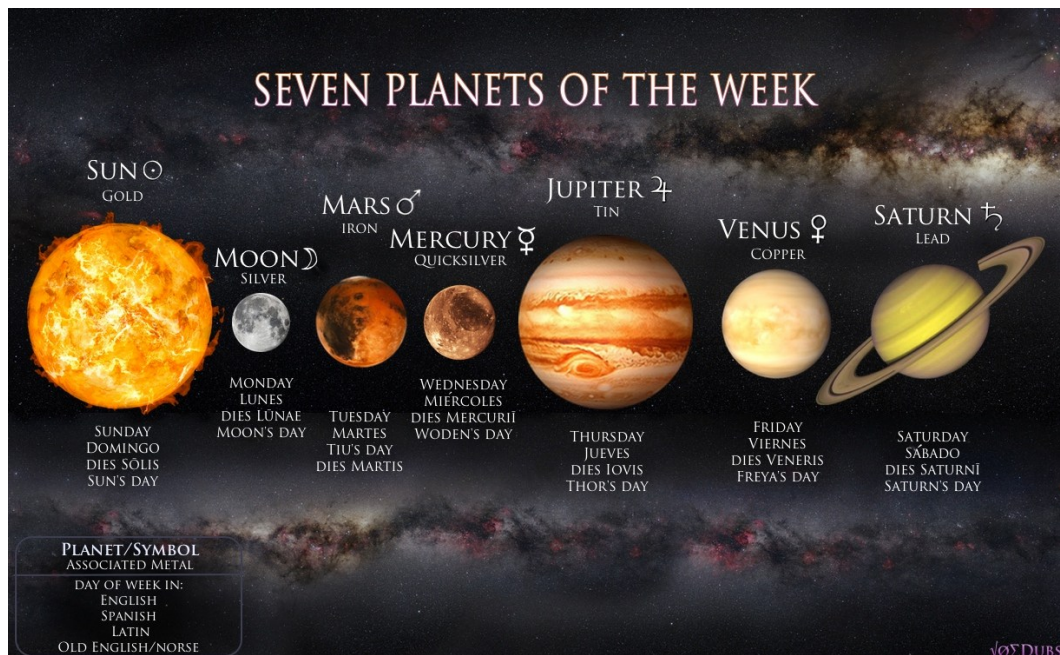
The verse 22, is the most significant of the chapter, since it irrevocably indicates that the companions of the cave are actually planets of the zodiac. Here, when the people of city count the companions (the planets) as three and their dog the fourth, and also five and their dog the sixth, the Quran rejects this count by saying that these people are guessing at the unseen. But afterwards it is mentioned that some said they were seven and their dog the eighth, and here no guessing at unseen is mentioned. That is because astrologically there are seven visible planets with star Sirius as the brightest star, called 'the dog star'. Also, the verse 22 mentions the possibility of invisible planets (confirmed in the modern times) by saying that only Lord knows their actual number, and therefore, it is pointless to be dogmatic about it.

23. And never say of anything, "Indeed, I will do that tomorrow," 24. Except (when adding), "If Allah wills." And remember your Lord when you forget (it) and say, "Perhaps my Lord will guide me to what is nearer than this to right conduct."

The verses 23–24 beautifully expounds the Islamic theology by saying that a man should always seek guidance from the heaven in his affairs, and without the power and support of the heaven, one might not accomplish anything.

25. And they remained in their cave for three hundred years and exceeded by nine. 26. Say, "Allah is most knowing of how long they remained. He has (knowledge of) the unseen (aspects) of the heavens and the earth. How Seeing is He and how Hearing! They have not besides Him any protector, and He shares not His legislation with anyone."

The verse 25 mentions the duration of stay in the cave by the companions. The style in which it is stated indicates the comparison between the solar calendar and the lunar calendar. Lunar calendar comprises of 12.4 months in respect to the solar calendar, which makes 300 years of the solar calendar equivalent to the 309 years of the lunar calendar. This could have been stated to relate the active principle of the Sun to the passive principle of the Moon, whose harmonious relationship gives birth to the twelve sign of the zodiac. And the verse 26 ends by stating that one should only receive guidance and seek protection from the heaven alone confirms this point.



The Chapter Al-Kahf and Fridays

Friday is astrologically ruled by the planet Venus. Therefore, to harness the full advantage of Venus's influence on Fridays; Muslims are required to participate in a congregational prayer assembly. Not only that, but there are narrations of prophet Muhammad that signify the reading of this chapter on Fridays to be particularly blessed. Some of them are as follows.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reports that the Prophet said: "Whoever recites Surah al-Kahf on Jumu'ah (Friday) will have illumination from the light from one Jumu'ah (Friday) to the next." Related by an-Nasa'i, al-Baihaqi, and al-Hakim.

Ibn 'Umar reports that the Prophet said: "Whoever recites Surah al-Kahf on Jumu'ah (Friday) will be blessed with a light that will rise from underneath his feet to the peak of the sky. This will be a light for him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will be forgiven for what is between the Jumu'ah (Friday) and the next Jumu'ah (Friday)." Related by Ibn Mardwiyah.

The Prophet said, "If anyone recites Surah al-Kahf on Friday, a light will shine brightly for him till the next Friday." Related by Bayhaqi. Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 2175. Narrated by Abu Sa'id.

The reason for this influence of reading chapter Al-Kahf on Fridays can be traced from the heroes mentioned in it. Firstly, Dhul-Qarnayn (Taurus) is hero of the fixed signs story, secondly al-Khidhr (Pisces) is hero of the mutable sign story, and thirdly the God-fearing man (Libra) is hero of the cardinal sign story. Now, Taurus and Libra are the signs ruled by Venus, whilst Venus is exalted in the sign of Pisces. Thus, the positive influence of reading the chapter on Fridays as according to the prophet's narrations can be explained through astrological concepts.



The End Note

This brings us to the end of this article. I hope you would have found it interesting and illuminating. I should conclude it by stating the following verse from the Quran.

We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness? (41, 53)

The Legacy of Ascension; Al-Quran, Chapter 17 (The Children of Israel)

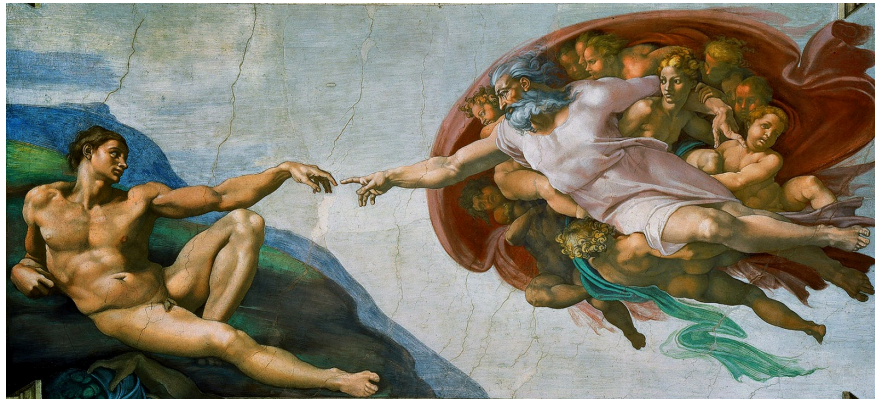
Introduction

This article provides a hermetic interpretation of the chapter 17 of Quran called “The Children of Israel”. It discusses the philosophy of spiritual wisdom and rituals that are mentioned in the Quran, and the legacy of their practice.

Time is the great designer of existence in the universe which never fails to promote the beauty of it, and also to destroy every ugliness. But the beauty has to be earned through intense trials, and it can only be generated from the purity of actions under the conditions that epitomize the very essence of the creator. Man is the creature who mirrors the image of the grand design, and he carries with himself the potential to reach the pinnacle of perfection in the universe. In doing so, he not only exemplifies his heroic status as the leader in every aspect of existence, but also fulfils his destiny of being the ultimate bearer of truth.

The chapter 17 of Quran offers the most profound guidance to reach such a state of perfection by demonstrating the possibility of success in the challenging times. Here I intend to interpret this guidance of the Quran by using the hermetic arts of astrology, symbolism, kabala, and alchemy. This chapter of Quran is called “The Children of Israel” because it symbolically represents the legacy of spiritual wisdom that can help to conquer the darkness through the practices of goodness in lifestyles.

The Power and the Redemption



The true ‘power’ always expresses itself in the face of a challenge from an outside source, and operates through the actions that symbolize the best potential to overcome the problems. This power is usually invoked under the most desperate conditions, and is required to perform intelligent actions to secure oneself from impending dangers. The power can also take many forms such as physical or verbal skills, as well as psychological capacity of patience, perseverance, and hard work. A person may adopt certain practices to overcome the challenges that would serve as rituals at the time to invoke the latent power, which in turn becomes the embodiment of heroism in the most defining moments of life for that person.

Once the challenges are diminished in their intensity through the use of power, the person still stays empowered due to the mastery he achieves in the practices of rituals during those difficult times. Since afterwards, the need of ritualistic practices are no longer evident in the improved

circumstances, a person may deem himself to be free of them, and thereby losing the mastery of invoking power for himself. In order to avoid that, it is necessary to understand the principle of 'redemption'. Redemption simply means that a person should continue with the practice of rituals that led to his power, but at a lesser intense level so as not to lose the mastery of it, and also to keep the rise of darkness at bay. Such a person is with the legacy of heroism consciously inherent within his being, the legacy whose power can be harnessed at any time.

On the other hand, it is also possible to be addicted by the rituals of self destructive practices at certain times of ease without realizing the mighty momentum which could be generated by those habits. Consequently, the guidance of light would be ignored and the words of wisdom would fall on deaf ears. Such practices should be called 'slavery', and the addiction to them without offering the least bit of resistance is the worst form of 'damnation'. This can be visualized as similar to sliding on a steep slope, which is very pleasurable but would always go deeper into the abyss; whilst good practices resemble the climb of some great mountain peak, which is though extremely arduous but would grant the best revelations of the universe to the being.

The Revelations of the Prime Legacy



The chapter 17 of Quran is rich in symbolic descriptions of the path to 'Ascension', and therefore in its interpretation I shall attempt to explain the verses from a range of perspectives. The chapter begins by stating the following verses.

Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far Distant place of worship the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our tokens! Lo! He, only He, is the Hearer, the Seer. (1) We gave unto Moses the Scripture, and We appointed it a guidance for the children of Israel, saying: Choose no guardian beside Me. (2) (They were) the seed of those whom We carried (in the ship) along with Noah. Lo! he was a grateful slave. (3)

In verse (1), the 'inviolable place of worship' is an allegory for the sign of Libra which brings about the sunset, and the beginning of night time; and the 'far distant place of worship' is Aries because the night ends with the sunrise at that sign. It is also stated here that the 'neighbourhood' of Aries, which would be the signs of Pisces and Taurus, are 'blessed' signs. The verse (1) therefore, indicates that this chapter would be about the training for the empowerment of mankind in the darker phase of the world i.e, between the setting and the

rising of the Sun. The verse (2) suggests that the children of Israel had inherited the legacy of power through the laws of Moses, and were therefore in possession of the rituals of empowerment. In verse (3), the 'Noah's ship' is a metaphor for the zodiac, and thus it expresses the inheritance of power by those who survived the tribulations of darkness by being in the ship of the zodiac, whilst others perished. The Quran further says,

And We decreed for the Children of Israel in the Scripture: Ye verily will work corruption in the earth twice, and ye will become great tyrants. (4) So when the time for the first of the two came, We roused against you slaves of Ours of great might who ravaged (your) country, and it was a threat performed. (5) Then we gave you once again your turn against them, and We aided you with wealth and children and made you more in soldiery. (6) (Saying): If ye do good, ye do good for your own souls, and if ye do evil, it is for them (in like manner). So, when the time for the second (of the judgements) came (We roused against you others of Our slaves) to ravage you, and to enter the Temple even as they entered it the first time, and to lay waste all that they conquered with an utter wasting. (7) It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you, but if ye repeat (the crime) We shall repeat (the punishment), and We have appointed hell a dungeon for the disbelievers. (8)

The 'two corruptions' in verse (4) is a reference to the two seasons of light, namely spring and summer. It is saying that the children of Israel fell into the lifestyles of decadence during the easy times, and as a result had become great tyrants. The verse (5) explains that the corruption in the sign of Aries was balance by the opposite sign of Libra which is metaphorically represented by the phrase 'slaves of ours of great might'. In verse (6) the children of Israel practiced the rituals of power, and therefore were aided by wealth (Taurus), children (Gemini), and soldiery (Aries). Again in verse (7) the principle of cause and effect is emphasized, and further illustrated by the mention of second punishment due to the corrupt activities in the astrological signs of summer. In verse (8) the mention of 'mercy' is meant to recommend the power rituals of winter that should overcome the misdeeds of summer. Some of the archetypal power rituals and laws are described in the following verses.

Luminaries (Sun and Moon)

Thy Lord hath decreed, that ye worship none save Him, and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with thee, say not "Fie" unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word. (23) And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy, and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little. (24) Your Lord is best aware of what is in your minds. If ye are righteous, then lo! He was ever Forgiving unto those who turn (unto Him). (25)

The verses (23–25) explain the laws relating to old parents that is allegorical to the luminary planets (Sun and Moon). The Moon is astrologically detriment in Capricorn, whilst the Sun is astrologically detriment in Aquarius, and therefore the law says that they have to be shown respect under the troubled state.

Venus

Give the kinsman his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness. (26) Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils, and the devil was ever an ingrate to his Lord. (27) But if thou turn away from them, seeking mercy from thy Lord, for which thou hopest, then speak unto them a reasonable word. (28) And

let not thy hand be chained to thy neck nor open it with a complete opening, lest thou sit down rebuked, denuded. (29) Lo! thy Lord enlargeth the provision for whom He will, and straiteneth (it for whom He will). Lo, He was ever Knower, Seer of His slaves. (30)

The verses (26–30) indicate the trials of archetypal Venus. The astrological Venus offers wealth and gentle attitudes toward others; and thus the verse (26) requires intelligent use of material resources from a person, and the verse (28) suggests appropriate mannerism. The verses (29–30) further provide guidelines for the investment of material resources with wisdom, and at the same time never to lose faith in the providence for ones livelihood.

Saturn

Slay not your children, fearing a fall to poverty, We shall provide for them and for you. Lo! the slaying of them is great sin. (31)

The verse (31) says the Saturn's archetypal character of killing the children since Saturn rules the signs opposite to that of the parents (Sun and Moon). The winter season can also be characterized by a desolate environment, and therefore children are at considerable risk here due to the lack of resources. Here, the ritual should be to supply the children with sufficient resources so as to help them survive the harshness of winter.

Mars

And come not near unto adultery. Lo! it is an abomination and an evil way. (32) And slay not the life which Allah hath forbidden save with right. Whoso is slain wrongfully, We have given power unto his heir, but let him not commit excess in slaying. Lo! he will be helped. (33)

In verse (32), the aggressive and dominating archetypal role of Mars is rebuked on account of their psychological consequences in the dealings with other people. The verses (33) further forbids the violence and killings for the sake of pride or any other form of vanity. The objective here is to keep the principles of justice and fair play intact in a society.

Mercury

Come not near the wealth of the orphan save with that which is better till he come to strength; and keep the covenant. Lo! of the covenant it will be asked. (34) Fill the measure when ye measure, and weigh with a right balance; that is meet, and better in the end. (35)

The verses (34–35) describe the importance of logical or rational attitudes when dealing with vulnerable situations. The archetypal Mercury signifies rules of engagement through communication skills and symbols. Therefore, any form of trickery is strictly forbidden between parties involved in business or social contracts. Also, the right conduct is encouraged in every affair to minimize the possibility of deception.

Jupiter

(O man), follow not that whereof thou hast no knowledge. Lo! the hearing and the sight and the heart—of each of these it will be asked. (36) And walk not in the earth exultant. Lo! thou canst not rend the earth, nor canst thou stretch to the height of the hills. (37)

Astrologically, knowledge and insights come under the domain of planet Jupiter. The verse (36) emphasizes the use of knowledge and experience in all aspects of life. Also with knowledge comes humility and righteous behaviours that are quite explicitly taught in verse (37).

The Confirmation of the Legacy

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving. (44)

The verse (44) refers to 'the seven heavens' which is essentially an allegory of the orbital patterns of the seven astrological planets. It suggests that human beings should endeavour to comprehend the nature of existence, and use their divine intelligence to be in accord with it. The following verses emphasize this point.

Establish worship at the going down of the sun until the dark of night, and (the recital of) the Qur'an at dawn. Lo! (the recital of) the Qur'an at dawn is ever witnessed. (78) And some part of the night awake for it, a largess for thee. It may be that thy Lord will raise thee to a praised estate. (79)

The verses (78–79) explains the significance of undertaking correct actions corresponding to the cardinal points of the zodiac. In verse (78), 'going down of the sun' is the reference to Libra, and 'dawn' is the reference to Aries; whilst in verse (79), 'part of the night' indicates the sign of Capricorn, and 'a praised state' expresses the sign of Cancer. Thus, the rituals of Quran exemplify the power that can be garnered from the trials and tribulations of time.

The End Note

Life is an ongoing ritual of the interactions of elements in nature whereby the existence manifests itself with elegance and beauty. Similarly, it is also essential for human beings to express their divine attributes by indulging into rituals of spiritual significance that reflect the beauty of their sublime character. I should conclude this article by stating the following verses from the Quran.

And say: My Lord! Cause me to come in with a firm incoming and to go out with a firm outgoing. And give me from Thy presence a sustaining Power. And say: Truth hath come and falsehood hath vanished away. Lo! falsehood is ever bound to vanish. (17, 80–81)

The Septenary Outlook of the Islamic Teachings

Introduction

This article attempts to explore the septenary approach in the Islamic traditions by interpreting the texts of Al-Quran and Hadiths (Prophet's narrations) from a hermetic perspective.



The number 7 can be characterised as the most universal symbol to be represented as the common denominator in all the mystery teachings of ancient religions. It is essentially considered to be the fundamental principle of creation through which the omnipotent Creator expresses the beauty of His designs in the universe. Therefore, man as being the representative of the divine attributes is considered to embody the essence of this principle which permeates and expresses throughout nature. The use of this number is also to recognize the consciousness in every kind of material or psychic phenomena, whose association with it would then justify the purpose of their existence. The number 7 thus represents the height of aspirations, the purity of intents, and the models of perfection in the order of existence.

In regards to the Islamic traditions, the number 7 constitutes a central theme for the fulfilment of Islamic thoughts. It is mentioned symbolically on many occasions with the highest connotations to its qualities in the Quran as well as in the Sahih Hadith books (the narrations of Prophet Muhammad). For instance, I have explained the septenary version of fundamental Islamic rituals and archetypal personalities in the context of hermetic principles in the article "Islam, the Great Hermetic Tradition". The ascension of prophet Muhammad (the Miraj) through the seven heavens is also discussed profusely in Islamic literature with a great symbolic significance, which I have investigated from a hermetic standpoint in the article "The Legacy of Ascension; Al-Quran, Chapter:17 (The Children of Israel)". Also, the story of the seven sleepers of Ephesus is mentioned in the chapter 18 of Quran, whose hermetic symbolism is described in the article "Astrotheology in Al-Quran, Chapter:18 (Al-Kahf)". In addition to my previous work on Islamic symbolism, I would be presenting here more evidences of the septenary model of Islamic teachings from a hermetic perspective.

The Septenary Teachings in the Quran

The Quran says,

Say: Who is Lord of the seven heavens, and Lord of the Tremendous Throne? (23, 86)

The hermetic metaphors that abound in the Quran symbolize the epitome of human consciousness and the ultimate goodness which it can offer. The metaphor for the 'seven heavens' represents the orbits of seven astrological planets, and the 'Throne' is allegorical to the ecliptic of zodiac signs around which the planets constantly traverse their paths. The Quran also mentions the following verse in a similar metaphorical fashion,

We have given thee seven of the oft-repeated (verses) and the great Qur'an. (15, 87)

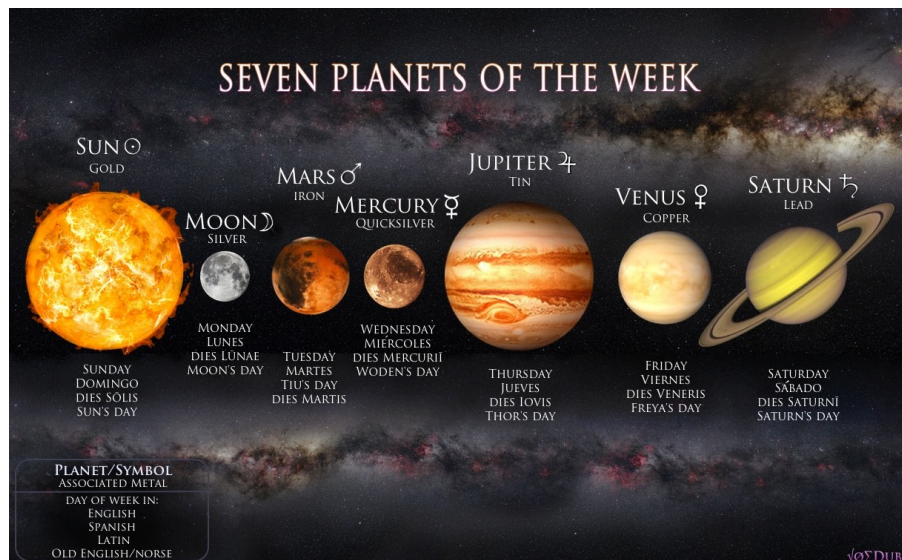
The consciousness of these patterns exalts the human beings above rest of the creatures by imparting to them greater vision for their existence beyond baser animal instincts. In other words, this consciousness of the heavens releases humans from the bondages of fear, greed, lust, and pride that actually result from their ignorance, and the darkness of their unknown destinies on account of which the nobler attributes of humanity would not come forth to fruition. It apprises humans of the sublime possibilities of their choices that may result in the lives of greater dimensions and more beautiful forms. The Quran says,

See ye not how Allah hath created seven heavens in harmony. (71, 15)

And We have created above you seven paths, and We are never unmindful of creation. (23, 17)

He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth. Then turned He to the heaven, and fashioned it as seven heavens. And He is knower of all things. (2, 29)

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but hymneth His praise; but ye understand not their praise. Lo! He is ever Clement, Forgiving. (17, 44)



Similar allegories consisting of the septenary arrangements can also be found in some sequences of the structure of Quran. For instance, there are seven chapters of Al-Quran that begin with the Huroof-al-Muqattaat of Ha-Mim in a straight sequence from chapter 40 to 46; and each of them individually expresses a planetary archetype alongside the theme of 'Ha-Mim'

which I have discussed in the article “The Mystery Letters of Quran (Huroof-al-Muqattaat)”. The Ha-Mim symbol of Huroof-al-Muqattaat represents the combination of the astrological signs of Libra and Gemini respectively, which can approximately be translated into the phrase ‘the message of justice’. Therefore, the Ha-Mim chapters form the Quranic message of justice from the standpoint of seven planetary archetypes. I shall mention the first few verses of these chapters here to explain this concept.

The chapter 40 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. The revelation of the Scripture is from Allah, the Mighty, the Knower, 3. The Forgiver of sin, the Acceptor of repentance, the Stern in punishment, the Bountiful. There is no Allah save Him. Unto Him is the journeying.

The chapter 40 is entitled ‘The Believer’, and it symbolically represents the archetypal qualities of Saturn, which also occupies the greatest orb in the heavens. Saturn is astrologically known for the actions of ultimate finality as it denotes the judgement time. It expresses the highest state of consciousness, the greatest realization of facts, and the inevitable passage into the realms of destiny. The verses 2–3 of this chapter indicate that it is a message of justice from the Saturn’s attributes of purification and judgement.

The Chapter 41 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. A revelation from the Beneficent, the Merciful, 3. A Scripture whereof the verses are expounded, a Lecture in Arabic for people who have knowledge,

This chapter is entitled ‘They are Expounded’, and it represents the qualities of planet Jupiter. Jupiter is astrologically considered to be the most beneficent planet because it expresses the consciousness of philosophers and mystics. It rules knowledge and mysticism, the combination that results in the greatest refinement of human attitudes. It brings about the effects in human understanding of the truth of existence, the realities of nature, and the profound depths to appreciate the causal characters of all activities in the harmonization of phenomena. Therefore, Jupiter’s prime quality is in the recognition of natural laws, and the integrity to accept ones position in the great plan of nature as an associated component of noble principles and moralities. The verses 2–3 of this chapter encapsulates the theme of knowledge and philosophy by symbolically referring to ‘a Lecture in Arabic’, thus the use of proficient language in order to enhance the human consciousness.

The Chapter 42 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. Ain. Sin. Qaf. 3. Thus Allah the Mighty, the Knower inspireth thee (Muhammad) as (He inspired) those before thee.

This chapter is appropriately entitled ‘Counsel’, because it expresses the archetypal character of Mercury in its verses. The first and second verses end with the mystery letters of Mim and Qaf, thereby denoting respectively the signs of Gemini and Virgo, both ruled by Mercury. The astrological Mercury is responsible for the knowledge of symbols for communications and technologies. It imparts the discipline of sciences such as chemistry and mathematics that are highly dependant on objective and detached analyses of material phenomena. Therefore, the verse 3 refers to the inspiration caused by the objective understanding and knowledge of the physical sciences that makes a person to ponder on the inherent order of the universe, and to determine ones place in the great sphere of the infinite realm of consciousness.

The Chapter 43 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. By the Scripture which maketh plain, 3. Lo! We have appointed it a Lecture, in Arabic that haply ye may understand.

The title of this chapter is 'Ornaments of Gold' which allegorically relates it to the astrological planet Sun. Since Sun is a luminary among the planets alongside the Moon, the second verse of this chapter is peculiarly in contrast to the second verses of the chapters that do not represent luminaries (Sun and Moon), thereby stating its objective to make things visible or obvious. The Sun astrologically represents the wisdom and intelligence of a just king, who would rule the hearts of his subjects with loyalty and fairness. There cannot be any ambiguity in the statements made by a king or else his subjects would be confused, and his kingdom questioned. The words of a king must not only be plain, but also clearly understood and appreciated by the subjects because they should dispel all doubts in everyone's minds. The verse 3 therefore says, 'in Arabic that haply ye may understand' referring to the message as being from the Sun.

The Chapter 44 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. By the Scripture that maketh plain. 3. Lo! We revealed it on a blessed night—Lo! We are ever warning –

This is the other chapter which mentions 'Scripture that maketh plain' in its second verse, and therefore it represents the luminary planet Moon. It is entitled 'Smoke' because in astrological symbolism, Moon causes the illusions of physical appearances that lead to characteristics of vanity. The verse 3 is also important here due to its mention of the 'blessed night' and 'warning'. The Moon makes it possible for humans to travel in nights without fear of total darkness, and similarly 'warnings' may help one to survive at times of utter ignorance. The Moon brings light into the consciousness through symbolism which can only be understood by the humans with authentic self-realization, and the capacity to look beyond the veneer of materialism.

The chapter 45 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. The revelation of the Scripture is from Allah, the Mighty, the Wise. 3. Lo! in the heavens and the earth are portents for believers.

The title 'Crouching' of chapter 45 is very indicative of the astrological qualities of planet Mars. Mars rules the astrological signs of Aries and Scorpio that have to deal with wars, conflicts, and power games. Therefore, Mars represents the transformation which is forced upon the human consciousness through urgency of conditions, or by providing the impetus to undergo radical changes in a situation. Any form of change that is violent, abrupt, and incisive can be characterised by the Mars archetype. Thus, the message of justice in this chapter is about reforms or changes in the status quo resulting in more appropriate conditions for the spiritual growth of humanity.

The chapter 46 says,

1. Ha. Mim. 2. The revelation of the Scripture is from Allah the Mighty, the Wise. 3. We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between them save with truth, and for a term appointed. But those who disbelieve turn away from that whereof they are warned.

The title 'Wind-Curved Sandhills' of chapter 46 represents the interaction of two distinct physical phenomena, wind and sand. The planet Venus rules the signs of Libra and Taurus that correspond to the hermetic elements of air and earth respectively. The astrological Venus signifies the objective values of material or intellectual properties, and therefore determines one's interests in people or activities. It considers the environments surrounding a person to be always in resonance with the needs of the inner self by creating a harmonious coordination between the subject and his environment. If humans respect the inhabitants of their environment in nature, then that would be tantamount to preserving the harmony of their own beings, whilst otherwise the destruction of environment would actually result in their own annihilation from the planet. The verse 3 of this chapter thus emphasizes the need to keep harmonious coordination with the natural environment of earth.

The structure of Quran is also divided into seven equal portions called the 'Manzils', so that the recitation or reading of the whole book can be undertaken within a week. This division is very symbolic of the septenary approach of the religion's outlook. The Manzils or seven divisions of the Quran are detailed in the following.

1. **Al Fatihah (chapter 1) through An Nisa' (chapter 4) consisting of 4 surahs.**
2. **Al Ma'ida (chapter 5) through At Tawba (chapter 9) consisting of 5 surahs.**
3. **Yunus (chapter 10) through An Nahl (chapter 16) consisting of 7 surahs.**
4. **Al Isra' (chapter 17) through Al Furqan (chapter 25) consisting of 9 surahs.**
5. **Ash Shuara' (chapter 26) through Ya Seen (chapter 36) consisting of 11 surahs.**
6. **As Saaffat (chapter 37) through Al Hujarat (chapter 49) consisting of 13 surahs.**
7. **Qaf (chapter 50) through An Nass (chapter 114) consisting of 65 surahs.**

The Septenary Teachings in the Hadith (the Quotes of Prophet Muhammad)

The 'Sahih Hadiths' are the authentic statements made by the Prophet of Islam during his ministry as a messenger of God. I have included some Hadiths in the following to describe the septenary version of teachings in them.

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet (p.b.u.h) said, "Seven people will be shaded by Allah under His shade on the day when there will be no shade except His. They are: (1) a just ruler; (2) a young man who has been brought up in the worship of Allah, (i.e. worship Allah (Alone) sincerely from his childhood), (3) a man whose heart is attached to the mosque (who offers the five compulsory congregational prayers in the mosque); (4) two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake and they meet and part in Allah's cause only; (5) a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for an illegal sexual intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah; (6) a person who practices charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows how much he has given in charity). (7) a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes get flooded with tears." Sahih Bukhari (Book #24, Hadith #504)

In the stated Hadith, the metaphorical use of seven planetary symbols is clearly evident. (1) a just ruler, symbolizes the Sun; (2) a young man who has been brought up in the worship of Allah, (i.e. worship Allah (Alone) sincerely from his childhood), symbolizes the Mercury; (3) a man whose heart is attached to the mosque (who offers the five compulsory congregational prayers in the mosque), symbolizes the Moon; (4) two persons who love each other only for Allah's sake and they meet and part in Allah's cause only, symbolizes the Venus; (5) a man who refuses the call of a charming woman of noble birth for an illegal sexual intercourse with her and says: I am afraid of Allah, symbolizes the Mars; (6) a person who practices charity so secretly that his left hand does not know what his right hand has given (i.e. nobody knows how much he has given in charity), symbolizes the Jupiter; and (7) a person who remembers Allah in seclusion and his eyes get flooded with tears, symbolizes the Saturn.

Narrated Salim's father: The Prophet said, "Any person who takes a piece of land unjustly will sink down the seven earths on the Day of Resurrection." Sahih Bukhari (Book #54, Hadith #418)

Abu Huraira (Allah be pleased with him) reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: One should not take a span of land without having legitimate right to it, otherwise Allah would make him wear (around his neck) seven earths on the Day of Resurrection. Sahih Muslim (Book #010, Hadith #3924)

The above mentioned Hadiths suggest that the iniquitous actions of human beings would result in the fall from heavenly grace. The septenary arrangement of Quran is described in the following Hadiths.

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas: Allah's Apostle said, "Gabriel recited the Qur'an to me in one way. Then I requested him (to read it in another way), and continued asking him to recite it in other ways, and he recited it in several ways till he ultimately recited it in seven different ways." Sahih Bukhari (Book #61, Hadith #513)

Narrated 'Abdullah bin 'Amr: Allah's Apostle said to me, "Recite the whole Qur'an in one month's time." I said, "But I have power (to do more than that)." Allah's Apostle said, "Then finish the recitation of the Qur'an in seven days, and do not finish it in less than this period." Sahih Bukhari (Book #61, Hadith #574)

The Prophet Muhammad had also incorporated the septenary pattern of behaviour even in his mundane activities. The following Hadiths demonstrate this point exquisitely.

Narrated Abu Huraira: Once the Prophet distributed dates among his companions and gave each one seven dates. He gave me seven dates too, one of which was dry and hard, but none of the other dates was more liked by me than that one, for it prolonged my chewing it. Sahih Bukhari (Book #65, Hadith #322)

Narrated Sad: Allah's Apostle said, "He who eats seven 'Ajwa dates every morning, will not be affected by poison or magic on the day he eats them." Sahih Bukhari (Book #65, Hadith #356)

Abu Huraira reported the Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) to have said: When a dog licks a utensil belonging to any one of you, (the thing contained in it) should be thrown away and then (the utensil) should be washed seven times. Sahih Muslim (Book #002, Hadith #0546)

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (may peace be upon him) said: When a dog drinks out of a vessel belonging to any one of you, he must wash it seven times. Sahih Muslim (Book #002, Hadith #0548)

Ibn Abu Aufa reported: We went on seven expeditions with Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) and ate locusts. Sahih Muslim (Book #021, Hadith #4801)

The greatest ritual of Islam is considered by Muslims to be the pilgrimage to Mecca, where Muslims perform their Hajj ritual. The following Hadiths give an account of this ritual.

Abdullah b. 'Umar (Allah be pleased with them) reported: I saw that when Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) came to Mecca and kissed the Black Stone, (in the first circumambulation) he moved quickly in three circuits out of seven circuits. Sahih Muslim (Book #007, Hadith #2895)

The above mentioned Hadith says that the Prophet performed circumambulation by moving quickly in three circuits, representing the three faster moving planets (Moon, Mercury, and Venus); whilst moved normally in the rest of the four circuits out of seven, thus representing the four slower moving planets (Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn).

The End Note

The septenary symbols had always been used by the ancient mystery schools to represent the universal consciousness. It is the language of order in the existence of nature that depicts beauty, harmony, and integrity in the overall scheme of the universe. It is the dimension through which the Divine consciousness manifests its accord in the realm of matter, and human beings get to receive the message of the Supreme providence. I should conclude this article by stating the following verse from the Quran.

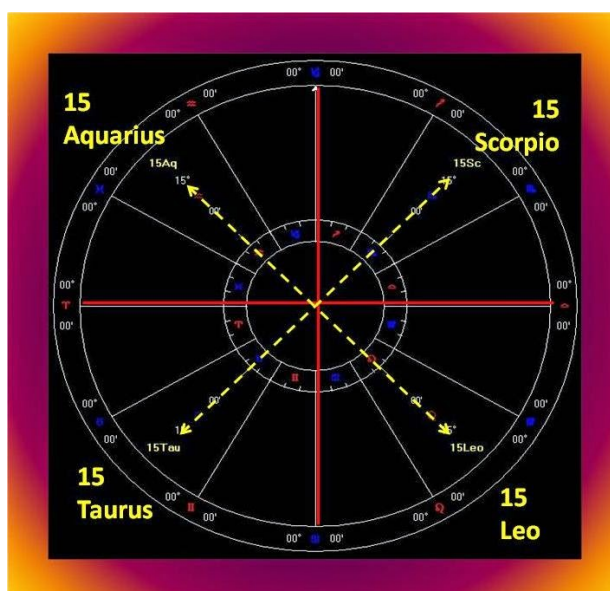
Who hath created seven heavens in harmony. Thou (Muhammad) canst see no fault in the Beneficent One's creation; then look again: Canst thou see any rifts? (67, 3)

The Magical King Solomon in Quran

Introduction

This article is an study of the Quranic texts regarding the career and wisdom of king Solomon from a hermetic perspective. It interprets the philosophy and spiritual teachings of Quran for the human empowerment and freedom.

The anecdotes of the magical kingdom of Solomon in the Quran are not only enchanting but also of deep philosophical and spiritual significance. The symbolic, and yet highly mysterious reign of Solomon included all the creatures that resided on earth as its subjects. Among them were men, jinn, animals, birds, insects, and every other life forms. The king Solomon could also directly communicate with those creatures, and command his rule on them. Here, the characteristics and events of the era of Solomon as described in Quran are interpreted from an astrotheological perspective, with an objective to comprehend the best principles of authority in a system of hierarchy and diversity for the benefits of individual participants, and to contribute towards the beauty of gestalt structures.



The Territory and the Turf

The inhabitants of earth usually acclimatize themselves to the conditions of their terrain in a way to maximize the usefulness of their individual talents. Some live in extreme conditions of hot or cold climates, whilst others like more moderate areas for their lifestyles. For instance, the indigenous territories of certain animals not only define them, but also assist them in their existence. As the generations progress, the animals get themselves used to the patterns of lands and seasons that they find ideal by physically and psychologically adjusting to those areas. They develop faculties to help them in the struggle for existence, and thereby tend to make a strong bond with their motherlands. There they are born, there they find sustenance, and there they reproduce. Reproduction by animals is also carried out in a way so as to preserve the best essence of their species, and to maximize the probability of their survival. In brief, animals relish the territories where they find continuation for their posterity.



In the tradition of Quran, 'humankind' is considered the vicegerents of God on earth because humans contain the Divine spirit in them. There is also a promise for every individual human soul of the resurrection, and an immortal life of pleasure or pain depending upon their actions in the world. Not only the Quran, but also many other cultures and traditions speak of some form of reincarnation or resurrection of life. The point here is that a human soul is essentially considered immortal, and therefore should not be liable to the territorial adherence similar to that of animals. In other words, humans are required to live on the turf and not the territory for their best interests, because unlike animals they are immortals.

From a psychological perspective, this teaching of human immortality tends to eradicate class differences that arise due to the unequal distribution of power or wealth. In a culture where humans are not valued beyond their utility at the animal level, the poor might easily get mocked in a society of rich; or otherwise the affluent few might easily be threatened by the community of poor. Territorial disputes over fertile lands and other similar objectives would form the norm of human activities, and thus resulting in a calamitous chaos on earth. Therefore, being a human requires the level of consciousness whereby a person may get disenchanted from territorial dependencies, and an understanding of earth as a level playing turf for the good of all.

The Way of the True King

The astrological sign of a king is 'Leo'. Therefore, the king Solomon in Quran is a metaphorical depiction of a human king corresponding to the sign of Leo. Leo being a 'fixed sign' of the zodiac, is an essential component of the 'fixed cross' which also includes the signs of Taurus, Scorpio, and Aquarius. The fixed cross is described in Quran with reference to Solomon in the following fashion.

And unto Solomon (We gave) the wind, whereof the morning course was a month's journey and the evening course a month's journey, and We caused the fount of copper to gush forth for him, and (We gave him) certain of the jinn who worked before him by permission of his Lord. And such of them as deviated from Our command, them We caused to taste the punishment of flaming fire. (34, 12)

In verse (34, 12), the person of Solomon himself is allegorical to the sign of Leo; the 'wind' is formed from the element 'air' of the sign of Aquarius; the 'fount of copper' is referred on account of copper being the metal of Taurus; and 'jinn' represent the sign of Scorpio. Also 'flaming fire' at the end of verse (34, 12) is a reference to the element 'fire' of Leo. This allegory of the fixed

cross is indicative of the royal authority that encompasses every facet of existence as a unifying power. The actions of king Solomon in Quran emphasizes the responsibility that comes with regality, and the loyal subjects that support the realm as much as the people of king's palace.

Solomon and the Queen of Sheba



The anecdote of king Solomon and the queen of Sheba is mentioned in the 27th Chapter of Quran. Here, the difference between the true kingdom of Solomon and the false kingdom of Sheba is explained by subjecting the queen of Sheba to the three trials of Solomon. Each of these three trials include the other three fixed signs of Taurus, Scorpio, and Aquarius respectively. The queen of Sheba got introduced to Solomon in the following manner.

And he (Solomon) sought among the birds and said: How is it that I see not the hoopoe, or is he among the absent? I verily will punish him with hard punishment or I verily will slay him, or he verily shall bring me a plain excuse. But he was not long in coming, and he said: I have found out (a thing) that thou apprehendest not, and I come unto thee from Sheba with sure tidings. Lo! I found a woman ruling over them, and she hath been given (abundance) of all things, and hers is a mighty throne. I found her and her people worshipping the sun instead of Allah; and Satan maketh their works fair seeming unto them, and debarreth them from the way (of Truth), so that they go not aright: (27, 20-24)

In verse 20, Solomon was interested in the presence of the hoopoe bird because this bird possessed a crest of feathers on its head, which made it a royal bird. The bird had digressed from its way to locate a false kingdom of Sun worshippers (Leo) at Sheba, and had informed Solomon of the discovery. Therefore, Solomon decided to test this false kingdom by subjecting them to the following trials.

The Taurus Trial

But lo! I am going to send a present unto them, and to see with what (answer) the messengers return. So when (the envoy) came unto Solomon, (the King) said: What! Would ye help me with wealth? But that which Allah hath given me is better than that which He hath given you. Nay it is ye (and not I) who exult in your gift. (27, 35-36)

Taurus is the sign of material wealth. The queen offered Solomon a pricey gift in order to justify her kingdom, but Solomon rejected the offer by explaining that the true wealth is actually the love and proximity of God.

The Scorpio Trial

He said: O chiefs! Which of you will bring me her throne before they come unto me, surrendering? A stalwart of the Jinn said: I will bring it thee before thou canst rise from thy place. Lo! I verily am strong and trusty for such work. One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: I will bring it thee before thy gaze returneth unto thee. And when he saw it set in his presence, Solomon said: This is of the bounty of my Lord, that He may try me whether I give thanks or am ungrateful. Whosoever giveth thanks he only giveth thanks for (the good of) his own soul: and whosoever is ungrateful (is ungrateful only to his own soul's hurt). For lo! my Lord is Absolute in independence, Bountiful. He said: Disguise her throne for her that we may see whether she will go aright or be of those not rightly guided. So, when she came, it was said (unto her): Is thy throne like this? She said: (It is) as though it were the very one. And (Solomon said): We were given the knowledge before her and we had surrendered (to Allah). And (all) that she was wont to worship instead of Allah hindered her, for she came of disbelieving folk. (27, 38-43)

Jinn is the metaphor for the sign of Scorpio. In verse 39, the stalwart Jinn said that he could bring the throne of Sheba to Solomon because that Jinn had the experience of the fixed signs; but the Jinn in verse 40 had the 'knowledge of the Scripture', which basically means that he had the knowledge of the whole zodiac, and therefore could immediately fetch the throne of Sheba for Solomon. In verse 41, Solomon changed the throne of Sheba to test the queen whether or not she would recognize those changes, but the queen in verse 42, failed to notice the change. The parable of this story suggests that due to decadence in lifestyles, the monarchs tend to lose touch with reality, and though their kingdom still exist in name, but in actuality it is all lost.

The Aquarius Trial

It was said unto her: Enter the hall. And when she saw it she deemed it a pool and bared her legs. (Solomon) said: Lo! it is a hall, made smooth, of glass. She said: My Lord! Lo! I have wronged myself, and I surrender with Solomon unto Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. (27, 44)

The verse 44 describes the trial of Queen with the phenomenon of mirage. The mirage is an optical illusion which occurs due to the temperature difference in the layers of air. 'Air' being the element of Aquarius, the sign whose symbol is the 'water carrying man', and thus quite befits the test of mirage for the queen. The queen got trapped by the illusion of water, and failed the test of Aquarius. Therefore, the queen of Sheba had to surrender her kingdom to the true king Solomon because the kingdom could not have been secured on false premises.

The End Note

The message of Quran is for the spiritual well being of humans, and that cannot be possible without human empowerment. Therefore, lessons of Quran map out the path for realization of human sovereignty and freedom, so as to help them reach the pinnacle of their potentials. I should conclude this article by quoting a verse from the Quran.

Say: O Allah! Owner of Sovereignty! Thou givest sovereignty unto whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt. Thou exaltest whom Thou wilt and Thou abasest whom Thou wilt. In Thy hand is the good. Lo! Thou art Able to do all things. (3, 26)



The Spider's Web; Al-Quran, Chapter 29 (Al-Ankabut)

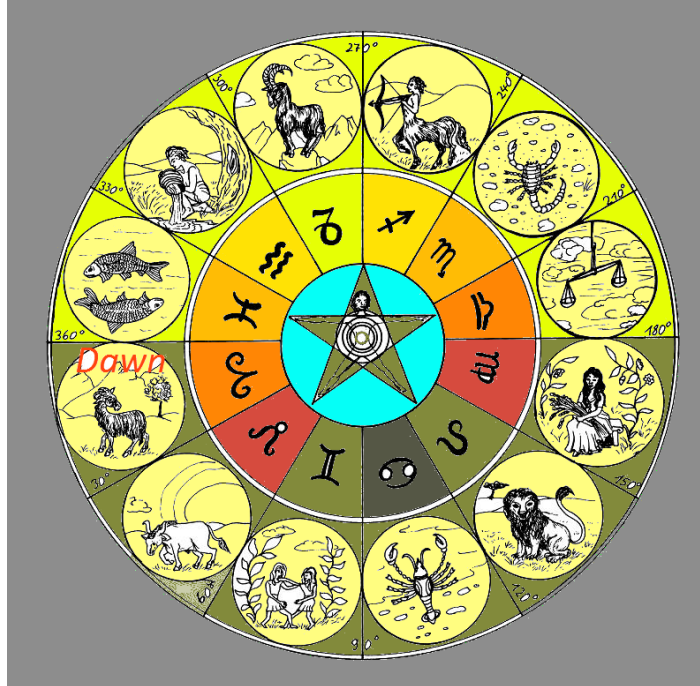
Introduction

Al-Ankabut (The Spider) is the 29th chapter of the Quran. Historically, it was revealed to prophet Muhammad during the most critical juncture of his ministry when the trials of his followers by the Meccan chiefs were at their extremes. Thus, it represents the purest light in the wake of struggle against utmost darkness, and a comforting guidance to his companions at the crunch times, as it contains the very essence of Islamic teachings. The style of the stories related in this chapter are also of metaphorical significance due to their hermetic nature. The name of this chapter is 'Al-Ankabut', meaning 'The Spider' is actually the allegorical reference to the astrological Sun, as it travels through the twelve astrological signs forming the zodiac, or a "Spider's house". Since this chapter expounds the most momentous period of the early Islam, therefore, it relates the 'astrological twilight zone' in its stories, and the importance to deal with it through wisdom. Also, in this article I have extensively referred to the most authentic eclectic work on Islamic anecdotes called "Stories of the Prophets", by Ibn Kathir.



The Astrological Twilight Zone

The 'astrological twilight zone' comprises of the rising and setting places of the Sun i.e., Aries and Libra, and the astrological signs in the immediate neighbourhood of them i.e., Pisces, Taurus, Scorpio, and Virgo. Overall the twilight zone consists of six out of the twelve signs of the zodiac. Their differences with other signs is on account of the variations in Sunlight they offer, whilst other signs perpetually remain either in total dark or light. It is important to note here certain astrological principles at work in this zone. For instance, within a twilight zone the signs with more light can overcome the signs with lesser light, and the opposite signs in the zone can restrict each other.



This chapter of the Quran was revealed around the time when prophet Muhammad was about to migrate from the city of Mecca to Medina. In the explanation of this chapter, I shall first state the narrative verses of stories that refer to the twilight zone of the zodiac, and afterwards discuss the spiritual philosophy described in this chapter.

Astrological Pisces, and the Story of Noah's People



The verses 14–15 refer to the story of Noah. It says,

And verily we sent Noah (as Our messenger) unto his folk, and he continued with them for a thousand years save fifty years; and the flood engulfed them, for they were wrong-doers. (14) And We rescued him and those with him in the ship, and made of it a portent for the peoples. (15)

Noah refers to the sign of Pisces. According to the Muslim lore narrated by Ibn Kathir, Noah had admonished his people from the worship of Idols, but they refused to heed his warnings. Then Noah made a ship in the midst of land, where alongside the passengers he gathered all sorts of animals and plants. His predictions of flood came true and that destroyed everything on the land, except those on board at his ship.

The idols in the above story are an allegorical reference to the 'Virgin' symbol of Virgo (the sign opposite to Pisces), and the land that was inundated is the element 'earth' of Virgo; whilst the flooding represents the 'water' element of Pisces, and the surviving ship of Noah is allegorical to the 'fish' symbol of Pisces.

Astrological Libra, and the Story of Abraham's People

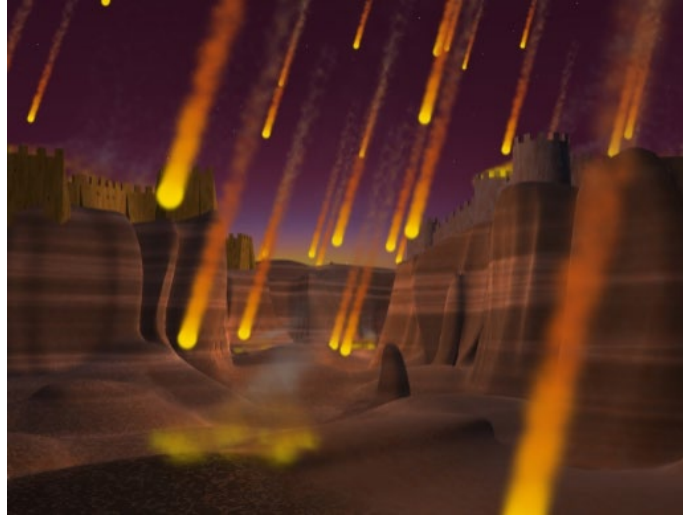


The verses 16–27 in the chapter refer to the story of Abraham. Here, I shall state only two of these verses for the purpose of explanation.

And Abraham! (Remember) when he said unto his folk: Serve Allah, and keep your duty unto Him; that is better for you if ye did but know. (16) But the answer of his folk was only that they said: "Kill him" or "Burn him." Then Allah saved him from the Fire. Lo! herein verily are portents for folk who believe. (24)

Abraham (Libra) also contended with his people against their practice of idol worship (the Virgo trait). Since Libra possesses more light in the twilight zone than Virgo, Abraham refused to worship the idols, and overcame his people by using diplomatic arguments (the Libra trait). Now Abraham's people still tested him against the 'fire', which is the element of the opposite sign Aries. But Abraham being a true Libra, withstood the trial of fire without any hurt.

Astrological Scorpio, and the Story of Lot's People (Sodom)



The verses 28–35 in the chapter refer to the story of Sodom. According to the Muslim lore in Ibn Kathir, people in the town of Sodom were sexual perverts. The Quran says, and here I quote only selected verses from the story.

And Lot! (Remember) when he said unto his folk: Lo! ye commit lewdness such as no creature did before you. (28) For come ye not in unto males, and cut ye not the road (for travellers), and commit ye not abomination in your meetings ? But the answer of his folk was only that they said: Bring Allah's doom upon us if thou art a truth-teller! (29) He said: My Lord! Give me victory over folk who work corruption. (30) Lo! We are about to bring down upon the folk of this township a fury from the sky because they are evil-livers. (34)

Appropriately dealing with one's sexuality is a Scorpio trait. People of Sodom failed in that, and therefore, according to Ibn Kathir were punished by the showers of stone pellets (representing the element earth of opposite sign Taurus) falling from the sky, and also the land of their town was turned upside down.

Astrological Taurus, and the Story of Midian People



The verses 36–37 in the chapter refer to the story of Midian. The people of Midian were very greedy, and therefore used to cheat or embezzle others in business deals. According to the lore from Ibn Kathir, messenger Shu'eyb asked them to keep the balance straight while weighing merchandise, but they refused. The Quran says in the chapter,

And unto Midian We sent Shu'eyb, their brother. He said: O my people! Serve Allah, and look forward to the Last Day, and do not evil, making mischief, in the earth. (36) But they denied him, and the dreadful earthquake took them, and morning found them prostrate in their dwelling place. (37)

Material wealth is a trait of the sign Taurus. Though Midian people were wealthy, but still stingy and greedy. As a result, the element earth of Taurus gave away from beneath them, and the town got destroyed due to the earthquake (trait of the opposite sign Scorpio).

Astrological Virgo, and the Stories of A'ad and Thamud



The verse 38 in the chapter refers to the stories of A'ad and Thamud. According to the lore in Ibn Kathir, they were two tribes of excellent craftsmen (Virgo trait). Those people were strong, tall, and used to hue their houses out of mountains and rocks. They eventually also used their strength and skills to carve idols to worship them. The Quran says,

And (the tribes of) A'ad and Thamud! (Their fate) is manifest unto you from their (ruined and deserted) dwellings. Satan made their deeds seem fair unto them and so debarred them from the Way, though they were keen observers. (38)

It is mentioned in Ibn Kathir that when people of A'ad (Virgo) refused the warnings of prophet Hud, they initially suffered from a severe drought (absence of element water of the opposite sign Pisces), followed by a hurricane (element air of the brighter sign Libra) that utterly destroyed them. People of Thamud when denied the prophet Salih, were destroyed by thunderbolts (Pisces), and followed by earthquakes (the element earth of Virgo).

Astrological Aries, and the Story of Pharaoh

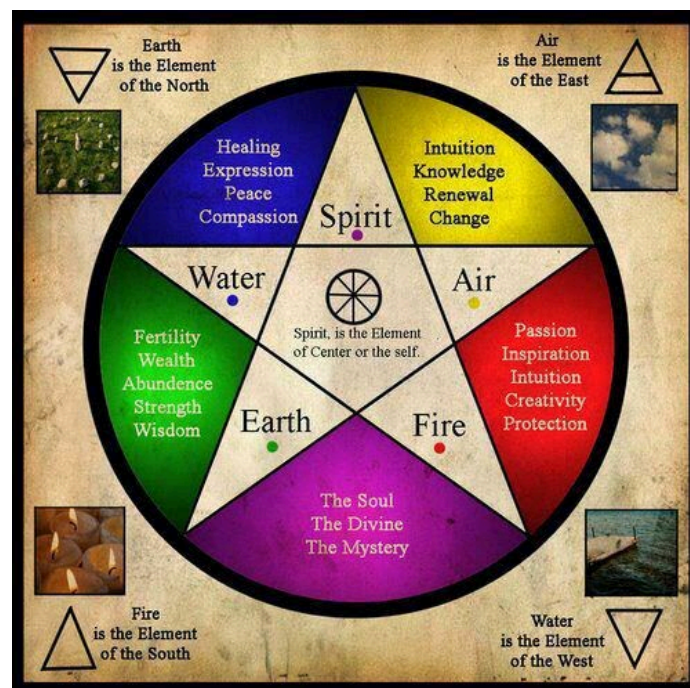


The verse 39 in the chapter refers to the story of Pharaoh. Ibn Kathir deals with the stories of Pharaoh and his cronies at considerable lengths, but the following verse mentions two of his ministers alongside Pharaoh. The verse also says that Pharaoh was proud and egotist (the Aries traits), and he misused his powers which eventually resulted in the fall of Pharaoh.

And Korah, Pharaoh and Haman! Moses came unto them with clear proofs (of Allah's Sovereignty), but they were boastful in the land. And they were not winners (in the race). (39)

Korah was the finance minister (Taurus trait) of Pharaoh, and therefore got swallowed by the earth (the element of Taurus). Pharaoh and his secretary Haman represented Aries, so were drowned by the water element of Pisces (the brighter sign of the twilight zone).

Balance of Elements in the Twilight Zone



The verse 40 of the chapter relates the consequences of disturbing the elemental balance in nature. It says,

So We took each one in his sin; of them was he on whom We sent a hurricane, and of them was he who was overtaken by the (Awful) Cry, and of them was he whom We caused the earth to swallow, and of them was he whom We drowned. It was not for Allah to wrong them, but they wronged themselves. (40)

Here, the hurricane represents the disturbance in the element 'air'; the 'awful cry' can also be translated as a strong blast or explosion, which is akin to the element 'fire'; earthquakes represent trouble in the element 'earth', and floods or deluges represent turbulence in the element 'water'. The verse ends by saying that people only cause trouble for themselves by not living with wisdom, and because the function of human intelligence is to keep themselves psychologically in balance alongside their physical environments.

The mention of the prophets in each of the stories, and the importance to follow their guidance is symbolic of the element 'spirit'. When spirit rules the material elements than there exists the harmony, balance, and peace in the world, and humanity stays away from all forms of corruptions such as vanity (idol worship), greed, lust, and pride. But once spirituality is abandoned in human existence, it leaves a fertile ground for vices to breed. Therefore, it is extremely necessary to guard against iniquitous behaviours. The Quran says in verses 41–44 the importance of being judicious in life.

The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allah is as the likeness of the spider when she taketh unto herself a house, and lo! the frailest of all houses is the spider's house, if they but knew. (41) Lo! Allah knoweth what thing they invoke instead of Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (42) As for these similitudes, We coin them for mankind, but none will grasp their meaning save the wise. (43) Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth. Lo! therein is indeed a portent for believers. (44)

In verse 41, the spider's house is a metaphor for the zodiac. It says that to keep ones consciousness in balance is very tricky and requires great spiritual wisdom. The verse 43 suggests that wise people would understand the importance of this message.

The End Note

I should conclude this article by quoting a couple of initial verses from this chapter. I hope the reader would have found it revealing and useful.

Do men imagine that they will be left (at ease) because they say, We believe, and will not be tested with affliction? Lo! We tested those who were before you. Thus Allah knoweth those who are sincere, and knoweth those who feign. Al-Quran (29:2–3)

The Art of War; Al-Hadeed (Iron)

Introduction

The situations involving warfare happen to be the greatest dilemmas that have inspired humanity throughout the known history. The mindset to indulge in conflicts by either individuals or groups seems almost to be integral to the human instinctive operation, whenceforth they may participate in activities with the focus on winning something extraordinary. Though the human urge is always to achieve their ideals with perfection, but even in victory the sense of triumph is usually shaded by the pursuing challenges of the future as much as the baggage of the past efforts. Consequently many wars have earned negative connotations on account of the sufferings and losses that frequently outweigh the happy outcome of victory. Evidently it should not mean that war in itself constitutes a wrong phenomena, but rather humanity is yet to learn the proper art of the true war. Also the notion of realizing the extrapolated ideals of peace by means of war has proven to be both unrealistic and unnatural, since such forms of peace may only exist in a world of fantasy or in a grave. Therefore any sort of living requires a war, but the right sort of living requires the Art of War. The practice of this art distinguishes a civilized culture from a barbaric culture, and precisely in this regard humanity can benefit from the hermetic wisdom contained in the texts of ancient scriptures. One such text is the chapter 57 Al-Hadeed (Iron) of Quran, because it primarily contains the mystical aspects of the great Art of War. The hermetic teachings can also help to minimize the collateral damage due to human endeavors in advancing the cause for a nobler culture.

The Hermetic War Zone

The Hermetic War Zone is the astrological twilight zone whereby transpires the interactions of the astrological signs of Light and Dark. The twilight zone consists of the two cardinal signs of Aries and Libra, the two fixed signs of Taurus and Scorpio, and the two mutable signs of Virgo and Pisces. Among these six signs; the earth signs of Taurus and Virgo represent the Light, the water signs of Scorpio and Pisces represent the Dark, and the signs of Aries and Libra with the elements of fire and air represent the Twilight. The sign of Aries has the character of 'strength', whilst the opposite sign of Libra stands for 'wisdom'. The sign of Virgo reflects 'logic or sensibility', whilst the sign of Pisces demonstrates 'compassion or sensitivity'. The sign of Taurus has 'wealth or resources', whilst the sign of Scorpio wields 'power or influence'. According to the hermetic wisdom, the characteristics of these signs formulate the Art of War in association with the dimensions of elements effecting them. In the hermetic war zone, Aries (Strength) is supported by Taurus (Wealth) and undermined by Pisces (Compassion); whilst Libra (Wisdom) is supported by Virgo (Logic) and undermined by Scorpio (Power). The function of earth signs (Taurus and Virgo) is always to support, whilst the function of water signs (Scorpio and Pisces) is always to undermine. The twilight signs of Aries and Libra form the front-line of the hermetic war zone, and hence the hermetic art of war requires the striking of balance between them in order to achieve a state of harmony and equilibrium. The chapter 57 begins with the following description of the hermetic war zone.

1. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifieth Allah; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. 2. His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth; He quickeneth and He giveth death; and He is Able to do all things. 3. He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward; and He is Knower of all things. 4. He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six Days; then He mounted the Throne. He knoweth all that

entereth the earth and all that emergeth therefrom and all that cometh down from the sky and all that ascendeth therein; and He is with you wheresoever ye may be. And Allah is Seer of what ye do. 5. His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, and unto Allah (all) things are brought back. 6. He causeth the night to pass into the day, and He causeth the day to pass into the night, and He is knower of all that is in the breasts.

The Divine attributes mentioned in the verse 1, 'the Mighty, the Wise' refer symbolically to the twilight signs of Aries (Strength) and Libra (Wisdom) respectively. The qualities stated in the verse 2–3; the ability to impart life and death, the first and the last, and the outward and the inward are all corresponding characteristics referring to Aries and Libra. Astrologically the Sun rises in Aries and sets in Libra, the Light comes forth in Aries and goes back in Libra, the day begins at Aries and ends at Libra causing the two signs to be the pivotal players in conducting the war between Light and Dark. The verse 4 particularly depicts the Hermetic War Zone as the 'six days' stated there represent the six signs of the war zone, and the 'Throne' represents the zodiac. The phrase 'all that entereth the earth and all that emergeth therefrom' symbolizes the earth signs of Taurus and Virgo; and the phrase 'all that cometh down from the sky and all that ascendeth therein' refers to the activities of the water signs of Scorpio and Pisces. The Hermetic War Zone is fundamental to the organization of life in nature whereby the consciousness of all living beings find the tests for their authenticity. The goal therefore is not to gain sovereignty or superiority since the real war is never between the living beings, but rather between the Light of life and the Darkness of death. A true warrior is the one that may find strength in life, and wisdom in death.



The War between Light and Dark

The verse 9 says,

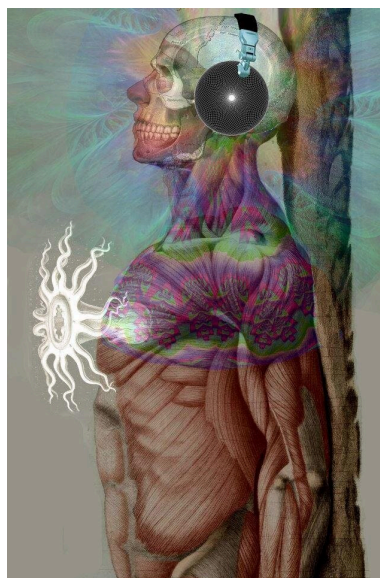
9. He it is Who sendeth down clear revelations unto His slave, that He may bring you forth from darkness unto light; and lo! for you, Allah is Full of Pity, Merciful.

The war between Light and Dark is as old as the conscience of humanity. From the standpoint of morality, it represents the ideological conflict between the Needs and Desires of human beings. The purpose of Need is to support the survival, whilst the objective of Desire is to find self-aggrandizement. Though the physical presence of light can be easily perceived

through the agency of vision, but the philosophical distinction between Light and Dark can only be recognized by a compassionate heart and a sensible mind. The desires drive humans to follow the dark path of greed and possessiveness. This darkness stokes the fires of passions by encouraging exploitation and abuse that might ultimately lead to chaos. The impatience of a person clouds his judgement, and thereby causes him to resort to extreme actions without due understanding of all the variables associated with the consequence. The Darkness thrives on the ignorance that remains unrealized by those suffering from it. On the contrary, the goals of spiritual growth interests the followers of Light. They tend to focus on the human needs by practicing simplicity, fairness, and integrity to establish order in every affair.

12. On the day when thou (Muhammad) wilt see the believers, men and women, their light shining forth before them and on their right hands, (and wilt hear it said unto them): Glad news for you this day: Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein ye are immortal. That is the supreme triumph. 13. On the day when the hypocritical men and the hypocritical women will say unto those who believe: Look on us that we may borrow from your light! it will be said: Go back and seek for light! Then there will separate them a wall wherein is a gate, the inner side whereof containeth mercy, while the outer side thereof is toward the doom.

The verse 12 contains powerful symbolism of the two kinds of lights carried by the believers. The light shining forth before them belongs to the earth signs of Taurus and Virgo, whilst the light on their right hands comes from the water signs of Scorpio and Pisces. The description of light is followed by the phrase 'Gardens underneath which rivers flow' evidently emphasizing the reference to the gardens of earth signs and the rivers of water signs. It suggests that the believers are those who may account for the factors associated with the war so as to fulfill the ideals of Light. Whilst the verse 13 mentions the hypocritical men and women to be those who wage wars without the ideals of Light. Though they may appear like warriors but such people never contribute to a real war. The word 'light' in the verse 13 symbolizes the true battlefield of a war. The hypocrite is actually worst than a disbeliever because when one abandons God he becomes a disbeliever, but when one is abandoned by God he becomes a hypocrite. The phrase 'wall wherein is a gate' in the verse 13 symbolizes the Eye or the Gate of Vision. It represents the element of Fate for the hypocrite, since a blind person remains in the dark despite of the presence of light.



The Way of the Warrior

The major characteristic of a true warrior is that he always fights for the higher ideals. The living in a state of war requires a great deal of physical commitment and mental focus that cannot be achieved without the presence of nobler goals.

19. And those who believe in Allah and His messengers, they are the loyal, and the martyrs are with their Lord; they have their reward and their light; while as for those who disbelieve and deny Our revelations, they are owners of hell-fire. 20. Know that the life of the world is only play, and idle talk, and pageantry, and boasting among you, and rivalry in respect of wealth and children; as the likeness of vegetation after rain, whereof the growth is pleasing to the husbandman, but afterward it drieth up and thou seest it turning yellow, then it becometh straw. And in the Hereafter there is grievous punishment, and (also) forgiveness from Allah and His good pleasure, whereas the life of the world is but matter of illusion.

The verse 19 suggests that the true warriors who may fall in a battlefield should actually be never considered fallen because their ideals stand nonetheless. Just as the warrior supports his cause by fighting for it, the light of his cause also stands for the life of the warrior. The warrior and his cause are not mutually exclusive as their combined legacy continues to find the ever greater heights. On the contrary, the verse 20 explains that those who battle without any higher goal would lose their existence with the tides of time; as the color of their lives fade with the change of seasons and the roots of their trees fail to stand the storms of weather, their legacy is consumed by the void of their darkness.

17. Know that Allah quickeneth the earth after its death. We have made clear Our revelations for you, that haply ye may understand. 18. Lo! those who give alms, both men and women, and lend unto Allah a goodly loan, it will be doubled for them, and theirs will be a rich reward.

The verse 17 uses the symbolism of earth's revival to describe the state of war as ever continuous and perpetual phenomena that is integrally built into the nature itself. The verse 18 suggests that the knowledge of the art of war increases only with the experience of the warrior and the very enhancement of this art represents the double payment on the 'goodly loan', because it improves the value and the standard of the warrior.

22. Naught of disaster befalleth in the earth or in yourselves but it is in a Book before we bring it into being—Lo! that is easy for Allah— 23. That ye grieve not for the sake of that which hath escaped you, nor yet exult because of that which hath been given. Allah loveth not all prideful boasters,

The main lesson here is that wars should not be fought merely to gain victory against the enemy because then the attainment of victory would supposedly end the war. The true war has to be constantly fought without any earthly objective to conquer, and therefore neither losses nor gains could be the decisive factors in the war that do not depend on them. The only purpose of a war should be the advancement in the art of war through the diligence and experience of the true warrior.

25. We verily sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the Balance, that mankind may observe right measure; and He revealed

iron, wherein is mighty power and (many) uses for mankind, and that Allah may know him who helpeth Him and His messengers, though unseen. Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty.

The verse 25 contains the most significant instructions regarding the art of war. The Scripture and the Balance stands for the signs of Aries and Libra respectively. They represent the forces of action and reaction to control the participants and the framework of the war experiment. Thus the equilibrium is achieved with the application of conditions that may render the war to be a beneficial human enterprise. The mention of 'He revealed iron' in verse 25 is a metaphor for the alchemical transformation of humanity into an industrious and functional unit. The metal iron is strong in its character, but it can also be designed and shaped into very useful instruments that may serve the engine of universal goodness. The iron is also attributed to represent the astrological properties of planet Mars, the warrior planet. It implies that just as human beings would use the metal iron for their facilities in life, similarly they should themselves become equally effective tools in the Divine hands to forge the destiny of all life. And just as a good workman may value an effective tool, the Divinity would likewise appreciate the worth of human contributions for the Divine plan.

The End Note

While working on this article, I constantly found the deeper awareness of the extent to which the state of war existed in the world. That made this experience all the more exhilarating and purposeful in view of the grand opportunity afforded to humanity by the forces of nature to learn about the great art of war. I hope that everyone would come across stories of heroism unprecedented in the human history, and that might inspire many generations to appreciate their legacy. I should conclude this article by stating the last two verses from chapter 57 of Quran.

28. O ye who believe! Be mindful of your duty to Allah and put faith in His messenger. He will give you twofold of His mercy and will appoint for you a light wherein ye shall walk, and will forgive you. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful; 29. That the People of the Scripture may know that they control naught of the bounty of Allah, but that the bounty is in Allah's hand to give to whom He will. And Allah is of Infinite Bounty.

'The Four Quls', the Spells for Spiritual Protection in Quran

Introduction

I intend to investigate the powerful protection spells stated in the Quran called the 'four quls'. The hermetic arts of astrology and symbolism are employed here to interpret the esoteric meaning, and the applications of these spells.



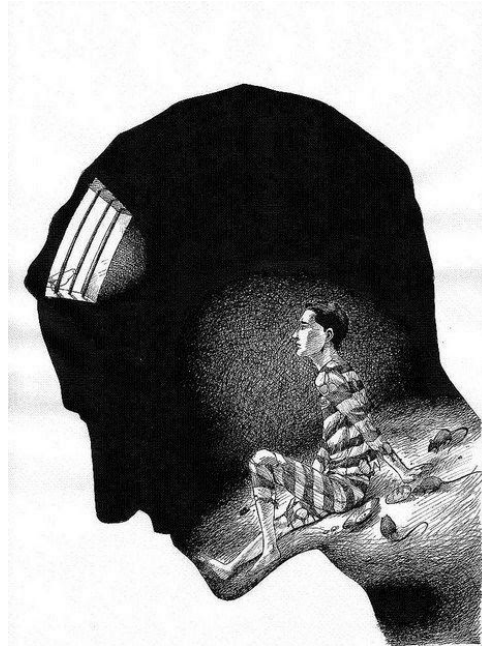
The word 'qul' in Arabic language means 'to say'. There are four chapters in Quran that begin with this word, each of them peculiarly composed of only a few short verses, and placed at the very end section of the Quran. These chapters are also used as mantras by Muslims during prayers because they consider them as powerful protecting 'surahs', and are popularly known as the 'four quls'. Here an attempt is made to interpret the message of these chapters in the light of astrology, philosophy, and psychology. There are four quadrants in an astrological zodiac, such that each of the four chapters correspond to one of those quadrants. Moreover, the philosophical and mystical significance of the spells for the empowerment of human beings is also discussed.

The Suggestibility and the Mind Control

The talent that stands out to distinguish the human existence on planet earth has to be their extraordinary communication skills with languages and symbols. Although human beings occupy a position of privilege when compared with other life forms, but they also frequently become victims of their own endowments. As languages make it possible for a mind to be open for all sorts of information, they can also be used as tools for manipulation and indoctrination of ideas.

The mind constantly searches for excitement in activities whereby it can subside the insecurity of being a vulnerable human. The biggest of such an insecurity is the unpredictability of its environment, and therefore, the foremost activity it dictates is the movement towards a safety zone. Though this action by the mind does provide a temporary solace in the thought of

doing the right thing, but at the same time it also creates a frame of reference for its objectives. This frame of reference can be defined by the terms 'indoctrination' or 'mind control'.



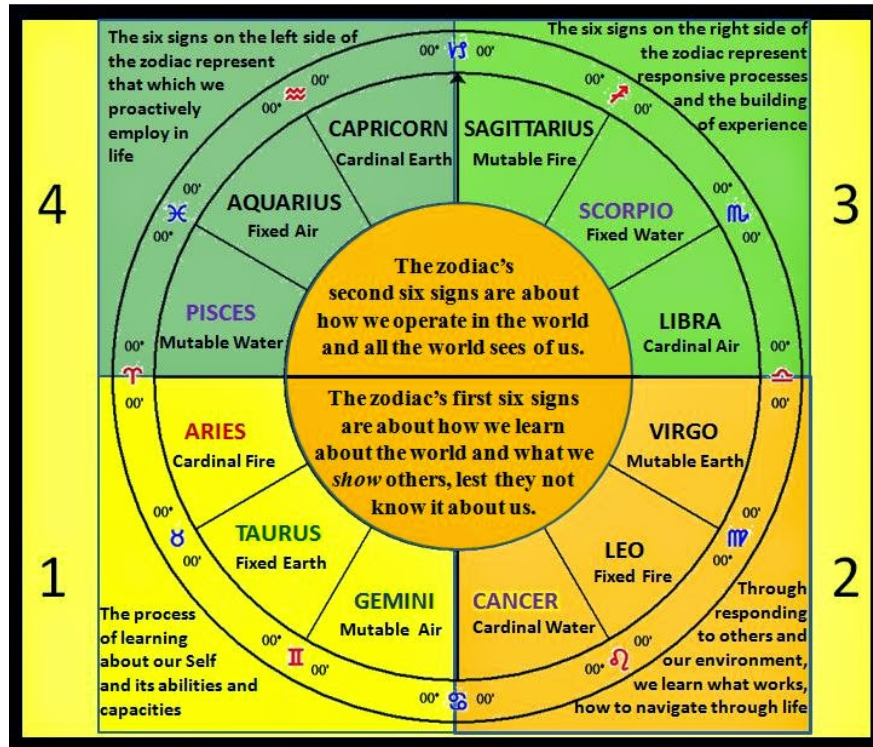
The 'mind control' requires a person to be on the stronger side at all times for his security, and in doing so the mind creates a conflict, and becomes a part of that conflict. This makes the mind to find security in a well defined and a well controlled conflict, because such a conflict dissolves unpredictable outcomes and insures sustainability for its existence. Notwithstanding the transient utility of this arrangement, it has the fundamental flaw of accepting the mind control as the absolute fact, whilst in actuality the 'frame of reference' is always relative and dependent. When the frame of reference changes, the mind still sticks to its illusory safety zone, and thereby becomes the victim of its own talents. The 'indoctrination' of a mind is thus responsible for the ambiguity in its judgement.

The mind of a human being is usually susceptible to propoganda that may provoke its sense of insecurity in terms of his identity, honour, and livelihood. Though it may well be based on lies, the propoganda can leave such powerful impressions on a mind so as to cause addiction from it. These psychological addictions take the forms of personality cults, football teams, organized religions, political ideologies, or food preferences and cause the enslavement of a human mind to an illusory frame of reference.

The Astrology of Persuasion

As mentioned earlier, the psychological insecurity of a human being is a direct consequence of the unpredictable environments, and that the mind craves for a safety zone whereby it can avoid hardships and struggle. A deeper understanding of this factor of unpredictable environments is possible through the study of astrology, because astrology involves the observation of human consciousness as it is influenced by the seasonal changes on earth. The seasons are caused by the variation of intensity in sunlight on earth during the course of a solar year in such a way that they include periods of moderateness and extreme. Astrology can potentially describe a pattern for the changes in human psychological environment, thereby serving as a tool for empowerment and emancipation. Whilst the mind control activities capture

a constant theme of imagery to be celebrated or rituals to be exercised in a definite manner, the astrological insights are based on the sequence of patterns that do not carry constant features but rather more variables, options, and flexibility for inspiring hope in a state of despair, than to whitewash a deplorable condition. The astrological insights can be utilized to confront indoctrinations through defiance of the definable suggestions that are offered by the factors of mind control or the agencies of enslavement. In brief, the key factor to break away from mind control is through defiance or non-cooperation by using astrological archetypes.



Chapter 112: The First Quadrant (Aries, Taurus, Gemini)

1. Say: He is Allah, the One!
2. Allah, the eternally Besought of all!
3. He begetteth not nor was begotten.
4. And there is none comparable unto Him.

The chapter 112 is composed of 4 verses, and it provides the protection from the influences of the first astrological quadrant. This quadrant represents the spring season which begins at the sign of Aries. The astrological Aries depicts an individualistic and almost selfish pride in ones abilities to conquer the world. In order to counter that pride, the great divine ego of the omnipotent and almighty God is employed to teach humility to the overconfident individual. In verse 2, the Taurus trait of accumulating material resources is checked by stating that God does not need anything for His existence. The verses 3–4 challenge the Gemini characteristics of working with symbols or emblems by defying the possibility of divisions in the authority of Godhead, and that of comprehension of divine through comparison or analysis.

Chapter 109: The Second Quadrant (Cancer, Leo, Virgo)

- 1. Say: O disbelievers!**
- 2. I worship not that which ye worship;**
- 3. Nor worship ye that which I worship.**
- 4. And I shall not worship that which ye worship.**
- 5. Nor will ye worship that which I worship.**
- 6. Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion.**

The chapter 109 of Quran offers protection from the influences of the second astrological quadrant. This quadrant is the brightest among others because it represents the summer season, and houses the two royal signs of Cancer and Leo. In order to protect against the influences of this quadrant, the mantra has to be very explicit in its defiance against authority. Therefore, the verse 1 says the autocratic and despotic rulers as 'disbelievers' in God. The verses 2–3 expresses the defiance to authority in the present tense, while verses 4–5 rejects them in the future tense. The verse 6 is peculiar since it says the word 'religion' which is essentially a Virgo trait. It declares that the manners of conduct with respect to religion should be separate from customary practices.

Chapter 113: The Third Quadrant (Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius)

- 1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of Daybreak**
- 2. From the evil of that which He created;**
- 3. From the evil of the darkness when it is intense,**
- 4. And from the evil of malignant witchcraft,**
- 5. And from the evil of the envier when he envieth.**

The chapter 113 poses challenge to the third astrological quadrant which includes the signs of Libra, Scorpio, and Sagittarius. This quadrant reflects the autumn season in its characteristics. In contrast to the first two quadrants, the latter two quadrants represent the darker side of the zodiac, due to which these two successive chapters begin by seeking of the 'refuge' in both the cases. In verse 1, the refuge has been sought after from the 'Lord of Daybreak' which is actually a reference to the sign of Aries, because Libra is the sign where the Sun sets. The verses 2–4 offer protection from the sign of Scorpio because they mention the malevolent creatures, gloomy environments, and malignant subversive activities. The verse 5 protects from the negative attitudes that result in reaction to the optimism, success, and well being of Sagittarius.

Chapter 114: The Fourth Quadrant (Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces)

- 1. Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind,**
- 2. The King of mankind,**

3. **The God of mankind,**
4. **From the evil of the sneaking whisperer,**
5. **Who whispereth in the hearts of mankind,**
6. **Of the jinn and of mankind.**

The chapter 114 offers protection from the fourth astrological quadrant which represents the winter season and consists of the signs of Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces. Similar to the preceding case, here also the 'refuge' is sought after due to the prevailing darkness in the quadrant. The verse 1 mentions the 'Lord of mankind', which is essentially a reference to the sign of Cancer due to its opposition to Capricorn. The verse 2 speaks of the 'King of mankind', thus referring to the sign of Leo (opposite Aquarius); and the verse 3 says the 'God of mankind', which is a reference to Virgo (opposite Pisces). The verses 4–5 indicate that the troubles caused by the fourth quadrant could result in afflictions at the heart region of human body, which is also associated with the royal signs of Cancer and Leo. The verse 6 metaphorically mentions jinn as the Capricorn, and mankind as the Aquarius.

The End Note

We live in a magical universe, an infinite cosmos, and a perfectly designed existence that is meant to inspire every living soul to reach the ultimate potentials of their experiences, and to make them to realize the beautiful beings that they have always been. I should conclude this article by quoting the following verse from Quran.

Allah tasketh not a soul beyond its scope. For it (is only) that which it hath earned, and against it (only) that which it hath deserved. Our Lord! Condemn us not if we forget, or miss the mark! Our Lord! Lay not on us such a burden as thou didst lay on those before us! Our Lord! Impose not on us that which we have not the strength to bear! Pardon us, absolve us and have mercy on us, Thou, our protector, and give us victory over the disbelieving folk. (2, 286)

The Symbolism of Trees in Quran

Introduction

One of the accomplishments of modern science is the creation of a greater consensus about assigning the status of living organisms to plants. The nature of plants though had always been recognized as highly complex in their diversity and systems of regeneration, but due to the limitations concerning organs of mobility and sensations that they were categorised as lesser forms of life. Nevertheless, the mystical perspective on the behaviour of plants carries a rich legacy of inspiration and devotion offered throughout history by all the major religious and cultural traditions. The mythologies of the world preserve special accounts to signify a whole spectrum of properties from medicinal remedies to mystical experiences caused by their prescribed applications. Many scholarly works have been conducted to describe the use of plants (leaves, flowers, fruits, etc.) in terms of their symbolic associations in the ritual practices of religions. Here, I shall be investigating the symbolic analogy of trees mentioned in the Quran as representatives of the most correct or true mode of expression and communication in nature from a hermetic perspective.



The Symbolic Teachers of Languages

The faculty that distinguishes humans from all the other creatures on earth is their extraordinary capacity to memorize words or symbols as expressive of definite meanings in terms of identifiable experiences. From a hermetic standpoint, all human experiences have their origins in the cosmos, as nature influences them according to the prevalent conditions of time and space. The function of linguistics therefore is to translate those experiences into convenient modes of recognition and expression. Now, humans comparatively get to experience a far greater level of diversity in physical and psychological climates than to plants due to their extraordinary ability to travel both in space and time. Human beings have faster modes of

transporting themselves from one place to another, and at the same time have records of past occurrences that they can study in the history books or other references of historical imports. Due to this immense pressure of processing a wide variety of experiences for adapting to the requirements of their existence in the world, there is a far greater chance for human minds to be confused or even collapse under the extreme conditions. But plants usually do not have to endure traumas of the changing environment consistently as they take roots in particular places with specific climatic conditions that fulfil their needs for survival. There is a much greater level of both authenticity and diversity present in the plants as their habitat mostly defines their characteristics throughout the earth. Therefore, the trees can certainly be more authentic and unadulterated in their expressions of experiences that are induced on account of cosmic influences to be symbolically associated with the most true or meaningful form of language. The Quran says,

Seest thou not how Allah coineth a similitude: A goodly saying, as a goodly tree, its root set firm, its branches reaching into heaven. Giving its fruit at every season by permission of its Lord? Allah coineth the similitudes for mankind in order that they may reflect. And the similitude of a bad saying is as a bad tree, uprooted from upon the earth, possessing no stability. Allah confirmeth those who believe by a firm saying in the life of the world and in the Hereafter, and Allah sendeth wrong-doers astray. And Allah doeth what He will. (14, 24–27)

The verses (14, 24–27) suggest the parallel between ‘trees’ and ‘sayings’. The authentic words are strongly rooted in the human experiences; they serve as lessons or guidelines for humans to follow in every situation; and thus acting upon such words inevitably brings forth good results. Whilst frivolous ideas are of illusory nature similar to those bad trees that do not carry any roots or stability, and thus are quite meaningless and futile. The Quran further says concerning the nature of human language.

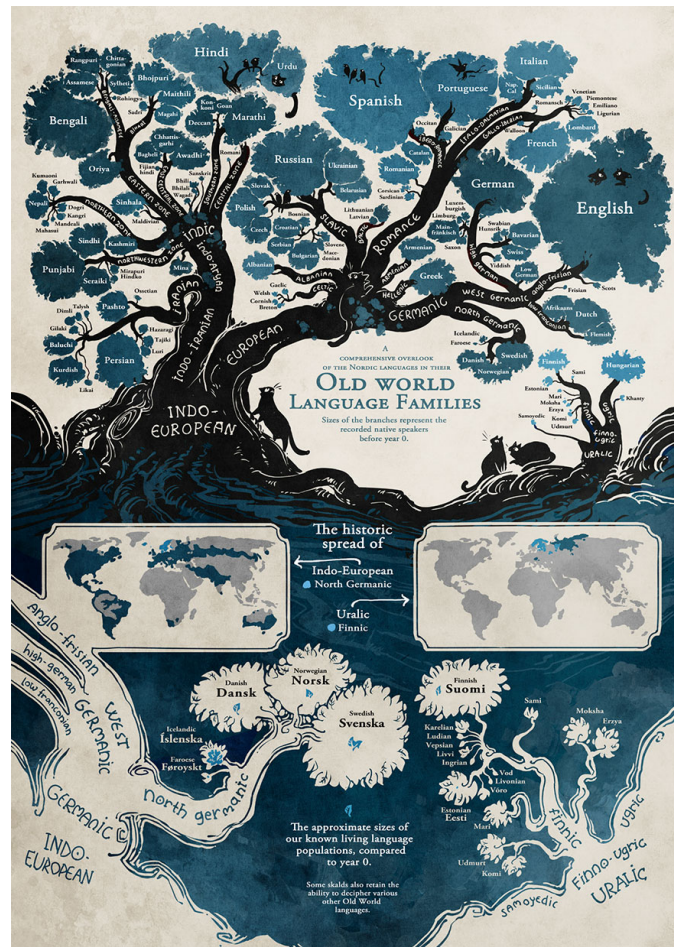
And He taught Adam all the names, then showed them to the angels, saying: Inform Me of the names of these, if ye are truthful. They said: Be glorified! We have no knowledge saving that which Thou hast taught us. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Knower, the Wise. He said: O Adam! Inform them of their names, and when he had informed them of their names, He said: Did I not tell you that I know the secret of the heavens and the earth? And I know that which ye disclose and which ye hide. (2, 31–33)

The human languages are composed of sentences and words that can be further decomposed into alphabets. The ancient Egyptians in particular used to have hieroglyphic writing systems whereby images were employed to represent certain words or sounds as the main constituents for formulating their language. Similarly, the combinations of basic or root alphabets (such as names or images) used in different orders and contexts reveal the meanings implied in sentences. In order for such sentences to make sense to the listeners, the communicators in a language must recognize a common ground of experiences that are embedded in the universal influence of archetypal or authentic elemental natures. The trees therefore, serve as the right symbols of experiences as their conditions are influenced by the archetypal elements i.e. fire, water, air, and earth in a very similar fashion to the humans. The Quran says,

And if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea, with seven more seas to help it, (were ink), the words of Allah could not be exhausted. Lo! Allah is Mighty, Wise. (31, 27)

The verse (31, 27) is very indicative of the evolution of human languages because the symbol of sea in the hermetic philosophy represents the mirror which reflects the impact of cosmic influences. Just as the words of a language reflect the consciousness from which it is uttered; the universal consciousness governed by the seven planetary influences (the seven seas) determine the existence of all forms of verbal expressions, and the symbolic medium for those expressions are the tremendously diverse varieties of trees.

The given verse also makes another subtle point by mentioning, 'the words of Allah could not be exhausted' that though the Quran (the words of Allah) contains a limited number of sentences in the Arabic language but the value of this divinely inspired book should not be assessed by the quantity of materials or discourses that it provides but rather the quality of them. The words merely serve as conduits for conveying the message, and therefore they must never be allowed to dominate over the theme of the message itself. Hence, there are many divinely inspired messages but there are no sacred languages, and as such the idea of making a language as the holy language of God is totally absurd. Thus, the philosophical analysis of Arabic literature is not necessary to understand the messages of Quran or its mysteries because Arabic language only serves as a convenient vessel to transfer the Quranic knowledge. And just as the transfer of water from one container to another can be managed without losing the water's essential ability of quenching the thirst, and so does it apply to the use of languages as mediums of knowledge. The phrase 'the words of Allah could not be exhausted' symbolically refers to the ability of Quranic knowledge to solve all the mysteries of life regardless of the language it is studied or learnt.



The Tree of Life

The language of a person represents his state of consciousness in whatever conditions he may use that language. The noble use of language implies understanding of physical as well as psychic phenomena so as not to cause any inadvertent offence or confusion. From a hermetic standpoint, the tree of life forms the axis of equinox points of the zodiacal signs i.e. Aries and Libra because in each of these signs the light and darkness are of equal lengths. The parity of light versus darkness on this axis establishes an equilibrium that results in equanimity, harmony, and peace. The Quran says,

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light. Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah setteth forth for mankind similitudes, for Allah is Knower of all things. (This lamp is found) in houses which Allah hath allowed to be exalted and that His name shall be remembered therein. Therein do offer praise to Him at morn and evening. Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguileth from remembrance of Allah and constancy in prayer and paying to the poor their due; who fear a day when hearts and eyeballs will be overturned; That Allah may reward them with the best of what they did, and increase reward for them of His bounty. Allah giveth blessings without stint to whom He will. (24, 35–38)

The verses (24, 35–38) are of great metaphorical importance regarding the essence of faith in the Islamic doctrine. The 'lamp' here is the allegory for a compassionate human heart, and when it gets kindled with the flame of love derived from the deepest feelings of sincerity and goodness then the ineffable glory of the purest light of God indelibly shines through the hearts of men. The 'blessed tree' here is a reference to the metaphorical 'tree of life' forming the equinox axis of the zodiac. The 'tree of life' is also mentioned in the following verses.

Then, when Moses had fulfilled the term, and was travelling with his housefolk, he saw in the distance a fire and said unto his housefolk: Bide ye (here). Lo! I see in the distance a fire; peradventure I shall bring you tidings thence, or a brand from the fire that ye may warm yourselves. And when he reached it, he was called from the right side of the valley in the blessed field, from the tree: O Moses! Lo! I, even I, am Allah, the Lord of the Worlds; Throw down thy staff. And when he saw it writhing as it had been a demon, he turned to flee headlong, (and it was said unto him): O Moses! Draw nigh and fear not. Lo! thou art of those who are secure. (28, 29–31)

God had talked to Moses at the 'tree of life' whereby the staff of Moses that symbolized his authority became alive and active. The heart of Moses initially got frightened because of realizing his great potential to discover the connection with God, but felt secure afterwards in the divine love and mercy. It was through his association with the 'tree of life' that Moses had liberated the Israelites from the tyrannical rule of Pharaoh so that they could go to their Promised Land.

The Tree of Loss

The axis of solstice in the zodiac which comprises of the signs of Cancer and Capricorn forms the 'tree of loss' due to the great disparity of light in the two signs of the axis. It is metaphorically described in the following story of Quran.

And verily We made a covenant of old with Adam, but he forgot, and We found no constancy in him. And when We said unto the angels: Fall prostrate before Adam, they fell prostrate (all) save Iblis; he refused. Therefor we said: O Adam! This is an enemy unto thee and unto thy wife, so let him not drive you both out of the Garden so that thou come to toil. It is (vouchsafed) unto thee that thou hungerest not therein nor art naked. And that thou thirstest not therein nor art exposed to the sun's heat. But the Devil whispered to him, saying: O Adam! Shall I show thee the tree of immortality and power that wasteth not away? Then they twain ate thereof, so that their shame became apparent unto them, and they began to hide by heaping on themselves some of the leaves of the Garden. And Adam disobeyed his Lord, so went astray. (20, 115–121)

The verses (20, 115–121) depict the anecdote of pride, jealousy, subversion, and temptation. Adam and his wife are the eternal twins of the sign of Gemini living in the garden of spring season; seduced by Iblis (the enemy) to exceed their limits (the solstice point) and eat of the tree of loss (the axis of solstice); and thereby lost the garden of spring season to fall into the heat and toil of the summer season. The 'tree of loss' made them to loose their ability to sincerely communicate with each other, and thus they had to hide themselves under the pretence of manufactured excuses (lies). The 'tree of loss' also represents the estrangement due to the idolatrous behaviours of all kinds whereby people give more importance to the symbols rather than the meanings of symbols, and thus end up inhabiting their own skins as strangers. The unethical behaviours of humans make them to loose their integrity of character, and consequently they fall from a state of grace to that of ignominy and toil.

The End Note

The gist of this article is to communicate the significance of language in the human affairs for the creation of a harmonious society based on love, compassion, and honesty by avoiding the pretentious or duplicitous attitudes. I should conclude here by stating the following verse from Quran.

And Allah will vindicate the Truth by His words, however much the guilty be averse. (10, 82)

The Symbolism of Animals in Quran

Introduction

In the previous article titled “The Symbolism of Trees in Quran”, I had described the trees as symbolic representatives of human languages or modes of communications due to their nature as stationary living beings; their emblem could only be used to indicate the forms or empirical values of an intellectual kind particular to the variety of the trees. Contrary to the trees, animals are mobile and exhibit a far greater range of physical and emotional functions, thus they may carry a gamut of implications relative to their shape, size, habits, and activities. As trees symbolize ‘words’, the animals symbolize ‘actions’; and just as words express qualitative or archetypal phenomena inhabiting in the realm of mind, the actions are more complex since they relate the mind to the physical world by qualifying them according to their worth. Words create the ‘Will’, and actions execute it. Therefore, when animals eat plants they are actually feeding themselves of the divine ‘Will’ or ‘Commandment’ so as to execute those commandments by utilizing their physical capacities. Failure in the fulfilment of this role should prove their inadequacy in the divine plan, because the creatures that do not resonate with the divine plan suffer the consequences through the divine law. The divine law is always directed by the divine plan to uphold the divine characteristics or values totally and unconditionally in the relative universe.



The Path of Power

The Quran says,

Whoso desireth power (should know that) all power belongeth to Allah. Unto Him good words ascend, and the pious deed doth He exalt; but those who plot iniquities, theirs will be an awful doom; and the plotting of such (folk) will come to naught. (35, 10)

The verse (35, 10) is significant as it suggests the concept of power associated with good words (plants) and pious deeds (animals) that find favour in the divine presence. The point here is that neither of plants or animals possess any powers at all because their actions are motivated totally by the pleasure derive of instincts that are pre-conditioned into every bit of their existence. Once left in nature, both plants and animals cannot exercise choices for making changes with respect to their conducts since the judgement factor remains totally absent in them. They cannot act relative to the circumstances by challenging them, rather tend to adapt to the flow of the occasion. For instance, a polar bear may survive the harsh winters of Arctic but would not be capable of withstanding the mildest tropical summers. Though animals do have considerable intelligence to govern their own mode of life in a particular set of conditions but they cannot rebel against those circumstances, and consequently their roles on earth is totally definite and defined. The notion of power negates such a role. One may ask here that whatever could be wrong with the plants/animals existence if they prefer to live in a specific habitat within nature. For is it not the nature that has devised the formula in the first place? Yes... Such an existence may be good enough for plants/animals kind but not for humans because it would make them stuck to the elements of nature. Humans shall neither find ascension nor exaltation as mentioned in the verse (35, 10) and thereby, no power. But then, how to get power? The Quran says,

And for every nation have We appointed a ritual, that they may mention the name of Allah over the beast of cattle that He hath given them for food; and your god is One God, therefore surrender unto Him. And give good tidings (O Muhammad) to the humble. (22, 34)

The verse (22, 34) suggests that by mentioning the name of one God over the food or in other words by recognizing the universe as a whole that human beings receive true power. For instance, viewed from a human perspective the earth can be divided into various political boundaries based on the whims of socio-economic and environmental conditions. But if possible to see it though a divine or heavenly vision from the outer space etc. the earth could only be considered as one entity. Just like a complex machine that may carry various cogs, gears, wheels, etc. but always acts as a single unit to fulfill its objective; the humans have a responsibility to integrate the diverse erratic forces of nature in an ordered condition for a mutually compatible existence. Humans shall have to challenge their own resources and environments in order to tread the path of power.



The Law of Power

The Quran says,

Of the cattle are some for burden and some for meat: eat what Allah hath provided for you, and follow not the footsteps of Satan: for he is to you and avowed enemy. (Take) eight (head of cattle) in (four) pairs: of sheep a pair, and of goats a pair; say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose? Tell me with knowledge if ye are truthful: Of camels a pair, and oxen a pair; say, hath He forbidden the two males, or the two females, or (the young) which the wombs of the two females enclose?—Were ye present when Allah ordered you such a thing? But who doth more wrong than one who invents a lie against Allah, to lead astray men without knowledge? For Allah guideth not people who do wrong. (06, 142–144)

The difference between cattle of burden and meat (food) denotes the distinction evident in the actions of production and consumption. To misrepresent the two kinds of actions can be very damaging to the health of any system since they respectively require entirely different conditions. The animals that are permissible here for meat (consumption) have been universally adapted to all kinds of challenges by surviving on meagre resources under the extreme seasonal conditions, and therefore feeding on them would likely promote the resistance factor in human actions. The four pairs of animals that are mentioned in verses (06, 142–144) are very symbolic because they allegorically counter the challenges offered by the four seasons of summer, spring, autumn, and winter. Among the four types of cattle, the pairs of sheep and goats are grouped together in the text because they respectively represent the signs of winter and autumn, thus the presence of Sun on the southern portion of the equator. The camels and oxen represent summer and spring respectively, and thus are grouped accordingly in the text together in order to occupy the northern portion of the equator for the seasonal transit of the Sun. Another very significant esoteric factor about this verse is that it demonstrates the great triad of father, mother, and child into its equation depicting the cardinal, fixed, and mutable astrological signs; the father being the cardinal signs, the mother being the fixed signs, and the young child being the mutable signs of the four seasons. The strong connections of these cattle to the conditions of seasons also become strikingly obvious when considering the physiological features and psychological traits of the associated types of animals to workout the challenges of seasonal adaptations. The following story in the Quran metaphorically refers to the possibility of this seasonal adaptation.

And when Abraham said (unto his Lord): My Lord! Show me how Thou givest life to the dead, He said: Dost thou not believe? Abraham said: Yea, but (I ask) in order that my heart may be at ease. (His Lord) said: Take four of the birds and cause them to incline unto thee, then place a part of them on each hill, then call them, they will come to thee in haste, and know that Allah is Mighty, Wise. (2, 260)

The four birds in the above passage metaphorically represent the four seasons. Once Abraham had mixed up the dead parts of the four birds and placed them separately at different corners of the land, the birds still responded to his call solely because they were already inclined towards him. The message of this metaphor is that as animal bodies may serve to evoke and bring forth certain actions owing to the powerful purposes or intentions; likewise the purpose may cause the bodies to be resurrected also, and that is the law of power. In the esoteric arts, the birds are frequently used to symbolize the powers of regeneration and resurrection.



The Act of Power

The Quran says,

O mankind! A similitude is coined, so pay ye heed to it: Lo! those on whom ye call beside Allah will never create a fly though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly took something from them, they could not rescue it from it. So weak are (both) the seeker and the sought! (22, 73)

The violent history of mankind bears witness to the fact that his ambitions for power have caused more trouble on earth than anything else. But the power does not really last for long if it is utilized for some selfish or mean objectives. In the verse (22, 73), the fly represents the archetypal power because though being small, its relative proportions of the physical organs makes it a very formidable creature. A healthy creature of proper proportions, talent, and intelligence should be considered a powerful creature, rather than some mighty king who would only cause trouble and destruction in the land on account of his ambitions. The verse (22, 73) also indicates that the divine power acts in unexpected or unusual ways because just like flies that cannot be easily controlled on account of its proportions, we can surmise from the extrapolation of this analogy about even smaller organisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, etc. that not only feed on large animals in parasitic relationships, but also may easily bring them down.

Lo! Allah disdaineth not to coin the similitude even of a gnat or anything above that. Those who believe know that it is the truth from their Lord; but those who disbelieve say: What doth Allah wish (to teach) by such a similitude? He misleadeth many thereby, and He guideth many thereby; and He misleadeth thereby only miscreants. (2, 26)

On the other hand, some small creatures do also perform extraordinarily fantastic labours in order to bless the humankind with the best gifts of nature.

And thy Lord inspired the bee, saying: Choose thou habitations in the hills and in the trees and in that which they thatch; Then eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of thy Lord, made smooth (for thee). There cometh forth from their bellies a drink divers of hues, wherein is healing for mankind. Lo! herein is indeed a portent for people who reflect. (16, 68–69)

The exercise of divine power is also strongly accentuated in the stories of Moses in the Quran.

And what is that in thy right hand, O Moses? He said: This is my staff whereon I lean, and wherewith I beat down branches for my sheep, and wherein I find other uses. He said: Cast it down, O Moses! So he cast it down, and lo! it was a serpent, gliding. He said: Grasp it and fear not. We shall return it to its former state. (20, 17–21)

The serpent in the verse (20, 17–24) is the symbol of royal power. Moses had inherently possessed this extraordinary latent power in the form of his staff which he only used for the very ordinary purposes, but the divine guidance supported him to manifest the true potential of it. A human being may be holding a low status in life, nevertheless this anecdote suggests that through right guidance and positive intentions one can acquire extensive powers to surpass all possibilities.

By the snorting coursers. Striking sparks of fire. And scouring to the raid at dawn. Then, therewith, with their trail of dust. Cleaving, as one, the centre (of the foe). Lo! man is an ingrate unto his Lord. And lo! he is a witness unto that. (100, 1–7)

The verses (100, 1–7) provide an excellent description of the use of power for nobler purposes. The imagery used here is symbolic of the transformative aspect of power since at dawn the darkness departs due to the light of Sun, similarly the right applications of power always result in happiness and freedom. The Quran offers the character of Solomon as the prime example to illustrate the righteous conduct of a powerful human being.

And there were gathered together unto Solomon his armies of the jinn and humankind, and of the birds, and they were set in battle order. Till, when they reached the Valley of the Ants, an ant exclaimed: O ants! Enter your dwellings lest Solomon and his armies crush you, unperceiving. And (Solomon) smiled, laughing at her speech, and said: My Lord, arouse me to be thankful for Thy favour wherewith Thou hast favoured me and my parents, and to do good that shall be pleasing unto Thee, and include me in (the number of) Thy righteous slaves. (27, 17–19)

But power can also either be directed towards wrong objectives or it may not be used at all due to laziness and stupidity, such as the following depictions of cases in the Quran.

The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books. Wretched is the likeness of folk who deny the revelations of Allah. And Allah guideth not wrongdoing folk. (62, 05)

Recite unto them the tale of him to whom We gave Our revelations, but he sloughed them off, so Satan overtook him and he became of those who lead astray. And had We willed We could have raised him by their means, but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust. Therefore his likeness is as the likeness of a dog: if thou attackest him he panteth with his tongue out, and if thou leavest him he panteth with his tongue out. Such is the likeness of the people who deny Our revelations. Narrate unto them the history (of the men of old), that haply they may take thought. (7, 175–176)

And ye know of those of you who broke the Sabbath, how We said unto them: Be ye apes, despised and hated! And We made it an example to their own and to succeeding generations, and an admonition to the God-fearing. (2, 65–66)

Why now turn they away from the Admonishment. As they were frightened asses. Fleeing from a lion! (74, 49–51)

Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo! the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass. (31, 19)

Shall I tell thee of a worse (case) than theirs for retribution with Allah? (Worse is the case of him) whom Allah hath cursed, him on whom His wrath hath fallen and of whose sort Allah hath turned some to apes and swine, and who serveth idols. Such are in worse plight and further astray from the plain road. (5, 60)



The End Note

The providence has bestowed humans with remarkable talents to overcome the greatest dilemmas of existence. It is up to human beings now to improvise and utilize their faculties by acknowledging the consequences and values of their actions as manifestations of the divine power. Finally, I should conclude this article by stating a verse from the Quran.

Lo! Allah wrongeth not even of the weight of an ant; and if there is a good deed, He will double it and will give (the doer) from His presence an immense reward. (4, 40)

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