



THE FOUR TERMS OF THE QUR'ĀN IN THE
DISCOURSE OF MAUDUDI: AN ANALYSIS OF HIS
METHODOLOGY

BY

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ABSTRACT

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi described the four key terms of the Qur'ān, i.e., *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *'Ibādah* and *Dīn* in his *Qur'an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahen* in detail. He has shown that each of these terms does not bear only one meaning rather they have other meanings too. To reach the comprehensive meaning of any of these particular terms, he suggested to combine its all-probable meanings. However, many scholars criticise him for this interpretation. Thus, the main purpose of this study is to introduce this book, evaluate its features, its methodology of understanding and interpreting these four basic terms, and to examine his approach of theological, philosophical and rational interpretation. Therefore, this research attempts to ascertain how far it goes in line with the praiseworthy approach. This present study adopts the approach of textual analysis in dealing with these four terms. The exploration depends basically on his book, *Qur'an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahen*, his comments about these terms in his monumental *tafsīr*, *Tafhim al-Qur'an*, and his other writings that talk about these terms. The researcher found that whenever Maududi warned that the absence of true understanding might cause some people to commit some sorts of *shirk* unconsciously, he did not categorise them as *Mushrik*. Likewise, whenever he categorised the state or the society as *jāhili* he meant that state or society has some characteristics of *jāhiliyyah*. Throughout the discussion Maududi used the methodologies which are suggested by previous scholars of this field, thus, his explanation is valid and it can be said that he has combined *tafsīr al-Riwāyah* with *tafsīr al-Dirāyah* in explaining these terms. It can be perceived that here, Maududi emphasised much on Islamic state, where other acts of worship did not get enough importance.

ملخص البحث

تناول السيد أبو الأعلى المودودي في كتابه المشهور: "المصطلحات الأربعة في القرآن؛" المصطلحات الأربعة الرئيسية بالتفصيل والمتمثلة في: الإله، الرب، العبادة، والدين. ويرى المودودي أن كل واحدة من هذه المصطلحات لا تقتصر على معنى واحد فقط، وإنما تتسع لعدة معانٍ أخرى، وللوصول إلى هذا المعنى الشامل، فإنه ينبغي على الباحث أن يجمع بين جميع هذه المعاني المحتملة. ولكن لم يسلم شرحه هذا من النقد من قبل عدد كبير من العلماء. إذن الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو التعريف بهذا الكتاب، وفهم معالمه، والمنهج المتبع فيه، كذا دراسة منهجه في التفسير اللاهوتي والفلسفي والعقلاني. من هنا يحاول الباحث التأكد من مدى تطابق ما ذهب إليه المودودي مع علماء الأمة الإسلامية وآرائهم، موظفاً المنهج التحليلي النصي، مع الاعتماد خاصة على كتابه "المصطلحات الأربعة في القرآن"، وتفسيره الموسوم "تفهم القرآن" وكتاباته الأخرى التي تناولت هذه المصطلحات. وجد الباحث أنه كما حذر المودودي من أن غياب الفهم الحقيقي قد يجر بعض الناس إلى ارتكاب بعض أنواع الشرك دون وعي، مع أنه لم يصفهم بالشرك. كما أنه كلما وصف الدولة أو المجتمع بالجاهلية كان يعني هذا عنده أن هذه الدولة أو المجتمع لديه بعض خصائص الجاهلية. فمن خلال هذا الشرح وجد الباحث ان المودودي قد استخدم المناهج التي اقترحها العلماء السابقون في هذا المجال، ويمكن القول بأنه جمع بين التفسير بالرواية والتفسير بالدراية في شرح هذه المصطلحات، وبالتالي شرحه مقبول. وقد يلاحظ أيضاً أن المودودي أعطى مساحة كبيرة لمفهوم الدولة الإسلامية حيث العبادات الأخرى لم تحصل أهمية كبيرة منه.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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To my beloved parents who have always inspired and encouraged me by saying, “O my son! We want nothing from you but the service toward the religion”.

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All I can do in the end is to appeal to my Generous Almighty Lord: O Allah! Grant all of them enormous bounties, favours and blessings in this world and in the hereafter for YOU are the Most Forgiving. Ameen....

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TRANSLITERATION

Consonants:

Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman
ب	b	س	s	ك	k
ت	t	ش	sh	ل	l
ث	th	ص	ṣ	م	m
ج	j	ض	ḍ	ن	n
ح	ḥ	ط	ṭ	ه	h
خ	kh	ظ	ẓ	و	w
د	d	ع	‘	ء	’
ذ	dh	غ	gh	ي	y
ر	r	ف	f		
ز	z	ق	q		

Vowels and Diphthongs:

Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman	Arabic	Roman
ـَ	a	يِ	ī	يَ	ay
ـُ	u	أَ، يَ	an	وُ	uww, ū (in final position)
ـِ	i	وُ	un	يِ	iy, ī (in final position)
ـَا، ـِ، ـِ	ā	يِ	in		
وُ	ū	وُ	aw		

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The ‘Uthmanī Caliphate was abolished in the earlier part of the 20th century while the balance of the world power seemed to have finally settled in favour of the West. Intellectually and politically, the West nearly succeeded in destroying the vitality of the Muslim mind.¹ Unfortunately, even the Muslim mind turned against its own cultural, religious and historical heritage. In that crucial situation, some Muslim scholars became pioneers who enlightened the Islamic way of life for its followers. Moreover, it is ‘*Sunnat Allāh*’ that He, Allāh, appoints some of His servants, from time to time, in the interval of the Prophets, to call upon people to the right path,² and they hold their patience in dire crisis. They possess not only the characteristics but also the fearlessness to embrace all sorts of torture from the opponents. Maulana Abul Ala Maududi* is one of those contemporary Muslim thinkers who awakened the dormant Muslims from their deep slumber and enriched the Muslim mind. To do this, he wrote many books and pamphlets where he tried to convince the Muslims to return to the original teachings of Islam and to overcome this crucial situation.

Maulana Maududi is a strong influential figure whose works present the teachings of Islam in such a logical way, with many attractive and convincing

¹ Masudul Hassan, *Sayyid Abul A`ala Maududi and his thought*, (Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1st edn., 1984), Vol. 1, xi.

² Paraphrased from the *ḥadīth* “At the head of every one hundred years, Allāh will send to this nation one who will revive for it its Religion.” See Abū Bakar Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Bayhaqī, *Ma`rifat al-Sunan wa al-Āthār*, ed. Sayyid Kasrawī Ḥasan, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1st edn., 1991), Vol. 1, 124. Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu`jam al-Awsaṭ*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Muḥammad Ḥasan Ismā‘īl, (Amman: Dār al-Fikr, 1st edn., 1999), Vol. 5, 44.

* The writers who have written on Maududi’s thoughts and movement have used different spelling for Maududi’s name. The researcher will use this (Maulana Abul Ala Maududi) spelling throughout the body of this discussion to maintain consistency. However, in quoted text, footnote or in titles given by other authors, the name will remain as it is.

arguments that rekindle the faith in the hearts of the millions of Muslims and make them staunch believers. His influence transcends the boundaries of *Jama'at-i Islami* and other organizations, it even extends far beyond the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

Ilāh, Rabb, dīn and *ʿibādah* are among the most important basic *Muṣṭalahāt* (terms) that Allāh (swt) states in the Qur'ān. Maududi developed his thoughts based on these terms. He opined that Muslims are entirely distinct from Hindus as well as from the followers of other religions in every respect. He expounded the true message of Islam with contemporary freshness and expression. He tried to prove that Islam is a complete code of life with its own belief system, values and principles, and its own unique social, political, economic, cultural and educational systems. In other words, he built an ideological community for Muslims enlightened with divine guidance and reflective on every aspect of life. It is upon their faith to establish an Islamic state, which will be governed according to the law revealed by Almighty Allāh.

In spite of his vast knowledge, many scholars, such as Yusuf al-Bannury,³ Wahiduddin Khan⁴ and many others degraded his talent. They took him as a misinterpreter of the Qur'ān and *Sunnah* for his own political agenda. Some of them, such as Bannury, blame Maududi that he could not complete his study.⁵ They also maintained that his books are not based on enough evidence from the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, and that he disparaged many prominent Muslim scholars and the Companions.⁶ In light of this, the research seeks to study Maududi's explanation of the above terms, and his methodology in interpreting them under the proposed topic

“The Four Terms of the Qur'ān in the Discourse of Maududi: An Analysis of his

³ Muhammad Yusuf al-Bannury, *al-Ustādh al-Mawdūdī wa shayyūn min ḥayātīhi wa afkārīhi*, (Istanbul: Ḥaqīqat Awi, 1986), 18-19.

⁴ See Wahiduddin Khan, *Dīn ki Siyasi Ta'abir* [Political interpretation of Religion], (New Delhi: Maktaba al-Risala, 1990).

⁵ Bannury, 6.

⁶ Ibid.

Methodology". It is hoped that this research will clarify the ideological stance of Maulana Maududi pertinent to Islamic principles and his position as a great Islamic scholar.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Ilāh, Rabb, dīn and *‘ibādah* are among the most important basic *Muṣṭalahāt* of the Qur’ān. These are the core teachings of the Qur’ān and Islamic *da‘wah*. It is very important to understand these terms in order to comprehend the significance of *‘aqīdah*, which is considered to be the most prominent element of Islam. It is an urgency for an individual to be illuminated with the true light of religion. It is like the heart in a body, which initially represents the whole body, if it is sick, it will ultimately affect the whole function of the body. It refers to those essential matters on which a believer puts his/her earnest faith with certainty and conviction. It plays a vital role to mould the Muslim mind and behaviour. That is the manner by which the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught his Companions. He always tried to nurture his Companions with the best characteristics during his 13 years in Makkah.

As a great scholar of Islam, Maududi did not neglect these terms; he placed significant importance by giving vast interpretations of these terms. Realising its gravity, he authored a book entitled *Qur’an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahun: Ilah, Rabb, Ibadah awr Din*.⁷ His magnificent work, *Tafhim al-Qur’an*, is also one of the contemporary Qur’ānic exegeses that reflects his views on these terms.

⁷ Abul Ala Maududi, *Qur’an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahun: Ilah, Rabb, Ibadat awr Din*, (Lahore: Islamic Publication, 3rd edn., 2000). The researcher provides the references from *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba‘ah fi al-Qur’ān*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Kāzīm Sabbāq, (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 5th edn., 1971). In addition, he uses *Four Basic Qur’ānic Terms*, trans. from Urdu by Abu Asad, (Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 1980), and *Qurāner Charti Moulik Paribhasha*, trans. from Urdu by Golam Subhan Siddiqi, (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 10th edn., 2005).

Several responses are found on Maududi's understandings and thoughts. Many scholars accuse him for his explanations and for the methodology that he used and claim that these interpretations are not in line with *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*. Some of them even argue that he was in favour of *Khawārij* and as such his view would be totally unacceptable. He is also accused of condemning the Companions of the Prophet (peace be upon them). In addition, it is argued that he had quoted *ḥadīth al-āḥād* and *ḥadīth al-dā'if* in his discussions.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to study his understanding of the four basic terms used in the Qur'ān and explore the truth whether his views are in line with those of the early Muslim scholars or not. In addition, the researcher will also explore his methodology of interpretation. It will try to explore whether he relied on authentic sources of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth while formulating his interpretations or not. It will also make an attempt to find out whether he actually disparaged any of the Companions of the Prophet or prominent Muslim scholars before him. If he criticised, what was his justification for his oppositions, and whether his thoughts inclined towards destructive schools (*al-Firaq al-Haddāmah*)?

In brief, this research seeks to study the abovementioned problem by exploring his way of explanation as well as his methodology of interpretation of the terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *'ibādah*. It is hoped that this research will bring forth insights to be implemented and contributed to the field of knowledge and promote further research in this field for the benefit of the Muslim *Ummah*.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research will attempt to answer the following questions:

- 1- What caused Maududi to think about the terms: *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *‘ibādah*.
- 2- What is his understanding of these four basic terms? Is it in line with *Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ*?
- 3- What is his methodology in explaining these terms? Did he refer to any methodology of prominent scholars?
- 4- Did he follow the teachings of the Qur’ān and authentic *aḥādīth* in exploring his thoughts?
- 5- How did he contribute to the proper teaching of these terms to shape Muslim minds?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- 1- To explore Maududi’s methodology in interpreting these four basic terms: *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *‘ibādah*.
- 2- To explore the use of Qur’ānic evidence and *aḥādīth* in his interpretation of these terms.
- 3- To examine his approach of theological, philosophical and rational interpretation of these terms.
- 4- To study his understanding of these terms.
- 5- To evaluate the views of selected classical and contemporary *‘Ulama* on these terms.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilizes qualitative method focussing on content analysis. The books written by Maulana on this issue (*tawhīd: Ilāh, Rabb, dīn* and *‘ibādah*), especially *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān*, are studied in order to explore his methodology, thoughts and understanding which had been used in his interpretation. His magnum opus *Tafhim al-Qur’an* is also analysed to identify his views in explaining the matters related to the terms. Other books, journals and articles written by him are also consulted. Reference is made to the writings of other scholars to study their criticisms against Maududi. The books related to this topic written by Imām Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī and others are also studied to compare Maududi’s views with theirs. Other books are also consulted to make this thesis factually comprehensive.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As the topic suggests, this study confines itself to the discussion of previous prominent *Mufasssirūn, Mutakallimūn* like Imām Ghazālī and Ibn Taymiyyah and contemporary scholars like Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī on this issue. This study attempts to analyse their methodology and explanation on these terms. Evidence will be given from their writings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is true that many people have written on Islamic revivalism and *Jama‘at-i Islami* in recent years. Others have also dealt with Maududi and his thoughts. However, to the best of our knowledge and understanding, no study on this topic has been carried out before. The books which are closely related to this topic are discussed next.

The book entitled *al-Tafsīr al-siyāsī fī mirā'āt kitābāt al-Ustādh Abī al-A'ālā Mawdūdī wa al-Shahīd Sayyid Quṭb* by Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi criticises the issues on *al-Sulṭah* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* of Maududi and Sayyid Quṭb. Although Nadwi agreed with many other scholars about establishing an Islamic state based on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, he disagreed with their understanding about these terms. Nadwi asked whether the relationship between Allāh and His slaves is reflective of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Yet, the relation is about the relation of the slave and his Lord; the Creator and His creatures. In this book, he mentioned that the main purpose of *'Ibād* is to worship Allāh while in Maududi's view, the main purpose is worshipping Allāh by establishing His sovereignty in the state, e.g. by implementing Allāh's law in all aspects of human life. According to Nadwi, *al-Sulṭah* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* are some of Allāh's Attributes; it does not refer to all Attributes of Allāh.

Alif al-Dīn al-Turābī wrote a book entitled *Abū al-A'ālā al-Mawdūdī: Ḥayātuhu wa Da'watuhu* where he discussed Maududi's life and the socio-political and religious situation of Indo-Pak subcontinent in the 20th century that contributed in shaping his thoughts.

Muhammad Yusuf al-Bannury wrote *al-Ustādh al-Mawdūdī wa shayyūn min ḥayātihī wa afkārīhī*. In the first part of the book, which is "*shayyūn min afkārīhī*", he highlighted many controversial issues such as "Islamic principles change due to benefit," "Infallibility of Prophets is not permanent," "In his view the main purpose of religion is establishing the caliphate and state," and "His view on guidance and religion" as well as many other issues pertinent to the teachings of Islam. He began with the four terms i.e. *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *'ibādah*. At first, he presented these issues according to Maududi, and then he criticised these issues in a consecutive order. At

the end of this book, Bannury briefly presented Maududi's biography and the basic principles of *Jama'at-i Islami*.

Bannury said upon praising Allāh and sending salutation to Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), that in this world, Allāh's universal nature is for every perfection in every field of knowledge, regardless of any art or occupation. The perfection cannot be gradually reached to its highest stage without following the footsteps of the pioneers. In brief, without benefitting from the previous learned generation, the perfect or right path cannot be achieved. Learning in the company of learned people is deemed as *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (straight path). Abul Ala Maududi however, is one of those people who learnt about religion without being accompanied by reputable scholars. By referring to this context, he tried to prove that Maududi's thoughts are not perfect because he did not learn from any reputable school of thought or scholar.

In the issue related to the four basic terms, Bannury criticised Maududi and said, it is clear from the latter's discussion that the linguists and the commentators, without any exception, did not know the explanation of these terms as it is intended by Allāh. There is no doubt that it is a very serious claim that nobody understands these terms except Maududi. And yet Maududi took the explanation of these words from scholars like al-Athīr al-Jazarī, Ibn Manẓūr al-Afriqī and al-Fayrūz Abādī where they cited the abovementioned terms in the dictionaries *al-Nihāyah*, *al-Lisān* and *al-Qamūs* respectively. Maududi also did not refer to early Muslim scholars like Abū 'Ubaydah, Abū 'Ubayd, Abū Ḥanīfah al-Daynūrī, Ibn Quṭaybah, and those who came after them like al-Azharī and al-Jawharī.⁸

⁸ Bannury, 18-19.

In addition, Bannury stated that Maududi is of the opinion that prayer, fasting, giving charity and performing the pilgrimage are the means of fulfilling the main purpose of creation; establishing the Islamic state and thus upholding the sovereignty of Allāh. Bannury claimed this is the reason why Maududi thoughts moved from the circle of Islam and from the straight path. Islamic state and its righteous functional system are the means of fulfilling religious duties. Establishing an Islamic state is a necessity in order to implement *Sharī'ah* law and to fulfil the greatest obligation that is to worship Allāh, the Most Merciful. Therefore, worshipping is the ultimate purpose among other purposes of religion.

Wahiduddin Khan wrote a book entitled *Khata' fī al-Tafsīr*⁹ whereby he criticised Maududi for his thoughts on comprehension of the *dīn* and his emphasis on establishing an Islamic state. Khan looked at it as a deviated form of interpreting Islam. In the course of his writing, he also condemned Maududi's book, *Qur'an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahen*.

Muḥammad 'Imārah in his *Abū al-A'la Mawdūdī wa al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah* clarified the issues of *al-jāhiliyyah wa al-takfīr* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* along with many other issues discussed by Maududi. 'Imārah agreed with Maududi on some aspects while disagreed with him on others. He mentioned two new ideas added by Maududi's *Ijtihād* which are *jāhiliyyah* (ignorance) and *takfīr* (charge of unbelief). Maududi described his contemporary Muslims as societies of ignorance for two reasons:¹⁰

Firstly, ignorance has influenced Muslim societies through colonization.

⁹ See Wahiduddin Khan.

¹⁰ Muḥammad 'Imārah, *Abū al-A'la Mawdūdī wa al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Waḥdah, 1986), 77.

Secondly, ignorance has developed since the era of the third Caliph of Islam.¹¹

‘Imārah, with full respect towards Maududi, argued that it is not right to describe our societies as societies of ignorance because some of the influence took place among us while our main key point is still based on *tawhīd*, not on *shirk*.¹²

On the issue of *al-ḥākimiyyah*, which is the core point of Maududi’s thoughts, he asserted that *al-ḥākimiyyah* in Islam is exclusively ordained for Allāh. The Qur’ān clearly discerns on *tawhīd* from where it is obvious that Allāh is the only One, and He has no partner. It is not only determined in the arena of religious belief but also in other aspects of life, like in governance and ruling. From the Islamic point of view, only Allāh has the right to be the Ruler based on His Nature and Origin. The authority of ruling by other than Allāh is only granted by Him.¹³ Based on this and other similar statements of Maududi, ‘Imārah argued that the former had taken away the authority of legislation and regulation from man, even the authority of implementation regardless of individual, group or even nation.¹⁴

In addition, ‘Imārah affirmed that although Maududi acknowledged man’s main role of being the *Khalīfah* or vicegerent on earth, Maududi then denied this *al-Khilāfah* to mean *al-ḥākimiyyah*. According to Maududi, *al-ḥākimiyyah* means *al-Sulṭah al-‘Ulyā wa al-Sulṭah al-Muṭlaqah* (Supreme and Absolute Authority). This Supreme Authority has the right of ruling according to His wish. Others have no choice except obeying this rule. There is no authority who can accuse this Supreme Authority or to raise questions for His actions whether they are accepted or unaccepted by people of different religious faith and creed; all His actions are

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 92.

¹³ Ibid., 198.

¹⁴ Ibid., 200.

righteous and ordained for the well-being of humanity. He does what He intends. ‘Imārah questions, is there any Muslim ruler who claims this described authority? It is not even claimed by non-Muslim rulers.¹⁵ Referring to Maududi’s writings ‘Imārah asserted that however, *al-ḥākimiyyah* is of two types; the first type is *ḥākimiyyah Ilāhiyyah* (Divine Authority), which is only reserved for Allāh, and the other is *ḥākimiyyah sha‘biyyah* (public authority), granted authority, which is for man.¹⁶ In addition, man is a ruler on earth not by himself but he is delegated on behalf of the Divine Authority.¹⁷ He has to follow the principles and the direction determined by this Divine Authority, explained by the Qur’ān and *Sunnah*, in addition, man has the authority to set some rules and regulations by using their intellect which should be congruous with the main principles dictated by the Supreme Authority.

Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr wrote in his doctoral thesis *The Politics of an Islamic Movement: The Jama‘at-i Islami in Pakistan*:

This is a study of the life and works of Mawlana Sayyid Abul A‘la Maududi, and the manifestation of his revivalist ideology in the ethos, organizational structure and political practice of the *Jama‘at-i Islami* of Pakistan.¹⁸

However, in this thesis Reza Nasr did not focus on these terms.

Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī in his *al-‘Ibādah fī al-Islām* discussed *‘Ibādah* and cited from the writings of Maududi to give a comparative definition of it. He claimed that Maududi seemed to think that the real meaning of the word *‘Ibādah* is complete submission and absolute obedience; after that, new emotional element could be added to it which is considered to be the worship of the heart after fulfilling the worship of

¹⁵ Ibid., 202-203.

¹⁶ Ibid., 207.

¹⁷ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyyah*, (Cairo: al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī, 1980), 93.

¹⁸ Vali Reza Nasr, Sayyed. “The Politics of an Islamic Movement: The Jama‘at-i-Islami in Pakistan,” (Ph.D. thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991), 2.

the head or neck. Submission of these elements will appear through the dependence on Him, or performing pilgrimage and by performing other forms of *‘ibādah*.¹⁹ Nevertheless, in this book, he did not explain the other three terms, *Ilāh*, *Rabb* and *dīn*.

Safiur Rahman al-Mubarakpuri criticised Maududi in his speech²⁰ regarding the issue of *‘ibādah* (worship) and *itā‘ah* (continuous obedience). He argued that, this is the idea on which Maududi’s political thought is revolved and many people are influenced by it. Not only that, many great scholars are also influenced by it although they do not enter his *Jama‘at*. Safiur Rahman also revealed that he was confused for a few days when it was presented to him for the first time. But, after that, Allāh clarified this to him in such a clear way that there was no doubt or confusion in his heart.²¹

Safiur Rahman added, examining the views of Maududi on *‘ibādah* and *itā‘ah*. He claimed that Maududi had said the continuous following of Allāh and His Messenger is *‘ibādah*. Based on this, Maududi concluded if a government does not govern according to the law laid by Allāh, then following and obeying that government would be considered as an act of worship towards the government and it is *shirk*; this is the key point from which Maududi developed the issue of *ḥākimiyyah*. In his speech, Safiur Rahman clarified that *‘ibādah* and *itā‘ah* are not the same. He opined that sometimes a deed is *itā‘ah* but not *‘ibādah*; likewise, a deed might be *‘ibādah* but not *itā‘ah*. Then, Safiur Rahman provided an example which is taken from the Qur’ān, where Allāh narrates about Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him).

¹⁹ Yūsuf al-Qarādāwi, *‘ibādah fī al-Islam*, (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 24th edn., 1995), 28.

²⁰ Retrieved on December 28, 2011 from

<http://www.salafitalk.net/st/viewmessages.cfm?Forum=16&Topic=6348>. [Translated from Urdu to English by Sameer ibn Haneef Semna. Urdu post made by Tariq Ali in noortv mailing list (which is a transcript of speech made by Shaykh Safiur Rahman al-Mubarakpuri rahimahullah)].

²¹ Ibid.

The people of Prophet Ibrāhīm were worshipping the idols but the idols were not obeyed by them, because the idols could not give them the command to obey. Therefore, it was worshipping, not following.²²

On the same issue, a similar statement was given by Ibn Bāz. He sent a letter²³ to Maududi revealing that he was informed that Maududi had explained the word ‘*ibādah*’ as *itā‘ah*. Therefore, according to this view, the person who follows someone is nothing but worshipping him. In addition, Umar ibn Ahmad al-Millibari, the owner of the magazine “*al-Salsabil*” also informed Ibn Bāz about this issue. He was enthusiastic about this issue which motivated him to write to Maududi. According to Ibn Bāz, obeying or following someone has a wider scope than ‘*ibādah*. All acts of ‘*ibādah*’ that a person does to please Allāh will be considered as obedience or *itā‘ah*, but not all acts of *itā‘ah* done for other than Allāh will be considered as ‘*ibādah*.

Obedience towards authority or a ruler who is not favoured by Allāh is not considered as an act of ‘*ibādah*’ because people do not believe it as a part of *Sharī‘ah*. They obey out of fear of oppression. Therefore, by obeying them, they will become sinners, not *Mushrik*.²⁴

Sa‘īd ibn Ḥijjī al-Ḥanbalī (1995) in *al-Kalām al-muntaqā mim mā yata‘allaq bi kalimat al-Taqwā*²⁵ discussed the issues related to *tawḥīd*. In explaining *tawḥīd*, he briefly mentioned *Ilāh* and ‘*Ibādah*, from both linguistic and scholarly perspectives. He also highlighted the relationship between *Ilāh* and ‘*Ibādah*. However, he mentioned nothing about the other two terms, *Rabb* and *dīn*.

²² Ibid.

²³ Retrieved on December 29, 2011 from <http://www.ahlalhdeth.com/vb/showthread.php?t=107107>. [Answer from a letter of Sheikh Ibn Baz to Maududi Rahimahumullah regarding the difference between ‘Ibadah (worship) and obedience, (On 2/4/1392 AH, Abul Ala Maududi sent me a letter no. 1526, dated 2 Safar, 1392 A.H.)].

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Sa‘īd ibn Ḥijjī al-Ḥanbalī, *al-Kalām al-muntaqā mim mā yata‘allaq bi kalimati al-Taqwā*, (Beirut: Dār ibn Ḥajm, 1st edn., 1995).

Yūsuf ibn Ḥasan al-Maqdisī (1995) in his *Mas'alat fī al-Tawḥīd wa faḍl lā ilāha illa Allāh* defined that *tawḥīd* as freeing or making unique. He also argued that many people do not know the reality of *tawḥīd*. He clarified that *tawḥīd* signifies the act of worship is offered to the only One by testifying through our tongue, believing whole-heartedly that we are obliged to solely worship Him and our homage is meant only for the Almighty and we cannot worship others than Him.²⁶

Al-Maqdisī also said, *Tbādah* is obedience towards Him; Oneness in obedience. Many people are careless on this issue. Therefore, people who give priority in obeying *Shayṭān* rather than obeying Allāh are sinners. In the same way, other people prioritise obeying a government order more than Allāh; this is especially true for those who prefer the worldly life. If a king or any governor asks any of these people to go to so and so rich person – although this person is bad - while it is time for prayer, he will leave the prayer and go to the person.²⁷ Here, although al-Maqdisī highlighted the issue of *Tbādah* he did not talk about the other three terms.

In the booklet *Lā ilāha illa Allāh Muḥammad al-Rasūl Allāh tafsīr wa tawḍīh*, Sharīf Ḥamdān Rājīḥ clarified the meaning of '*Lā ilāha illa Allāh Muḥammad al-Rasūl Allāh*'. He also shed light on the obligation which is required of the person who witnesses these words, what he should follow or avoid, and the features that make it invalid. He emphasised that repetition of these words throughout the whole Qur'ān, not only in Makkah but also in Madīnah, indicates its significance. It is due to gradually purifying the beliefs of the then people in the Arab land. A person should

²⁶ Yūsuf ibn Ḥasan ibn 'Abd al-Hādī al-Maqdisī, *Mas'alat fī al-Tawḥīd wa faḍl lā ilāha illa Allāh*, (Beirut: Dār al-Bashā'ir al-Islāmiyyah, 1995), 80.

²⁷ Ibid.

therefore know and understand it clearly in order to make his worship absolutely for Allāh, which is the core purpose of his creation.²⁸

However, in this booklet, Rājīḥ discussed *Ilāh* and *'Ibādah* briefly while he was explaining *tawḥīd*. Nevertheless, he did not elucidate the other two terms, *dīn* and *Rabb*.

The book *Hal Allāhu Mawjūd*²⁹ written by Muṣṭafā Mu'awwiḍ 'Abd al-Ma'būd included a chapter named "*Maḥmūd al-Ulūhiyyah wa al-ilḥād wa qaḍiyat al-īmān bi wajūd Allāh fī al-Islām*". In this chapter, he discusses the issue of *Ilāh*. He alleges that it is very difficult, although not impossible to provide a comprehensive definition of the words Allāh or *Ilāh*. From the linguistic perspective, *Ilāh* means *al-Ma'būd* (the worshipped) either this is true or false *Ma'būd*, but, in *shar'ī* point of view, it widely refers to *al-Ma'būd al-Ḥaq*, the true worshipped. Here, in this chapter, the author tried to give a comprehensive definition of *Ilāh* from the philosophical, historical and religious perspectives; in other words, from the Theism perspective.³⁰ Although Muṣṭafā discussed the issue of *Ilāh* in detail, he did not illuminate on the other three terms *'Ibādah*, *Rabb* and *dīn*.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

It is undeniable that many people have been influenced by the Islamic political environment, particularly based on two prominent Islamic movements, namely Muslim Brotherhood and *Jama'at-i Islami*. People are showing their support in favour of Islamic law. The above literature review leads the researcher to justify that

²⁸ Al-Sharīf Ḥamdān Rājīḥ al-Hijādī, *Lā ilāha illa Allāhu Muḥammad al-Rasūl Allāh Tafsīr wa Tawḍīḥ*, (Jiddah: Dār al-Mujtama' li al-Nashri wa al-Tawzī', 1990), 12-13.

²⁹ Muṣṭafā Mu'awwiḍ 'Abd al-Ma'būd, *Hal Allāhu Mawjūd*, (Cairo: Maktabah Madbulī, 2005).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 17-18.

no research has been conducted on this topic. Thus, an analysis of Maududi's thoughts and methodology is very crucial and timely, especially on his *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arbaʿah fī al-Qurʾān: Ilāh, Rabb, ʿIbādāt* and *dīn*. This study will attempt to clarify the issues related to those four terms. This will be an original as well as a new contribution to the body of knowledge in this area.

PROPOSED OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

This study is divided into five chapters followed by a conclusion. Chapter One deals with the methodological aspect of the topic. It provides statement of the problem, literature review and discusses other structural facts of the research. Chapter Two briefly illustrates Maududi's life and thoughts. Chapter Three explains the four basic terms of the Qurʾān, their meanings and Maududi's views on these terms. Chapter Four presents Maududi's methodology of interpretation of the terms. Chapter Five provides a critique of Maududi's views by other scholars and this is followed by a Conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

ABUL ALA MAUDUDI: A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE, THOUGHTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Agwani (1986) asserted that Abul Ala Maududi [1903-1979] was the first religio-political figure who brought attention to the supreme purpose of Islam in order to establish sovereignty of God on earth.¹ He is also considered to be one of the first Muslim thinkers to develop a systematic political reading of Islam and a plan for social action. In praising Maududi, Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī said:

There are some people who have the ability of convincing writing ...while some scholars have the ability of scrutiny and investigation ... and some preachers have good quality to influence people. However, all skilful writers, scrutineer scholars and influential preachers are not necessarily great thinkers. Nevertheless, a thinker is the person who has been given the ability to think deeply, and has special vision, has own opinion about any major issue related to mankind and without depending on others.... Our Islamic World has lost in 23rd September 1979 a great global Islamic thinker... he is none but Abul Ala Maududi.²

Maududi started his revolutionary mission at a time when the balance of the world power in areas of economics, politics, intellectual and technology seemed to have finally settled in favour of the West. The entire Muslim world was adversely affected by the massive western colonial power, and some people started to feel that the progressive lineage of Islamic history had ceased to exist. The horizon became dark and dismal after the world had been ruled for nearly fourteen centuries by the Muslims.

¹ Mohammed Shafi Agwani, *Islamic Fundamentalism in India*, (Chandigarh: Twenty-First Century India Society, 1986), 53.

² Retrieved on January 4, 2015 from <http://www.qaradawi.net/new/articles/5094--1>.

In this crucial situation, in order to actualize his vision, Maududi raised his voice to make a call to formulate an up-to date Islamic system of governance.

Masudul Hasan, a contemporary scholar, described his call as such:

He invited the Muslims to the real source of their strength: the Qur'an and *Sunnah* of the Prophet (p.b.u.h). He awakened the Muslims to a new goal and a mission: to live and to die for Islam. He challenged the spell of the Western thought and developed a new *Ilm al-Kalam* to meet the intellectual challenge of the West. He expounded the original message of Islam with a contemporary freshness and expression that Islam is a complete way of life with its own belief system, values and principles and its own unique social, political, economic, cultural and educational systems. He invited the Muslims to strive for the establishment of the Islamic order and be witnesses of this DEEN (way of life) before the entire human race.³

Obviously a person's personality is shaped by those around him and the environment he lived in. Therefore, to know about Maududi, a renowned scholar from the Indian subcontinent who played an important role in reviving Islam in the 20th century, it is very crucial to clarify the political, social, economic, educational and religious status quo of his contemporary India as well as to know about his life and how he grew up. There is no doubt that all these situations influenced his thoughts.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before the arrival of Muslim traders and missionaries as well as Muslim armies to the Indian subcontinent between 7th and 8th centuries, the population of this area mainly consisted of Hindus and Buddhists. By 1100 (A.D.) a number of Indo-Muslim states had been established and by the 16th century, the Mughal Empire dominated northern

³ Masudul Hassan, *Sayyid Abul A'ala Maududi and His Thought*, (Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1st edn., 1984), Vol. 1, xi.

India. The British formally disbanded the empire in 1857 at which time about one-quarter of India's population were Muslims.⁴

India was ruled by the Muslims for a long time however, after the 18th century they were replaced by the British. At first, the British came to India under the East India Company, which was founded in 1600 in London.⁵ During their early involvement in India, they attached themselves only in trading to certain points along the coast. In the 18th century, during the decline of the Mughal Empire, they gradually began to wage war against the land of eastern and south-eastern India, especially over the rich province of Bengal, which was under the authority of Nawab Alivardi Khan.⁶

After the death of Nawab Alivardi Khan in 1756, Siraj-ud-Daula became the Nawab of Bengal. He ordered the British to dismantle their fortifications which had been constructed without permission. Mir Jafar, the commander of the Nawab's troops, betrayed Siraj-ud-Daula, which resulted Nawab's defeat at the battlefield of Plassey where he was killed.⁷ After the British victory at Plassey in 1757, the subcontinent had been ruled by the British for approximately two centuries.⁸ During this time, the British did not offer sufficient higher posts to the educated natives or to those who proved fidelity.⁹

During the first half of the British period, around 70 years of the Company's rule, the Muslims suffered in the field of education due to many reasons. One of the reasons was that the British used to consider the Muslims as their main enemy who

⁴ Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), 5.

⁵ Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, (London: Routledge, 4th edn., 2004), 220.

⁶ See S.M. Azizuddin Husain, *1857 Revisited*, (New Delhi: Kanishka Publications, 2007), 18-19.

⁷ Kulke and Rothermund, 232.

⁸ K. Sarwar Hasan, *Pakistan and the United Nations*, (New York: Manhattan Publishing Company, 1960), 20.

⁹ W. W. Hunter, *History of the Indian Peoples*, (New Delhi: Cosmo Publication, 1984), 222.

always want to regain power. As a result, the British government did not facilitate sufficient support for the Muslims. On the other hand, the Muslims looked at Western education as a means to destroy their religion and culture. Backwardness of the Muslims in the field of education resulted in their backwardness in economy, administration as well as in the field of politics.

Syed Ahmad Khan and Nawab Abdul Latif gave first priority to educational advancement and did not consider political action on a countrywide basis to be either feasible or beneficial for the Muslims.¹⁰ When the government realised that it was very important to improve the relationship with the Muslims and to help them to resolve the problem of their backwardness in education, it provided them some special facilities for English education. In this regard, Lord Mayo in 1881 gave special attention and recommended scholarships for Muslim students and gave special care to Urdu, Persian and Arabic in the educational institutions. As a continuation of this project, a few years later, Syed Ahmed Khan established a Muslim college at Aligarh.¹¹

However, this new educational system did not suit the Muslims because of a few reasons as explained by W.W. Hunter in his *Indian Musalmans*. Hunter stated:

The truth is, that our system of Public Instruction ignores the three most powerful instincts of the Musalman heart. In the first place, it conducts education in the vernacular of Bengal, a language which the educated Muhammadans despise, and by means of Hindu teachers, whom the whole Muhammadan community hates.... In the second place, our rural schools seldom enable a Muhammadan to learn the tongues necessary for his holding a respectable position in life, and for the performance of his religious duties.... In the third place, our system of Public Instruction makes no provision for the religious education of the Muhammadan youth.¹²

¹⁰ Latif Ahmed Sherwani, (ed.), *Pakistan in the Making*, (Karachi: n.p., 1986), 98.

¹¹ Ibid., 40.

¹² W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans*, (London: Trubner and Company, 1871), 178-179.

The same situation can be found in the economic condition of the Muslims in British India. Indian national sources of wealth had been narrowed in several ways under the British rule. In the 18th century, India was a great manufacturing as well as agricultural country and its products, especially the Indian loom, were supplied to Asian and European markets. Indian manufacturers were discouraged by the policy of the East India Company and the British Parliament in the early years of the British rule in order to encourage the rising manufacturers of England. This policy was taken to make India subservient to the industries of the Great Britain.¹³

The reason that irritated the British towards the Muslim was that their missionary workers could not make any progress in the Muslims' residential areas. The British missionary and educational system were observed by the Muslim scholars with great suspicion. The British felt that if they could eradicate the traditions and destroy the places of worship of the Muslims in one vigorous effort, it would indeed be good for the Christian faith and for the British rule.¹⁴

Although there were many facts behind the revolt in 1857 by the native Indians, the Muslims were the main victims as they were the pioneers of this revolt. It was thought that the Muslims wanted to regain their lost power, which resulted in their being penalised much more than other Indian communities. Besides that, they were backward economically and educationally which worsened their condition.¹⁵

However, the Indian National Congress was established in 1885 to promote mutual good-will and charity amongst the members of all races, castes and creeds, as a 'representative' party for the people of the Indian subcontinent. From the beginning,

¹³ Douglas M. Peers, *India under Colonial Rule 1700-1885*, (Great Britain: Pearson Education Ltd., 2006), 96.

¹⁴ W. H. Russell, *My Diary in India*, (London, Farringdon Street: Routledge, 1860), Vol. 2, 78.

¹⁵ Sherwani, 1.

the Congress was a thoroughly national body and its doors were open to all classes.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the Hindu leaders could not show their tolerance towards the Muslims. They became anxious to substitute Hindi for Urdu language and Nagri for the Persian script. They dared to criticise the Prophet of Islam through *Bande Mataram* and set up a number of societies to save cows. All of the issues were offensive to Muslims. Apart from these, there were many other issues, which strained the relationship between Hindu and Muslim.¹⁷

In this situation, the prominent Muslim leaders felt that as Muslims they had some special interests, but they also had some shortcomings; they were small in numbers, economically backward and educationally more behind than the Hindus. The only way to safeguard their interests was to have a separate Muslim political organization of their own; therefore, they established the Muslim League in 1906.¹⁸

By observing the Muslims' situation, two suggestions were given by two prominent thinkers regarding the creation of a Muslim state. Muhammad Iqbal in his presidential address at Allahabad in 1930 mentioned that he would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Chaudhuri Rahmat Ali, a student of law of Cambridge, stated in a pamphlet *Now or Never* a scheme for a fully independent territorial Muslim state. It will include the Panjab, the Frontier province, the princely state of Kashmir and Baluchistan.¹⁹ As a result, the new sovereign state of Pakistan came into existence on August 1947.²⁰ The Pakistan movement based its ideology on Islam, however, it was

¹⁶ Talik Raj Sareen, *Colonial India: Political, Social and Cultural Studies*, (Delhi: Criterion Publication, 1990), 84.

¹⁷ Sherwani, 70.

¹⁸ Ibid., 225.

¹⁹ P. Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, (Cambridge: The University Press, 1972), 219.

²⁰ Sarwar Hasan, 20.

a slogan only and no one was quite sure what was meant by the Islamic way of life.²¹ During this crucial situation of Indian Muslims, at the early part of 19th century, Abul Ala Maududi was born. His life, thoughts and contributions are provided in the forthcoming discussion.

CHILDHOOD

Abul Ala Maududi's biographical information has been cited by many scholars including himself. Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari (1992) stated that Maududi was born to a reputable family in Aurangabad, a well-known town in the former princely state of Hyderabad [Deccan], presently Andhra Pradesh, India on Rajab 3, 1321 AH [September 25, 1903 AD]. On the paternal side, his ancestry can be traced back to the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him).²² In this regard, Maududi said, "I belong to the Syeds of the Holy Prophet's own progeny – the *Ahle Bait*, popularly called the *Sadat*."²³ In spiritual leadership, the family had a long-standing history. His family name 'Maududi' was derived from the famous saint, Khwaja Qutb al-Dīn Maudud [d. 527 AH], a well-known founder of the Chistī Ṣūfī order. Towards the end of the 9th century of the Islamic calendar [15th century of the Christian calendar], Maududi's forefathers had moved to the subcontinent from Chisht. Maududi's namesake Abul Ala Maududi [d. 935 AH] was the first one to arrive. Maududi's father, Ahmad Hasan, born in 1855 AD, was a lawyer by profession and a highly religious and devout person.²⁴ Maududi is the youngest of

²¹ Arif Hussain, *Pakistan its Ideology and Foreign Policy*, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966), 7.

²² Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, *Mawlana Mawdudi, An Introduction to his Life and Thought*, (Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 1992), 9.

²³ Syed Asad Gilani, *Maududi Thought & Movement*, (Lahore: Islamic Publication Ltd., 1984), 21.

²⁴ Khurshid and Ansari, *Mawlana Mawdudi, An Introduction to his Life and Thought*, 9.

Sayyed Ahmad Hasan's five children and the second son from his father's second marriage.²⁵ About the spiritual background of his family, Maududi said:

My father had taken to The Way when I was one year old only. For three years, thereafter, he had renounced the temporal world and lived as a 'darbish'... my mother too was not behind in The Way. Such were the parents who groomed me. Thus, the religion had a very deep impression on my personality from the very early life.²⁶

Alif al-Dīn al-Turābī (1987) mentioned that his mother was Ruqayyah Begum and her family being of Turkish origin also carried a mark of nobility. Her great grandfather, Mirza Tulak Baig, migrated to India during the reign of Alamghir, one of the greatest Mughal emperors. He settled there and served the Mughals as a military general. Maududi's maternal grandfather, Mirza Qurban Ali Baig, had been a poet and a writer and close to the Delhi circle of the renowned Urdu poet, Mirza Asadullah Ghalib. He was also the chief editor of *Makhzan al-Fawā'id*, an old Urdu magazine.²⁷

Maududi spent his childhood in Aurangabad until the age of 13 or 14²⁸ where he received special care from his father. Ahmad Hasan being a father wanted his son to become a Maulavi, a theologian and religious scholar²⁹ thus Maududi was supervised accordingly. His educational life went through three phases.

FIRST PHASE: EARLY EDUCATION

Ahmad Hasan intended to make Maududi an Islamic scholar. To reach this vision, he trained and supervised his son personally. Ahmad Hasan took pains to train Maududi in the right direction and to impart Islamic values in him. He arranged Maududi's

²⁵ Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 9.

²⁶ Quoted from Gilani, 28.

²⁷ Alif al-Dīn al-Turābī, *Abū al-A'lā al-Mawdūdī: Ḥayātuhu wa Da'watuhu* [Abul Ala Maududi: His life and mission], (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 1987), 118.

²⁸ Gilani, 29.

²⁹ Nasr, 12.

early education at home and he himself took the responsibility of educating him. Besides this, he had a few house tutors who used to teach him various subjects especially Urdu, Arabic, Persian, *Fiqh* and *Ḥadīth*. During his childhood, he was known to everybody for his talent especially in memorizing *Muwatta* of Mālik at this stage.³⁰ His father's mastery in Urdu was reflected in Maududi's lucid style and powerful command of that language.³¹ During his schooling at home, he mastered the Arabic language so much so that at the age of eleven, he translated Qāsim Amīn's *al-Mar'ah al-Jadīdah* from Arabic to Urdu, which confirmed his great talent.³² Maududi stated from his earliest recollections:

I recall my tuitions at home with mixed feelings. Several teachers took me on until I went to *Madrasah*.... On the whole the home-education proved to be more useful and beneficial than the *Madrasah*. I gained in 5-6 years, the amount of knowledge which the *Madrasah* boys attained in 8 years. When I joined the *Madrasah*, at the age of 11, in class VIII, I was the youngest of all the students; yet, I had better knowledge in some subjects.... I was taught till the age of nine, strictly at home. By then I had been taught several elementary books in the *Sarf* and *Nahu* (Arabic Syntax and Grammar), Arabic literature, and *Fiqh* (the dictates of Islamic law).³³

Ahmad Hasan was not only an academic instructor of his son but also a mentor to nurture good habits, attitude and conduct. He filled Maududi's leisure time by asking him to join the company of his father and his friends who were gentle and noble persons. This act had contributed greatly to shape Maududi's thoughts.³⁴

Maududi said:

The closely supervised life upto the age of nine had make me discernable of virtue and vice. The foundation of a religious character had been firmly laid. I was no longer in the impressionable age to accept any influence without an appraisal. I realised the benefit of the

³⁰ Turābī, 122.

³¹ Nasr, 13.

³² Ibid.

³³ Gilani, 34-35.

³⁴ Ibid., 33-34.

childhood-foundation of character. I was made free to move about, unsupervised, at the age of fifteen, and it was that foundation which made me firm against the onslaught of capricious ideas commonly held by the youth of my age.³⁵

To shape his morality according to those of heroes of Islam, Ahmad Hasan introduced Maududi to stories on Islam, the Prophets, the Prophet's Companions and other moral stories. Furthermore, Ahmad Hasan forbade him from playing with street children to keep him away from any immoral activity. Simultaneously, he was taught morality in a practical manner, as Maududi said, "Once I slapped the child of our maid. He asked the child to slap me in return. The incident was a lesson to me. I never raised my hand on a subordinate, again."³⁶

Ahmad Hasan used to encourage his son to perform good deeds because he wanted to teach him as well as to develop confidence in him. His elder brother, Abul Khair Maududi gave an account of Maududi by saying:

One day Abul A'lā accompanied his father to the mosque. The *mu'adhdhin** was absent, and the father asked the young Abul A'lā to give *adhān* [the call to prayer]. Abul A'lā mounted the minaret without any hesitation and gave the call to prayer. His age was then not more than five years.³⁷

The steps that had been taken by Ahmad Hasan to give his son proper education in his early age can be summarized through the following points:³⁸

- 1 Ahmad Hasan used to narrate to his son the history of Islam, the stories of the Prophets as well as other moral stories, which played a vital role in shaping Maududi's ideology. He took care of the leisure time of Maududi, as he had to be accompanied by his father and his friends who were gentle

³⁵ Ibid., 36-37.

³⁶ Ibid., 31.

* *Muadhdhin*: one who calls for prayer.

³⁷ Turābī, 124. See also Aḥmad Idrīs, *Abū al-A'lā al-Mawdūdī: Ṣafahāt min ḥayātihi wa Jihādihi*, (Cairo: al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī, 1979), 6. Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 12.

³⁸ Ibid., 124.

and noble persons. This was done to build proper behaviour since an early age and to teach him the correct Urdu language.

- 2 He did not allow Maududi to mix or to play with the street children; instead he arranged a suitable place to play at the yard of his house for his children to prevent them from bad habits.
- 3 Maududi had been strictly taught so that he would not raise his hand on a weakling or a subordinate. If he did so, he had to receive its punishment of a similar type.
- 4 Ahmad Hasan used to take him to the mosque when he was only five years old in order to train him and to cultivate its necessity in his mind.
- 5 He used to encourage him to do good deeds to train him on one hand and on the other, to develop confidence in him.

SECOND PHASE: INSTITUTIONAL EDUCATION

After spending nine years at home Maududi was enrolled into *Madrasah Fauqaniyah*, Aurangabad, in the *Rashidiya* Standard [lower secondary] at the urging of his teacher, *Maulavi* Nadimullah Husaini. After six months of study, he sat for examinations. Unfortunately, he failed in the tests; it was because he was uninterested in Arithmetic. Despite his failure, he was promoted to the '*Maulavi*' classes. Here he was introduced, for the first time, to the modern sciences of Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and History, which had created interest in him.³⁹

In 1914, Maududi sat for *Maulavi* (matriculation) examination and achieved second division because of low marks in Mathematics. The subjects that had been taught at this stage were Arabic literature, the book of *Mirqat* in *Mantiq*, the book of

³⁹ Gilani, 35-36.

Qudurī in *Fiqh*, and the book of *Shamā'il al-Tirmidhī* in *Ḥadīth* besides regular subjects like History, Geography, elementary Physical Sciences, Mathematics, etc.⁴⁰

Then, he was sent to *Maulavi* Alim class of the *Dār al-'Ulūm*. Ahmad Hasan left him at Hyderabad and went to Bhopal. After six months, Maududi was terrified by the sudden news that his father had a stroke. For this reason, he had to leave Hyderabad and set out for Bhopal instantly. He had to cease his study and accompany his mother to Bhopal to attend to the needs of his ailing father. This is the story of an institutional education of a great scholar like Maududi, which lasted a very short span of time. Maududi describes this sad experience in the following:

My father left me at Hyderabad and went to Bhopal. Six month had hardly gone by when I was shocked by the sudden news that my father was stricken with a stroke. I left for Bhopal, immediately, in the condition of an indigent student taking my mother along with me. I took to my sick father's bed and remained at his call. Hopes for his recovery would dwindle, day by day. Tragedy, a necessary element of life, made its forceful appearance. That traumatic experience of about two years taught me a lesson by the hard way that one must stand on his own feet, to live honorably well. And, that, economic self-reliance is not possible without hard work.⁴¹

THIRD PHASE: SELF-EDUCATION

After the death of Ahmad Hasan, in order to survive, Maududi engaged himself in the field of journalism.⁴² Although the illness and later the death of his father stopped him from formal education and disrupted his study for the time being, it could not turn Maududi away from his journey of seeking knowledge. During his engagement in journalism, he realised the urgency of being proficient in English. To achieve his goal, he spent almost two and half years learning the language. At the beginning, he spent about five months with a tutor and when he felt confident enough, he started to

⁴⁰ Ibid., 37.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 21.

study on his own for another two years. During that time, he referred to the dictionary and read books from several fields such as History, Philosophy, Political Science, Economics, Religions and Sociology. This made him knowledgeable and introduced him to many ideas and thoughts. English was then no longer a strange language to him.⁴³ About this critical situation of his life, he said:

The period from 1916 to 1921 was a period of great trials and tribulations for me. I had to move from place to place and face financial difficulties. I was distressed that I could not continue the process of education. I was always conscious of this deficiency, but could do nothing to make up for this loss. In 1921 when I settled at Delhi as the editor of the *Muslim*, I thought of renewing my education. Whatever time I could spare after fulfilling my responsibilities as a journalist, I spent it in acquiring knowledge in Arabic literature, Tafsir, Hadith, Fiqh, philosophy and other allied subjects. Soon I became sufficiently proficient in various disciplines.⁴⁴

He was very sad due to the discontinuation of his study. Therefore, after a notable break, he planned to complete his interrupted education again in 1921. His spare time from journalistic duties was devoted to studies in Literature, *Tafsīr*, *Ḥadīth*, *Mantiq* and Philosophy under various masters such as Abdus Salam Niyazi, Ashfaqur Rahman Kandahlwi and Maulana Sharif Ullah Khan. During that time, he acquired sufficient proficiency in the abovementioned subjects.⁴⁵ He continued his study and took lessons from new books which were not included in his earlier study.⁴⁶

JOURNALISM: MAUDUDI'S FIRST PROFESSION

In 1918, Maududi first worked in the field of journalism in *Madina* newspaper. He worked there with his brother for two months. It was during this time when the movements of political awakening were to sweep the scenes in India like a hurricane.

⁴³ Ibid., 39.

⁴⁴ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 25.

⁴⁵ Gilani, 41.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 42.

Naturally, Maududi stood in opposition to anything related to British, and became an active worker of *Anjuman I'anat-e-Nazarbandand-e Islam* to help Muslim prisoners. He also participated in the Khilafat movement in 1919.⁴⁷ Tajuddin, the moving spirit of the Prisoners Help Society and publisher of the weakly *Taj*, entrusted the editorial responsibility to Maududi and his brother. Unfortunately, the *Taj* was closed down in a few months. However, in 1920 *Taj* was published again from Jabalpur. At first, it was a weekly then converted to a daily newspaper, and he was appointed as the editor.⁴⁸

After that, Maududi returned to Delhi at the end of 1920. Then, in 1921, he was appointed as the editor of the newspaper *Muslim* which operated for around two years under his editorship.⁴⁹ From 1925 to 1928, Maududi worked as the editor of the newspaper *al-Jami'at*.⁵⁰ Finally, he left journalism after spending almost ten years as a journalist-cum-editor of various journals and dailies.

MAUDUDI AS A WRITER

Maududi chose 'the pen' to be the instrument for the mission in his life: the renaissance of Islam and the reconstruction of Islamic thought.⁵¹ During his self-education, Maududi wrote the most popular book *al-Jihād fī al-Islām* and *Daulat-e-Asafiya aur Hakumat-e-Britania*. He also began to learn German language in order to broaden his knowledge.⁵² About his writing method, Maududi said:

⁴⁷ Ibid., 38.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 39-40.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 42.

⁵¹ Ibid., 43.

⁵² Ibid., 42.

I felt that before writing on any subject, I should acquire as much knowledge about such matter as possible. After some time I developed the urge to undertake research on Islamic topics. My research studies were thereafter directed towards research in various aspects of Islam. My way of research is that when I have to form an opinion about any matter I strive to acquire information about all aspects of such matter from all quarters, and study whatever material I am able to muster. In the course of study I mark important passages and take notes. When I write I do not consult the books; I merely depend upon my own notes.⁵³

He authored more than a hundred books on various issues, such as religious, moral, economic, social and political aspects of Islam. He is not only an extraordinary Islamic scholar who has great knowledge about the Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth* and Muslim law, like other traditional scholars, but also a scholar in the fields of Sociology, Philosophy, Economics and Political Science. However, his main contributions have been in the fields of Qur'ānic exegesis, ethics, social studies, and the problems facing the international movement of Islamic revival.⁵⁴

FORMATION OF HIS THOUGHTS

To develop his creative thinking, Maududi started to look closely at the world through contemplation. He looked at the world around him in light of the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān and the Prophet's *Sunnah*. His ideology and thoughts emanated from the depth of his vision.⁵⁵ On his credit of the Qur'ān in forming his ideology, Maududi stated:

There was a time when I was also a believer of traditional and hereditary religion and practiced it.... At last I paid attention to the holy Book and the Prophet's *Sunnah*. I understood Islam and renewed my faith in it voluntarily. Thereafter I tried to find out and

⁵³ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 27.

⁵⁴ Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari (eds), "Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival" in *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Mawlānā Sayyid Abul a'la Mawdūdī*, (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1979), 363.

⁵⁵ Gilani, 45.

understand the Islamic system in detail. When I was satisfied in this I began to invite others to the truth.⁵⁶

According to Asad Gilani, Maududi began to guide Muslims of the subcontinent, publishing his messages through the monthly *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. Despite trials and financial difficulties, he continued on with his mission.⁵⁷ He used this means to educate and nourish his followers mentally and intellectually. Based on this he established his movement, *Jama'at-i Islami*.⁵⁸ Among the issues, which he discussed were the major problems encountered in the modern age; and provide from Islamic perspective. Through constructive criticism, he exposed the weak points of the Western civilization.⁵⁹ Since it is based on man's independence of and indifference to Divine guidance, western thought gradually causes man to think that there is no need to follow God's guidance and man is not answerable to God for his conduct. Likewise, it gradually becomes utilitarian or pragmatic view of morals; consequently, mankind is split into a multiplicity of nations with hostile separation instead of universal brotherhood.⁶⁰

According to Maududi, *Dīn al-Islām* as opposed to western civilization is a complete code of life, thus it should be spelled out and put into practice in all its fullness; its metaphysical doctrines, its principles of personal behaviour and social conduct as well as the principles of organizing a sound and healthy economy.⁶¹ This social order is based on the theory that all human beings are equal. Likewise, by crossing the geographical boundaries and limits of race, colour and language, it will

⁵⁶ Nasr, 29. See also *Rudad-i-Jama'at-I Islami*, Vol. 1, 5-6.

⁵⁷ Gilani, 65.

⁵⁸ Ahmad Idris, *Abu al-A'la al-Mawdūdī: Ṣafāḥāt min Ḥaytihi wa Jihādīhi*, (Tunis: Dār Būslāmah, n.d.), 38.

⁵⁹ Khurshid and Ansari, "Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'lā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival" 362.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 368-369.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 369.

result in universal brotherhood.⁶² While the spirit of this social order includes all that, all aspects of life should be directed towards pleasing Allāh.⁶³

Maududi started his mission when the West intellectually and politically nearly succeeded in destroying the vitality of the Muslim mind. Eventually, the Muslim mind turned against its own cultural, religious and historical heritage. It was a great challenge for him. Therefore, he strove to bring back Muslims to their original source and worked hard to prove that Islam is relevant even today, as it was relevant for fourteen centuries back. In this regard, Maududi narrated:

At that time my scheme of work was that the dominance of the Western thought which swayed the minds of the Muslims should be broken, and it should be brought home to the Muslims that they had their own way of life which was superior to the Western way.⁶⁴

Another significant contribution of Maududi is the clarification of the *tawḥīd* and its requirements. According to Maududi, *tawḥīd* consisted of three elements, i.e. *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyyah*, *tawḥīd al-rubūbiyyah* and *tawḥīd al-ḥākimiyyah*. And one of the fundamental requirements of *tawḥīd* is that the *sulṭah* and sovereignty should be exclusively for Allāh alone. Despite many verses of the Qur'ān which indicate this fact, many Muslims confined *tawḥīd* to its two other elements and they are heedless to one another, i.e. *tawḥīd al-ḥākimiyyah*.⁶⁵ Referring to verses 44, 45 and 47 of *Sūrat al-Mā'idah*, Maududi was of the opinion that whoever does not govern according to the rule of Allāh because it is not perfect or the prevailing ruling that has been prescribed by him or by others is more perfect than Allāh's ruling; obviously, he is *kāfir*, *fāsiq* and *zālim*.⁶⁶ Likewise he presented the Islam in a lucid way.

⁶² Masudul Hasan, Vol.1, 342.

⁶³ Ibid., 470.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 91.

⁶⁵ Turābī, 262-263.

⁶⁶ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyyah*, (Cairo: al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī: 1980), 81.

A LUCID PRESENTATION OF ISLAM

Maududi felt the necessity to present a brief, but a lucid and comprehensive view of Islam, therefore he wrote *Risala-i-Diniyat*. In this book, Maududi provided an outline of the Islamic way of life as well as mentioned the wisdom behind such way. He argued that Islam is different from other religions. Every religion of the world has been named either after the name of its founder, such as Christianity, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism or after the community or nation in which it took its birth like Judaism. However, Islam is an attributive title, whosoever possesses this attribute, i.e. the declaration of the *shahādatayn*, regardless of his sense of belonging towards any race, country or clan, is a Muslim. Islam is the religion of nature. According to Islamic belief, the sun, the moon, all heavenly bodies, air, water, stones, trees and animals are all revolving and existing in accordance with the divine decree of Allāh in a very perfect motion and space without causing any collision with each other, which reflects the very quality of their submission and subservience to His laws. Likewise, being a creature of Allāh, man should also be obedient to Allāh's laws. Maududi also proved the universality of Islam.⁶⁷

A CALL TO THE REAL PURPOSE OF LIFE

Maududi in observing the surrounding situation invited people towards Islamic revival and reassertion. He called people towards the original sources of Islam, the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Referring to the interviews with Maududi by Altaf Hussain, Masudul Hasan quoted what Maududi said:

I started the study of the Quran and the Hadith in Arabic directly. As I progressed in my studies the truth came to dawn on me, and the clouds of doubt began to disperse. I had studied the books of other religions as

⁶⁷ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 77.

well, and when I compared other religions to Islam, I became convinced of the superiority of Islam.⁶⁸

After being convinced about the true path which is Islam, he invited people towards it. According to him, this way is not the one that exists in name only today, rather it is a call towards the way prescribed by the Qur'ān. He invited people, as mentioned by Asad Gilani:

Come and let us all be united to wipe out the aggression, cruelty and darkness which has engulfed the world today. Let us obliterate the 'godly' rule of men over men. Let us build a new world on the pattern given in the Qur'an. Man should have the dignity and honour for the sole reason that he is a human being. Let us have a world of liberty and equality, justice and peace.⁶⁹

AWAKENING MUSLIMS

Maududi's *da'wah*, according to Asad Gilani, has added a new history. In observing the recent history of Muslims, he concluded that he should do something for the sake of Allāh in order to awaken the Muslim nations. The task was initiated by Shah Waliullah Dehlvi and Syed Ahmad Shaheed Brelvi; however, the martyr of the latter obviously created obstacle and impeded the movement of contemporary Muslims for their spiritual revivalism. Although the Pan-Islamism of *Jamal al-Din* Afghani did kindle a spark, however, in terms of a real achievement his *da'wah* was not successful. According to Maududi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Allama Iqbal and Muhammad Ali Johar had made noteworthy contributions though those were not enough. It appeared that the Muslims were destined for doom until the advent of Imām Mahdi.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid., 28-29. See also, Altaf Hussain Qureshi: *Mulaqatain*. Also reproduced in *Interviews of Maulana Maududi*, edited by Abu Tariq.

⁶⁹ Gilani, 50.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 63-64.

However, it is ‘*Sunnat Allāh*’ that He, Allāh, appoints some of His servants, from time to time, in the interval of the Prophets who can call people to the right path as mentioned in the Prophet’s tradition⁷¹ and they hold their patience in dire crisis. Maududi, in this critical situation, continued the task of previous torchbearers of Islam through a journal as the new mouthpiece of Islamic renaissance.

In 1932, a paper named *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* was run in Hyderabad by Maulana Abu Muhammad Muslih with a view to project the message of the Qur’ān. Nevertheless, he faced difficulties in continuing this paper. Therefore, Maududi stepped forward to continue this noble job and decided to publish it in his own way.⁷² He started it with a slogan, “O Muslims, rise with the *da‘wah* in the Qur’ān; and influence the whole world.”⁷³ In his autobiography, Maududi narrated the story of publishing the *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* as follows:

It was under such circumstances that I started the paper *Tarjuman al-Quran* from Hyderabad Deccan in 1932. At that time my scheme of work was that the dominance of the Western thought which swayed the minds of the Muslims should be broken, and it should be brought home to the Muslims that they had their own way of life which was superior to the Western way. My plan was that through constructive criticism and by marshalling facts and figures I should expose the weak points in the Western civilization. My strategy was that side by side with such exposure of the Western culture, I should project Islam in proper perspective, so that the Muslims could realize that their salvation lay in holding fast to Islam.⁷⁴

Masudul Hassan mentioned that, Maududi expressed the message of *Tarjuman al-Qur’an* in its first editorial as follows:

⁷¹ The idea was from the *ḥadīth* “At the head of every one hundred years, Allāh will send to this nation one who will revive for it its Religion.”. See Abū Bakar Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Bayhaqī, *Ma‘rifat al-Sunan wa al-Āthār*, ed. Sayyid Kasrawī Ḥasan, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutb al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1st edn., 1991), Vol. 1, 124. Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Awsaṭ*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥasan Muḥammad Ḥasan Ismā‘īl, (Amman: Dār al-Fikr, 1st edn., 1999), Vol. 5, 44.

⁷² Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 91.

⁷³ Gilani, 392.

⁷⁴ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 91.

The sole purpose of the journal is to proclaim the Word of Allah and to invite men to supreme effort in the Way of Allah. Its special purpose is to comment from the point of view of the Quran upon the thought, the ideas and the principles of the culture and civilization that are spreading in the world, to explain the principles advanced by the Quran and the Sunnah in the context of contemporary philosophy, science, politics, economics, culture, and sociology and to formulate the application of the principles of the Qur'an and the Sunnah to the conditions of the present age. This journal invites the Muslim Ummah to a new life.⁷⁵

Maududi began, said Asad Gilani, to guide Muslims of the subcontinent by publishing his messages through the monthly *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. Despite trials and financial difficulties, he continued with his mission.⁷⁶ Allahbukhsh K. Brohi stated:

Tarjumān al-Qur'ān in which his views about Islam and what it had to say upon questions relating to the law and constitution of a Muslim state were put forward with a great deal of vigour and clarity. That he was a scholar of enormous range and proportions and was a man of unimpeachable character, was the most obvious thing for anyone to see.⁷⁷

It was like a flambeau which Maududi used to guide his followers. In his *da'wah*, there was no other means except through this weapon. He used this means to nourish his followers mentally and intellectually. Based upon this weapon, he established his movement, *Jama'at-i Islami*.⁷⁸

A TIMELY PRESENTATION OF THE QUR'ĀN

For the revival of Islam in the 20th Century, his *Tafhim al-Qur'an* played a very significant role. The main purpose behind *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* was to expose the weak points of the Western civilization through constructive criticisms and by marshalling facts and figures in projecting Islam in a proper perspective to make

⁷⁵ Ibid., See also, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an* (first issue).

⁷⁶ Gilani, 65.

⁷⁷ Allahbukhsh K. Brohi, "Mawlānā Abul A'lā Mawdūdī: The Man, the Scholar, the Reformer" in *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'lā Mawdūdī*, edited by Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1979), 294.

⁷⁸ Ahmad Idris, 38.

Muslims realise that their salvation lay in holding fast to Islam.⁷⁹ On the other hand, the main purpose of *Tafhim al-Qur'an* lies in presenting the proper meanings and messages of the Qur'ān in a language and style that can penetrate the hearts and minds of modern Muslims, men and women. In addition, the purpose also includes showing the application of the Qur'ān in people's daily challenges, both on the individual and societal levels. Maududi presented the Qur'ān as a book of guidance for humans and as a guidebook for the movement to implement and enforce that guidance in human life.⁸⁰ *Jama'at-i Islami* was founded in 1941 while Maududi undertook the writing of this *tafsīr* at the initial stage of the movement's formation.

Maududi was of the opinion that although the Qur'ān speaks to the reader in the language of life which can penetrate his heart, because of its poor translation it often becomes lifeless. Another problem with the translation is its literal translating style where every word is printed under the original verse thus breaking the message into fragments, and disturbing the rapturous communion between the book and the reader. He said in the Preface to the *Tafhim*, as quoted by Altaf Gauhar:

The Qur'ān speaks to the reader in the language of life, vividly and melodiously, its sparkling cadence invigorates the mind and its impassioned notes stir the soul, as if a great storm were raging in the heart. By comparison the language of the translation is a poor echo of the glorious original, so lifeless and insipid that one is often left completely cold. A flame runs through the words of the Qur'ān which seems to get snuffed in the translation. The spirit of spring in full bloom seems to vanish leaving behind a trail of dry brown leaves.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 91.

⁸⁰ Khurshid and Ansari, "Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'ālā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival" 363-364.

⁸¹ Altaf Gauhar, "Mawlānā Abul A'ālā Mawdūdī – A Personal Account" in *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'ālā Mawdūdī*, edited by Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, (London: The Islamic Foundation, 1979), 274.

In the *Tafhim* these difficulties and defects disappear and the message of the Qur'ān comes through clear and true, says Altaf Gauhar.⁸² Maududi tried to translate as much as possible from Arabic to Urdu so that the reader of the Qur'ān will get its real taste. He also clarified the issues that seem to be controversial when they are not.

Appreciating this *tafsīr*, Syed Asad Gilani stated:

It is a commentary of the Qur'an written with a view to enable the modern mind to get to the spirit of the Divine Book. It is characterized by two salient features: Firstly, the Maulana has endeavoured in it to translate, as far as possible, from the original text Arabic – the literary marvel into the indigenous language – Urdu – so that the reader may realize what after all was the reason that the facial expression of an infidel like Utba would transform at listening to a few of its verses and out of restlessness he would place his hand on the mouth of the reciter lest its portent should enchant and overpower his senses.... The marginal notes constitute the second noteworthy characteristic of the *Tafhim ul-Qur'an* which has been written keeping in view of the difficulties faced by the modern mind in understanding the Qur'an. Steering clear of the controversies centering round diction, language and logic, he has presented the key to the problems confronting the present age. He has highlighted all the difficulties encountered by a reader in the study of the Qur'an.⁸³

His *Tafsīr*, said Abbas Ali Khan, possesses encyclopaedic information in various fields of knowledge, but never was he diverted from the real message of the Qur'ān, i.e. to present it as a Book of guidance. His *Tafsīr* has hardly any parallel in the Urdu language. He transformed the message of the Qur'ān in clear, plain and forceful Arabic into a plain and forceful Urdu language. An objective reader of his *Tafsīr* is likely to be influenced by this *Tafsīr*.⁸⁴

Altaf Gauhar expressed his experience about its tremendous presentation thus:

I started reading *Sūrah* Yūsuf. I had not known before. I was enthralled. I had never come across anything written in such simple and direct Urdu with complete command over the subject....Mawlānā

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Gilani, 369-371.

⁸⁴ Noor Mohammad Osmani, "Mawdūdī's Tafhīm al-Qur'ān and Islamic Da'wah: A Methodological Study," (Ph.D. thesis, International Islamic University Malaysia, 2002), 89. See also, Abbas Ali Khan "Mawlana Mawdudi as an Encyclopedia of Knowledge" in Zaman, *Greatest Da'i*, pp. 264-265.

undertook the translation for the average educated reader who is not familiar with the Arabic language.⁸⁵

During this time, Maududi travelled on a study tour to the Middle East countries. The sole purpose of this tour was to get practical experience to develop his commentary on the Holy Qur'ān.⁸⁶ In addition, he wanted to study the geographical aspects of the places mentioned in the Qur'ān.⁸⁷

WIDER CONCEPT OF 'IBĀDAH AND ULŪHIYYAH

According to Maududi, *'ibādah* does not only mean five times prayer, paying *zakāh*, fasting in the month of *Ramadhān* or performing *hajj* and so on. Nevertheless, all the actions can be considered as *'ibādah* if they are done in accordance with the way that has been described by Allāh and His Messenger (peace be upon him). Therefore, when someone abstains from something that is *ḥarām*, refrains from conceit, deception, cruelty, and resorts to justice and fair play, they would also be considered as acts of worship. Likewise, every moment he spends to serve humanity or remains mindful of Allāh's commandment and keeps himself within the bounds of Allāh's limit, those actions are also considered as if he spent for the sake of Allāh.⁸⁸ Maududi stated in his *Tafhim*, "whatever, one does in His way, in subservience to His *Sharī'ah*, is *'ibādah*; and that covers his bargains, his domestic life, his social intercourse and his concentration in everything worldly."⁸⁹

Although Maududi does not deserve credit for the originality of the concept of God, he deserves credit because he had stressed on it more than others. The original

⁸⁵ Altaf Gauhar, "Mawlānā Abul A'ālā Mawdūdī – A Personal Account," 274.

⁸⁶ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 2, 58.

⁸⁷ Khurshid and Ansari, "Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A'ālā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival," 363-364.

⁸⁸ Gilani, 289-290.

⁸⁹ Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhim al-Qur'an*, (Lahore: Idarah Tarjuman al-Qur'an, 1991), Vol. 1, 55.

concept of God had already been expounded by the Prophets, again and again. However, to remind people about the Prophets' explanation regarding this concept, he authored the book *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-arbaʿah fī al-Qurʾān* in order to elaborate the concept of God from different angles. He showed that the concept of God is wider than what can be grasped by the first sight of the statement "There is no god but Allāh." According to Maududi, this statement not only proclaims the unity of God as the Creator or even as the sole object of worship but it also proclaims the uniqueness of God as the Master, Sovereign, Lord and Law-giver. The concept of His being the sole Sovereign and Lawgiver provides the basic principle of authority. Therefore, all the laws and principles made by man, which are contrary to the laws prescribed by Allāh, are to be rejected. Man, being a creature of Allāh, is bound to serve and be obedient to Allāh. Likewise, being chosen as a vicegerent by Allāh, he should act according to Allāh's wish. Regarding *ʿibādah*, Maududi opined that in Islam it does not only refer to certain acts of rituals but also includes all acts of obedience towards Allāh. Maududi maintained that, defiance and rebellion against Allāh's laws and arrogation to oneself or to others other than the One True God with the authority to command is *jāhiliyyah*. The dominance of *jāhiliyyah* is the main obstacle to Islam becoming a living reality. To be a complete and comprehensive way of life, no aspect of human life can claim an autonomous status and thus fall beyond the jurisdiction of Islam.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ See Khurshid and Ansari, "Mawlānā Sayyid Abul Aʿlā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival," 365-367.

ISLAM: THE ULTIMATE WAY OF LIFE

Despite the global dominance of the Western civilization through its modern technology, Maududi did not feel apologetic for Islam. Nevertheless, he firmly believed that the Islamic way of life is necessary and suitable for the salvation of contemporary man as it was for the man of 14 centuries ago. Although he appreciated the scientific and technological achievements of the Western civilization, he disagreed with the idea that it is based on man's independence of, and indifference to, Divine guidance. This attitude gradually makes man think that there is no need to follow God's guidance and he is not answerable to God for his conduct. It also pushes the Western society gradually to the utilitarian or pragmatic view of morals; consequently, the human family has been split into a multiplicity of nations with hostile separation instead of universal brotherhood. Likewise, rather than family ties that are strengthened with the most precious moral virtues, the infatuation with sensual pleasure has given rise to modes of social behaviour which are destroying the very bases of family life and robbing man of pure feelings and character. Thus, Maududi felt the necessity to have an alternative new social order and state to be spelled out and put into practice through the Islamic way of life in all its fullness - its metaphysical doctrines, its principles of personal behaviour and social conduct as well as the principles of organizing a sound and healthy economy.⁹¹

According to Maududi, this social order is based on the theory that all human beings are equal. Despite their variation in languages, colours and races they are actually a single group. Islam recognizes such differences. If there were to be any difference between people, it would be based on their ideas, beliefs and principles; therefore, there can be an ideological society against a racial or national society. This

⁹¹ Ibid., 368-369.

social order, overstepping the geographical boundaries and limits of race, colour and language, makes the universal brotherhood.⁹² While the spirit of this social order will be that, all aspects of life should be headed towards the pleasure of Allāh.⁹³

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT

Many scholars have authored a vast number of books to guide people towards Islam. They have enriched the field of Islamic thought by their efforts and their number is huge. On the other hand, there are some scholars who have spent their time to mobilize people through their actions, such as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Ḥasan al-Bannā. However, Maududi is a combination between these two, i.e. preaching thoughts through authoring books and founding a movement to materialize the thoughts into practice. Tufail Muhammad said, “Maulana Maududi was no arm-chair scholar. He launched a new movement for Islamic revival: the *Jama‘at-i Islami*, which has been working for the mission ever since its inception in August 1941.”⁹⁴ About this movement Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq stated:

The Islamic movement which founded by Mawdūdī has grown into a strong and highly organized religio-political organization which has attracted people from all classes, but has a specially strong influence over the intelligentsia and the youth of the subcontinent.... Mawdūdī has by now become very much like a father figure for Muslims all over the world.⁹⁵

⁹² Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1. 342.

⁹³ Ibid., 470.

⁹⁴ Tufail Muhammad, “Foreword” in *Sayyid Abul A‘la Maududi and his Thought*, by Masudul Hasan, (Lahore: Islamic Publication Ltd., 1984), Vol. 1. xi.

⁹⁵ Khurshid and Ansari, “Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival,” 364.

QUR'ĀNIC GENERATION

One of the notable and memorable contributions of Maulana Maududi is his *Tafhim* as mentioned earlier and its charismatic characteristic is its contemporary style while its great achievement is its ability to turn the younger generation towards the marvellous charms of the Qur'ān, a generation who speaks about the Qur'ān and has Qur'ānic study circle on campuses. Praising this generation Asad Gilani said, "Students of the *Tafhim ul-Qur'an* have played the key role to stem the tide of the onslaught of western secular civilization."⁹⁶

NEW SCHEME OF EDUCATION

As a reformer, Maududi was very concerned about the significance of education. According to him, in any system of reform, education plays a vital role. Therefore, in 1936 he pointed out the necessity of reforming the system of education imparted in the Muslim University of Aligarh.⁹⁷ Commenting upon the present educational system, he said it does not prepare the Muslim youths to be the leaders of the future Muslim *Ummah*, rather it causes them to be the destroyers of it. He asserted that a reflection on this modern education and culture demonstrates that they are contrary to the spirit of Islam. He also warned that if we accept the 'modern' at its face value, then we shall lose our young generation.⁹⁸ In 1941, he also pointed out how Muslim religious institutions should reform their educational system, in his address at Nadwatul Ulum. Maududi felt that, if nobody comes forward to establish a new Islamic scheme of education then his movement, *Jama'at-i Islami* should be the one. In this regard, in 1944, Maududi sat with the experts at Dar al-Salam. After a week long discussion

⁹⁶ Gilani, 231.

⁹⁷ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1. 290.

⁹⁸ See Gilani, 322-323, see also, Convocation Address, 1940.

over various aspects of the matter, they came up with a proposal of a three-stage educational system: preliminary, secondary and higher educational systems. In all these three stages, there was a combination between Islamic studies and modern studies.⁹⁹

A CLARIFICATION: ISLAMIC OR MUSLIM GOVERNMENT

It was generally believed that the terms ‘Islamic’ and ‘Muslim’ refer to the same things. Therefore, all Muslim states by default are Islamic states, and all the activities of such governments are considered to be a demonstration of Islamic teaching. If anything taken by a particular government is considered contrary to the Islamic teaching then it would be interpreted through different angles, far from the reality, or it would be considered as private action. Surprisingly, this idea was not only the idea of the layman, rather it was also the idea of most of the educated people. It is Maududi who first unveiled the issue and stated that the Islamic government is the only government which obeys Allāh and His Messenger (peace be upon him) in all aspects of life. The government has greater respect for public opinion, follows the system of consultation and believes that the foremost and fundamental sources of its legislation are to be the Qur’ān and *Sunnah*.¹⁰⁰

ISLAM: A SUPERIOR CULTURE

As a comprehensive way of life, Islam covers all aspects of life. Despite its distinct culture, which is superior to other cultures, many misgivings are prevalent among the elite groups of society about the Islamic culture. In recent centuries, Islam and

⁹⁹ See Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1. 290-291.

¹⁰⁰ Gilani, 203-204.

Muslims have been cornered and harshly condemned by many evangelists, orientalist and other anti-Islamic people. Due to lack of knowledge about Islam, people considered the activities done by Muslims as Islamic. They fancy it cannot be anti-Islamic.¹⁰¹ Focusing on only a few Muslims activities, they branded Islamic culture as synonymous and equal to anti-human culture, barbarism and terrorism worldover. Likewise, Islamic culture has been characterised as backward, underdeveloped and anti-progress. In addition to this, it has been said that Islam has spread by dint of swords.

Maududi said that, when Muslims followed Islam in the true spirit, they succeeded in all fields. A large part of the world was under their control and Islamic culture became the dominant culture of the world. Unfortunately, when they became indifferent to Islam, their culture became stagnant and they lost the leadership of the world. They lost the true spirit of Islam; their disabilities caused them to retreat. They were not only losing themselves in the rising tide of Western civilisation but also their thinking was being moulded by Western thought. More dangerous than that is that new generations of Muslims have started to believe that the Western way of life is the true way of life. Maududi asserted that much blame for this unhappy state of affairs lay on the religious leaders of Islam.¹⁰²

By observing the considerable mental confusion among Muslim multitudes in respect to culture, Maududi felt the need to contribute. Therefore, to show those people who believe the Western culture as the true way of life, he spoke on this issue in detail¹⁰³ and proved that the Islamic culture is superior. To remove the negative

¹⁰¹ See Gilani, 373.

¹⁰² See Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1. 109-110.

¹⁰³ See Gilani, 372- 373.

attitude towards Islam and its culture, he authored a few books, such as *Jihād fī al-Islām*, *Sood*, *Purdah* and many others as explained in the following.

JIHĀD FĪ AL-ISLĀM

Maududi's intellectual contributions had begun with his writing the book *al-Jihād fī al-Islām*¹⁰⁴. Starting with this work, he initiated his intellectual *Jihād* in the cause of Islam. In 1927, he was only 23 or 24 years old when the book was written.¹⁰⁵ The young Maududi observed that many Muslim writers had tried to answer the charge of Gandhi and other western writers that 'Islam is spread by sword'. Unfortunately, they had adopted the apologetic way, which made Islam to stand in the docks. Therefore, he wrote it to present Islam as it is, and not as it should be according to the understanding of western writers.¹⁰⁶ Allama Iqbal, as cited by Asad Gilani in his *Maududi thought and Movement*, mentioned that, "he had not come across a book like it on this subject, so comprehensive and erudite."¹⁰⁷ In this book, Maududi proved that the concept of war in Islam is primarily that of guarantor of world peace and a source of protection of the oppressed against the oppressor.¹⁰⁸ This book brings out the concept of Islamic *Jihād* in a proper perspective.

SOOD (USURY)

Some Muslim minds which have been polluted by Western thought think that Islam being a rational religion does not prohibit interest but it prohibits usury. Unfortunately, they find it fashionable to believe that the modern society could not

¹⁰⁴ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Jihād fī al-Islām*, (Lahore: Idara Tarjuman ul Quran, 1988).

¹⁰⁵ Turābī, 222.

¹⁰⁶ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 51-52.

¹⁰⁷ Gilani, 374.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

exist without interest. In addition, to challenge the gospel truth of Western civilisation regarding economic practices, which they have taken instead of reasoning, they cannot believe that the economic system can be sustained without usury or interest. Therefore, Maududi published a series of articles regarding usury through *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. These articles were later compiled into a book entitled *Sood*.¹⁰⁹ In this book, he highlighted that the Qur'ān strictly declares *sood* as prohibited. Referring to the Qur'ān, Maududi said that those who accept *sood* would rise on the Day of Resurrection as a person beaten by *Shayṭān* because they compare usury with trade even though Allāh has permitted trade and prohibited usury. Allāh has commanded believers to give up what is due to them from usury; otherwise, they should prepare themselves to make war against Allāh. He also highlighted the matter through a historical background that not only Islam prohibits usury but all religions and many philosophers have prohibited it. According to Maududi, even the economists of the West are not in agreement that interest is indispensable for sustaining the economic system. Saying that interest is allowed, cannot be accepted as Islam prohibits all types of interests without differentiating between interest and usury. In this occasion, he opined, when interest is charged at a specified rate regardless of the circumstances of the debtor, it would cause him misery and financial distress. Therefore, he suggested that Islam permits trade and the money could be advanced to a debtor on some profit and loss sharing basis.¹¹⁰

Similarly, his book *Purdah*¹¹¹ was also authored to bring back Muslim women to Islam. Firstly, Maududi published his thoughts in provoking articles in his

¹⁰⁹ Abul Ala Maududi, *Sood*, (Lahore: Kazi Publications Ltd., 1999).

¹¹⁰ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 1, 112-114.

¹¹¹ Abul Ala Maududi, *Purdah and the Status of Women in Islam*, (Lahore: Kazi Publications Ltd., 1991).

Tarjuman al-Qur'an between 1935-1939; later on, these articles were compiled into a book in 1939 under the title *Purdah*.¹¹²

FATWĀ (VERDICT)

Use of Loudspeaker

The Prophet said, “*Ḥalāl* is manifested and *ḥarām* is manifested and there are some other things in between which are doubtful.”¹¹³ Because of this tradition of the Prophet, many ‘*Ulamā*’ found it problematic to give any decree. When the loudspeaker was introduced for the first time, people were enthusiastic to know about its validity in prayer. They ran towards the ‘*Ulamā*’ to know whether it is lawful in Islam or not. According to Asad Gilani, some ‘*Ulamā*’ including Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi find it unlawful in Islam. Thanvi even opined that its use has become a cause of evil when this instrument is placed in mosques causing dishonour to the house of Allāh. According to Maududi, the use of this instrument is quite valid and it is one of those means of this world that Allāh has granted. Maududi argued that as it is an invention of this contemporary time, it is basically wrong to search for the Islamic verdict in the Qur’ān, *Sunnah* or in jurisprudence. However, based on the principles of *Shari‘ah*, the use of it is lawful without any doubt. He further argued that it is very strange that the disbelievers may use technology that is granted by Allāh to make the sound of evil louder while the believers hesitate to use it in raising the voice of goodness.¹¹⁴ This incident shows the deep Islamic thinking and understanding of Maududi.

¹¹² Ibid., 205.

¹¹³ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1st edn., 1998), Vol. 3, 57.

¹¹⁴ See Gilani, 192-194.

***Jum'ah* Prayer at Village**

Previously it was not permissible to perform *Jum'ah* prayer in the village. The Islamic scholars in the past had given the verdict about the invalidity of performing *Jum'ah* prayer in villages. The views of the *'Ulama* of the subcontinent were not different than that. However, it is Maududi who viewed it differently in this regard. He argued that there is much difference between the old Arab settlements, in terms of population and facilities and between present villages; even the population of Madina in the past was not more than a few thousands. With few conditions, he gave the verdict as permissible to perform *Jum'ah* prayer in the village.¹¹⁵

Birth Control

In 1935, Maududi published a number of articles opposing the birth control movement. He asserted that birth control leads to gradual social imbalance. With this conviction, he argued that the balance of proportion within the society could be disrupted by it. Birth control not only causes gradual evacuation of the vital and active element of society but also upsets the proper proportion between the old and the young. Therefore, with the reduction in the number of children, the proportion of the aged can rise in society.¹¹⁶ Referring to many countries in the West such as England, France, Germany, Italy etc. Maududi said that even in the West, the birth control movement had led to reactions whereby a gradual change of outlook was discernible.¹¹⁷ According to Asad Gilani, Maududi described birth control as one of the silliest notions of the West. By tracing the long history of the birth control movement and analyzing surveys of many places, Maududi concluded with certainty

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 195.

¹¹⁶ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 271.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 273-274.

that it is fatal and will destroy the society. It will also weaken the social, racial, economic and ethical values. Ultimately, it is utterly useless, futile and silly.¹¹⁸ The pattern of life that Islam builds has no place for birth control, he added.¹¹⁹

STRUGGLING FOR RELIGION

Anti Qadiani Movement

Maududi was listed as one of the most dangerous men in Pakistan because of his rebellion against the government. However, it was acknowledged that he was rational, scholastic, mindful and fearful of God, patriotic, religious and ideological, a man whose aims were pious, said Asad Gilani.¹²⁰ The Qadiani riots were plotted and they were pre-planned to provide the government the opportunity to dismiss the cabinet headed by Nazimuddin.¹²¹ Another object of this pre-planned plotting against Maududi, according to Asad Gilani, was that, if he were drawn out to support the *tehrrik-against-Qadianiat*, then he would be accused as a rioter and face death; if not, then the public would denounce and disown him for good. Therefore, Maududi had to be silenced, physically, or at least politically.¹²² He fought against the false prophethood of Gulam Ahmad Qadiani. In March 1953, he wrote a pamphlet entitled *The Qadiani Problem*, where he explained their basic tenets and proposed to the government to declare them as separate minority community.¹²³ Despite his adopting the middle course, it could not save him from the arrogance of the government. He

¹¹⁸ Gilani, 383.

¹¹⁹ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 274.

¹²⁰ Gilani, 92.

¹²¹ Ibid., 131.

¹²² Ibid., 104.

¹²³ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 1, 442.

was arrested and kept in solitary confinement for 316 days, until he sentenced to death.¹²⁴

The Status of *Sunnah*

Maududi also brought forward the status of the *Sunnah* as well as he has fought back to establish its authority as a source of law. The Ayub regime was very much fertile for anti-*Hadīth* movement and free thinkers against Islam. The sole purpose of this movement was to present a new version of Islam, such as *Nizam-i-Rububiat*, thus it was beneficial for the un-Islamic rules in Muslim countries. In fact, it was introduced in Pakistan to support the dictatorial regime. They raised many issues in denying the *Sunnah* such as ‘whether the *Sunnah* is a source of law was a disputed issue?’ and ‘why should the *Sunnah* be a source of law?’ and many other questions. Maududi played a significant role in refuting all their claims and establishing unequivocally the authority of *Hadīth*. The answers regarding this issue were published in 1963 in the form of a book entitled *Sunnat ki Aini Haythiyat* [The Constitutional Status of *Sunnah*].¹²⁵ Maududi stated:

This concept of rejecting the authority of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet attracts all Western minded people for there is no better alternative to remain Muslims after dissociating oneself from the principles of Islam. What else could be more desirable than the fact that whatever is *ḥalāl* in the West and has remained *ḥarām* in the religion of ‘Mullas’ for centuries become now *ḥalāl* for them and they get proofs from the *āyāt* of the Qur’ān itself!¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Gilani, 104-105.

¹²⁵ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 2, 146-147.

¹²⁶ Abul Ala Maududi, *Sunnat ki Aini Haythiyat*, [The Constitutional Status of *Sunnah*], (Lahore: Islamic Publication Ltd., 1996), 22.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY

With the creation of Pakistan, a large number of refugees had come from India. The Pakistan government established many refugee camps to shelter them. *Jama'at-i Islami* concentrated on volunteer services, which were supervised by Maududi.¹²⁷

Before Bangladesh got its independence from Pakistan, Maududi tried his best to protect Pakistan from the separation. On this occasion, he appealed to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman by saying:

I am aware of all that you have been saying against me during the last two years, although I did not say anything against you. In view of this background it was not meant for me to address you. Now that the very future of Pakistan is at stake I am appealing to you, disregarding all personal considerations, not to precipitate any action, which might be a point of no return.¹²⁸

Maududi had notable achievement in the field of social work. He established several social service institutions; there are labour welfare committees in order to maintain industrial peace through conciliation and co-operation between the employer and the employees; he founded female committees with the objective to create awareness of their obligations and rights that are enjoined in Islam. Moreover, he also established student organizations to fight against the clandestine communist, pseudo-socialist and atheistic activities of the enemies.¹²⁹

Maududi's contributions for Islam were recognised in the form of King Faisal Award amounting Two Hundred Thousand Saudi Rials, a Gold Medal and a citation. He did not utilise the award for his personal gains and luxury; he donated the entire amount to the Islamic Research Academy Pakistan.¹³⁰ It is his contributions which made him to be a such scholar who was the only Pakistani invited by the government

¹²⁷ Gilani, 396.

¹²⁸ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 2, 395.

¹²⁹ Gilani, 78.

¹³⁰ Turābī, 161-162.

of Saudi Arabia to advise them on setting up an Islamic university at Madīnah. He was nominated to the executive committee of the University and became a founding member of the *Mu‘tamar al-‘Ālam al-Islāmī*.¹³¹

MAUDUDI’S INFLUENCE

Maududi is a man who has shaped history and influenced the world through his thoughts. His thoughts became dominant in our times, inspiring Muslims all over the world. His influence transcends the boundaries of *Jama‘at-i Islami* and other organisations, even going beyond the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent. His writings still continue to influence the thought of Muslims, as the Himalayas or the Alps influence the climate in Asia or Europe without themselves moving about, added Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari.¹³²

DEPARTURE OF A GREAT SOUL

Maududi suffered from stuning of feet, stomach pain and back pain. He also suffered from some heart problems. His son, Ahmad Farooq, persuaded him to travel to America for treatment. On 26th May 1979, Maududi left Lahore for the USA. After several heart attacks, Maududi’s soul departed to meet his Generous Lord. He passed away at 8:45 a.m. on 22nd September 1979.¹³³ His body was brought to the residence of his son and was prepared for the funeral. After offering five *Janāzah* (funeral) prayers his body was transferred from the USA to London, and at the airport *Janāzah* was held twice. From London to Karachi the dead body was carried by the

¹³¹ Masudul Hassan, Vol. 2, 58.

¹³² Khurshid and Ansari, “Mawlānā Sayyid Abul A‘lā Mawdūdī, An Introduction to his vision of Islam and Islamic Revival,” 365.

¹³³ Masudul Hasan, Vol. 2, 481- 482.

Pakistan Airlines [PIA]. The plane reached Karachi in the morning of 25th September 1979. *Janāzah* was offered once again in Karachi. On the same day, the body of Maududi reached Lahore. The people waited for hours to have a last glimpse at their leader's blessed face.¹³⁴ On 26th September 1979, the funeral procession started towards Qadhafi Stadium and reached there at 10 a.m. The Qadhafi stadium was packed to the full. It was the largest funeral gathering in the history of Pakistan. The famous Islamic scholar, Yūsuf al-Qaraḏāwī, led the *Janāzah* prayer. After the *Janāzah* prayer, the body was buried at 5-A Zaildar Park, the place where he had lived all his life. He was 76 years at the time of his death. May his soul rest in peace! *Āmīn!*¹³⁵

The following chapter will elaborate the four terms i.e. *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *'ibādah* as elaborated by Maududi.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 482- 484.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 484.

CHAPTER THREE

FOUR BASIC TERMS OF THE QUR'ĀN: *ILĀH, RABB, DĪN AND* *‘IBĀDAH*

The thoughts that Maududi has developed since 1933, came to bear fruit in 1941 through the establishment of *Jama‘at-i Islami*.¹ When he started his *da‘wah*, he did not have a team, the resources and the means.² He published *Qur’an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahen* which was originally published in the monthly Urdu magazine, *Tarjuman al-Qur’an*.³ He wrote it in order to clarify the important *Muṣṭalahāt* (terms) that Allāh SWT uses in the Qur’ān which are *Ilāh, Rabb, dīn* and *‘ibādah*. At the same time, he wished to eliminate misinterpretations that were widely prevailing on these terms.

According to Maududi, these terms are the centre for all the teachings of the Qur’ān and the core point of Islamic *da‘wah*. The universal call of the Qur’ān is that, Allāh is the only One *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*. Therefore, it is obligatory for man to acknowledge Him and accept Him as *Ilāh* and *Rabb*. No one other than He deserved the attributes that are implied by these terms. Consequently, it also requires that a person worships Him alone, and not anyone else, and makes his *dīn* exclusively for Allāh by rejecting all other *dīn*.⁴

¹ Syed Asad Gilani, *Maududi Thought & Movement*, (Lahore: Islamic Publication Ltd., 1984), 51.

² *Ibid.*, 68.

³ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Kāzīm Sabbāq, (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 5th edn., 1971), 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

MAUDUDI'S CRITICISM ON THE FOUR TERMS

According to Maududi, when the Qur'ān was revealed, the terms *Ilāh* and *Rabb* were familiar to the Arabs because, for a long time they had been using these terms and knew them both from connotative and denotative angles. Whenever they were calling towards the statement, “there is no *Ilāh* but Allāh and there is no *Rabb* rather than He,” no one had the least share in the qualities and attributes, which the words denote, they at once comprehended the full import, understood completely without any doubt or uncertainty. They were fully aware of what they were declaring. They knew, by this declaration, the things that were exclusively for Allāh and the attributes that no one can be attributed to other than Allāh. Therefore, whoever declared it, they did it consciously and those who denied it, also did it after thinking about its consequence. Likewise, they had comprehensive knowledge about *'ibādah* and *dīn*. The demands and the requirements of these words were very clear to them. Whenever they were addressed towards these words, they knew that they had to change their lifestyle with this declaration.⁵

However, with the passing of time, the real meaning of these terms, which were known to the people during the time of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), have been narrowed down from their wider meaning to very limited meaning, even it started to be disappeared gradually from people's mind. The change that took place in the later years was because of two reasons. Firstly, the gradual decline of interest in the Arabic language. Secondly, the original meaning of these four terms had not been passed on to those people who were born and brought up in Islamic

⁵ Ibid., 8-9.

society. These reasons caused recent linguists and commentators to use the meaning of later generation instead of the original meaning in explaining these terms.⁶

To support his view, Maududi demonstrated how people think about these terms in a narrow sense, such as the word *Ilāh* has become a synonym for idol; *Rabb* indicates someone who brings up or rears or feeds another person; the term *‘ibādah* is used to mean some rituals; the word *dīn* has resembled religion, and the word *tāghūt* describes an idol or the Devil.⁷

Maududi claimed that the satisfaction with these narrow explanations causes people to think that they are observing the religion properly and exclusively for the sake of Allāh. As a result, they fail to grasp the real message as well as the great spirit of the Qur’ān. Misunderstanding of these terms can be considered as the main obstacle towards understanding the faith properly. Whatever shortcoming can be seen in people’s belief, faith and actions is because of this narrow understanding.

Maududi warned about the consequence of the absence of real knowledge on these terms. He asserted that it can affect the proper understanding of the whole Qur’ān. The person who does not know what is meant by *Ilāh* or *Rabb* or *‘ibādah*, what Qur’ān meant when it uses the word *dīn*, will not be able to grab the true understanding of the Qur’ān. Therefore, he will not be able to know the *tawhīd* clearly. In other words, he will not be saved from *shirk* nor will he be able to make his *‘ibādah* sincerely for Allāh and make his *dīn* exclusively for Allāh. As a result, although he is a believer of the Qur’ān, the guideline or the instructions provided by the Qur’ān will remain incomplete to him. Although he has declared that there is no

⁶ Ibid., 9-10.

⁷ Ibid., 10.

god but Allāh, he is accepting unconsciously many other gods along with Him.⁸ Although he is affirming that Allāh is the only One *Rabb*, in his practical life, he is unconsciously obedient to many other *rabbs*. He is avowing with all seriousness and sincerity that he is not worshipping anyone other than Allāh. Yet, he does it unknowingly. In the same way, he is assuring that he is observing the *dīn* of Allāh exclusively. Due to lack of understanding on these terms, all of his actions that he performed to please Allāh might be considered as worship before others other than Allāh, because he has been practising not in the same way that has been prescribed by Allāh.⁹

MAUDUDI'S ELABORATION OF THE FOUR TERMS

Maududi felt the necessity to elaborate the four terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *‘ibādah* in a comprehensive way in order to describe the real purpose of the Qur’ān and its lesson. He described these terms from various aspects such as linguistic point of view, the notions of pre-Islamic nations, the Qur’ānic description regarding these terms, etc.

ILĀH

Maududi in his *Qur’an Ki Char Bunyadi Istilahen* started the discussion with the term *Ilāh*. He described the term from several angles. Firstly, he explained it from the linguistic point of view where he provided references from various earlier *tafāsīr* such as *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm* by Abū al-Fidā ‘Imād al-Dīn ‘Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Gharā’ib al-Qur’ān* by Niẓam al-Dīn Ḥasan al-Nīsāburī and others. After reflecting upon the linguistic origins of this term, he showed how this term mean

⁸ Ibid., 7-8.

⁹ Ibid.

‘ibādah (the act of worship) as well as *ma‘būd* (the object of worship).¹⁰ Secondly, he gave an historical overview on this term with references from the Qur’ān about the pre-Islamic concept of *Ilāh*. From this discussion, he concluded with “the essence of *ulūhiyyah* is authority.” Thirdly, the same essence of *ulūhiyyah*, which means authority, is also acknowledged by the Qur’ān in his whole discussion on *Ilāh*.¹¹

Linguistic Justification

Alīf, *lām* and *hā* are the three letters which the root word *Ilāh* consists of. The meaning can be found through various usage of this root in the dictionaries which are:¹²

1. *Aliha*: being confused or perplexed
2. *Alihtu ilā fulān*: achieving peace and mental satisfaction by seeking refuge with someone or through the relation with him
3. *Aliha al-rajulu ya’lahu*: being frightened or scared by any calamity or disaster, and then taking proper shelter by someone
4. *Aliha al-rajulu ilā al-rajul*: turning towards someone eagerly due to the strong love for him
5. *Aliha al-Faṣīlu*: the lost issue of the she-camel rushed to snuggle up to its mother on finding it
6. *Alihan ilāhatan wa alūhatan*: offered worship or adoration

¹⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹¹ Ibid., 23.

¹² See Abū al-Fidā’ Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Umar ibn Kathīr al-Qurashī, al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm*, (Kuwait: Jam‘īyat Ihyā’ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 6th edn., 2011), Vol. 1, 31. See also, Niẓām al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Nīsāburī, *Gharā’ib al-Qur’ān wa Raghā’ib al-Furqān*, (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Qayyimah, 1999), Vol. 1, 138-140.

It is also said that the word *al-Ilāh* came from “*lāha yalīhi līhan*” being hidden or concealed.

Maududi maintained that, by reflecting upon these appropriate meanings, “*Aliha ya’lahu ilāhatan*”, it seems to be used as *‘ibādah* (the act of worship) as well as *ma’būd* (the object of worship). In this regard, some considerations, can be applied to reach this conclusion, stated in the following:

1. The first and foremost factor that leads a person towards worship is his need for it. He will not worship anyone or the feeling of worshipping will not grow in his mind unless he has this thought in his mind that he is worshipping someone who is able to remove his distress. He is also able to fulfil his needs and able to protect him from any kinds of calamity and so on.¹³
2. If a person believes that someone is able to fulfil his needs, it obligates him to acknowledge his superiority on the basis of his status. Acknowledgement only on his superiority in status is not enough but he should also acknowledge his superiority in power and strength.¹⁴
3. It is also a true fact that, in daily life, where any of the needs of a human being is met through a give-and-take basis, which takes place under one’s full consciousness, will never lead him to worship others. For example, somebody needs money to fulfil his needs. Therefore, he goes to a person, asks for a job and gets the job. He does his work properly and gets the salary from that person accordingly. However, it will never come to the mind of that needy person to worship that employer. It is because the

¹³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 14.

¹⁴ Ibid.

whole transaction would take place within the full ken of his senses and he is fully aware of the circumstances or the reason for giving him the money. The feeling of worshipping will not grow in one's mind unless the personality, the power of *ma'būd* and the ability to fulfil others' needs will be surrounded by some kind of mysteries. That is why, the word chosen to denote *ma'būd* includes in its meaning the senses of mystery, perplexity, superiority in status, etc.¹⁵

4. It is natural that, whenever a person believes another person is able to fulfil his needs, provide shelter and protection, soothe his disturbed heart and fill it with peace and calm, then he turns eagerly to that person as a matter of course.¹⁶

Through the above discussion, Maududi concluded that the connotation of the word *ilāh* to indicate *ma'būd* includes fulfilling needs, protection or shelter, peace, highness, superiority in status and strength. Therefore, these abilities require a *ma'būd* to fulfil others' needs, provide shelter in case any disaster falls upon them, and to be mysterious in some ways or hidden from man's eyes, which will make people to turn towards him and to act according to him. Therefore, putting this belief in mind of Whom people worship is the *Ilāh* and the *Ma'būd*.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷ See, Abul Ala Maududi, *Islamer Rajnaitik Motobad*, trans. from Urdu by Muhammad Abdur Rahim (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 2005), 8.

The Pre-Islamic Concept of *Ilāh*

After discussing the word *ilāh* from the linguistic perspective, Maududi described it as the basis of pre-Islamic concept.¹⁸ He also presented the ancient nations' concept of *ilāh* and the concept that has been rejected by the Qur'ān. Those people used to believe their *ilāhs* to be their patrons and shelter, as well as there is a Supreme Being above all other gods; showing dishonour to gods can cause epidemics, lose of life and property. It is not necessary that *ilāh* must be a supernatural being, it can also be a person or his own desire. The detail discussion is given next:

Ilāh: The Rescuer and the Source of Strength

Pre-Islamic people used to believe their *ilāhs* to be their patrons who would come to rescue them. The evidence on this can be found in many places in the Qur'ān such as in *Sūrat Maryam* where Allāh says, "These people have set up other gods than Allāh so that they may become their supporters."¹⁹ In this verse, Allāh uses the word 'Izzan' (from 'Izat) which refers to a powerful and strong authority whom nobody may dare do any harm. However, here it means a person having such a strong supporter that no enemy or opponent of his may even cherish an evil intention against him.²⁰ In another place Allāh says, "They set up deities apart from Allāh*, hoping that they will receive help from them."²¹

¹⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 15.

¹⁹ Qur'ān, Maryam: 81.

²⁰ Abul Ala Maududi, *Tafhim al-Qur'an*, (Lahore: Idarah Tarjuman al-Qur'an, 1991), Vol. 3, 80.

* The translation of the Qur'ānic verses used throughout this thesis has been taken from Mohsin Khan's translation (retrieved from http://www.searchtruth.com/chapter_display.php?chapter=1&translator=5&mac=), and modified the Arabic words according to the IIUM transliteration scheme, such as Allah to Allāh, Muhammad to Muḥammad, Fir'aun to Fir'awn, etc., as well as 'peace be upon him' has been used instead of *صلى الله عليه وسلم*.

²¹ Qur'ān, *Yāsīn*: 74.

Maududi pointed out from these verses the concepts of pre-Islamic people about *ilāh*. They used to believe their *ilāhs* to be their patrons, who would come to rescue them in times of danger or calamity. They would feel full security under their protection from fear and any kind of harassment.²²

Ilāh: The Shelter

Maududi asserted that those people also used to believe their *Ilāh* to be the shelter. In supporting his view, Maududi referred to *Sūrat Hūd*, where Allāh says, “And when the command of your Lord came to pass, the gods besides Allāh whom they had called upon, did not avail them in the least. They added nothing to them except ruin.”²³ Further evidence can be found in *Sūrat al-Naḥl*²⁴, *Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ*²⁵, and in *Sūrat Yūnus*²⁶; on reflecting upon the verses of *Sūrat al-Naḥl*, Maududi said in his *Tafhim*, the words employed here to refute man-made deities clearly indicate that these deities were deceased Prophets, saints, martyrs and pious and other extraordinary beings buried in their graves, not angels, *jinn*s, devils or idols. The angels and devils are alive: therefore, the words, “They are dead, not living” cannot be applied to them, and it is out of the question to say about idols of stone or wood that “They do not know at all when they shall again be raised to life” in the Hereafter.²⁷

By reflecting upon these verses, Maududi remarked a few things. Firstly, those to whom the people of *jāhiliyyah* used to address their prayers as their *ilāhs*,

²² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 16.

²³ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 101.

²⁴ And the other beings, whom the people invoke, create nothing; nay, they are themselves created. They are dead, not living, and they do not know at all when they shall again be raised to life. Your *Ilāh* is One *Ilāh*. (Qur’ān, *al-Naḥl*: 20-22).

²⁵ And invoke not any deity other than Allāh, *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* [there is no deity but He]. (Qur’ān, *al-Qaṣaṣ*: 88).

²⁶ Those who invoke others beside Allāh, associating them with Him in His divinity, only follow conjectures and are merely guessing. (Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 66).

²⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 533.

they used to do it in times of distress or for fulfilment of any of their needs, which is clear from the verse of *Sūrat Hūd*. Secondly, those of their *ilāhs* were not only *Jinns*, angels and gods, but also dead human beings who passed away long ago as described by the statement in *Sūrat al-Nahl*, “Dead they are, and not alive, and they know not when they would be raised from their state” which is considered to be clear evidence for it. Thirdly, they used to think that their *ilāhs* could hear their *du‘ā’* (prayers) and could come to rescue them, which is obvious in all these evidence.²⁸

Ilāh: A Supreme Being above all other Gods

According to Maududi, one of the concepts of the pre-Islamic people about *ilāh* was that there are many gods but one is the Supreme Being and the others are minor gods. In commenting verse 28 of *Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*, he mentioned in his *Tafhim* that they had belief in those minor gods. At the beginning those minor gods were favourite servants of Allāh and through their intercession the worshippers would attain nearness to the Supreme God, but those favourite servants gradually become regarded as gods. In order to please them, the worshippers started invoking them for help. They developed the belief that those minor gods had the powers to change their destinies and could answer their prayers and remove their hardships.²⁹ In proving his view, Maududi refers to the following places: in *Sūrat al-Zumar*, Allāh says, “As for those who have taken others than Allāh for their guardians, (they say): ‘We worship them only that they may bring us nearer to Allāh’”³⁰ and in *Sūrat Yūnus* He says, “They worship, beside Allāh, those who can neither harm nor profit them, saying; these are our

²⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 17.

²⁹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 618.

³⁰ Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 3.

intercessors with Allāh.”³¹ Similar evidence also can be found in *Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*³² and in *Sūrat Yāsīn*.³³

Based on these verses, Maududi noted that the concept of god to the pre-Islamic Arabs was not that the supernatural authority of *ulūhiyyah* has been distributed among the *ilāhs* or there is no Supreme authority over them. Nevertheless, they believed in a Supreme Being whom they used to call “Allāh” in their language. Their belief about their gods was that there is an authority for them to enjoy some share in the divinity of the Supreme God. Their word has value, it would be accepted and the worshippers’ demands would be fulfilled through them. Their intercession could result in some gain or ward off of some harm or loss. These were the grounds on which the pre-Islamic Arabs regarded their gods as *ilāhs* besides Allāh. Therefore, it is clear that, to regard someone as an intercessor with Allāh, seeking help from him, performing certain devotions in his honour and making of offerings for him, all these acts constituted in their terminology, the treating of him as *ilāh*.³⁴

Ilāh: Dishonouring Him and its Consequence

Another belief of pre-Islamic people about their gods was that showing any kinds of dishonour towards them can cause epidemics and lost of life and property. In this regard, Maududi quoted the verse of *Sūrat al-An‘ām*, narrating from Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him), Allāh says, “I do not fear those whom you associate with Allāh

³¹ Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 18.

³² Surely We destroyed many a town around you. We sent Our Messages to them repeatedly and in diverse forms that they may eschew (their evil ways) and return (to Allāh). So why did those whom they had set up as gods apart from Allāh, hoping that they would bring them nearer to Him, not come to their aid? Instead, they failed them. This was the end of the lie they had fabricated and the false beliefs they had invented. (Qur’ān, *al-Aḥqāf*: 27-28).

³³ Why should I not serve the One Who created me and to Whom all of you shall be sent back? What! Shall I take any deities apart from Him whose intercession will not avail me the least were the Merciful One to bring any adversity upon me, nor will they be able to rescue me? Qur’ān, *Yāsīn*: 22-23).

³⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 19.

in His divinity. Only that which my Lord wills,”³⁵ and in *Sūrat Hūd*, narrating from the people of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him), He says, “All we can say is that some of our gods have afflicted you with evil.”³⁶ In explaining this verse Maududi said the people of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) (unbelievers) presumably thought that because of the blasphemy that made by Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) about some saints or deities, he had become mad. Therefore, he had been tortured by both words and stones although once he was respected among them.³⁷ Verse 51 of *Sūrat al-Nahl*³⁸ can also be used in this issue.

Observing the above verses Maududi remarked that the people of previous nations used to think that showing dishonour towards their deities, offending them or making their gods angry by any means can cause epidemics, famine, lost of life and property, or other calamities.³⁹

Ilāh: A Person or his own Desire

In his discussion Maududi affirmed that the concept of god of the pre-Islamic people is unlike that mentioned previously because the ‘*ilāh*’ is not a supernatural authority worshipped by people. It is shown that following one’s desire can also be considered as worship, thus desire itself is ‘*ilāh*’. Likewise, following someone’s prescription or ruling in regarding something as lawful or unlawful can also be considered as acknowledging him as ‘*ilāh*’. One can find evidence for this in *Sūrat al-Tawbah*⁴⁰,

³⁵ Qur’ān, *al-An’ām* : 80

³⁶ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 54.

³⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 347.

³⁸ Allāh has enjoined: “You shall not take to yourselves two gods; for He is the only One God: so fear Me.” (Qur’ān, *al-Nahl*: 51).

³⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 20.

⁴⁰ They have made their scholars and monks as their Lords beside Allāh, and likewise the Masīḥ, the son of Mary, although they were enjoined not to worship any other than the One Deity, besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. (Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 31).

*Sūrat al-An‘ām*⁴¹, *Sūrat al-Furqān* and *Sūrat al-Shūrā*. Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Furqān*, “Have you ever considered the case of the person who has made his lust his god? Can you take the responsibility of guiding such a one aright?”⁴² According to Maududi, whoever becomes slave of his desire or lusts, considers them as his god. His services towards desire is like someone who worships his god or deity, thus he is guilty of *shirk* as the one who worships an idol. As was described by Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), narrated by Abū Umāmah,⁴³ the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Of all the false gods being worshipped and served, instead of Allāh, the worst in the sight of Allāh is one’s own lust.”⁴⁴ This verse and the Prophet’s tradition are enough to prove that he who obeys his selfish desires and regards his personal views as the only law, makes his self his *ilāh* instead of God. Therefore, he is not eager to do something, which will bring no benefit for him even though it is ordered by Allāh. That is why, for such a person the god is his own *nafs* (desire).⁴⁵

In *Sūrat al-Shūrā* Allāh says, “Do they have any associates (of Allāh) who have laid down for them a way pertaining to faith which Allāh did not sanction?”⁴⁶ In commenting upon this verse Maududi said, it is clear here that the word ‘*shurakā*’ (associates) does not mean those beings whom the people invoke, worship or make offerings for, yet it refers to those whom the people associate in the authority and

⁴¹ And, likewise, the beings supposed to have a share in Allāh’s divinity have made the slaying of their offspring seem lawful to many of those who associate others with Allāh in His divinity. (Qur’ān, *al-Nahl*: 31).

⁴² Qur’ān, *al-Furqān*: 43.

⁴³ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī, (Musil: Wajārat al-Awqāf wa al-Su’ūn al-Dīniyyah lḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, al-Jamhūriyyah al-‘Irāqīyyah, 2nd edn., 1984), Vol. 8, 103.

⁴⁴ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 453. [“And who is more astray then one who follows his own lust (desires) without the guidance from Allāh (revelation)” (Qur’ān, *al-Qaṣaṣ*: 50) “Have you seen him who takes his own desires as his god, and Allāh knowing (him as such) left him astray, sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allāh.” (Qur’ān, *al-Jathiyah*: 23)

⁴⁵ See Maududi, *Islamer Buniadi Shikkha*, trans. from Urdu by Muhammad Abdur Rahim (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 2006), 60.

⁴⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Shūrā*: 21.

sovereignty of Allāh, as well as they believe in their thoughts, creeds, ideologies and philosophies. They adopt their prescribed values, moral precepts, norms of culture and civilisation. Likewise, they follow the laws, rules, regulations, rites and rituals sanctioned by them in their personal as well as collective lives. They follow their prescriptions regardless of the fields, either in trade and business dealings or in politics and governments. They respect it in such a way as if it is the *Sharī'ah*, which they are bound to follow. This is the same sort of *shirk* as prostrating oneself before others or invoking others other than Allāh.⁴⁷

The verse 21 of *Sūrat al-Shūrā* and the verse 137 of *Sūrat al-An'ām* use the word *shurakā'* (making associate with Allāh in *ulūhiyyah* (Godhood)) instead of *ilāh*. These two verses indicate that those who regard any rule, custom or practice prescribed by someone or any group as a *sharī'* rule, which is not sanctioned by Allāh, will be considered guilty as they associate this person or that group with Allāh in *ulūhiyyah*.⁴⁸

How the Jews and the Christians make their religious scholars *rabb* or *ilāh* rather than Allāh, has been shown through the verse of *Sūrat al-Tawbah*.⁴⁹ The explanation can also be found in the Prophet's tradition, which is collected by al-Tirmidhī and narrated by 'Adī ibn Ḥātim, it says that, once 'Adī visited the Prophet (peace be upon him), wearing a golden cross on his neck, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reciting this verse. Hearing this verse 'Adī objected the Prophet (peace be upon him), that they do not worship them (religious scholars). In reply, the

⁴⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 499.

⁴⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 22.

⁴⁹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 189-190.

Prophet (peace be upon him) said, yes they do, they (religious scholars) had made *ḥarām ḥalāl* and *ḥalāl ḥarām*, and they obey them; obeying them in itself is *‘ibādah*.⁵⁰

Combination of these Concepts about Ulūhiyyah

Maududi combined all the concepts about *ulūhiyyah* and said that logically there is a co-relationship among these concepts. He asserted that, when a confidence grow in a person about someone/being that he has some measure of authority in controlling the universe then only he regards that being to be his helper or patron in the supernatural sense, capable of solving his problems or fulfilling his needs, capable of hearing and granting his prayers, able to bring benefit or harm to him. Likewise, this confidence makes him believe that displeasure of this being can bring harm while its pleasure can bring benefit. Similarly, when a person believes in certain being to have some share in the authority of Allāh then he prays to that being to fulfil some of his needs although this person believes in Allāh. Equally, the person who regards some rules or customs given by someone other than Allāh and considers them as *shar‘ī* commandments and binds himself to obey them also does so because he acknowledges this supreme authority. Therefore, it can be said as a conclusion that the essence of *ulūhiyyah* is authority. Whether people regard it as sovereignty of a supernatural kind over the whole universe, or on the basis that human beings are bound to follow the law of God, whatever way it is, it must be followed.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Khalīl Ma’mūn Shīḥā (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 2002), 1189.

⁵¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 22-23.

***Ulūhiyyah* in the Qur’ān**

Maududi asserted that the Qur’ān also affirms the *sulṭah* (authority) as the essence of *ulūhiyyah*. Based on this concept of *sulṭah*, all *ulūhiyyah* other than Allāh have been rejected and falsified by the Qur’ān which affirms the *ulūhiyyah* for Allāh alone through its strong arguments. The Qur’ān argues that there is only One Being (Allāh) in the heavens and the earth, Who possesses and exercises all the powers and all the authority. All creations belong to Him, all blessings come from Him and He has the sole authority to command. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth is obedient to Him and bound to follow the guideline given by Him, willingly or unwillingly. Nobody has such authority other than He nor has the right to command. Nobody knows the secret of the creation or its arrangement and the way of management nor has the least share in the control of the universe besides Him. Therefore, in reality, there is no *ilāh* other than He and, as it is so, whatever is done in regarding others as *ilāh* is absolutely wrong or invalid by its nature regardless of whether it is an act of prayer, seeking refuge, turning towards him with hope and fear, expecting intercession, or obeying his command. All these acts that have been done for others other than Allāh should be done only for Allāh, because only He has the Supreme Authority.⁵²

To support his view, Maududi quoted many Qur’ānic evidences on this issue, such as in *Sūrat al-Zukhrūf* where Allāh says, “He it is Who is the only *Ilāh* (God to be worshipped) in the heavens and the earth. He is the Most Wise, the All-Knowing.”⁵³ In explaining this verse and the following, Maududi said, there is no

⁵² Ibid. 23-24.

⁵³ Qur’ān, *al-Zukhruf*: 84.

separate *Ilāh* in the heavens and the earth, there is only One *Ilāh* of the entire universe. Therefore, the whole system of the universe is working through His wisdom and only He knows all realities of it.⁵⁴

Similarly in *Sūrat al-Anbiyā'*, Allāh says, “Had there been other *Ilāh* besides Allāh in the heavens and the earth, both would have gone out of order. So, absolutely free is Allāh, Lord of the Throne, from the false things they ascribe to Him.”⁵⁵ In explaining this verse Maududi said it contains a simple argument as well as a deeper argument. Simple in the sense that a simple person without even thinking will also agree that if there are two masters in controlling the universe, it could not function smoothly and properly. On the other hand, the deeper sense is that, if somebody ponders upon the whole universe; the earth, the stars, the moon, and how they are functioning, then he would realise that it is not possible even for a moment to function without proper balance and proportion among them. Likewise, this smooth function, harmony and coordination between the heavenly bodies are clear proofs and thus, deny the existence of different independent rulers. Therefore, it obliges there to be One All-Powerful Manager, Controller, Administrator and the Supreme Authority Who can govern and rule the whole universe.⁵⁶

In order to prove this issue i.e. both *ulūhiyyah* and authority necessitates each other, he quoted many verses of the Qur’ān such as verses of *Sūrat al-Naḥl*⁵⁷,

⁵⁴ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 552.

⁵⁵ Qur’ān, *al-Anbiyā'*: 22.

⁵⁶ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 153.

⁵⁷ Is then He, Who creates as one who creates not? Will you not then remember?... Those whom they invoke besides Allāh have not created anything, but are themselves created... Your *Ilāh* is One *Ilāh* (God Allāh, none has the right to be worshipped but He). (Qur’ān, *al-Naḥl*: 17, 20 & 22).

*Sūrat Fāṭir*⁵⁸, *Sūrat al-An‘ām*⁵⁹, *Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ*⁶⁰, *Sūrat al-Naml*⁶¹, *Sūrat al-Furqān*⁶², *Sūrat al-Baqarah*⁶³, *Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*⁶⁴, *Sūrat al-Mu‘minūn*⁶⁵ and *Sūrat al-Isrā’*⁶⁶.

⁵⁸ O mankind! Remember the Grace of Allāh upon you! Is there any creator other than Allāh who provides for you from the sky (rain) and the earth? *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). How then are you turning away (from Him)? (Qur’ān, *Fāṭir*: 3).

⁵⁹ Say (O Prophet to the disbelievers): “Tell me, if Allāh took away your hearing and your sight, and sealed up your hearts, who is there - an *ilāh* (a god) other than Allāh who could restore them to you?” See how variously We explain the *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.), yet they turn aside. (Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 46).

⁶⁰ And He is Allāh; *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). His is all praise, in the first (i.e. in this world) and in the last (i.e. in the Hereafter). And for Him is the Decision, and to Him shall you (all) be returned. Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “Tell me! If Allāh made night continuous for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is an *ilāh* besides Allāh who could bring you light? Will you not then hear?” Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “Tell me! If Allāh made day continuous for you till the Day of Resurrection, who is an *ilāh* besides Allāh who could bring you night wherein you rest? Will you not then see?” (Qur’ān, *al-Qaṣaṣ*: 70-72).

⁶¹ Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth, and sends down for you water (rain) from the sky, whereby We cause to grow wonderful gardens full of beauty and delight? It is not in your ability to cause the growth of their trees. Is there any *ilāh* with Allāh? Nay, but they are a people who ascribe equals (to Him)! Is not He Who has made the earth as a fixed abode, and has placed rivers in its midst, and has placed firm mountains therein, and has set a barrier between the two seas (of salt and sweet water). Is there any *ilāh* with Allāh? Nay, but most of them know not. Is not He Who responds to the distressed one, when he calls Him, and Who removes the evil, and makes you inheritors of the earth, generations after generations. Is there any *ilāh* with Allāh? Little is that you remember! Is not He Who guides you in the darkness of the land and the sea, and Who sends the winds as heralds of glad tidings, going before His Mercy (rain)? Is there any *ilāh* with Allāh? High Exalted be Allāh above all that they associate as partners (to Him)! Is not He Who originates creation, and shall thereafter repeat it, and Who provides for you from heaven and earth? Is there any *ilāh* with Allāh? Say, “Bring forth your proofs, if you are truthful.” (Qur’ān, *al-Naml*: 60-64).

⁶² He to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and Who has begotten no son and for Whom there is no partner in the dominion. He has created everything, and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements. Yet they have taken besides Him other *āliha* that created nothing but are themselves created, and possess neither hurt nor benefit for themselves, and possess no power (of causing) death, nor (of giving) life, nor of raising the dead. (Qur’ān, *al-Furqān*: 2-3).

⁶³ And of mankind are some who take (for worship) others besides Allāh as rivals (to Allāh). They love them as they love Allāh. But those who believe, love Allāh more (than anything else). If only, those who do wrong could see, when they will see the torment, that all power belongs to Allāh and that Allāh is Severe in punishment. (Qur’ān, *al-Baqarah*: 165).

⁶⁴ Say (O Muḥammad to these pagans): “Think! All that you invoke besides Allāh show me! What have they created of the earth? Or have they a share in (the creation of) the heavens? Bring me a Book (revealed before this), or some trace of knowledge (in support of your claims), if you are truthful!” And who is more astray than one who calls besides Allāh, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? (Qur’ān, *al-Aḥqāf*: 4-5).

⁶⁵ No son (or offspring or children) did Allāh beget, nor is there any *ilāh* along with Him; (if there had been many gods), behold, each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others!. (Qur’ān, *al-Mu‘minūn*: 91).

⁶⁶ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “If there had been other *āliha* along with Him as they assert, then they would certainly have sought out a way to the Lord of the Throne. Glorified and High be He! From *‘Uluwan Kabirā* (the great falsehood) that they say!” (Qur’ān, *al-Isrā’*: 43).

Referring to all these verses, Maududi affirmed that the same central idea is circulated repeatedly throughout these verses from the first to the last. This idea necessitates both *ulūhiyyah* and authority and there is no difference in essence and significance between these two. When one does not have the authority, one cannot be the *ilāh* or he should not be accepted as *ilāh*. Whosoever has the authority he deserves to be *ilāh* and only he should be accepted as *ilāh*. It is because of that the needs of a human being, which are related to *ilāh* or the necessities, which bound him to acknowledge *ilāh*, cannot be fulfilled without authority. Therefore, the *ulūhiyyah* is meaningless without the authority. It is contrary to reality as well as turning towards such type of god is a fruitless endeavour.⁶⁷

In order to comprehend this central idea, Maududi suggested that readers should analyse it according to the following premises and the deductions that it sets forth:

1. Fulfilling the needs, removing the crisis, giving shelter or protection, extending helping hands, taking care or grooming, preserving and responding to prayers which may seem to be very trivial to a person, in reality, are not so. Nevertheless, it has strong relations with the authority who has controlling power over the whole universe. If a person thinks deeply about the process of fulfilling the smallest needs, he would realise how much effort it costs. It is impossible to be prepared without the engagement of uncountable units of the universe. For example, a glass of drinking water or just a grain of wheat used as food does not come automatically. The sun, the earth, the wind and the seas have vital role in its production. Therefore, to respond to the prayers or fulfil the needs

⁶⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 29.

does not require simple power or ordinary authority, rather it obliges the same unique authority which is required for creating the heavens and the earth, controlling the movement of the heavenly bodies, bringing the wind and the rain together. In brief, it requires the same authority that is essential for governing and maintaining the discipline of the whole universe.⁶⁸

2. This authority is an indivisible authority. It is impossible for the authority of creation in one hand while the authority of providing food and drink in the other; the sun under one authority while controlling the earth by another. It is also quite impossible to be created by someone while the illness and its cure by someone else and life and death in the hands of the third person. If there is such division in authority, it would certainly lead the universe to chaos and confusion. Therefore, all power should belong to one Supreme Authority to which all the things of the heavens and the earth have to return.⁶⁹
3. In view of the fact that all power belong to one Sovereign only and none has the least share in it, that is why *ulūhiyyah* too should only belong to one. He is the unique possessor of *ulūhiyyah* where there is no portion for others. Nobody other than He has the ability to respond to the call, accept the prayers, provide shelter and protection, extend helping hands, be the patron and bring good or harm. Therefore, on the basis of the concept of *ilāh*, which is inscribed in one's mind, nobody is *ilāh* other than He. There is even no *ilāh* in the sense that he can guide others to the the

⁶⁸ Ibid., 30.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

Supreme Authority who is close to Him or can intercede for others. No one has the least power or authority to interfere in His ruling system over the universe, or none has any entry in His affairs. Likewise, acceptance or rejection of any recommendation is under His consideration. Not only that, nobody has such kind of power by which he can get acceptance of His intercession.⁷⁰

4. The essence of the central Supreme Authority is that the various dimensions of sovereignty over the universe ultimately should be centred on the one and only one Supreme Sovereign. Not even the least share of it should be vested onto anyone else. Since He is the Only Creator who provides shelter, governs over the universe and where nobody has less contribution, therefore, all these attributes urge the human reasoning to accept none but Him as the Only Lord and the Lawgiver. Also in this aspect of authority, no one has less share. It is also worthless to think that someone other than He responds to the call, accepts the prayers, fulfils the needs and gives shelter in difficulties in His kingdom. In addition, it is illogical to regard someone other than Him as an independent and absolute authority who has the right to legislate. Creating, providing livelihood, giving life and death, subjugating the sun and the moon, turning night into day and day into night, fixing the destiny, ruling over the universe and legislating power - all of these are different aspects of a single, omnipotent authority and sovereignty which is absolutely indivisible. Therefore, whoever regards someone's word or ruling system, which is not sanctioned by Allāh, as obligatory to follow would be considered as *shirk*

⁷⁰ Ibid., 31.

like the act of a person who prays to someone other than Allāh. Likewise, whoever claims himself to be the *Mālik al-Mulk*, *al-Musaytir*, *al-Qāhir* and *al-Ḥākim al-Muṭlaq* (Possessor of the kingdom or absolute monarch), even in the political sense, is like the person who claims *ulūhiyyah* for himself and addressing people by saying that he is their patron, helper and protector in the supernatural sense.⁷¹

The Qur’ān states that in the act of creation, fixation of the destiny of the creatures and management over the universe, there is no least share for someone other than Allāh. Simultaneously, it also affirms that He alone is the Lord over the universe and the universe belongs to Him alone, without having any portion for others from it. For example, Allāh says in *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*:

Say (O Muhammad): “O Allāh! Possessor of the kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You will, and You take the kingdom from whom You will, and You endue with honour whom You will, and You humiliate whom You will.”⁷²

Similarly one can find in *Sūrat al-Mu’minūn* where Allāh says, “So Exalted be Allāh, the True King, *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), the Lord of the Supreme Throne!”⁷³ It is the same thing that Allāh has affirmed about Himself by describing Him as the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the *Ilāh* (God) of mankind in *Sūrat al-Nās*⁷⁴. All these clearly indicate that the *ulūhiyyah* includes monarchy and lordship. *Tawḥīd al-ulūhiyyah* maintains that there should not be any share for anyone in these aspects. The Qur’ān affirms it clearly in *Sūrat Ghāfir* where Allāh says:

⁷¹ Ibid., 32.

⁷² Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*: 26.

⁷³ Qur’ān, *al-Mu’minūn*: 116.

⁷⁴ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “I seek refuge with (Allāh) the Lord of mankind, The King of mankind, The *Ilāh* of mankind.” (Qur’ān, *al-Nās*: 1-3).

The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allāh. Whose is the kingdom this Day? (Allāh Himself will reply to His Question): It is Allāh's the One, the Irresistible!⁷⁵

It means that on that Day, the secrets of everyone will be laid bare and it will be manifested to man that none of their actions is hidden from God. A caller will call with a loud voice: today, to whom belongs the Dominion? And the answer will not be other than that: To none but Allāh alone, Whose power and authority transcend that of all others.

In explaining this verse, Maududi said that this verse is interpreted excellently in a *ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be pleased with both). He described how⁷⁶ on one occasion the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) stated, while he was on a pulpit, that Allāh will take both the heavens and the earth in His hand and will proclaim to all before Him: “I am the King; I am the Mighty one; I am the Self-exalted one; Where are the people who used to claim themselves as kings upon the earth, those who called themselves mighty, and who were ‘their Majesties?’” ‘Abdullah (with whom Allāh be pleased) narrated that while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was uttering these words, his body trembled so much in awe of Allāh Almighty that they were really afraid that he might fall from the pulpit.⁷⁷ After describing the term *Ilāh*, Maududi focused on the term *Rabb*.

RABB

Maududi described the term *Rabb* from various aspects. He showed the meaning of the word ‘*Rabb*’ from the linguistic perspective and how the Qur’ān uses this word in

⁷⁵ Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 6.

⁷⁶ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. 4, 291-292. Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad ibn al-Tamīmī, *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥabbān*, (Arranged by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Balbān al-Fārisī and named as *al-Iḥsān fī Taqrīb Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥabbān*), (Lebanon: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, 2004), 1277. Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr*, Vol. 12, 389.

⁷⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 33.

different places to answer question like: What was the meaning of this concept to pre-Islamic nations? What was the meaning of *Rabb* to the people of the then prevailing divine religions, namely Judaism and Christianity? How did the Arab *Mushriks* use to think about this term? After presenting all these definitions, Maududi has shown the Qur'ānic appeal about this term to humankind.

Linguistic Explanation

The root of this word consists of the letters *Rā*, *Bā* and *Bā*.⁷⁸ Its basic and fundamental meaning is bringing up or rearing up. Various meanings for this word are free access over something, guardianship, mending, ending and completing. Based on these meanings, the meanings of superiority, leadership, ownership and master can be added. Some examples of the usage of this word in various meanings in Arabic language are given below:⁷⁹

1. As in bringing up, nourishing and developing, for instance, *Rabba al-walad* which means he took care of the boy. That is why, the foster son and the foster daughter are called *al-rabīb* and *al-rabībah*, respectively. This term is also used for the child who grows up in his/her stepmother's house, and the nurse who takes care of a child is also called *al-rabībah*. The stepmother is called *al-rābbah*, although she is not the mother of the child, she takes care of him/her. Likewise, the stepfather is called *al-rābb*. The preserved medicine is called *murabbab* or *murabbā* while *rabba*

⁷⁸ Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyā, *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1st edn., 2001), 378.

⁷⁹ For detailed discussion see, Muḥammad Mukarram ibn Manzūr al-Afrīqī al-Miṣrī, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 3rd edn., 1999), Vol. 5, the root [*Rā bā bā*], 94-102. See also, Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ya‘qūb al-Fayrūz Abādī, *al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīt*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1978), Vol. 1, Chapter ‘ر’, section: ‘ر’, 70-71.

yarubbu rabban refers to add, to increase and to complete. For example, *rabba al-Ni‘mah* means increase generosity and reach in the verge of it.⁸⁰

2. To gather and to accumulate: It says that *fulānun yarubbu al-nās* which means so and so gathers people or people gather around him, thus the place of gathering is called *al-murabba* while the word *al-tarabbub* means to unite or to gather.⁸¹
3. Guardian, patron and mender: It says that *rabba ḍay‘atahu* means he took care or looked after someone’s property.⁸²
4. Superiority, leadership, chieftainship and whose command is obeyed: It says that *qad rabba fulānun qawmahu* means so and so has ruled or governed his tribe and *rabbaytu al-qawm* means I ruled the tribe.⁸³
5. Owner or master: The owner of the house is called *rabbu al-dār*, an example for this can be found in the Prophet’s tradition, *arabbu ganamin am rabbu ibil*⁸⁴ which means, are you owner of sheep or owner of camel?⁸⁵

Maududi argued that all these meanings are derived from the term (*rabb*). Unfortunately, people make mistake when they confine its use only to mean taking care or growing up. In explaining *al-rubūbiyyah*, they have repeatedly said, “grooming something, stage to stage to reach into its verge.” In reality, this is only

⁸⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 35.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁴ Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Shaybānī, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, (Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1st edn., 1998), Vol. 5, 867. It is mentioned here as ‘*arabbu ibilin anta aw rabbu ganam*’.

⁸⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 37.

one of its various meanings. Through the proper analysis of this word, one can find that the word is used in these following ways:⁸⁶

- a. One who takes care, brings up, nourishes and is responsible to fulfil the needs (of others).
- b. Guardian, patron or who supervises and is responsible to carry out work towards improvement.
- c. The leader who occupies the central position of his tribe and the people who gather around him.
- d. The leader whose command is obeyed, who has the authority to implement the law, whose supremacy is acknowledged, and has authority to dispose of.
- e. Owner or master.

The Qur'ānic Usage of this term

Maududi affirmed that the Qur'ān uses the word *rabb* to indicate all the abovementioned meanings. In some places, the word indicates one or two meanings and in other places, it refers to more than that. However, sometimes it also denotes all these meanings together in one place.⁸⁷ Examples of these usages are given in the following discussion.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 37.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 38.

First Meaning

Allāh says in *Sūrat Yūsuf*, “He said: ‘May Allāh protect me from this! My Lord has given me a good abode’”⁸⁸. In commenting upon this verse, Maududi said that the commentators and the translators generally claimed that Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) used the word ‘*Rabbī*’ to indicate ‘*Azīzu Miṣr*’. They assumed that Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) argued by saying, “My master has treated me kindly and given me a comfortable livelihood so how can I be disloyal and ungrateful as to commit adultery with his wife?” Maududi did not agree with this opinion although it can be accepted because the word ‘*Rabbī*’ in Arabic language is sometimes used to indicate ‘my master’. The reason why Maududi rejected the idea is because it is not appropriate for a Prophet of Allāh to refrain from a sin remembering the kindness shown by his master instead of remembering Allāh’s bounty upon him. There is not even a single example in the Qur’ān shows that a Prophet called anyone other than Allāh as his *Rabb*. Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) himself has shown the difference between his faith and faith of those Egyptians, which one can find in verse 41, 42 and 50, that his *Rabb* is Allāh while they regarded other human beings as their *Rabb*. And then, when the word ‘*Rabbī*’ may also mean ‘my Lord’ (Allāh), why should then one take the other meaning i.e. ‘my master’ which is contrary with his own creed?⁸⁹ In addition to this, the pronoun ‘*hu*’ used in the word ‘*Innahu*’ refers to its immediate antecedent, Allāh, from Whom he sought protection, thereby, here it is unnecessary to refer to someone who is not mentioned closely.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 23.

⁸⁹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 392-393.

⁹⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, (footnote), 38.

Second meaning

The second meaning of the term ‘*Rabb*’ is evident in many places of the Qur’ān. Allāh says, narrating from Ibrāhīm, in *Sūrat al-Shu‘arā’*, “They are all enemies to me, except the ‘*Rabb*’ of the ‘*Ālamīn*.’”⁹¹ The word ‘*Rabb*’ means one who takes care or protects and provides needs for everyday life. This explanation can be found in the following verses of the same *sūrah* while it says, “Who has created me, and it is He Who guides me. And it is He Who feeds me and gives me to drink. And when I am ill, it is He who cures me.”⁹² In explicating these verses Maududi said whenever Prophet Ibrāhīm thought about these idols (gods) or worshipping them, he could see that he would be ruined in this world as well as in the Hereafter. Since their worship is clearly harmful, thus worshipping them is as if worshipping one’s own enemy.⁹³ To prove his view, Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) presented three arguments which nobody can refute. According to Prophet Ibrāhīm, despite all those deities being worshipped in this world; there is only Allāh, the Lord of the ‘*Ālamīn*, Whose worship he finds reasonable and good for himself because worshipping Him is worshipping of one’s own Cherisher and Supporter.⁹⁴ The first argument to support this is that He (Allāh) is the Creator without any partner, the believers and the polytheists believe this but not the atheists; no one has ever denied that Allāh is the Creator of the whole universe. Therefore, he (Ibrāhīm) being a creature of Allāh, he should only worship his Creator, no one else, because no one has less share in His creation.⁹⁵ The second argument is that, He (Allāh) did not leave man after creating him to look towards other supporters for help yet He guided him and had taken the

⁹¹ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 77.

⁹² Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 78-80.

⁹³ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 501-502.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

responsibility to protect him and to fulfil his needs. This support is provided by Him from the very beginning; since a person is born, milk is produced in his mother's breasts while unseen power teaches him how to suck it and take it down inside the throat. From the first day he is born until to his death, all the things he needs in each of his stages of life for his growth and development, sustenance and survival, all are provided by the Creator. Then to protect human life against all sorts of disease, germs and poisons, He has created effective antidotes...when all these facilities are provided by the Creator then it is folly and ingratitude to worship other than Allāh and seek their support in need and trouble.⁹⁶ The third argument is that, the relation between man and his Creator is not merely confined to this worldly life rather it extends to the Hereafter. He is the same *Rabb* Who has created him, will ask him about his worldly life and judge him on the Hereafter. To punish or to forgive somebody will be entirely in Allāh's hand. If this is the reality, then whoever worships other than Allāh, he is in fact, preparing for his doom, no one is more unfortunate than him.⁹⁷

In this regard, Maududi also provided some references to *Sūrat al-Nahl*,⁹⁸ *Sūrat al-An'ām*⁹⁹ and *Sūrat al-Muzzammil*¹⁰⁰ to vindicate his point.

Third meaning

The third meaning of the term '*Rabb*' can be found in several places throughout the Qur'ān when Allāh says in *Sūrat Hūd*, "He is your Lord! and to Him you shall

⁹⁶ Ibid., 503.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 503-504.

⁹⁸ And whatever of blessings and good things you have, it is from Allāh. Then, when harm touches you, unto Him you cry aloud for help. Then, when He has removed the harm from you, behold! Some of you associate others in worship with their Lord (Allāh). (Qur'ān *al-Nahl* : 53-54)

⁹⁹ Say (O' Prophet): "Shall I seek a lord other than Allāh, while He is the Lord of all things?" (Qur'ān, *al-An'ām*: 165).

¹⁰⁰ (He Alone is) the Lord of the east and the west, *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He). So take Him Alone as *Wakīl* (Disposer of your affairs). (Quran, *al-Muzzammil*: 9).

return”¹⁰¹; in *Sūrat al-Zumar*, “Then to your Lord is your return”¹⁰²; in *Sūrat Saba’*, “Say: ‘Our Lord will assemble us all together (on the Day of Resurrection)”¹⁰³; in *Sūrat al-An‘ām*, “There is not a moving creature on earth, nor a bird that flies with its two wings, but are communities like you. We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their Lord they (all) shall be gathered”¹⁰⁴ and in *Sūrat Yāsīn*, “And the Trumpet will be blown (i.e. the second blowing) and behold! From the graves they will come out quickly to their Lord.”¹⁰⁵ In all these places, it refers to a Central Position before Whom all will assemble.

Fourth meaning

The fourth meaning of the term ‘*Rabb*’ can be found in the following verses. Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Tawbah*, “They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allāh,”¹⁰⁶ He says in *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*, “None of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh.”¹⁰⁷ In these two verses, the word ‘*arbāb*’ indicates those leaders who have been regarded by their tribe or nation as their guide and the higher authority. The people are bound to follow the command and the instruction of their guide and their words are unquestioningly accepted as law. Whatever has been described by their leaders as *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*, they believe it blindly although it is not sanctioned by the Supreme Authority.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰¹ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 34.

¹⁰² Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 7.

¹⁰³ Qur’ān, *Saba’*: 26.

¹⁰⁴ Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 38.

¹⁰⁵ Qur’ān, *Yāsīn*: 51.

¹⁰⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 31.

¹⁰⁷ Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*: 64.

¹⁰⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 40.

Similarly, in *Sūrat Yūsuf*, narrating from Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him), Allāh says, “As for one of you, he will pour out wine for his *rabb* ... And he said to the one whom he knew to be saved: ‘Mention me to your *rabb*’. But *Shayṭān* made him forget to mention it to his *rabb*.”¹⁰⁹ In a like manner, the term has been used in another place of this *Sūrat* where Allāh says, “But when the messenger came to him, (Yūsuf) said: ‘Return to your *rabb* and ask him, ‘What happened to the women who cut their hands? Surely, my Lord (Allāh) is Well-Aware of their plot’”.¹¹⁰

In the verses of *Sūrat Yūsuf*, one can see that Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) had repeatedly used the phrase ‘*rabbihim*’ to indicate the ‘*Azīzu Miṣr* (Fir‘awn). It is because the Egyptians did in fact believe him to be the possessor of absolute sovereignty and the lawgiver. They had taken him as their god. On the other hand, Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) regarded Allāh alone as the *Rabb* and the Supreme Authority, not the Fir‘awn.¹¹¹

Fifth meaning

Sometimes the term ‘*Rabb*’ has been used in the Qur’ān to indicate the fifth meaning i.e. owner or master. Example can be found in *Sūrat Quraysh* where Allāh says, “So let them worship (Allāh) the *Rabb* of this House. (He) Who has fed them against hunger, and has made them safe from fear.”¹¹² Further use of this term conforming to

¹⁰⁹ Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 41- 42.

¹¹⁰ Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 50.

¹¹¹ Maududī, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 41.

¹¹² Qur’ān, *Quraysh*: 3-4.

the fifth meaning can also be found in *Sūrat al-Şāffāt*,¹¹³ *Sūrat al-Anbiyā*,¹¹⁴ *Sūrat al-Mu'minūn*¹¹⁵ and in *Sūrat al-Nazm*.¹¹⁶

Devious Nations: Notion on *al-Rubūbiyyah*

According to Maududi, the abovementioned verses gave a clear meaning of the term 'Rabb'. Therefore, he felt the necessity to analyse the term through the concepts made by the devious nations and clarify the reasons why the Qur'ān wanted to refute their concept and what was the Qur'ānic appeal to the people. Thus, it is important to present the false notions to get a clear picture of their ideas. According to him, none of the previous nations, regardless of *kāfir* or *mushrik*, denied the existence of Allāh. They had the belief that Allāh alone created the heavens and the earth; He created them as well. The sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies are under His control. However, their belief in Him regarding *Ilāh* and *Rabb* was very narrow. That is why, Allāh sent all the Messengers (peace be upon them) to explain it properly.¹¹⁷

Prophet Nūḥ's People and their Understanding of the Concept

The earliest nation in history mentioned in the Qur'ān is the nation of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him). Maududi showed through the following verses that the people of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) did not deny the existence of God. The following refuting statements of his people can be considered as strong evidence in

¹¹³ Lord of the heavens and of the earth, and all that is between them, and Lord of every point of the sun's risings. (Qur'ān, *al-Şāffāt*: 5) Glorified be your Lord, the Lord of Honour and Power! (He is free) from what they attribute unto Him! (Qur'ān, *al-Şāffāt*: 180).

¹¹⁴ Glorified be Allāh, the Lord of the Throne, (High is He) above what they attribute to Him! (Qur'ān, *al-Anbiyā*: 22).

¹¹⁵ Say: "Who is (the) Lord of the seven heavens, and (the) Lord of the Great Throne?" (Qur'ān, *al-Mu'minūn*: 86).

¹¹⁶ And that He (Allāh) is the Lord of Sirius. (Qur'ān, *al-Nazm*: 49).

¹¹⁷ See Maududi, *Islamer Rajnayatik...*, 6-8.

this issue. The Qur’ān narrates from the people of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) who said, “He is no more than a human being like you, he seeks to make himself superior to you. Had Allāh willed, He surely could have sent down angels.”¹¹⁸ This verse is a clear indication that the people of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) were cognizant of the Being ‘Allāh’.

Likewise, they did not deny that Allāh is the Creator of the universe and the *Rabb* in the first and second meanings of the term, which have been discussed previously. For example, when Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) said to them, “He is your *Rabb!* and to Him you shall return”¹¹⁹, And “Ask forgiveness from your *Rabb*; Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving”¹²⁰, And “See you not how Allāh has created the seven heavens one above another, and has made the moon a light therein, and made the sun a lamp? And Allāh has brought you forth from the earth.”¹²¹ None of his people, in reply to him, said that Allāh is not their *Rabb*, He did not create the earth, the heavens and themselves, or He is not the main processor over the universe. Neither have they denied that Allāh is their *Ilāh*. That is why, Nūḥ said: “You have no other *Ilāh* (God) but Him”¹²² instead of saying “accept Allāh as your *Ilāh*”, which was more appropriate, if they had believed otherwise.¹²³

Maududi stated that, questions may be raised as to what exactly was the basic dispute between Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) and his people. A researcher of the Qur’ān will find that there were two main reasons for their dispute, which are as follows:

¹¹⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Mu’minūn*: 24.

¹¹⁹ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 34.

¹²⁰ Qur’ān, *Nūḥ*: 10.

¹²¹ Qur’ān, *Nūḥ*: 15-17.

¹²² Qur’ān, *al-A’rāf*: 59.

¹²³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 43.

1. According to Maududi, the *da‘wah* of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) was that Allāh is *Rabb al-‘ālamīn*, Whom you believe to be the Creator and Cherisher of the universe. He is the One Who fulfil your needs. In fact, He is your Only *Ilāh*, there is no *ilāh* but He. No one can fulfil your needs, protect you from danger, respond to your call and help you except Him. Therefore, He alone deserves your full submission, and you should worship Him alone.¹²⁴ That is why, Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) said to his people, “O my people! Worship Allāh! You have no other *Ilāh* (God) but Him... but I am a Messenger from the *Rabb* (Lord) of the *‘Ālamīn* (*mankind and jinns*)! I convey unto you the Messages of my Lord.”¹²⁵

On the contrary, the people said that there is no doubt that Allāh is the *Rabb al-‘ālamīn* but there are also other gods and they have some portions in the affairs of the universe. They can fulfil their needs as well. So, the people regarded them as gods besides Allāh.¹²⁶ “They have said: ‘You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave *Wadd*, nor *Suwā‘*, nor *Yaghūth*, nor *Ya‘ūq*, nor *Nasr* (names of the idols).’”¹²⁷

2. Maududi stated that, the people of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) regarded Allāh as the *Rabb* in the sense that He is the Creator, the Lord of the earth and the heavens, and the Supreme regulator of the affairs of the universe. However, they did not agree that only His Sovereignty should be followed in shaping one’s morality, social relations, culture, politics

¹²⁴ Ibid., 44.

¹²⁵ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 59-62.

¹²⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 44.

¹²⁷ Qur’ān, *Nūḥ*: 23.

and other worldly affairs. While only he has the authority to give instruction, command and legislation and only His law should be followed, they had also taken their chiefs and priests as gods in all these matters. Nevertheless, the *da'wah* of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) was that the *rubūbiyyah* is indivisible and not separable. Therefore, they should acknowledge Allāh's *rubūbiyyah* in all its senses. As a representative of Allāh, they should obey Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him) and follow the commandments that he conveyed to them.¹²⁸ In this sense he said, "I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So, fear Allāh, keep your duty to Him, and obey me."¹²⁹

The Qawm 'Ād and Thamūd and their Understanding of the Concept

After describing Nūḥ's people's understanding of *rubūbiyyah*, Maududi pointed out the false notions of the two following nations, namely *'Ād* and *Thamūd*. Although they lived in different eras and different places, their notions were the same. All of them did not deny the existence of God, but they did not take Him as the indivisible Supreme Authority. The gap that took place between Nūḥ and his people was the same that took place between those Prophets and their people. However, the people of Thamūd were more arrogant. The point of disagreement for all of them was that they denied the acknowledgement of Allāh as their only *Rabb* with all its aspects. The evidence is provided next:

¹²⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 45.

¹²⁹ Qur'ān, *al-Shu'arā'*: 107-108.

‘Ād:

When Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) said to his people, “O my people! Worship Allāh! You have no other *Ilāh* (God) but Him”¹³⁰ in reply to him, they said, “You have come to us that we should worship Allāh alone and forsake that which our fathers used to worship.”¹³¹ In commenting upon this verse Maududi said, it is worthy of notice that the people of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) neither disbelieved in Allāh nor refused to worship Him. However, they did not acknowledge the teaching of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him), i.e. Allāh alone should be worshipped, and that none other may be associated in servitude to Him.¹³²

Similar evidence can also be found in another place of the Qur’ān, narrating about the people of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him) Allāh says, “If our *Rabb* had so willed, He would surely have sent down the angels.”¹³³ In *Sūrat Hūd* Allāh says, “Such were ‘Ād (people). They rejected the *Āyāt* of their *Rabb* and disobeyed His Messengers, and followed the command of every proud obstinate (oppressor of the truth, from their leaders).”¹³⁴

Thamūd:

The people of Prophet Šāliḥ (peace be upon him), like the people of Prophet Hūd (peace be upon him), did not deny the existence of God, but they did not take Him as Supreme Authority in all aspects.¹³⁵ Allāh narrates about them:

When the Messengers came to them, from before them and behind them (saying): ‘Worship none but Allāh’ They said: ‘If our Lord had so

¹³⁰ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 65.

¹³¹ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 70.

¹³² Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 46.

¹³³ Qur’ān, *Fuṣṣilat*: 14.

¹³⁴ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 59.

¹³⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 48.

willed, He would surely have sent down the angels. So indeed! We disbelieve in that with which you have been sent.’¹³⁶

It is clear here that they denied worshipping Him alone, on the basis that the Prophet should not be a human being, rather he was supposed to be an angel. In other words, they did not have any problem in worshipping Allāh alone if the Prophet would come as an imaginary being.

However, what is narrated about them and took place in *Sūrat Hūd*¹³⁷ and *Sūrat al-Shu‘arā*¹³⁸ indicate that their Prophets had urged them to worship Allāh alone. The point of disagreement between the Prophets and their people was that although they agreed to worship Allāh they did not agree to leave their forefathers’ path in worship.

The People of Ibrāhīm and their Understanding of the Concept

Then Maududi pointed out the concept of *al-rubūbiyyah* among the people of Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) who came after the people of Thamūd. He showed great importance towards them. It is significant because there was rumour spreading among the people that their King, Namrūd, did not believe in God yet claimed himself to be God. However, the fact is that Namrūd did believe about the existence of God as well as regarded Him as the Creator and the Possessor of the universe. The claim that he did about *rubūbiyyah* was in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term. Another misconception that grew in people’s mind was that the people of Prophet Ibrāhīm

¹³⁶ Qur’ān, *Fuṣṣilat*: 14.

¹³⁷ And to Thamud (people, We sent) their brother Salih. He said: “O my people! Worship Allāh, you have no other *Ilāh* but Him...” They said: “O Ṣāliḥ! You have been among us as a figure of good hope, till this [new thing which you have brought; that we leave our gods and worship your God (Allāh) Alone]! Do you forbid us the worship of what our fathers have worshipped?” (Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 61-62).

¹³⁸ When their brother Ṣāliḥ said to them: “Will you not fear Allāh and obey Him? I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allāh, keep your duty to Him, and obey me...And follow not the command of *al-Muṣrifūn*, who make mischief in the land, and reform not.” (Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā*’: 142, 143, 150, 152).

(peace be upon him) neither did know Allāh nor believe in His *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*. The actual fact is that their belief was not much different than the belief of the people of Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him), ‘Ād and Thamūd. They believed in Allāh and regarded Him as *al-Rabb*, the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the Controller upon the universe. They did not deny worshipping Him. Their fault was that they had regarded the heavenly bodies as partners with Him in *rubūbiyyah* in the first and second senses as they had taken them as gods. In addition, they had treated their kings as *rabb* in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term. Maududi was surprised how this rumour spread widely despite all these Qur’ānic evidence. Thus, he felt that it is appropriate to mention the story of Prophet Ibrāhīm’s search for the truth when he reached maturity.¹³⁹ The story can be found in the Qur’ān:

When the night covered him over with darkness he saw a star. He said: “This is my lord.” But when it set, he said: “I like not those that set.” When he saw the moon rising up, he said: “This is my lord.” But when it set, he said: “Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be among the erring people.” When he saw the sun rising up, he said: “This is my lord. This is greater.” But when it set, he said: “O my people! I am indeed free from all that you join as partners in worship with Allāh. Verily, I have turned my face towards Him Who has created the heavens and the earth Ḥanīfā (Islamic Monotheism, i.e. worshipping none but Allāh Alone) and I am not of *Al-Mushrikūn*.”¹⁴⁰

It is shown here how Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) realised the Truth through the mental experience, which he experienced at the beginning, before prophethood was bestowed upon him. This experience depicts how a right-thinking and sound-hearted man, who was born in a purely polytheistic environment and had received no instruction in monotheism, was ultimately led to discover the Truth by careful observation and serious reflection on the phenomena of the universe.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 49.

¹⁴⁰ Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 77-79.

¹⁴¹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 556-557.

Referring to the abovementioned underlined parts of the verses 77-79 of *Sūrat al-An‘ām* Maududi stated that the society where Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) was born into, had the concept about the Creator of the heavens and the earth, Who was regarded as the *Rabb*, distinct from the *rubūbiyyah* of the heavenly bodies (*al-sayyārāt al-samāwiyyah*). This was natural because this nation was from the offspring of those people who had believed in Prophet Nūḥ (peace be upon him). Islam was continuously reviving with the sending down of the Prophets to their relatives, and to the close nations namely ‘Ād and Thamūd as the Qur’ān says, “When the Messengers came to them, from before them and behind them.”¹⁴² From his own society and environment Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) realised the fact that Allāh is the *Rabb* and the Creator of the heavens and the earth. On the other hand, the question that was raised in Prophet Ibrāhīm’s mind was in which basis his people were worshipping the heavenly bodies besides Allāh in *rubūbiyyah*, was it valid or not? He was searching for the truth even before he was chosen for the prophethood. Ultimately the phenomenon of the rising and setting of the moon, the sun and the stars guided him to seek the truth that there is no *Rabb* other than the Creator of the heavens and the earth. That is why, when he saw the setting of the moon he said, if my *Rabb* does not guide me, I am afraid that I will not be able to reach to the truth. I too will be betrayed by this phenomenon and become one of those millions of people who have been betrayed by this and gone astray. When he had been chosen by Allāh for prophethood he had started inviting people towards Allāh.¹⁴³ Analysis of his deep contemplation in seeking the Truth that he used in his *da‘wah* makes the abovementioned fact clearer as Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) said, “And how

¹⁴² Qur’ān, *Fuṣṣilat*: 14.

¹⁴³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 51.

should I fear those whom you associate in worship with Allāh, while you fear not that you have joined in worship with Allāh things for which He has not sent down to you any authority.”¹⁴⁴ On other occasions, he said, “And I shall turn away from you and from those whom you invoke besides Allāh.”¹⁴⁵ Similar statements in this regard can also be found in *Sūrat al-Anbiyā’*,¹⁴⁶ *Sūrat al-Şāffāt*¹⁴⁷ and *Sūrat al-Mumtahinah*.¹⁴⁸

It is clear from the above discussion that the people who were addressed by Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) were neither ignorant of God nor deny His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb* of the universe nor unaware about all these ideas. Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) was calling to people who had regarded others as partners besides Allāh in *ulūhiyyah* as well as in *rubūbiyyah* in the first and second senses of the term i.e. taking care and supervising. That is why there is no statement about Ibrāhīm that he had tried to convince his people about the existence of God, or His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb* of the universe. The core point of his *da‘wah* and in which he had frequently emphasised was that Allāh alone is the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*.¹⁴⁹ This can be seen in the dialogue that had taken place between Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) and Namrūd which is described by the Qur’ān:

Have you not looked at him who disputed with Ibrāhīm about his *Rabb* (Allāh), because Allāh had given him the kingdom? When Ibrāhīm said (to him): “My *Rabb* is He Who gives life and causes death.” He said, “I give life and cause death.” Ibrāhīm said, “Verily! Allāh causes the sun

¹⁴⁴ Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 81.

¹⁴⁵ Qur’ān, *Maryam*: 48.

¹⁴⁶ He said: “Nay, your Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth, Who created them.” (Qur’ān, *al-Anbiyā’*: 56). [Ibrāhīm] said: “Do you then worship besides Allāh, things that can neither profit you, nor harm you?” (Qur’ān, *al-Anbiyā’*: 66).

¹⁴⁷ He said to his father and to his people: “What is it that which you worship? Is it a falsehood *āliha* other than Allāh that you seek? Then what do you think about the *Rabb* of the ‘*Alamīn*.” (Qur’ān, *al-Şāffāt*: 85-87).

¹⁴⁸ Verily, we are free from you and whatever you worship besides Allāh, we have rejected you, and there has started between us and you, hostility and hatred for ever, until you believe in Allāh Alone. (Qur’ān, *al-Mumtahinah*: 4).

¹⁴⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 52.

to rise from the East; then cause it you to rise from the West.” So the disbeliever was utterly defeated.¹⁵⁰

Through the above description, it becomes clear that the dialogue that had taken place between Ibrāhīm and Namrūd was not about the existence of God, rather it was about whom Ibrāhīm had regarded as his *Rabb*.¹⁵¹ Firstly, Namrūd was from a nation that had acknowledged the existence of God. Secondly, he cannot say that he is the creator of the heavens and the earth because it was nonsensical. Actually, he did not claim it. What he did was that he was seen as the *rabb* of the kingdom where Prophet Ibrāhīm was one of its subjects. This claim of *rabb* for his kingdom was not in the first or the second senses of the term because in these senses he had regarded the sun, the moon and the other heavenly bodies as partners of *Rabb*. However, he had claimed it in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term. On the other hand, as he was the king of that kingdom all of his subjects were his slaves and his supreme authority should be considered as the central authority of the society. His command should be followed as their law.¹⁵² The reason for his arrogance was none other than the fact that Allāh had given him the authority of the kingdom, as the Qur’ān says, “because Allāh had given him the kingdom.”¹⁵³ When Namrūd was informed that there was a boy in his kingdom called Ibrāhīm who did not acknowledge the *rubūbiyyah* of the sun, the moon or the other heavenly bodies in the supernatural sense nor did he regard the king as the *rabb* in the political and social senses, he became astonished by it. Namrūd sent for him and asked whom he regarded as his *rabb*. Prophet Ibrāhīm replied that his *Rabb* is the One Who has the authority to give life and death. However, Namrūd did not realise its depth; he said proudly, “I have also

¹⁵⁰ Qur’ān, *al-Baqarah*: 258.

¹⁵¹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 198.

¹⁵² See Maududi, *Islamer Rajnayatik...*, 11.

¹⁵³ Qur’ān, *al-Baqarah*: 258.

the authority to give life and death, whomsoever I can kill and whomsoever I can give life.” Prophet Ibrāhīm then said that his Lord is Allāh alone; the *rubūbiyyah* belonged only to Him with all its meanings. Prophet Ibrāhīm also refuted the *rubūbiyyah* of Namrūd on the basis that he does not have the authority over the sun rising and its setting. Namrūd was smart, he realised the fact very fast that his claim to be *rabb* was false pretension and he was utterly defeated. Despite the truth being clear to him, his selfishness, arrogance and family interest had overcome the reality, and discourage him to step-down from his false *rubūbiyyah* and to obey Allāh. That is why, Allāh ended the dialogue by saying, “And Allāh guides not the people, who are *Zalimun* (wrong-doers, etc.).”¹⁵⁴

When he did not follow what he was supposed to follow after truth was clear to him, rather he had shown arrogant and autocratic rule towards his people; Allāh too did not show him the light of His guidance. This was not in Allāh’s nature that He would guide somebody to the truth when he does not have any interest in it.¹⁵⁵

The People of Prophet Lūṭ and their Understanding of the Concept

According to Maududi, the people of Prophet Lūṭ’s understanding of *rubūbiyyah* was not much different from the previous nations’ understanding. These people also did not deny the existence of God nor did they deny His being the Creator and the *Rabb* in the first and second senses of the term i.e. taking care and supervising. However, they did not regard Allāh as the *Rabb* in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term i.e. leader, whose command is obeyed and owner or master. In addition to this, they did not regard their Prophet as a trustworthy representative from Allāh. The grave sin that

¹⁵⁴ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 198. See also Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 54,

¹⁵⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 55.

they had committed and the punishment that they had received consequently derived from their willingness to follow their desire. In this regard the Qur’ān says:

When their brother Lūṭ (Lot) said to them: “Will you not fear Allāh and obey Him? Verily! I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allāh, keep your duty to Him, and obey me. No reward do I ask of you for it (my Message of Islamic Monotheism), my reward is only from the Lord of the ‘*Alamīn* (mankind, jinns and all that exists). Go you in unto the males of the ‘*Alamīn* (mankind). And leave those whom Allāh has created for you to be your wives? Nay, you are a trespassing people!”¹⁵⁶

The above call that Prophet Lūṭ had addressed to his people is only applicable to those who did not deny the existence of God or His being the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe. That is why, Prophet Lūṭ’s people did not counter attack him by asking who God is. How could He be the Creator of the universe or become their *Rabb* and the *Rabb* of the whole universe?¹⁵⁷ Rather they said, “If you cease not. O Lūṭ (Lot)! Verily, you will be one of those who are driven out!”¹⁵⁸

In another place, this incident is presented as follows:

And (remember) Lūṭ (Lot), when he said to his people: “You commit *Al-Fahishah* (sodomy the worst sin) which none has preceded you in (committing) it in the ‘*Alamīn* (mankind and jinns). Verily, you do sodomy with men, and rob the wayfarer (travellers, etc.)! And practise *Al-Munkar* (disbelief and polytheism and every kind of evil wicked deed) in your meetings.” But his people gave no answer except, that they said: “Bring Allāh’s Torment upon us if you are one of the truthful.”¹⁵⁹

Based on these verses, Maududi asserted that it is not possible for anyone to utter this statement unless he believe in the existence of God. Their crime was not that they denied the *ulūhiyyah* or the *rubūbiyyah* of Allāh in the supernatural sense. Although they did believe in Allāh, they refused to follow His laws and guideline

¹⁵⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 161-166.

¹⁵⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 56.

¹⁵⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 167.

¹⁵⁹ Qur’ān, *al-Ankabūt*: 28-29.

brought by Prophet Lūṭ (peace be upon him), in all aspects of their life such as in the moral, social and cultural spheres.¹⁶⁰

The People of Prophet Shu‘ayb and their Understanding of the Concept

Based on the available information on the people of Prophet Shu‘ayb (peace be upon him), Maududi commented that they were descendants of Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him). Shu‘ayb was sent to them as a Prophet. Therefore, no question should be raised whether they believed in the existence of God or His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*. They were originally Muslims but with the passing of time, the Islamic code of life and conduct had been corrupted.¹⁶¹ From the Qur’ānic discussion, it is indicated that they claimed themselves as *mu‘min* because Prophet Shu‘ayb (peace be upon him) used to repeatedly tell them to do this and that if they were truly believers. An analysis of Prophet Shu‘ayb’s dialogue and the responses of his people indicate that they did believe in Allāh and acknowledged His *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*. But their fault was in two points: Firstly, they had associated others with Allāh in His *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* in the supernatural sense, so their worship was not exclusively for Allāh. Secondly, according to them, Allāh’s *rubūbiyyah* did not include the authority to lay down the law to regulate their moral, social, economic and cultural behaviour.¹⁶² That is why they regarded themselves as free, as described by the Qur’ān:

And to (the people of) Madyan (Midian), (We sent) their brother Shu‘ayb. He said: “O my people! Worship Allāh! You have no other *Ilāh* but Him.” Verily, a clear proof (sign) from your *Rabb* has come unto you; so give full measure and full weight and wrong not men in their things, and do not mischief on the earth after it has been set in

¹⁶⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 57.

¹⁶¹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 54-55.

¹⁶² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 58. See also Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 55.

order, that will be better for you, if you are believers... And if there is a party of you who believes in that with which I have been sent and a party who do not believe, so be patient until Allāh judges between us, and He is the Best of judges.¹⁶³

These verses show that the people of Prophet Shu‘ayb (peace be upon him) suffered from two major ailments, which are polytheism and dishonesty in business. Prophet Shu‘ayb (peace be upon him) devoted his efforts in purging them of those evils.¹⁶⁴ About their error in *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* Allāh narrates,

And O my people! Give full measure and weight in justice and reduce not the things that are due to the people, and do not commit mischief in the land, causing corruption. That which is left by Allāh for you (after giving the rights of the people) is better for you, if you are believers. And I am not set over you as a guardian. They said: “O Shu‘ayb! Does your *Salāh* (prayer) (i.e. the prayers which you offer has spoiled your mind, so you) command that we leave off what our fathers used to worship, or that we leave off doing what we like with our property? Verily, you are the forbearer, right-minded!” (They said this sarcastically).¹⁶⁵

The underlined sentences clearly indicate their errors in *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*.

Fir‘awn’s People and their Understanding of the Concept

Maududi asserted that there was great similarity on the concept of *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* between Namrūd’s people and Fir‘awn’s people. Misconception about the notion of Fir‘awn’s nation is greater than the notion of Namrūd’s nation. It is generally known that Fir‘awn denied the existence of God and claimed himself to be God. It is as if he was misguided claiming to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the people also had shown their idiocy by accepting his claim. That is clearly contradictory with history and the narration of the Qur’ān. The little difference

¹⁶³ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 85-87.

¹⁶⁴ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 55.

¹⁶⁵ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 85-87.

that can be found in Fir‘awn’s people’s case is that there was a racial bias against the *Banī Isrā’īl* because of their nationality and other political reasons. Only this racial biasness vetoed Fir‘awn’s people to acknowledge the *ulūhiyyah* and the *rubūbiyyah* of Allāh.¹⁶⁶

When Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) was vested high authority by the then Egyptian king, he had tried his best to establish Islam there. The impacts of his strive for the sake of Islam had lasted for centuries. There might not have many believers in Egypt during the time of Fir‘awn but it is rational to have some people who had knowledge about the existence of God and His being the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It is also logical to remain from the teaching of Prophet Yūsuf such amount of knowledge through what the people of Egypt still could recognise Allāh as the *Rabb* and the *Ilāh* in the supernatural sense. Therefore, it can be said that there was none who denied His existence. However, those who denied His existence actually regarded other beings as partners with Him in the *ulūhiyyah* and the *rubūbiyyah*. Impact of Islam was still there until Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) came to them.¹⁶⁷ The evidence can be found in the statement given by a Coptic noble in front of Fir‘awn after listening the plan of Fir‘awn to kill Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him). Following is the Fir‘awn’s plan as described by the Qur’ān:

And a believing man of Fir‘awn’s family, who hid his faith said: “Would you kill a man because he says: ‘My Lord is Allāh,’ and he has come to you with clear signs (proofs) from your Lord? And if he is a liar, upon him will be (the sin of) his lie; but if he is telling the truth, then some of that (calamity) wherewith he threatens you will befall on you. Verily, Allāh guides not one who is a *Muṣrif* (a polytheist, or a murderer who shed blood without a right, or those who commit great sins, oppressor, transgressor), a liar!. O my people! Yours is the kingdom this day, you are uppermost in the land. But who will save us from the Torment of Allāh, should it befall us?.... O my people! Verily,

¹⁶⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 60.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

I fear for you a fate like that day (of disaster) of the Confederates (of old)! Like the fate of the people of Nūh (Noah), and ‘Ad, and Thamūd and those who came after them.... And indeed Yusuf did come to you, in times gone by, with clear signs, but you ceased not to doubt in that which he did bring to you, till when he died you said: ‘No Messenger will Allāh send after him...’ And O my people! How is it that I call you to salvation while you call me to the Fire! You invite me to disbelieve in Allāh (and in His Oneness), and to join partners in worship with Him; of which I have no knowledge, and I invite you to the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving!.”¹⁶⁸

Based on this whole speech, Maududi affirmed that until that time, despite the passing of several centuries, the impact of the great personality of Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him) had not disappeared completely from the people’s mind. Because of his great struggle, the Egyptians had not yet reached the verge of ignorance where they did not know about the existence of God or His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*, or His power over nature and that His anger is something to be feared of. The last part of the speech clearly indicates that they did not totally deny God being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*, what they did was that they associated others with Him in these attributes.¹⁶⁹

Some statements that cause general public to think about Fir‘awn that he claimed lordship for himself, are: he asked Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) “And what is *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*?”¹⁷⁰; after listening to Mūsā, “We are the Messengers of *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*,”¹⁷¹; his command towards Hāmān, “O Hāmān! Build me a tower that I may arrive at the ways, the ways of the heavens, and I may look upon the *Ilāh* of Mūsā,”¹⁷²; his threat towards Mūsā, “If you choose an *Ilāh* other than me, I will

¹⁶⁸ Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 28-31, 34 & 41-42.

¹⁶⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt...*, 63.

¹⁷⁰ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 23.

¹⁷¹ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 16.

¹⁷² Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 36-37.

certainly put you among the prisoners,”¹⁷³; his decree toward his people, “I am your *Rabb*, most high,”¹⁷⁴; his statement that he uttered before his chiefs, “O nobles, I do not know that you have any god beside myself”¹⁷⁵ and many others. Based on these abovementioned statements, it is natural to promote the idea that Fir‘awn denied the existence of God; he had no idea about *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn* and he regarded himself as the only *ilāh*. However, the reality was that this attitude of arrogant expression was inspired by his racial prejudices.¹⁷⁶

With the strong personality of Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him), Islam had spread throughout Egypt. His remarkable participation in the higher authority brought the opportunity for *Banī Isrā’īl* to establish their stronghold in the land of Egypt which lasted for three or four centuries. After that, the Egyptian nationalism begun to germinate its racial biasness which resulted *Banī Isrā’īl* to be dethroned from their power as well as to restore a nationalist Egyptian authority instead. This nationalist rule used every way to humiliate *Banī Isrā’īl* and to abolish all the remarkable works that had taken place during Prophet Yūsuf’s rule. They re-established their own former traditions of the Age of Ignorance. When Prophet Mūsā was sent to them as a Prophet of Allāh, they naturally became terrified that *Banī Isrā’īl* might be victorious over them again.¹⁷⁷

These fear and racial biasness caused Fir‘awn to show his arrogance and anger and to ask Prophet Mūsā who might this *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn* be. Who was supposed to be the *ilāh* rather than him? In fact, it is not that he did not know about the existence of *Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*. This fact can be clearer with the dialogue that took place

¹⁷³ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 29.

¹⁷⁴ Qur’ān, *al-Nāzi‘āt*: 24.

¹⁷⁵ Qur’ān, *al-Qāṣas*: 38.

¹⁷⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 63.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 64. See also Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 636-638.

between Prophet Mūsā, Fir‘awn and his chiefs, as mentioned in the Qur’ān. For example, in one occasion, Fir‘awn denied with certainty that Prophet Mūsā was not Allāh’s Messenger, he said, (And if he be a Prophet), “Why then are not golden bracelets bestowed on him, or angels sent along with him?”¹⁷⁸ Can such a statement have been asserted by a person who did not know God or the angels?¹⁷⁹

On another occasion, the dialogue that had taken place between Fir‘awn and Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) can be found in *Sūrat al-Isrā’*.¹⁸⁰ The Qur’ān describes the mental state of Fir‘awn’s people in *Sūrat al-Naml*¹⁸¹ and in the assembly where both Prophet Mūsā and Fir‘awn’s people gathered in *Sūrat Tahā*.¹⁸²

It is clear that the dispute and the debate that took place among them after being warned about the punishment of Allāh was because there were still some remnants of notion about Allāh’s greatness and mightiness engraved in their hearts. However, when the ruling racist warned them about the possible change in the authority or political revolution if they adopted the faith of Mūsā and Hārūn, then they all stood against their Prophet.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Zukhruf*: 53.

¹⁷⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 64.

¹⁸⁰ Then Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) said to him: “O Mūsā! I think you are indeed bewitched.” [Mūsā] said: “Verily, you know that these signs have been sent down by none but the *Rabb* of the heavens and the earth as clear (evidences i.e. proofs of Allāh’s Oneness and His Omnipotence, etc.). And I think you are, indeed, O Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) doomed to destruction (away from all good)!” (Qur’ān, *al-Isrā’*: 101-102).

¹⁸¹ But when Our *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) came to them, clear to see, they said: “This is a manifest magic.” And they belied them (those *Āyāt*) wrongfully and arrogantly, though their ownselves were convinced thereof [i.e. those (*Āyāt*) are from Allāh, and Mūsā is the Messenger of Allāh in truth, but they disliked to obey Mūsā, and hated to believe in his Message of Monotheism]. (Qur’ān, *al-Naml*: 13-14)

¹⁸² Mūsā said to them: “Woe unto you! Invent not a lie against Allāh, lest He should destroy you completely by a torment. And surely, he who invents a lie (against Allāh) will fail miserably.” Then they debated with one another what they must do, and they kept their talk secret. They said: “Verily! These are two magicians. Their object is to drive you out from your land with magic, and overcome your chiefs and nobles.” (Qur’ān, *Ta-hā*: 61-63).

¹⁸³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 66.

After clarifying this issue, Maududi affirmed the real basis for the dispute that had taken place between Mūsā and Fir‘awn. Likewise, he pointed out the errors of Fir‘awn and his people and the aspects on which Fir‘awn’s claim of *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* was based. Then Maududi suggested that the readers ponder upon these following verses systematically to understand this fact:

1. The courtiers of Fir‘awn who wanted to wipe-out the *da‘wah* of Prophet Mūsā from the land of Egypt addressed Fir‘awn on some occasions: “Will you leave Mūsā and his people to spread mischief in the land, and to abandon you and your gods?”¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, the believer among the courtiers said to the Fir‘awn: “You invite me to disbelieve in Allāh (and in His Oneness), and to join partners in worship with Him; of which I have no knowledge.”¹⁸⁵

Based on these verses in addition to the latest information available as a result of historical and archaeological research about the people of ancient Egypt during the time of Fir‘awn, Maududi came to the conclusion that the people of Egypt and Fir‘awn himself had associated some of their gods with Allāh in the first and the second means of the term *Rabb*, and they used to worship them. It is obvious that if Fir‘awn had claimed lordship for himself in the supernatural sense, it means that, he was the generator of the universe and there was no *Rabb* and *Ilāh* other than him, then he would never have worship other gods.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 127.

¹⁸⁵ Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 42.

¹⁸⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 67

2. Among the statements of Fir‘awn that have been mentioned in the Qur’ān are: “O chiefs! I know not that you have an *Ilāh* (a god) other than me”¹⁸⁷ and “If you choose an *Ilāh* (god) other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners.”¹⁸⁸ According to Maududi, these statements do not mean that Fir‘awn had denied all other gods except him; rather he wanted to reject the *da‘wah* of Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) and to make it invalid. His *da‘wah* towards God was not only as the *Rabb* in the supernatural sense but also as the Supreme Sovereign and the ultimate Lawgiver in all aspects whether political, cultural, or social. From this perspective, Fir‘awn said to his people, “O people, I do not know such type of *Ilāh* rather than me” and he threatened Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) by saying that if he regarded anyone else as his *Ilāh* in this sense then he would be put in jail.¹⁸⁹

According to these verses as well as the additional information that can be found about these verses supported by historical and archaeological proof about ancient nations, Maududi asserted that the Fir‘awn of Egypt not only claimed absolute sovereignty but also pretended to have special sanctity being kinship with the gods. They did it to make their acceptance stronger in the mind of their subjects. The Fir‘awns of Egypt are not rare or exceptional from other dynasties in making this claim, yet there have been many dynasties, which also have claimed such type of divine authority besides assuming absolute sovereignty. Thus, they made mandatory on their subjects to perform various acts of worship before them as their

¹⁸⁷ Qur’ān, *al-Qāṣaṣ*: 38.

¹⁸⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘arā’*: 29.

¹⁸⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 70. See also Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 636-637.

slaves. It was actually not for itself, rather to strengthen their political authority under this umbrella of religious authority. That is why, in Egypt or in other places, whenever a dynasty had fallen the assumed *ulūhiyyah* of that particular dynasty also came to an end. Thus, the spiritual overlordship was always transferred to the new authority of the dynasty.¹⁹⁰

3. The *ulūhiyyah* that was claimed by the Fir‘awn, in fact, was not in the supernatural sense rather it was from the political sense. He had assumed the *rubūbiyyah* over Egypt and its people in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term. Based on the premise that he was the owner of the land of Egypt and whatever properties and resources involved, he alone deserved its sovereignty and his central personality is the sole yardstick in forming its cultural and social life. No one other than he had the authority to its legislation.¹⁹¹ That is why, he cried out by saying, O wretched people, cannot you see who is ruling over this land and under whose control are the canals which have been dug out from the Nile, upon which depends your whole economy? All these developments in this country have been brought about by my predecessors, and me but you are being devoted, charmed and fascinated by this pauper!¹⁹² His claim is described by the Qur’ān, “And Fir‘awn (Pharaoh) proclaimed among his people, saying: ‘O my people! Is not mine the dominion of Egypt, and these rivers flowing underneath me. See you not then?’”¹⁹³ This is the same basis upon which Namrūd also claimed his lordship, that Allāh has given him

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 71.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 544.

¹⁹³ Qur’ān, *al-Zukhruf*: 51.

the kingdom. Not only Namrūd but Fir‘awn, during the time of Prophet Yūsuf (peace be upon him), also claimed the *rubūbiyyah* on the same basis upon his people.¹⁹⁴

4. The dispute that had taken place between Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) and Fir‘awn and his nobles was because of Mūsā’s *da‘wah* that in reality, there is no *ilāh* or *rabb* with all the senses of the term *rabb*, except Allāh, the Lord of the universe. He alone is the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb* in the supernatural sense and in political, social and cultural matters as well. He deserved to be worshipped and obeyed. His laws should be followed. Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) had been vested with the prophethood along with the commandments presented by Allāh to Fir‘awn and his people. Thus, the authority should be in Prophet Mūsā’s hand, not in Fir‘awn’s.¹⁹⁵ That is why, Fir‘awn and his nobles accused the two bothers, Prophet Mūsā and Prophet Hārūn (peace be upon them), of wanting to dispossess them of their authority and to rule over the land of Egypt, demolishing the existing culture by replacing it with their own culture.¹⁹⁶ In this regard, as it is described in the Qur’ān, Fir‘awn said to Mūsā, “Have you come to drive us out of our land with your magic, O Mūsā?”¹⁹⁷ Addressing his people he said, “Leave me to kill Mūsā, and let him call his Lord (to stop me from killing him)! I fear that he may change your religion, or that he may cause mischief to appear in the land!”¹⁹⁸ As a response to him, his people said, “Verily! These are two magicians.

¹⁹⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 72.

¹⁹⁵ See Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 484-492.

¹⁹⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 73. See also Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 96-97.

¹⁹⁷ Qur’ān, *Ṭāhā*: 57.

¹⁹⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Mu‘min*: 26.

Their object is to drive you out from your land with magic, and overcome your chiefs and nobles.¹⁹⁹

All these statements were delivered after Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) had presented his *da'wah* towards them. A true feature of his *da'wah* can be visualized through the verses of *Sūrat Hūd*,²⁰⁰ *al-Dukhān*,²⁰¹ *al-Muzzammil*,²⁰² *Ṭāhā*²⁰³ and *al-Shu'arā'*.²⁰⁴

A conclusion can be drawn based on the abovementioned verses that misconceptions about *rubūbiyyah* that appeared across nations since ancient time, including that of Fir'awn of the Nile Valley. On the other hand, the message or the *da'wah* delivered by the Prophets throughout the ages, was the same one spread by Prophet Mūsā and Prophet Hārūn (peace be upon them).

The Jews and the Christians

After clarifying Fir'awn's people's concept of *Rabb*, Maududi showed Israelites' view regarding this term. Israelites are people who have later on adopted Judaism and

¹⁹⁹ Qur'ān, *Ṭāhā*: 63.

²⁰⁰ And indeed We sent Mūsā (Moses) with Our Āyāt (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and a manifest authority; To Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his chiefs, but they followed the command of Fir'awn (Pharaoh), and the command of Fir'awn (Pharaoh) was no right guide. (Qur'ān, *Hūd*: 96-97).

²⁰¹ And indeed We tried before them Fir'awn (Pharaoh)'s people, when there came to them a noble Messenger [i.e. Mūsā], Saying: "Restore to me the slaves of Allāh (i.e. the Children of Israel). Verily! I am to you a Messenger worthy of all trust, And exalt not (yourselves) against Allāh. Truly, I have come to you with a manifest authority." (Qur'ān, *al-Dukhān*: 17-19).

²⁰² Verily, We have sent to you (O men) a Messenger (Muḥammad) to be a witness over you, as We did send a Messenger [Mūsā] to Fir'awn (Pharaoh). But Fir'awn (Pharaoh) disobeyed the Messenger [Mūsā], so We seized him with a severe punishment. (Qur'ān, *al-Muzzammil*: 15-16).

²⁰³ Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said: "Who then, O Mūsā (Moses), is the Lord of you two?" [Mūsā] said: "Our Lord is He Who gave to each thing its form and nature, then guided it aright." (Qur'ān, *Ṭāhā*: 49-50).

²⁰⁴ Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said: "And what is the Lord of the 'Ālamīn?" Mūsā (Moses) said: "Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty." Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said to those around: "Do you not hear (what he says)?" Mūsā (Moses) said: "Your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!" Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said: "Verily, your Messenger who has been sent to you is a madman!" Mūsā (Moses) said: "Lord of the east and the west, and all that is between them, if you did but understand!" Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said: "If you choose an *Ilāh* other than me, I will certainly put you among the prisoners." (Qur'ān, *al-Shu'arā'*: 23-29).

Christianity as their faith. Certainly, there is no probability of their denying the existence of God or denying His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*, because the Qur’ān affirms their belief by calling them *Ahl al-Kitāb* (people of the Scripture). However, what is the particular error in their belief and fault for which they have been characterized in the Qur’ān as being *Ḍāllīn* (went astray)? Answer to this question can be found in the Qur’ān as Allāh says:

Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Exceed not the limits in your religion (by believing in something) other than the truth, and do not follow the vain desires of people who went astray in times gone by, and who misled many, and strayed (themselves) from the Right Path.”²⁰⁵

It can be understood through this verse that, in essence, the error of the Jews and the Christians is the same as the error of the people of the previous nations. In addition, their error was the result of their exaggeration of religion. In commenting upon this verse, Maududi said that this refers to those misguided nations from whom the Christians derived their false beliefs and ways, particularly to the Hellenistic philosophers under the spell of whose ideas the Christians had veered from the straight way that they had originally followed. The beliefs of the early followers of the Masīḥ were mainly in conformity with the reality that they had witnessed and conformed to the teachings that they had received from their guide and mentor. Referring to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, Maududi showed a brief and chronological deviation of Christianity. After this presentation, it is evident from the statements of the Christian scholars that love and veneration for the Christ were intensely exaggerated in the religion, which led early Christians to go astray. This exaggeration and the use of expressions such as *Ilāh* or *Rabb* and ‘Son of God’ led to ‘Īsā being vested with divine attributes and to the peculiar Christian notion of redemption, even

²⁰⁵ Qur’ān, *al-Mā'idah*: 77.

though these could not be accommodated into the body of the teachings of Christ. When the Christians came to be infected with philosophical doctrines, they did not abandon the original error into which they had fallen but tried to accommodate the errors of their predecessors through apologetic and rational explanations. Thus, instead of returning to the true teachings of Christ, they used logic and philosophy to fabricate one false doctrine after another. It is to this error that the Qur’ān calls the Christians’ attention to this verse.²⁰⁶

One can find this issue in detail in the Qur’ān in *Sūrat al-Tawbah* where Allāh says, “And the Jews say: ‘Uzair is the son of Allāh, and the Christians say: Masīḥ is the son of Allāh.”²⁰⁷ Other similar statements on this issue can also be found in *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*²⁰⁸ and *Āl ‘Imrān*²⁰⁹ where it has been shown how the error of *Ahl al-Kitāb* had taken place. Firstly, it happened through over respecting their Prophets, saints and angels, who actually deserved respect because of their religious status but they had raised them to the status of *ulūhiyyah* and associated them with Allāh, believing that they had such authority in controlling the universe. Therefore, they worshipped them on that basis and sought help from them, thinking that they had some portion in *ulūhiyyah* as well as in *rubūbiyyah* in the supernatural sense and assumed that they

²⁰⁶ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 491- 495.

²⁰⁷ Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 30.

²⁰⁸ Surely, they have disbelieved who say: “Allāh is the Masīḥ [‘Īsā (Jesus)], son of Maryam.” But the Masīḥ said: “O Children of Israel! Worship Allāh, my Lord and your Lord” ... Surely, disbelievers are those who said: “Allāh is the third of the three (in a Trinity).” But there is no *Ilāh* but One *Ilāh* (God - Allāh)...And (remember) when Allāh will say (on the Day of Resurrection): “O ‘Īsā, son of Maryam! Did you say unto men: ‘Worship me and my mother as two gods besides Allāh?’” He will say: “Glory be to You! It was not for me to say what I had no right (to say)...” (Qur’ān, *al-Mā’idah*: 72, 73 & 116).

²⁰⁹ It is not (possible) for any human being to whom Allāh has given the Book and *al-Ḥukma* (the knowledge and understanding of the laws of religion, etc.) and Prophethood to say to the people: “Be my worshippers rather than Allāh’s.” On the contrary (he would say): “Be you *Rabbāniyyīn* (learned men of religion who practise what they know and also preach others), because you are teaching the Book, and you are studying it.” Nor would he order you to take angels and Prophets for lords. Would he order you to disbelieve after you have submitted to Allāh’s Will? (Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*: 79).

could remit their sins and come to their rescue and protect them from misfortune and disasters.²¹⁰

Secondly, they were mistaken when they regarded their rabbis and monks as *rabb* besides Allāh. In fact, the latter's function was to inform people about the divine laws and purify them morally and spiritually according to God's instruction. However, those people were gradually given a status by their people that they could decide what is *ḥalāl* and what is *ḥarām*. They could, whimsically, command them to do something or prohibit them to do so without referring to the scripture; they also could prescribe any practice according to their wish. Likewise, they had fallen into the same two basic errors into which previous nations of Prophet Nūḥ, Prophet Ibrāhīm, 'Ād, Thamūd, people of Madyan and others had fallen earlier. Like the previous nations, they had also made the angels and the intimate slaves of Allāh as partners with Him in *rubūbiyyah* in the supernatural sense as well as in the cultural and political senses. Therefore, they had taken the principle of their cultural, social, moral and political rules and regulations based on human reasoning instead of the scripture sent down by Allāh²¹¹ until they reached a stage about which the Qur'ān says, "Have you not seen those who were given a portion of the Scripture? They believe in *jibt* and *tāghūt*."²¹² Supporting evidence also can be found in *Sūrat al-Mā'idah*.²¹³

Jibt is a comprehensive word, which includes all myths and superstitions such as magic, talismans, the art of the occult, black magic, necromancy, witch-craft,

²¹⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 77.

²¹¹ Ibid., 78.

²¹² Qur'ān, *al-Nisā*: 51.

²¹³ Say (O Muḥammad to the people of the Scripture): "Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allāh: those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allāh and His Wrath, those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swines, those who worshipped *tāghūt* (false deities); such are worse in rank (on the Day of Resurrection in the Hell-fire), and far more astray from the Right Path (in the life of this world)." (Qur'ān, *al-Mā'idah*: 60).

foretelling, the belief in talismans or lucky stones or unlucky colours, etc., or in the influence of heavenly bodies.²¹⁴ On the other hand, *tāghūt* refers to an individual, or a group of people, institution or organization rebelling against Allāh's guideline and virtually setting up himself or itself as god instead of acting as a slave.²¹⁵ When the Jews and the Christians committed the same errors indicated above, several types of superstitious beliefs took place in their mind because of the first error, and because of the second one where the rabbis and the monks gradually began to assume that they had the authority to tell people about what was right and what was wrong as had been presumed by those who were openly rebelling against God.²¹⁶ The obstinacy of the Jewish religious scholars had reached such a point that they openly declared that the followers of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) were in greater error than even the polytheists of Arabia. This was despite the fact that they knew that the Muslims stood for absolute monotheism, while their opponents believed in that undisguised polytheism, which has been so vehemently denounced throughout the Bible.²¹⁷

The Arab Pagans

After describing all the previous nations' understanding regarding *rubūbiyyah*, Maududi talked about the Arab pagans. These are the people to whom Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) was sent and the first people to be addressed by the Qur'ān. So what was the nature of their error in *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*? Were they ignorant of Allāh, or did they deny His existence causing Allāh to send Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) to convince them about His existence? Did they not

²¹⁴ See Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 359-360.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 196-197.

²¹⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 79.

²¹⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 360.

acknowledge Allāh as the *Rabb* and *Ilāh* causing the Qur’ān to be sent down to them to persuade them on this issue? Did they refuse to worship Allāh or to obey Him, or did they not regard Him as the responder of supplication and provider of needs? Did they assume that the *Lāt*, *‘Uzzā*, *Manāt*, *Hubal* and other gods were the real creators, masters, sustainers and controllers over this universe, or did they believe that those gods were the source of their law, guidance as well as moral and social codes?

Maududī was of the view that a researcher of the Qur’ān will get negative answers for all these questions. He argued that, it is apparent in the Qur’ān that the pagan Arabs did not only acknowledge the existence of Allāh but they also believed Him to be the Creator and the Master of the universe as well as of their own gods. They also regarded Him as their *Ilāh* and *Rabb*. It was He to Whom they addressed their prayers as the last resort, in time of danger or when any calamity fell upon them. They did not deny in worshipping Him. They neither believed in their gods to be their creators and creators of the universe or sustainers for all nor did they regard them as their guides and instructors in the social and moral affairs of life.²¹⁸ Regarding this issue, Allāh says in the Qur’ān:

Say: “Whose is the earth and whosoever is therein? If you know!” They will say: “It is Allāh’s!” Say: “Will you not then remember?” Say: “Who is *Rabb* of the seven heavens, and *Rabb* of the Great Throne?” They will say: “Allāh.” Say: “Will you not then fear Allāh (believe in His Oneness, obey Him, believe in the Resurrection and Recompense for each and every good or bad deed).” Say “In Whose Hand is the sovereignty of everything (i.e. treasures of each and everything)? And He protects (all), while against Whom there is no protector, (i.e. if Allāh saves anyone none can punish or harm him, and if Allāh punishes or harms anyone none can save him), if you know.” [*Tafsīr al-Qurtubī*, Vol. 12, Page 145] They will say: “(All that belongs) to Allāh.” Say: “How then are you deceived and turn away from the truth?” Nay, but We have brought them the truth (Islamic Monotheism), and verily, they (disbelievers) are liars.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ Maududī, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 80

²¹⁹ Qur’ān, *al-Mu’minūn*: 84-90.

More evidence on this issue can be found in *Sūrat al-Isrā'*²²⁰ and *Sūrat Yūnus*.²²¹

The Qur'ān narrates their belief about their gods in their own words where Allāh says, "And those who take *Awliya* (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): "We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allāh."²²² In another place, Allāh says that they say, "These are our intercessors with Allāh."²²³

Maududi stated they did not even assume that their gods were able to guide them to the truth, that is why, when Allāh commanded his Prophet to ask them "Is there of your (Allāh's so-called) partners one that guides to the truth?"²²⁴, it caused them to be silent. None of them dared to reply that the *Lāt*, *'Uzzā*, *Manāt* and other gods guided them to the right belief and conduct, and taught them the principles of justice, peace and harmony for their worldly life as well as from its provided information where they can get the knowledge of basic realities of the universe.²²⁵ Therefore, Allāh said to His Prophet, "Say, 'It is Allāh Who guides to the truth. Is then He, Who gives guidance to the truth, more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance unless he is guided? Then, what is the matter with you? How judge you?'"²²⁶

²²⁰ And when harm touches you upon the sea, those that you call upon besides Him vanish from you except Him (Allāh Alone). But when He brings you safely to land, you turn away (from Him). And man is ever ungrateful. (Qur'ān, *al-Isrā'*: 67).

²²¹ He it is Who enables you to travel through land and sea, till when you are in the ships and they sail with them with a favourable wind, and they are glad therein, then comes a stormy wind and the waves come to them from all sides, and they think that they are encircled therein, they invoke Allāh, making their Faith pure for Him Alone, saying: "If You (Allāh) deliver us from this, we shall truly be of the grateful." But when He delivered them, behold! They rebel (disobey Allāh) in the earth wrongfully. (Qur'ān, *Yūnus*: 22-23).

²²² Qur'ān, *al-Zumar*: 3.

²²³ Qur'ān, *Yūnus*: 18.

²²⁴ Qur'ān, *Yūnus*: 34.

²²⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 82.

²²⁶ Qur'ān, *Yūnus*: 35.

Then what was their real error in *rubūbiyyah*, that Prophet (peace be upon him) was sent and the Qur’ān was revealed to correct it? Maududi affirmed that a proper study of the Qur’ān indicates that they had also fallen into two basic errors, the same errors that occurred in the previous deviated nations. In one way or another, they associated others with Allāh in *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* in the supernatural sense, and they believed that the angels, men of piety and heavenly bodies had some portion in the realm of cause and effect. That is why they did not only turn to Allāh in their prayers, seeking help or in other acts of worship but also to those whom they regarded as their gods.²²⁷ The Qur’ān talks about this error in many places, such as in *Sūrat al-Ḥajj*,²²⁸ *Yūnus*,²²⁹ *Fuṣṣilat*,²³⁰ *al-Mā’idah*,²³¹ *al-Zumar*²³² and *al-Naḥl*.²³³

In the cultural and political affairs, they did not regard Allāh as their *Rabb*, yet they had taken their religious leaders, their chiefs and the elders of their family or clan as their guide, in other words, as their *rabb*. From those leaders, they used to get their

²²⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt...*, 83.

²²⁸ And among mankind is he who worships Allāh as it were, upon the very edge (i.e. in doubt); if good befalls him, he is content therewith; but if a trial befalls him, he turns back on his face (i.e. reverts back to disbelief after embracing Islam). He loses both this world and the Hereafter. That is the evident loss. He calls besides Allāh unto that which hurts him not, nor profits him. That is a straying far away. He calls unto him whose harm is nearer than his profit; certainly, and evil *Mawlā* (patron) and certainly an evil friend! (Quran, *al-Ḥajj*: 11-13).

²²⁹ And they worship besides Allāh things that hurt them not, nor profit them, and they say: “These are our intercessors with Allāh.” Say: “Do you inform Allāh of that which He knows not in the heavens and on the earth?” Glorified and Exalted be He above all that which they associate as partners with Him! (Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 18).

²³⁰ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “Do you verily disbelieve in Him Who created the earth in two Days and you set up rivals (in worship) with Him?” (Quran, *Fuṣṣilat*: 9).

²³¹ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him] to mankind): “How do you worship besides Allāh something which has no power either to harm or to benefit you? But it is Allāh Who is the All-Hearer, All-Knower.” (Qur’ān, *al-Mā’idah*: 76).

²³² And when some hurt touches man, he cries to his Lord (Allāh Alone), turning to Him in repentance, but when He bestows a favour upon him from Himself, he forgets that for which he cried for before, and he sets up rivals to Allāh, in order to mislead others from His Path. (Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 8).

²³³ So (as a result of that) they deny (with ungratefulness) that (Allāh’s Favours) which We have bestowed on them! Then enjoy yourselves (your short stay), but you will come to know (with regrets). And they assign a portion of that which We have provided them unto what they know not (false deities). By Allāh, you shall certainly be questioned about (all) that you used to fabricate. (Qur’ān, *al-Naḥl*: 55-56).

rules and regulation of everyday life.²³⁴ Allāh says in the Qur’ān, “And so to many of the *Mushrikūn* their *shurakā’* have made fair-seeming the killing of their children, in order to lead them to their own destruction and cause confusion in their religion.”²³⁵

Maududi asserted that it is clear that the word *shurakā’* does not refer to gods or idols; rather it refers to those leaders and chiefs who had made the killing of one’s own children seem like a noble act.²³⁶ Gradually, they added it to the religion of Prophet Ibrāhīm and Prophet Ismā‘īl (peace be upon them). He added it was also clear that those leaders and chiefs were not regarded by their people as partners besides Allāh; hence, they had some control over the affairs of the universe or they were worshipped or addressed in supplication. However, they regarded them as partners besides Allāh in *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah* in the sense that they had the absolute right to legislate or lay down the laws according to their wishes, either in cultural, social or moral and religious spheres.²³⁷ In this regard Allāh says, “Or have they partners with Allāh (false gods), who have instituted for them a *dīn* which Allāh has not allowed.”²³⁸

The word ‘*dīn*’ and its significance will be detailed later where there will also be more discussion on the related verses. However, whatever introduced by the leaders and the chiefs and formed part of *dīn* without being sanctioned by Allāh yet accepted by the Arab pagans as religious obligation were in fact, associating them with Allāh in both *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*.²³⁹

²³⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 83.

²³⁵ Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 137.

²³⁶ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 586.

²³⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 86.

²³⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Shūrā*: 21.

²³⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 86.

The Message of the Qur'ān

After presenting this foregoing discussion about the deviated nations and their notions, Maududi concluded by saying it is obvious that from the earliest time to the revelation of the Qur'ān, none of those nations which have been described in the Qur'ān as transgressors, misguided, and deviated, denied the existence of Allāh or His being the *Rabb* and the *Ilāh*. The basic error was that they all divided the five senses that have been explained from the Qur'ānic and linguistic perspectives at the beginning of this discussion, into two parts.²⁴⁰

Despite *Rabb* being the Cherisher, the Provider and the Protector in the supernatural sense, they had intended something different from these attributes. Although they had regarded Allāh as the Supreme *Rabb*, they also assumed that the angels, *Jinn*, invisible forces, the stars, other heavenly bodies, the Prophets, saints and other spiritual men had different portions in this *rubūbiyyah*.²⁴¹

As for the other attributes, such as His being the Supreme Authority to command or prohibit, the Supreme Sovereign, the Source of guidance, the Legislator, the Supreme Lord, and the Fountainhead of culture and society, they also had different views. They had either regarded particular human beings as the *Rabb* instead of Allāh or they regarded Allāh to be so in theory but treated these beings as *Rabb* in moral, cultural and political spheres. All the Prophets over time had been sent to remove these misconceptions, and it was the same reason why Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) had also been sent as the final Prophet. The core point of their *da'wah* was that there is only One *Rabb* in all senses of the term and He is Allāh. The *rubūbiyyah* is indivisible, so there is no possibility of dividing and distributing any of its portion

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 87.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

to someone in any mean. The management and control of the universe is based on One Central Authority, the Authority Who had created it and arranged it properly. He has all rights over it; no one had a hand in creating it nor had shared with Allāh in administrating or controlling it. As its central authority is in Allāh's hand, therefore, He alone is the *Rabb* in the supernatural sense, in cultural, political and moral senses as well. He alone is worthy to be worshipped and addressed in *rukū'* (bow down), *sujūd* (prostration) and supplications, and it is He Whom we rely upon. He is able to fulfil needs. He is the King, the King of the kings, the Legislator and He has the right to prescribe what is right and what is wrong. Although *rubūbiyyah* had been divided into two parts because of ignorance but it is in fact an indivisible attribute of Allāh, none of its parts can be separated from another or no one can be associated with Allāh in any aspect.²⁴²

The Qur'ān has described this issue in several places, such as in *Sūrat al-Jāthiyah*,²⁴³ *Maryam*,²⁴⁴ *Hūd*,²⁴⁵ *al-Muzzammil*,²⁴⁶ *al-Anbiyā'*,²⁴⁷ *al-Nās*²⁴⁸ *al-Kahf*,²⁴⁹ etc.

²⁴² Ibid., 89.

²⁴³ So all the praises and thanks are to Allāh, the Lord of the heavens and the Lord of the earth, and the Lord of the 'Alamīn. And His (Alone) is the Majesty in the heavens and the earth, and He is the All-Mighty, the All-Wise. (Qur'ān, *al-Jāthiyah*: 36-36).

²⁴⁴ Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. Do you know of any who is similar to Him? (Qur'ān, *Maryam*: 65).

²⁴⁵ And to Allāh belongs the Ghaib (unseen) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him return all affairs (for decision). So worship Him (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) and put your trust in Him. (Qur'ān, *Hūd*: 123).

²⁴⁶ (He Alone is) the Lord of the east and the west, *Lā Ilāha illā Huwa*, (none has the right to be worshipped but He). So take Him Alone as *Wakīl*. (Qur'ān, *al-Muzzammil*: 9).

²⁴⁷ Truly! This, your *Ummah* is one religion, and I am your Lord, therefore worship Me (Alone). But they have broken up and differed as regards their religion among themselves. (And) they all shall return to Us. (Qur'ān, *al-Anbiyā'*: 92-93).

²⁴⁸ Say: "I seek refuge with (Allāh) the Lord of mankind, The King of mankind, The *Ilāh* of mankind." (Qur'ān, *al-Nās*: 1-3).

²⁴⁹ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): "I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your *Ilāh* is One *Ilāh* (God i.e. Allāh). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." (Qur'ān, *al-Kahf*: 110).

Maududi asserted that, through a chronological study of these verses, it clearly indicates that the Qur'ān uses the word *rubūbiyyah* synonymously with sovereignty, and the concept of the word *Rabb* has been described as Absolute Monarch of this universe, the Lord and the Master, without being associated with others. Therefore, He is the Cherisher, Provider and Sustainer of the universe. He is the One Who looks after His slaves, protects them from harm and fulfils their needs. In this sense, obedience to Him is natural and the only right basis on which social life can be based upon properly. The attachment to His central Personage is capable to unite different individuals and groups as an *Ummah*.²⁵⁰

He alone is worthy to be worshipped and obeyed by all humanity and other creatures; He alone is the Lord, Master and Ruler over them. The Arab as well as the other ignorant nations did the same mistake, which continues even until today where they have divided and distributed this comprehensive concept of *rubūbiyyah* into five facets. They have assumed that these different aspects of *rubūbiyyah* can be vested onto different beings, even it has already been vested (according to them). The Qur'ān with its strong evidence and cogent arguments shows that it is impossible to vest any aspect of *rubūbiyyah* to anyone in this central system which is under the Supreme Authority. The nature of this central system is clear evidence to prove that all aspects of *rubūbiyyah* are exclusively for Allāh, Who alone brought the universe into existence.²⁵¹ Thus, Islam is nothing but man's exclusive and total submission to God. Likewise, a Muslim is not a servant of himself, or of his ancestors, or of his

²⁵⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 93.

²⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

family and nation, or of any ruler, general, leader, Mulla, Sheikh or any other person. He is the servant of God alone.²⁵²

Therefore, whoever assumes that any of these aspects of *rubūbiyyah* is vested onto anyone in any sense rather than Allāh or he treats that particular being as so while living in this system he is in fact ignoring the reality or turning away from it and rebelling against the Truth. By doing so, he destroys as well as brings loss and ultimate disaster for himself.²⁵³ After this long discussion on *Rabb* Maududi discussed the third term of the basic four terms of the Qur'ān which is *‘ibādah*.

‘IBĀDAH

Maududi analysed the term *‘ibādah* from the linguistic perspective. He has shown its different usage in five different meanings, all related to each other. According to him, the first three meanings, slavery, total submission and worshipping, are its basic meanings while the remaining two are secondary. Maududi asserted that the Qur'ān throughout its discussion also uses the word *‘ibādah* to indicate these three basic meanings. In some occasions, it could be seen that the word is used to indicate the first and the second meanings, in other places to indicate only the second meaning, or in still other places to indicate all three meanings together. In conclusion, he opined that it is not possible to mean one of these three meanings only when it talks about *‘ibādah* of Allāh; all are supposed to be exclusively for Allāh, wholly and solely.

²⁵² Maududi, *Islamer Buniadi...*, 58.

²⁵³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 94.

Linguistic Analysis

In Arabic, *al-‘Ubūdah*, *al-‘Ubūdiyah*, *al-‘Abdiyah*²⁵⁴ means *al-Khūḍū‘ wa al-Tadhallul* which means being obedient or submissive before someone without resisting or being ungrateful. Therefore, he (the superior) can use him (the inferior) or employ him according to his wish. In Arabic, *ba‘irun mu‘abbadun*, indicates the camel that is very obedient to its master (rider) or *ṭarīqun mu‘abbadun* to indicate the lane that became smooth because many people used it. The meanings, which can be derived from this root verb, are slavery or bondage, obedience, worship, servitude and bond or restriction.²⁵⁵ The famous Arabic dictionary *Lisān al-‘Arab* has explained this root verb in detail showing the usage of all these derived meanings.

In brief, the basic concept that can be developed from the word *‘abd* is regarding someone’s supremacy or lordship over oneself by abdicating freedom or independency for his sake with total surrender and being obedient to him without any resistance.²⁵⁶ This is the slavery or bondage in the real sense, which can be understood by any Arab once he hears the word *al-‘abd* or *al-‘ibādah*. Since the primary obligation of a slave is to obey his master and follow his instructions, the word carries the sense of submission and obedience as well. However, a slave does not only obediently submit himself to the will of his master physically, but also mentally acknowledges his supremacy and shows his gratitude for his kindness and favours. Therefore, he exaggerates in praising and respecting his master and performs the obligations perfectly. These acts are called worship. It is considered as worship only when it would be expressed simultaneously through one’s physical and mental

²⁵⁴ See Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyā, *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1st edn., 2001), the root *‘Ayn-Bā-Dāl*, 701-702.

²⁵⁵ Maududī, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 96.

²⁵⁶ See Maududī, *Islamer Buniadi...*, 102.

capacities.²⁵⁷ The other two remaining senses are actually secondary, not primary, so their explanation is not required here.

Usage of the Term in the Qur'ān

Based on an in-depth research of the Qur'ān, Maududi asserted that the word *'ibādah* has been used in several places to indicate these three meanings. In some occasions, it could be seen that the word is used to indicate the first and the second meanings, in other places to indicate only the second meaning while in other places to indicate all three together.

'Ibādah: Slavery and Submission

Examples of the word *'ibādah* in the context of the first and second senses can be found in *Sūrat al-Mu'minūn*. Allāh says:

Then We sent Mūsā (Moses) and his brother Harun (Aaron), with Our *Āyāt* (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.) and manifest authority, to Fir'awn (Pharaoh) and his chiefs, but they behaved insolently and they were people self-exalting (by disobeying their Lord, and exalting themselves over and above the Messenger of Allāh). They said: "Shall we believe in two men like ourselves, and their people are obedient to us with humility (and we use them to serve us as we like)." ²⁵⁸

Here, the Qur'ān narrates the word *'ābidūn* from Fir'awn's statement who told his people arrogantly, "should we follow them (Mūsā and Hārūn) while their nation, *Banī Isrā'īl*, is in bondage to us and fully subservient to us." In another place Allāh says, "And this is the past favour with which you reproach me, that you have enslaved (*'abbadta*) the Children of Israel." ²⁵⁹ Likewise, the word *'abbadta* is used in Prophet

²⁵⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 97. See also Maududi, *Islamer Rajnaytik...*, 8.

²⁵⁸ Qur'ān, *al-Mu'minūn*: 45-47.

²⁵⁹ Qur'ān, *al-Shu'ara'*: 26.

Mūsā's reply to Fir'awn to mean, "you, O Fir'awn, enslaved the *Banī Isrā'īl*, so they have to act according to your command and wish." Both of these words, *'ābidūn* and *'abbadta*, refer to bondage, submission and obedience. The word *'Ābid* means worshipper. According to the Arabic language, to be a worshipper and a bondsman are almost synonymous. Therefore, when the Prophets invited their people to worship Allāh alone, they wanted them to worship, serve and obey none but Allāh and that is the real significance of the word *'ibādah*.²⁶⁰

In *Sūrat al-Baqarah*, Allāh says, "O you who believe (in *Tawhīd*)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allāh, if it is indeed He Whom you worship."²⁶¹ In commenting on this verse, Maududi said that the believers are told that if they really regarded themselves as true believers in following the Law of Allāh as they claim, then they should abandon all taboos and prohibitions imposed by the priests, rabbis and church's fathers, monks and their own forefathers. Although they are required to abstain from whatever has been prohibited by Allāh, they ought to feel no compunction with regard to consuming all that He has permitted. This means that in spite of praying and facing towards the *Qiblah*, a person has not fully assimilated into Islam as long as he maintains the pre-Islamic taboos in matters of eating and drinking and holds on to the fetters of superstition forged by the victims of ignorance. A person's adherence to these taboos is indicative of the fact that the poison of ignorance continues to flow in his veins.²⁶² About the background of this verse, Maududi said that in pre-Islamic era, the Arabs imposed upon themselves various types of restrictions in eating and drinking as a result of obeying their religious leaders or due to superstitions that they had inherited from their ancestors.

²⁶⁰ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 31, 280.

²⁶¹ Qur'ān, *al-Baqarah*: 172.

²⁶² Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 134.

When those Arabs became Muslims Allāh told them if they really want to worship Him alone, then they should stop these restrictions and enjoy from all that Allāh had made lawful for them without fear of any harm. In other words, if they were no more slaves to their religious leaders or ancestors instead of Allāh, and if they really want to obey Allāh by leaving the obedience to their priests or ancestors, then they have to follow only Allāh's prescription in eating and drinking. In this verse *ta'budūn* means *tuṭī'ūn*.²⁶³

Further, the same meaning of *'ibādah* can be found in *Sūrat al-Mā'idah*,²⁶⁴ *al-Nahl*²⁶⁵ and *al-Zumar*.²⁶⁶ In all these three places, *'ibādah* of *ṭāghūt* means bondage to *ṭāghūt* or being obedient to it. When the Qur'ān uses the word *ṭāghūt*, it indicates a type of state, authority or leadership that transgresses against Allāh, through its rules and regulations whether by use of force or through seducing or immoral teaching. Surrendering towards such state, authority or leaders, being obedient to them and acting according to their instructions will be considered as *'ibādah* before those *ṭāghūt*.²⁶⁷

'Ibādah: Submission or Obedience

In many places of the Qur'ān, the word *'ibādah* has been used to indicate *iṭā'ah* (submission or obedience) such as in *Sūrat Yāsīn* where Allāh says, “Did I not ordain

²⁶³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 100.

²⁶⁴ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him] to the people of the Scripture): “Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allāh: those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allāh and His Wrath, those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swines, those who worshipped *ṭāghūt*. (Qur'ān, *al-Mā'idah*: 60).

²⁶⁵ And verily, We have sent among every *Ummah* (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): “Worship Allāh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) *ṭāghūt*.” (Qur'ān, *al-Nahl*: 36).

²⁶⁶ Those who avoid *al-ṭāghūt* by not worshipping them and turn to Allāh in repentance, for them are glad tidings. (Qur'ān, *al-Zumar*: 17).

²⁶⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 101.

for you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship *Shaytan*. Verily, he is a plain enemy to you.”²⁶⁸

Everybody knows that nobody worships *Shayṭān*, rather everyone always curses *Shayṭān*. On the Day of Judgement, mankind will not be charged by Allāh because of their worshipping before *Shayṭān*, yet they will be charged because of their obedience towards *Shayṭān*, and because of their following the path that has been prescribed by *Shayṭān*.²⁶⁹

Another example of the use of *‘ibādah*, which indicates *itā‘ah* can be found in *Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt*²⁷⁰ where Allāh says, “Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils) and what they used to worship (*ya‘budūn*).... And they will turn to one another and question one another.”²⁷¹

This dialogue had not taken place between an *‘ābid* (worshipper) and a *ma‘būd* (the object of worship), i.e. those gods and idols whom they used to worship through performing of various rituals; rather it had taken place between an *‘ābid* and religious or other leaders who came to the people in the name of well-wishers or saviours of the nation or liberators, etc., thus people followed them blindly but those leaders betrayed them and led them astray, which caused mischief in the land. The Qur’ān called this blind obedience to such leaders and following their instructions as *‘ibādah*.²⁷²

²⁶⁸ Qur’ān, *Yāsīn*: 60.

²⁶⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt*..., 102.

²⁷⁰ (It will be said to the angels): “Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils) and what they used to worship. Instead of Allāh, and lead them on to the way of flaming Fire (Hell);...” And they will turn to one another and question one another. They will say: “It was you who used to come to us from the right side [i.e. from the right side of one of us and beautify for us every evil, order us for polytheism, and stop us from the truth i.e. Islamic Monotheism and from every good deed].” They will reply: “Nay, you yourselves were not believers.” And we had no authority over you. Nay! But you were transgressing people. (Qur’ān, *al-Ṣāffāt*: 22-23 & 27-30).

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt*..., 102.

In *Sūrat al-Tawbah*, Allāh says, “They took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allāh and (they also took as their Lord) Messiah, son of Maryam, while they were commanded to worship none but One *Ilāh*.”²⁷³

Accepting the scholars and rabbis as *rabb* besides Allāh and worshipping them signify that they (Jews and Christians) regarded them (scholars and rabbis) as authority to make things lawful or unlawful according to their own desires without being ordered by Allāh or sanctioned by the Prophets, and being obedient to them. This is also explained by Prophet Muḥammad (Peace be upon him) which can be found in a *ḥadīth*²⁷⁴ when ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim objected to the Prophet’s (Peace be upon him) suggestion that they worshipped their scholars or rabbis. The Prophet replied, to him that “Yes they did. They (rabbis and monks) prohibited the allowed for them (Christians and Jews) and allowed the prohibited, and they obeyed them.”²⁷⁵ This is how they worshipped them.²⁷⁶

‘Ibādah: Act of Worship

The third sense or meaning of *‘ibādah* is worship; Maududi said that worship has two aspects. The first aspect is that of performing various religious duties before someone or something such as *Rukū‘*, *Sujūd*, *Qiyām*, *Ṭawāf*, kissing holy places, offering sacrifices, etc., which are actually performed as acts of worship. Whether this person or thing is being regarded as an independent supreme god, or an interceder to the supreme god or having a share in the managing of the universe under the control of that supreme god. The second aspect is to believe that a person has control over the

²⁷³ Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 31.

²⁷⁴ Al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Khalīl Ma’mūn Shīḥā, 1189.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 103. See also Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 189-190.

realm of cause and effect, therefore, praying to him, invoking him in times of distress or trial, and seeking his protection against danger or disaster.²⁷⁷

Maududi was of the view that, according to the Qur'ān, both of these aspects are considered as acts of worship; evidence for this claim can be found in several places of the Qur'ān, such as the words *a'budu* in *Sūrat Ghāfir*,²⁷⁸ *ya'budūn* in *Sūrat Maryam*,²⁷⁹ and *'ibādatihim* in *Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*,²⁸⁰ all refer to prayer and invocation.²⁸¹

In a verse in *Sūrat Saba'* that narrates about angels, Allāh says, “Nay, but they used to worship the *jinn*; most of them were believers in them.”²⁸² Worshipping *jinn* or believing in them respectively means seeking protection or shelter from them and believing that they have the authority to do so.²⁸³ This explanation can also be found in *Sūrat al-Jinn* where Allāh says, “And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the *jinn*.”²⁸⁴

Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Furqān*, “And on the Day when He will gather them together and that which they worship besides Allāh...”²⁸⁵; proper reflection upon full discussion on this verse will find that the phrase *'wamā ya'budūn'* (the objects of

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “I have been forbidden to worship [*a'budu*] those whom you worship besides Allāh, since there have come to me evidences from my *Rabb*.” (Qur'ān, *Ghāfir*: 66).

²⁷⁹ “And I shall turn away from you and from those whom you invoke besides Allāh. And I shall call on my Lord; and I hope that I shall not be unblest in my invocation to my Lord.” So when he had turned away from them and from those whom they worshipped [*ya'budūn*] besides Allāh, We gave him Ishaq and Ya'qub, and each one of them We made a Prophet. (Qur'ān, *Maryam*: 48-49).

²⁸⁰ And who is more astray than one who calls (invokes) besides Allāh, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become enemies for them and will deny their worshipping [*'ibādatihim*]. (Qur'ān, *al-Aḥqāf*: 5-6).

²⁸¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 104.

²⁸² Qur'ān, *Saba'*: 41.

²⁸³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 105.

²⁸⁴ Qur'ān, *al-Jinn*: 6.

²⁸⁵ And on the Day when He will gather them together and that which they worship besides Allāh [idols, angels, pious men, saints, 'Īsā - son of Maryam, etc.]. He will say: “Was it you who misled these My slaves or did they (themselves) stray from the (Right) Path?” They will say: “Glorified be You! It was not for us to take any *Awliyā'* (Protectors, Helpers, etc.) besides You, but You gave them and their fathers comfort till they forgot the warning, and became a lost people. (Qur'ān, *al-Furqān*: 17-18).

worship) refers to saints, Prophets and pious people. Likewise, worship of them includes acknowledging their superiority, attributing them with divine characteristics, believing that they are capable benefiting metaphysically, protecting from harm and responding the invocations, as well as performing some rituals in order to respect them.²⁸⁶

Exactly in the same manner, the angels will also be charged by Allāh on the Day of Judgement, as it is mentioned in *Sūrat Saba'*, “And (remember) the Day when He will gather them all together, and then will say to the angels: ‘Was it you that these people used to worship?’ They will say: ‘Glorified be You! You are our *Walī* instead of them....’”²⁸⁷

In this verse, *ya'budūn* also means worshipping towards imaginary idols of angels as the pre-Islamic people used to do. The sole purpose of this worship was to please the angels, draw their attention as well as sympathy towards them and to seek their help in worldly affairs.²⁸⁸ Further examples can be found in *Sūrat Yūnus* where the Qur'ān uses the word *ya'budūn*²⁸⁹ while *Sūrat al-Zumar* uses the phrase '*na'budu hum*'²⁹⁰; in both of these places the root verb '*ibādah* refers to worship. The discussion itself expresses the purpose of their worship too.²⁹¹

All the above provide examples that refer to the worship of others other than Allāh. The root verb '*ibādah* refers to slavery and obedience whereby *ma'būd* refers to either *shayṭān* or those who rebels against Allāh and becomes *tāghūt*. Instead of persuading people to obey Allāh, they persuade others to obey themselves exclusively,

²⁸⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 106.

²⁸⁷ Qur'ān, *Saba'*: 40-41.

²⁸⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 106.

²⁸⁹ They worship besides Allāh things that hurt them not, nor profit them, and they say: “These are our intercessors with Allāh.” (Qur'ān, *Yūnus*: 18).

²⁹⁰ And those who take *Awliyā'* (protectors and helpers) besides Him (say): “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allāh.” (Qur'ān, *al-Zumar*: 3).

²⁹¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 107.

or it refers to those leaders who lead people according to their own innovative rules and regulations instead of Allāh’s guidance. However, in places where *‘ibādah* refers to worship, *ma‘būd* refers to Prophets, saints and pious people whom people regarded as gods, was actually contrary to their own guidance and teaching. Likewise, it referred to angels and *jinn* who were believed, because of misconception, to have share in *rubūbiyyah* in managing the universe, or to imaginary powers or idols, which became the centre of worship as a consequence of seduction of *shayṭān*. These types of *ma‘būd* and worshipping before them has been falsified by the Qur’ān, whether it is bondage, obedience, or the actual observance of the ritual of worship. All these false *ma‘būd* are actually slaves of Allāh, they do not deserve to be worshipped and their worshippers will not gain any benefit rather failure, frustration and humiliation. Allāh alone is their Lord as well as the Lord of the universe, He alone has the Supreme Authority and hence, He alone deserves to be worshipped.²⁹² The Qur’ān states this reality in many places, such as in *Sūrat al-A‘rāf*, “Verily, those whom you invoke besides Allāh are slaves like you. So invoke them and let them answer you if you are truthful... And those whom you invoke besides Him cannot help you nor can they help themselves.”²⁹³ More examples regarding this issue can be found in many places in the Qur’ān, such as in *Sūrat al-Zukhruf*,²⁹⁴ *Sūrat al-Raḥmān*,²⁹⁵ *Sūrat al-Isrā’*,²⁹⁶ *Sūrat al-Rūm*,²⁹⁷ and in *Sūrat Hūd*²⁹⁸.

²⁹² Ibid., 107-108.

²⁹³ Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 194,197.

²⁹⁴ And they make the angels who themselves are slaves to the Most Beneficent (Allāh) females. (Qur’ān, *al-Zukhruf*: 19).

²⁹⁵ The sun and the moon run on their fixed courses (exactly) calculated with measured out stages for each (for reckoning, etc.). And the herbs and the trees both prostrate. (Qur’ān, *al-Raḥmān*: 5-6).

²⁹⁶ The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. (Qur’ān, *al-Isrā’*: 44).

²⁹⁷ To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him. (Qur’ān, *al-Rūm*: 26).

²⁹⁸ There is not a moving (living) creature but He has grasp of its forelock. (Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 56).

‘Ibādah: Slavery, Obedience and Worship

The above discussion shows that the word ‘*ibādah* in the Qur’ān has been used in various places to mean slavery and obedience together or to mean one of these two meanings without the other or to mean worship only. This part will show that the word ‘*ibādah* has been used in some places of the Qur’ān to mean all of these three meanings together.

With all the proofs that those being worshipped besides Allāh are His slaves and powerless in front of Him, the Qur’ān calls upon all human being as well as *jinn* to worship Allāh alone. The Qur’ān affirms all bondage, submission and worship belong to none but Allāh alone. Not even the slightest part of any sense of ‘*ibādah* should be performed for anyone besides Allāh.²⁹⁹ This Qur’ānic *da‘wah* towards people can be found in several places, Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Nahl*, “And verily, We have sent among every *Ummah* (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allāh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) *tāghūt*.’”³⁰⁰ In another place Allāh says, “Those who avoid *al-tāghūt* by not worshipping them and turning to Allāh in repentance, for them are glad tidings.”³⁰¹ In *Sūrat al-Tawbah*, He says, “They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allāh... while they were commanded to worship none but One *Ilāh*.”³⁰²

Further examples can be found in *Sūrat Yāsīn*³⁰³ and *Sūrat al-Baqarah*.³⁰⁴ All these verses appeal to people to avoid submission and obedience to *tāghūt*, *Shayṭān*,

²⁹⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt...*, 111.

³⁰⁰ Qur’ān, *al-Nahl*: 36.

³⁰¹ Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 17.

³⁰² Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 31.

³⁰³ Did I not ordain for you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship *Shayṭān*. Verily, he is a plain enemy to you. And that you should worship Me [Alone Islamic Monotheism, and set up no rivals, associate-gods with Me]. That is a Straight Path. (Qur’ān, *Yāsīn*: 60-61).

³⁰⁴ O you who believe! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allāh, if it is indeed He Whom you worship. (Qur’ān, *al-Baqarah*: 172).

priests and rabbis, fathers and forefathers; rather their submission and obedience should be to Allāh alone.³⁰⁵ In addition, the following evidence from the Qur’ān urge people to do their ‘*ibādah*, which refers to worship, exclusively for Allāh. Allāh says in *Sūrat Ghāfir*, “Say: ‘I have been forbidden to worship those whom you worship besides Allāh, since there have come to me evidences from my *Rabb*, and I am commanded to submit to *Rabb* of the ‘*Ālamīn*.’”³⁰⁶ Further supporting evidence can be seen in *Sūrat Ghāfir*,³⁰⁷ *Sūrat Fāṭir*³⁰⁸ and *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*.³⁰⁹ These verses affirm that the word ‘*ibādah* refers to *du‘ā*. It is because the verses that precede and follow speak about *ālihah* (gods) who were treated as *sharīk* besides Allāh in *rubūbiyyah* in the supernatural sense.³¹⁰

After providing these long insightful arguments, Maududi asserted that it is therefore not difficult for a knowledgeable person to understand that wherever the Qur’ān speaks about ‘*ibādah* to Allāh, even without indicating to any sense, it encompasses all three senses, namely bondage, submission and worship. For example, the following verses can be analysed in this regard, Allāh says in *Sūrat Ṭāhā*, “Verily! I am Allāh! *Lā ilāha illā Ana* (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me,”³¹¹ and in *Sūrat al-An‘ām*, “Such is Allāh, your Lord! *Lā ilāha illā Huwa*, the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the *Wakīl*

³⁰⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 112.

³⁰⁶ Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 66.

³⁰⁷ And your Lord said: “Invoke Me, I will respond to your (invocation). Verily! Those who scorn My worship they will surely enter Hell in humiliation!” (Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 60).

³⁰⁸ Such is Allāh your Lord; His is the kingdom. And those, whom you invoke or call upon instead of Him, own not even a *Qitmir* (the thin membrane over the date-stone). If you invoke (or call upon) them, they hear not your call, and if (in case) they were to hear, they could not grant it (your request) to you. And on the Day of Resurrection, they will disown your worshipping them. (Qur’ān, *Fāṭir*: 13-14).

³⁰⁹ Say (O Muḥammad to mankind): “How do you worship besides Allāh something which has no power either to harm or to benefit you? But it is Allāh Who is the All-Hearer, All-Knower.” (Qur’ān, *al-Mā’idah*: 76).

³¹⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 113.

³¹¹ Qur’ān, *Ṭāhā*: 14.

(Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all things.”³¹² In the following places further examples can be reflected upon: *Sūrat Yūnus*,³¹³ *Sūrat Yūsuf*,³¹⁴ *Sūrat Hūd*,³¹⁵ *Sūrat Maryam*³¹⁶ and *Sūrat al-Kahf*.³¹⁷

In these verses the word ‘*ibādah*’ has been used to signify ‘*ibādah*’ of Allāh which certainly encompasses all three senses of the word: inclusive of bondage, submission and worship; there is no reason to mean only one while it concerns the ‘*ibādah*’ to Allāh. The Qur’ān presents its *da‘wah* in verses like these in a complete manner. In addition, the purpose of Qur’ānic *da‘wah* is none other than our bondage, submission and worship should all be exclusively for Allāh.³¹⁸ Therefore, in the above verses, confining the meaning of the word to only one of these three meanings is actually confining Qur’ānic *da‘wah* to a limited circle. As a consequence, those who embrace Islam with such a confined and narrow understanding of the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* would not be able to follow Islam fully and it would be considered as incomplete.³¹⁹ After the term ‘*ibādah*’ has been explained Maududi elaborated the fourth term that is *dīn*.

³¹² Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 102.

³¹³ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “O you mankind! If you are in doubt as to my religion (Islam), then (know that) I will never worship those whom you worship, besides Allāh. But I worship Allāh Who causes you to die, I am commanded to be one of the believers.” (Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 104).

³¹⁴ You do not worship besides Him but only names which you have named (forged), you and your fathers, for which Allāh has sent down no authority. The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allāh. He has commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism), that is the (true) straight religion. (Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 40).

³¹⁵ And to Allāh belongs the *Ghayb* (unseen) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him return all affairs (for decision). So worship Him (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) and put your trust in Him. (Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 123).

³¹⁶ To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two, and your Lord is never forgetful. Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. (Qur’ān, *Maryam*: 64, 65).

³¹⁷ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your *Ilāh* is One *Ilāh* (God i.e. Allāh). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord. (Qur’ān, *al-Kahf*: 110).

³¹⁸ See, Maududi, *Islamer Rajnayatik...*, 19-20.

³¹⁹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 115.

DĪN

Maududi elaborated the term ‘*dīn*’ from the linguistic perspective and provided references from various dictionaries, such as *Maqāyīs al-Lughah* and *Lisān al-‘Arab*, poems, prophetic traditions and verses from the Qur’ān. From this elaboration, he pointed out four concepts of the term. However, according to him, before the revelation of the Qur’ān, the word had not attained the status of a formal term as such. With the revelation of the Qur’ān, the word has been presented with very clear-cut and definite connotations. Not only that, it was also placed among the most important terminology of the Qur’ān to indicate the entire way of life.

Linguistic Analysis

By referring to *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*³²⁰ and *Lisān al-‘Arab*, Maududi said that there are many different connotations of the word in Arabic language which are as follows:

1. Subjugation or dominance, administrative or legislative authority, pressurisation to be obedient or use power to enslave or make one obedient.³²¹ In Arabic, *dāna al-nāsa*³²² means ‘pressurised people to obey’; *dintuhum fa dānū*³²³ means ‘I subjugated them so they obeyed me’; *dintu al-qawma*³²⁴ means ‘I conquered the tribe and made them slaves’; *dāna al-rajulu*³²⁵ means ‘the person became powerful and honoured’;

³²⁰ Abū al-Ḥusayn Aḥmad ibn Fāris ibn Zakariyā, *Maqāyīs al-Lughah*, (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1st edn., 2001), the root *Dāl-Yā’-Nūn*, 353.

³²¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 116.

³²² Muḥammad Mukarram ibn Manzūr al-Afrīqī al-Miṣrī, *Lisān al-‘Arab*, (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, n.d.), Vol. 13, 167.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid.

*dintu al-rajula*³²⁶ means ‘I forced him to do something that he disliked’; *dintuhu* means ‘I ruled or governed upon him’; *dayyantuhu al-qawma* means ‘I appointed him to rule over the tribe’.³²⁷ The Prophet said, “*al-kayyisu man dāna nafsahu wa ‘amila lamā ba‘da al-mawī*”³²⁸ which means dominate and humiliate one’s desire. On this basis, the word *dayyān* is used to indicate a person who dominates and rules over a state, nation or tribe, as it was addressed to the Prophet, *yā sayyid al-nāsa wa dayyāna al-‘Arab*,³²⁹ from this same basis the words *madīnun* and *madīnatun* are used to refer to a slave boy and girl respectively. The Qur’ān also states *ghayra madīnīn*³³⁰ on the same basis.

2. Obedience and bondage, subordination and domination by someone and bearing humiliation under subjugation and power of others:³³¹ As stated, *dintuhum fadānū* means ‘I subjugated them so they obeyed me’; *dintu al-rajula* means ‘I served him’. The Prophet used the phrase *tadīnu lahum bihā al-‘Arab*³³² to mean ‘because of this, Arab will obey them or they can subjugate the Arabs’. On this basis, in Arabic, the obedient tribe is called *qawmun dayyīnun*, it is the same meaning that can be found in a *ḥadīth* when the Prophet said, “*yamruqūna mina al-dīni*”³³³; here *al-dīn* does not

³²⁶ Ibid.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, Vol. 7, 284. Abū ‘Abdullah al-Ḥākim al-Nisābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn*, (Bayrūt: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2007), Vol. 1, 77. *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Vol. 5, 835-836.

³²⁹ *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, Vol. 2, 678. Abū Bakar Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī al-Bayhaqī, *al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, ed. Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir ‘Aṭā, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutb al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1999), Vol. 10, 406. (The phrase used here is ‘*Yā Mālik al-nāsa wa dayyāna al-‘Arab*’).

³³⁰ Qur’ān, *al-Wāqī‘ah*: 86.

³³¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 117.

³³² Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Ibrāhīm ‘Uṭwah ‘Awwad (Misr: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1975), Vol. 5, 365.

³³³ Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. 2, 125.

mean religion but it means obedience, therefore, this prophetic phrase means ‘they come out from the obedience of the leader’.

3. Rules, regulations, ideology, doctrine, custom, tradition or religion:³³⁴ In Arabic, “*māzāla dhālika dīnī wa daydanī*” means ‘*adatī* (my habit or custom); *dāna* means ‘*idhā i’tāda khayran aw sharran*’ (accustomed good or bad). The same meaning can be found in a *ḥadīth* too where the Prophet said, “*kānat Qurayshun wa man dāna bi dīnihim*”³³⁵ which means ‘*alā ṭarīqatihim wa ‘ādatihim*’ (who followed their path and customs), etc.
4. Reward, repayment, justice and accountability:³³⁶ It says in an Arabic proverb as well as in a *ḥadīth*, ‘*kamā tadīnu tudān*’³³⁷ which means ‘as you sow so shall you reap’. It can be seen in the Qur’ān where Allāh narrates from the disbelievers, ‘*a’innā la madīnūn*’³³⁸ which means ‘*hal nahnu majjiyyūn muḥāsabūn*’ (will we be repaid or accounted?); as well as in Prophet’s saying, ‘*Allāhumma din hum kamā yadīnūn*’ which means ‘*ijzihim*’ (punish them according to their deeds); from here the word ‘*al-dayyān*’ means to judge, etc.

A summary about the concept of *dīn* among the Arabs is given below:³³⁹

- a) Dominance or subjugation from the Supreme Authority.

³³⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 118.

³³⁵ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismā‘īl al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 3rd edn., 2003), 814. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Vol. 2, 234. (The phrase used in *Bukhārī* is ‘*kānat Qurayshun wa man dāna dīnahā*’ while in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* it is, ‘*kāna Qurayshun wa man dāna dīnahā*’).

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Aḥmad ibn Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-Zuhd al-Kabīr*, ed. Taqī al-Dīn al-Nadawī (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 2nd edn., 1983), 296, 297. Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal al-Shaybānī, *al-Zuhd*, ed. Ḥāmid Aḥmad al-Ṭāhir al-Basyūnī, (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2004), 182.

³³⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Sāffāt*: 53.

³³⁹ Ibid., 119.

- b) Obedience, servitude and worship of the one who submitted to the authority.
- c) Rules, regulations or code of life, which are to be followed.
- d) Accountability, justice, reward and punishment.

Maududi asserted that before Islam, the Arabs had different connotations in using this word, their use of it and its various derivatives revolved around one or all of the abovementioned connotations. However, these connotations were not clear enough to the Arabs and this word did not get a terminological position in any systematic and recognised school of thought; rather the understanding of this word was vague and insubstantial. With the revelation of the Qur'ān, the word received a more definite connotation. The Qur'ān uses the word for its own purpose, which represents a complete code of life with four components,³⁴⁰ these components are:

- a. Sovereignty and Supreme Authority.
- b. Obedience and submission to that authority.
- c. Intellectual and practical system formed under that authority.
- d. Repayment by that authority for loyalty in obedience or rebellion and transgression against it.

The Qur'ān uses the word on different places on different occasions to refer sometimes to the first connotation, sometimes to the second or the third while other times to indicate the fourth. However, to represent a complete code of life the word *al-dīn* is used. Examples of such different usage are given next:

³⁴⁰ Ibid., 120.

Dīn: Supreme Authority and Obedience to it

Examples of usage in the first and second senses can be found in *Sūrat Ghāfir*,³⁴¹ *Sūrat al-Zumar*³⁴² and *Sūrat al-Bayyinah*³⁴³ for the phrase ‘*mukhliṣan*’ or ‘*mukhliṣīna lahu al-dīn*’; in another place in *Sūrat al-Zumar* for the phrase ‘*al-dīn al-khāliṣ*’³⁴⁴; in *Sūrat al-Nahl*³⁴⁵ for the phrase ‘*lahu al-dīn al-wāṣibā*’ and in *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*³⁴⁶ for the phrase ‘*dīni Allāh*’.

In explaining the phrase ‘*mukhliṣan* or *mukhliṣīna lahu al-dīn*’ Maududi said the Arabic word *dīn* contains several meanings such as (1) domination and sovereignty, rulership and political power and authority to enforce one’s decision on others, (2) obedience, compliance with commands and servitude and (3) the practice and the way that a man follows. According to these three meanings, *dīn* in this verse means “The way of life and attitude which a man adopts after acknowledging the supremacy and accepting the obedience of another and “to worship Allāh making

³⁴¹ Allāh, it is He Who has made for you the earth as a dwelling place and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape and made your shapes good (looking) and has provided you with good things. That is Allāh, your Lord, then blessed be Allāh, the Lord of the ‘*Alamīn*. He is the Ever Living, *Lā ilāha illā Huwa* (none has the right to be worshipped but He), so invoke Him making your worship pure for Him Alone. All the praises and thanks be to Allāh, the Lord of the ‘*Alamīn*. (Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 64-65).

³⁴² Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “Verily, I am commanded to worship Allāh (Alone) by obeying Him and doing religious deeds sincerely for Allāh’s sake only and not to show off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship; And I am commanded (this) in order that I may be the first of those who submit themselves to Allāh (in Islam) as Muslims.”... Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) “Allāh Alone I worship by doing religious deeds sincerely for His sake only and not to show-off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship.” So worship what you like besides Him... Those who avoid *al-ṭāghūt* by not worshipping them and turn to Allāh in repentance, for them are glad tidings. (Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 11-12, 17).

³⁴³ And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allāh, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him). (Qur’ān, *al-Bayyinah*: 5).

³⁴⁴ Verily, We have sent down the Book to you (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) in truth: So worship Allāh (Alone) by doing religious deeds sincerely for Allāh’s sake only, (and not to show-off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship). Surely, the religion is for Allāh only.... (Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 2-3).

³⁴⁵ To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and (all that is in) the earth and *al-Dīn Wāsiba* is His [(i.e. perpetual sincere obedience to Allāh is obligatory). None has the right to be worshipped but Allāh]. Will you then fear any other than Allāh? (Qur’ān, *al-Nahl*: 52).

³⁴⁶ Do they seek other than the religion of Allāh (the true Islamic Monotheism worshipping none but Allāh Alone), while to Him submitted all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly. And to Him shall they all be returned. (Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*: 83).

one's religion exclusively His" means that one should refrain from combining another's worship with the worship of Allāh, but should worship Allāh alone, should follow His Guidance alone, and should comply with His Commands and injunctions only.³⁴⁷

In all these places, the word *al-dīn* refers to Supreme Authority, acknowledgement of this authority, and as a result, being obedient to this authority. The appeal of the phrase '*mukhliṣan* or *mukhliṣīna lahu al-dīn*' is that no one should regard anyone other than Allāh as having the ultimate authority, domain and ruler-ship over the universe and making one's obedience and submission exclusive for Allāh that there is no association of anyone else with Him in this respect.³⁴⁸

Dīn: A System Formed Under the Authority

Examples of usage of the word in the third sense, i.e. intellectual and practical system formed under that authority, can be seen in many places in the Qur'ān such as in *Sūrat al-Rūm* where Allāh says:

To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him... He sets forth for you a parable from your own selves, - Do you have partners among those whom your right hands possess to share as equals in the wealth We have bestowed on you? Whom you fear as you fear each other? ... Nay, but those who do wrong follow their own lusts without knowledge, ... So set you (O Muhammad) your face towards the *dīn* of pure Islamic Monotheism (*Ḥanīfā*) Allāh's *Fiṭrah*, with which He has created mankind. No change let there be in *Khalq-illāh*, that is *al-Dīn al-Qayyim*, but most of men know not.³⁴⁹

In commenting upon the last verse, Maududi explained the word *dīn* do not turn one's face to any other direction after he has adopted this way of life. Then he should think like a Muslim and his likes and dislikes should be of a Muslim. His

³⁴⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 355-356.

³⁴⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 122.

³⁴⁹ Qur'ān, *al-Rūm*: 26, 28, 29, & 30.

values and standards should be the ones set by Islam and his character and conduct should bear the stamp of Islam, and the affairs of his individual and collective life should be ordered according to the way taught by Islam.³⁵⁰

Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Nūr*, “The woman and the man guilty of illegal sexual intercourse flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not pity withhold you in their case, *fī dīni Allāh* (in a punishment prescribed by Allāh).”³⁵¹ To explain the phrase ‘*fī dīni Allāh*’ Maududi said the first thing that deserves attention in this verse is that the criminal law is termed as ‘*dīni Allāh*’. This shows that ‘*dīni Allāh*’ does not merely consist in *ṣalāh*, *ṣiyām*, *ḥajj* and *zakāh* dues, but the law of the land is also part of ‘*dīni Allāh*’. The establishment of the *dīn* does not mean the establishment of *ṣalāh* alone but it also includes the establishment of the divine law and the system of law based on it. If these laws are not established, the mere establishment of the system of *ṣalāh* will be regarded as partial implementation of the way. But when this an unislamic system of law is adopted, it amounts to the total rejection of the divine way itself.³⁵²

In another place Allāh says, “Thus did We plan for Yūsuf. He could not take his brother by the *dīn* (law) of the king (as a slave).”³⁵³ Maududi claimed that, this verse categorically refutes the misconception by declaring that the law of the land is as much a part of the *dīn* of Allāh as *ṣalāh*, *ḥajj*, *ṣiyām* and *zakāh* are. Therefore, the demand of the acceptance of *al-dīn* made in verses 19 and 85 of *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*, that is, “Indeed, Islam alone is the right *dīn*, in the sight of Allāh” and “Whosoever will adopt any other *dīn* than the way of Islam, it shall not be accepted”, includes laws as

³⁵⁰ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 752.

³⁵¹ Qur’ān, *al-Nūr*: 2.

³⁵² Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 343-344.

³⁵³ Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 76.

well as *ṣalāh* and other obligatory duties prescribed by Allāh. Therefore, the exclusion of this part of *dīn* from any system would incur the displeasure of Allāh.³⁵⁴

Further usage of the word ‘*dīn*’ in this sense can also be found in *Sūrat Yūnus*,³⁵⁵ *Sūrat Yusuf*,³⁵⁶ *Sūrat al-Tawbah*,³⁵⁷ *Sūrat al-An‘ām*,³⁵⁸ *Sūrat al-Shūrā*,³⁵⁹ and *Sūrat al-Kāfirūn*³⁶⁰.

In all these verses, the word *al-dīn* has been used to mean the rules or regulations, *Shari‘ah*, or code of conduct, or that system of thought and action, which are followed by people. If the Supreme Authority for the law or code, etc., is Allāh Himself, then a person, without any doubt would follow Allāh’s *dīn*. However, if this code is the commandment of any monarch, then he is in that particular monarch’s *dīn*; if it is prescribed by some *mashāyikh* or priests then he is following their *dīn*; and if it has been laid down by the family, the clan or the tribe, or the national body, then he is following their *dīn*. In brief, whomsoever a person considers as the Supreme Authority and follows his prescribed law, the person would be considered as a follower of that authority’s *dīn*.³⁶¹

³⁵⁴ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 422.

³⁵⁵ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “O you mankind! If you are in doubt as to my religion (Islam), then (know that) I will never worship those whom you worship, besides Allāh. But I worship Allāh Who causes you to die, I am commanded to be one of the believers. And (it is inspired to me): Direct your face (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) entirely towards the religion *Hanīfā* (Islamic Monotheism, i.e. to worship none but Allāh Alone), and never be one of the *Mushrikūn*.” (Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 104-105).

³⁵⁶ The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allāh. He has commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism), that is the (true) straight religion. (Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 40).

³⁵⁷ Verily, the number of months with Allāh is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allāh on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are Sacred, (i.e. the 1st, the 7th, the 11th and the 12th months of the Islamic calendar). That is the right religion. (Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 36).

³⁵⁸ And so to many of the *Mushrikūn* their (Allāh’s so-called) “partners” have made fair-seeming the killing of their children, in order to lead them to their own destruction and cause confusion in their religion. (Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 137).

³⁵⁹ Or have they partners with Allāh (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allāh has not allowed. (Qur’ān, *al-Shūrā*: 21).

³⁶⁰ To you be your religion, and to me my religion (Islamic Monotheism). (Qur’ān, *al-Kāfirūn*: 6).

³⁶¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 125.

Dīn: Repayment by the Authority

Many examples of usage of the word *dīn* in the fourth sense, i.e. repayment by the Supreme Authority for loyalty in obedience or rebellion and transgression against it can be found in the Qur'ān. Allāh says, "Verily, that which you are promised (i.e. Resurrection in the Hereafter and receiving the reward or punishment of good or bad deeds, etc.) is surely true. And verily, *al-dīn* (Recompense) is sure to happen."³⁶² In another place, He says, "Have you seen him who denies *al-dīn* (Recompense)? That is he who repulses the orphan (harshly), and urges not the feeding of *al-Miskīn* (the poor)."³⁶³ Likewise, in *Sūrat al-Infīṭār*, He says, "Again, what will make you know what *Yawm al-dīn* is? The Day when no person shall have power (to do) anything for another, and the Decision, that Day, will be (wholly) with Allāh."³⁶⁴ After reflecting upon these verses, it is very clear that in all three places the word *dīn* has been used to mean accountability, judgement and repayment.³⁶⁵

Dīn: A Comprehensive Code

All the examples on *dīn*, quoted from the Qur'ān show the senses that had been used by the Arabs, more or less, in pre-Islamic era. The following discussion will show that the word *dīn* means a comprehensive code of life. The code in which a person acknowledges the Supreme Authority of a being, gives his submission and obedience to that being, and shapes his conduct and behaviour according to the guideline prescribed by that authority. Therefore, he puts great hope to achieve honour, position and reward for his loyalty as well as fears disgrace and severe punishment that can

³⁶² Qur'ān, *al-Dhāriyāt*: 5-6.

³⁶³ Qur'ān, *al-Mā'ūn*: 1-3.

³⁶⁴ Qur'ān, *al-Infīṭār*: 17-19.

³⁶⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 126.

cause by disobedience to that authority. The ultimate purpose of establishing *dīn al-ḥaq*, according to him, would be Allāh's pleasure only.³⁶⁶

This comprehensive usage of the word 'dīn' in the Qur'ān can be found in many places, such as in *Sūrat al-Tawbah*:

Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allāh [as the Supreme Authority thus does not obey Him], (2) nor in the Last Day [the Day of accountability and repayment], (3) nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allāh and His Messenger [the intellectual and practical system formed under that authority] (4) and those who acknowledge not '*Dīn al-Ḥaq*' [religion of truth] (i.e. Islam) among the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), until they pay the *Jizyah* with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.³⁶⁷

'*Dīn al-Ḥaq*' is a term given and explained by Allāh Himself. All four senses of the term have been clearly shown in brackets throughout the translation of the verse. In the first part of the verse Allāh clarifies these four senses and concludes the verse by using the term '*Dīn al-Ḥaq*'.³⁶⁸

This terminological sense of the word *dīn* also can be found in the statement by Fir'awn as Allāh narrates, "Fir'awn (Pharaoh) said: 'Leave me to kill Mūsā, and let him call his Lord! I fear that he may change your *dīn*, or that he may cause mischief to appear in the land!'"³⁶⁹ In explaining this verse Maududi said the meaning of the phrase '*yubaddila dīnakum*' should be properly understood on account of which Fir'awn wanted to put Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) to death. The word *dīn* implies the system of government, and what Fir'awn meant to say was this: "I fear that he will change your king".³⁷⁰ In other words, the *dīn* of the land was the

³⁶⁶ See Abul Ala Maududi, *Islami Andoloner Vabishshat Kormosuci*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Habibur Rahman (Dhaka: Crescent Printing Press limited, 1986), 13.

³⁶⁷ Qur'ān, *al-Tawbah*: 29.

³⁶⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 127.

³⁶⁹ Qur'ān, *Ghāfir*: 26.

³⁷⁰ See Abū al-Faḍl Shahāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Alūsī, *Rūhu al-Ma'ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm wa al-Sab'u al-Mathānī* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-'Arab, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), Vol. 13, part 24, 94-95.

religious, political, cultural and economic systems that were prevalent in Egypt on the basis of Fir‘awn’s and his family’s sovereignty, and Fir‘awn was afraid that Prophet Mūsā’s message would change that very *dīn*.³⁷¹

After reflecting the details of the discussion that is provided by the Qur’ān about Prophet Mūsā and Fir‘awn, it can be said that the word *dīn* does not mean as a religion only but it represents a state or a whole politico-social and cultural system. Fir‘awn’s concern was that if Prophet Mūsā could succeed in his *da‘wah* then there would be a revolutionary change in the administrative system, together with all the laws, rules and customs. Therefore, a completely different new system could replace Fir‘awn’s prevailing system or there would be no system at all and the land would fall to anarchy.³⁷²

Similar ideas to the word *dīn* can also be found in *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān*,³⁷³ *Sūrat al-Tawbah*,³⁷⁴ *Sūrat al-Anfāl*³⁷⁵ and *Sūrat al-Naṣr*.³⁷⁶ In all these places, the word *dīn* reflect the meaning of belief, ideology, moral principles and behaviour; shown in the following discussion.

The message of the two verses (19 and 85) of *Sūrat Āl ‘Imrān* is that the right and proper way of life is the one which stands upon obedience and bondage to Allāh. Any other system prescribed by other authority and showing obedience to that authority has no value in Allāh’s scheme and so it is naturally rejected by Him. Man

³⁷¹ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 405-406.

³⁷² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt...*, 128.

³⁷³ Truly, the religion with Allāh is Islam... And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him. (Qur’ān, *Āl ‘Imrān*: 19, 85).

³⁷⁴ It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muḥammad) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islam), to make it superior over all religions even though the *Mushrikūn* (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allāh) hate (it). (Qur’ān, *al-Tawbah*: 33).

³⁷⁵ And fight them until there is no more *Fitnah* (disbelief and polytheism: i.e. worshipping others besides Allāh) and the religion will all be for Allāh Alone. (Qur’ān, *al-Anfāl*: 39).

³⁷⁶ When comes the Help of Allāh (to you, O Muḥammad) against your enemies) and the conquest, and you see that the people enter Allāh’s religion in crowds, so glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and forgives. (Qur’ān, *al-Naṣr*).

is Allāh's creature, lives in His kingdom and Allāh is his Master and Sustainer; the position of humankind is no more than a subject at the sight of Allāh. Therefore, man has no right to spend his life in obedience to someone's authority besides Allāh's as it cannot be accepted by Allāh.³⁷⁷ Referring to verses 64 and 83 of *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān*, Maududi commented that,

True religion means total obedience and submission to Allāh. Worshipping Him does not mean merely that you pray five times a day yet it means that His Commandments should be carried out at all times. You should abstain from what He has commanded. In every particular issue find out what the commandment of Allāh is. Do not judge the right and wrong based on your own desire or suggestion given by intellects, forefathers, families and relations.³⁷⁸

In addition to this, the pointed verse of *Sūrat al-Tawbah* says that Allāh has sent His Messenger with '*Dīn al-Ḥaq*' (religion of Truth), *al-Islām*, and the sole purpose of the Prophet's mission was to make this *dīn* prevail over all other ways of life.³⁷⁹

Furthermore, the referred verse 39 of *Sūrat al-Anfāl* is a command addressed to the believers of '*Dīn al-Ḥaq*' to fight against all non-believers until there would be no *fitnah*. In other words, there would be no system which rebel against Allāh's obedience and bondage, therefore, the entire humanity will accept '*Dīn al-Ḥaq*'.³⁸⁰ In brief, *dīn* is regarding Allāh as Lord, Master and Ruler; to obey and serve only Him; to be accountable to Him, to fear only His punishment and to wish His rewards. It also includes obedience to Allāh's Messengers because the commandments of God have been given to human beings through His Books and His Messengers.³⁸¹

³⁷⁷ See Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 239-240.

³⁷⁸ Maududi, *Islamer Buniadi...*, 59.

³⁷⁹ See Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 190.

³⁸⁰ See Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 151-152, Vol. 2, 145.

³⁸¹ Maududi, *Islamer Buniadi...*, 92.

Finally, in *Sūrat al-Naṣr*, which was revealed almost at the end of Prophet Muḥammad's prophethood, Allāh addressed His Prophet after spending 23 years of continuous struggle. The Islamic *futuḥāt* had overcome all resistance in Arabia and Islam had established itself practically as a system of life which includes all aspects such as belief, ideology, morality, culture, economy, politics, etc. Therefore, delegation after delegation from all parts of Arabia arrived to pledge allegiance to this practical system of life, which was the ultimate purpose of the Prophet's mission. After mentioning this fruit of his *da'wah*, Allāh reminded His Prophet not to let any sentiments of vanity or pride arise in his mind and make him feel that he owed the success to himself. Your *Rabb*, Allāh is alone free of all sorts of lackings and shortcomings as He is perfect in every aspect. Therefore, any credit for the success which crowned the Prophet's efforts was due rightfully to Allāh alone, thus the Prophet should glorify Him and utter His praises and beg forgiveness for any possible shortcomings that might have occurred during his 23 years of service to his *Rabb*.³⁸²

According to Maududi the political system of Islam is based on three principles i.e. *tawḥīd*, *risālah* and *khilāfah*.³⁸³ He asserted that without proper understanding of these three principles, it is difficult to understand Islamic politics. Based on the above clarification on the four Qur'ānic terms, Maududi established his argument on *tawḥīd* and related it to other two components. *Tawḥīd* means that only Allāh is the Creator, Sustainer and Master of the universe and of all that exist in it. The sovereignty of this kingdom is vested only in Him. He alone has the right to command or forbid. He alone deserves the worship and obedience, no one else. The apparent control which man has over nearly everything in his life and the things under his possession, his

³⁸² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 129.

³⁸³ Abul Ala Maududi, *Islamer Jiban Paddhati*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Abdur Rahim (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 2005), 23-25.

physical organs and faculties, none of these is created by him or acquired by him. All these faculties or organs are actually bestowed entirely by Allāh to man. Therefore, he has no right to decide the purpose of his existence or to set the limits of his authority; nor anyone else is entitled to make these decisions for him. This right is reserved only for Allāh, Who has created man, endowed him with mental and physical faculties and provided material things for his use. This principle of the unity of Allāh totally negates the concept of the legal and political independence of human beings, individually or collectively. No individual, family, class or race can set themselves above Allāh. Allāh alone is the Ruler and His commandments are the Law. The appeal of this *tawhīd* towards a person is to achieve Allāh’s pleasure,³⁸⁴ as mentioned in a *ḥadīth*, “And towards You we hasten and You we serve.”³⁸⁵ Thus, for a person who acknowledges this creed, all of his activities should be in accordance with the law of Allāh, “O Allāh, it is You we worship, and unto You we pray and prostrate.”³⁸⁶

On the other hand, concerning the *risālah*, Maududi explains that it is the medium through which the law of Allāh was introduced. The two bestowed things to man through this medium are the Book (al-Qur’ān) in which Allāh has set out His law, and the authoritative interpretation and exemplification of the Qur’ān by His Prophet through words and deeds as the representative of Allāh. Prophet Muḥammad had shown the practical Islamic way of life according to the Qur’ān by implementing the Law of Allāh in detail. Both of these Prophethood and the Qur’ān came from Allāh, and these two are indivisible sources. The written form of this teaching is called the

³⁸⁴ Abul Ala Maududi, *Islami Andoloner Naytik Bhitti*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Abdur Rahim (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 2009), 17.

³⁸⁵ Al-Musta’ṣim billāh Abū Hurayrah, *Mukhtaṣar al-Muṣannif li ‘Abd al-Razzāq ibn Hammām al-Ṣan’ānī*, (Beirut: Dār al-Jayl, 1st edn., 1997), Vol. 1, 480. Muḥammad ibn Abī Shaybah, *Muṣannif ibn Abī Shaybah*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1989), vol, 2, 201.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

Book while the implemented version of it is the Prophet's life itself.³⁸⁷ The combination of these two elements i.e. the Qur'ān and the Prophetic interpretation, is called the Sharī'ah.

Maududi said that *khilāfah*, according to the Arabic lexicon means 'representation'. Man, according to Islam, is the representative of Allāh on earth, His vicegerent. By virtue of the powers delegated to him by Allāh, man is required to exercise his God-given authority in this world within the limits prescribed by Allāh. Finding a similarity between the *khilāfah* and the case of an estate, which someone has been appointed to administer on behalf of someone else, Maududi affirmed that four conditions must be met to be a *khalīfah*. First, the *khalīfah* should not regard himself as the real owner; second, he administers the property only according to the owner's instructions; third, he exercises his authority within the limits prescribed by the owner; and finally, he fulfils only the will of the owner.³⁸⁸ His ultimate goal is Allāh's pleasure; therefore, he will struggle to achieve it.³⁸⁹ When a state is established based on these criteria, it will be considered as *khilāfah* under the sovereignty of Allāh and he will perform Allāh's will by working within the limits prescribed by Him and in accordance with His instructions and injunctions.

How extensively Maududi had used the methodologies developed by previous scholars to explain the Qur'ān will be shown in the following chapter.

³⁸⁷ Abul Ala Maududi, *Islami Sonscritir Marmo Katha*, trans. from Urdu by Muḥammad Habibur Rahman (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 1994), 177.

³⁸⁸ See Maududi, *Islami Sonscritir...*, 17-20.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAUDUDI'S METHODOLOGY OF INTERPRETATION OF THE FOUR TERMS

Methodology as described by *The Chamber Dictionary* is, “A system of methods and rules applicable to research or work in a given science or art.”¹ One may find in the books of *tafsīr* that the exegetes of the Qur’ān have developed some rules and regulations to explain the Qur’ān that is called *manhaj* or methodology. According to Ibn ‘Abbās, Qur’ānic exegeses are of four types. Firstly, *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*, which everybody should know, secondly, the explanation that Arabs know from their daily lifestyle, thirdly, the explanation that is only known to the experts, and finally, the explanation that nobody knows except Allāh.² In the early period of Islam, three well-known methodologies, i.e. *al-tafsīr bi al-Ma’thūr*, *al-tafsīr bi al-Ra’y* and *al-tafsīr al-Ishārī* have been developed to explain the Qur’ān.³ The best methods of *Tafsīr* indicated by Ibn Taymiyyah⁴ and adopted by Ibn Kathīr are as follows:

If someone asks about the best methods of *Tafsīr*, we reply that the best method is to explain the Qur’an with the Qur’an itself. What is mentioned in general terms in one place in the Qur’an, is usually explained in another place. When one does not find this easily, he should look to the *Sunnah* because its purpose is to explain the Qur’an and elaborate upon its meanings...If one cannot find the *Tafsīr* in the Qur’an or *Sunnah*, he should refer to the statements of the Companions, who were the most knowledgeable of *Tafsīr*, for they witnessed the situations and incidents that we did not witness. They also had the

¹ The Chambers Dictionary, (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publisher Ltd.), 10th ed., 941.

² Muḥammad ‘Abd al-‘Azīm al-Zurqānī, *Manāhil al-‘Irfān fī ‘Ulūm al-Qur’ān*, (Cairo: Maṭba‘ah ‘Īsā al-Babī al-Ḥalabī), 3rd ed., Vol. 2, 10.

³ Thameem Ushama, *Sayyid Quṭb’s Methodology of Qur’ānic Exegesis*, in “al-Shajarah” 2008, Vol. 13, No. 1. P 23.

⁴ Ṣabrī al-Mutawallī, *Manhaj ibn Taymiyyah fī tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, (Cairo: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1981), 65-66.

deepest comprehension, the most correct knowledge, and the most righteous works.⁵

Bilal Philips mentioned that by observing the methodologies that were used by the Prophet (Peace be upon him) and his Companions as well as the early generation of Muslim scholars, early scholars have suggested a few steps as a prerequisite for a sound *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān. These steps are, firstly, *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān, secondly, *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān by the *Sunnah*, thirdly, *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān by *Āthār*, fourthly, *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān by language and finally, *tafsīr* of the Qur'ān by opinion.⁶

Realizing the in-depth significance of these four terms, Maududi explained them in many of his writings. Nevertheless, those explanations seemed to be insufficient to him, when it comes to playing the vital role in removing the misconceptions from the minds of the people. Therefore, he felt the necessity to explain these terms in detail and in this regard, he said:

Although I have given explanations of these terms in many earlier writings, they are not enough to remove all the misconceptions in peoples' minds, nor are they likely to satisfy everybody because, in the absence of full semantic explanations based on recognized Arabic usage, and quotations from the Qur'an itself, I might be taken as expressing my own opinion only, an opinion which in any case will not appeal to those who differ with me on other issues. I shall therefore endeavor, in the forthcoming discussions, to extensively quote the dictionary sense of the words, and not say anything which I cannot base either on recognized usage, or the Qur'an. The order I shall follow will be *Ilah, Rabb, Ibadah* and *Deen*.⁷

One of the significant characteristics of Maududi's *tafsīr* is that he had combined *tafsīr al-Riwāyah* with *tafsīr al-Dirāyah*. In explaining these terms, he focused more on the Qur'ān, *ḥadīth* and language, in addition to interpreting these

⁵ Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar ibn Kathīr al-Qurashī, al-Dimashqī, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm*, (Kuwait: Jam'īyyatu Iḥyāu al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 6th edn., 2011), Vol. 1, 12-13. English version has been quoted from *Tafsīr ibn Kathīr*, (Riyadh: Darussalam, 2003).

⁶ Abu Ameenah Bilal Philip, *Uṣool at-Tafseer*, (Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 2005), 49.

⁷ Abul Ala Maududi, *Four Basic Qur'anic Terms*, trans. from Urdu by Abu Asad (Delhi: Markazi Maktaba Islami, 1980), 9.

through many other means. The *Tafāsīr* that he referred to in his explanation are *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān fī ta’wīl āy al-Qur’ān*, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Aẓīm*, *Gharā’ib al-Qur’ān wa Raghā’ib al-Furqān* and *Rūh al-Ma‘ānī*.

The methodologies that have been used by Maududi in explaining the four terms are described in the following:

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

With the passing of time and the spread of Islam outside the Arabian Peninsula, the Arabic language started to become diluted with foreign words, which resulted in the loss of the original meaning of many vocabularies.⁸ Maududi pointed out two reasons behind this occurrence. Firstly, the gradual decline of interest in the Arabic language, and secondly, the original meanings of these four terms had not remained with those people who were born and brought up in the Islamic society. Therefore, contemporary linguists and commentators use the meanings attributed by later generations, instead of the original meaning in explaining the Qur’ānic words.⁹

To support his view, Maududi demonstrated how people think about these terms in a narrow sense, such as how the word *Ilāh* becomes a synonym of idol; *Rabb* indicates someone who brings up or rears or feeds another person; the term *‘ibādah* is used to mean some rituals; the word *dīn* has resembled religion and the word *ṭāghūt* describes an idol or the Devil.¹⁰

Maududi was of the opinion that satisfaction with these narrow explanations makes people think that they are observing the religion properly and exclusively for

⁸ Bilal Philip, 46.

⁹ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān*, (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 5th edn., 1971), 9-10.

¹⁰ Ibid., 10.

the sake of Allāh. He asserts that whatever shortcoming can be seen in people's belief, faith and actions is because of this narrow understanding. Therefore, it is very important to explain these four terms in a comprehensive way to describe the real purpose of the Qur'ān and its messages.¹¹

A reader of various *tafāsīr* will find that the classical as well as non-classical exegetes paid special emphasis to the lexicon in their explanation, and Maududi was no exception. He not only relied on the usage of Arabic language in explaining these terms, but also started his discussion with a linguistic interpretation. His reliance on the Arabic language can be treated as coming next to his dependence on the verses of the Qur'ān and *aḥādīth*.

For example, in discussing the term *Ilāh* from the linguistic perspective, Maududi said that *alīf*, *lām* and *hā* are the three letters which the root word *Ilāh* consists of. The meanings that can be found through various uses of this root in the dictionaries are as follows:¹²

1. *Aliha*: being confused or perplexed
2. *Alihtu ilā fulān*: achieving peace and mental satisfaction by seeking refuge with someone or through the relation with him
3. *Aliha al-Rajulu ya'lahu*: being frightened or scared by any calamity or disaster, and then taking proper shelter by someone
4. *Aliha al-Rajulu ilā al-Rajul*: turning towards someone eagerly due to the strong love for him
5. *Aliha al-Faṣīlu*: the lost issue of the she-camel rushed to snuggle up to its mother upon finding her

¹¹ Ibid., 11-12.

¹² See Ibn Kathīr, Vol. 1, 31. See also, Niẓām al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Nīsāburī, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān*, (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Qayyimah, 1999), Vol. 1, 138-140.

6. *Alihan ilāhatan wa alūhatan*: offered worship or adoration

It is also said that the word *al-Ilāh* comes from “*lāha yalīhi līhan*” which means being hidden or concealed.

Maududi observed that by reflecting upon these appropriate meanings, “*Aliha ya’lahu ilāhatan*”, it could be used as *‘ibādah* (the act of worship) as well as *ma‘būd* (the object of worship).¹³

He elaborated that the connotation of the word *ilāh* as *ma‘būd* includes fulfilling needs, protection or shelter, peace, highness, superiority in status and strength. Therefore, these abilities require the *ma‘būd* to be able to fulfil others’ needs, provide shelter when any disaster falls upon them, and to be mysterious in some ways or hidden from the eyes of men, which will make people turn towards him and act according to him. Therefore, keeping this belief in mind, Whom people worship is the *Ilāh* and the *Ma‘būd*.¹⁴ In the same way, Maududi explained the three other terms. Sometimes, he also referred to poetry to strengthen his argument. For example, in explaining the term *Rabb*, he said that sometimes this term is used in the Arabic language to mean master or leader,¹⁵ as Labīd ibn Rabī‘ah said:¹⁶

وأهلكن يوماً رب كندة وابنه

ورباً معد بين خبت وعرعر

“Once they defeated the head of Kindah, his son as well as the head of Ma‘ad tribe between Khabt and Arar”.

Here the phrase ‘*rabba kindah*’ refers to the head of the *Kindah* tribe.

¹³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 13.

¹⁴ See, Abul Ala al-Maududi, *Islamer Rajnaytik Motobad*, trans. from Urdu by Muhammad Abdur Rahim (Dhaka: Adhunik Prokashani, 2005), 8.

¹⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 36.

¹⁶ Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī ibn Ismā‘īl ibn Sīdah, *al-Mukhaṣṣaṣ*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1990), Vol. 5, part 17, 154.

The same meaning can also be found in the verse by al-Nābigha al-Dhabyānī when he said:¹⁷

تُحِبُّ إِلَى النِّعْمَانِ حَتَّى تَنَالَهُ
فَدَى لَكَ مِنْ رَبِّ تَلِيدِي وَطَارِي

“She (the camel) is rushing very fast to get Nu‘mān, I am glad to present all earned and inherited property to you (o Nu‘mān) on behalf of our head”.

In another place, in explaining the term *‘ibādah*, he quoted a poem:¹⁸

أرى المال عند الباخلين معبداً

Property is honoured and venerated by a stingy person in such a way that it is as if he worships it. Indicating to use of the term *‘ibādah*, Maududi said that one of its meanings is worshipping.

Sometimes Maududi also referred to the sayings of the Arabs in his argument; he quoted the statement of Ṣafwān ibn Umayyah towards Abū Sufyān to prove that one of the meanings of the word *rabb* is rearing, caring or providing shelter. Ṣafwān said:

يربني رجل من قريش أحب إلي من أن يربني رجل من هوازن

It means Ṣafwān preferred the shelter of Quraysh than the shelter of Hawāzin.¹⁹

EXPLAINING WITH PRE-ISLAMIC CONCEPT

Maududi argued that the real meaning of these terms as he understood them was not something new, rather it was known to the people living in the early centuries of Islam. The previous section showed how Maududi described the meanings through

¹⁷ Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-Bayān fī ta’wīl āy al-Qur‘ān*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Shākir, (Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risālah, 2000), Vol. 1, 141.

¹⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 97.

¹⁹ Ibid., 35.

lexicons, Arabic literature and verses of poetry. The next part provides the explanation through Qur'ānic narration regarding the notions of pre-Islamic nations. The details have been given in the third chapter thus only a few verses are mentioned here.

The Qur'ān narrates that those people used to believe their *ilāh* (gods) to be their patrons and shelter who would come to rescue them. Allāh says in *Sūrat Maryam*, “These people have set up other gods than Allāh so that they may become their supporters.”²⁰ In this verse, Allāh uses the word ‘*Izzan*’ (from *Izat*) which refers to a powerful and strong authority whom nobody may dare do any harm. However, it means a person having such a strong supporter that no enemy or opponent of his may even cherish an evil intention against him.²¹ In another place Allāh says, “They set up deities apart from Allāh, hoping that they will receive help from them.”²² Referring to the verse, “And when the command of your Lord came to pass, the gods besides Allāh whom they had called upon, did not avail them in the least. They added nothing to them except ruin”²³, Maududi said those to whom the people of *jāhiliyyah* used to address their prayers as their *ilāh* used to do it in times of distress or for fulfilment of any of their needs.²⁴

The other notions that Maududi derived from the Qur'ān about the pre-Islamic nations are that they used to believe that there is a Supreme Being above all other gods²⁵ and showing dishonour to gods can cause epidemics, loss of life and property.²⁶

²⁰ Qur'ān, *Maryam*: 81.

²¹ Abul Ala al-Maududi, *Tafhim al-Qur'an*, (Lahore: Idarah Tarjuman al-Qur'an, 1991), Vol. 3, 80.

²² Qur'ān, *Yāsīn*: 74.

²³ Qur'ān, *Hūd*: 101.

²⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

It is not necessary that *ilāh* must be a supernatural being, it can be a person or his own desire.²⁷ Maududi provided ample evidence from the Qur’ān for all these concepts.

THE EARLY NATIONS’ NOTIONS

In discussing the term ‘*Rabb*’ with detailed accounts of Qur’ānic evidence, Maududi analysed the term through the concepts of the deviated nations and clarified why the Qur’ān wants to refute their concepts and what the Qur’ānic appeal is towards the people. He discussed their concepts about the term, one after another to make it clear. He argued that none of the previous nations, regardless whether they are *kāfir* or *mushrik*, denied the existence of Allāh. Nevertheless, their belief in Him regarding *Ilāh* and *Rabb* was very narrow. That is why, Allāh sent all the Messengers (peace be upon them) to explain it properly.²⁸

The Qur’ān narrates about the people of Prophet Nūḥ (Peace be upon him) who said, “He is no more than a human being like you, he seeks to make himself superior to you. Had Allāh willed, He surely could have sent down angels.”²⁹ This verse is a clear indication that the people of Prophet Nūḥ (Peace be upon him) were cognizant of the Being ‘Allāh’. Likewise, they did not deny that Allāh is the Creator of the universe and the *Rabb* in the first and second meanings of the term, i.e. who takes care or protects and provides the needs of everyday life. For example, when Prophet Nūḥ (Peace be upon him) said to them, “He is your *Rabb*! and to Him you shall return,”³⁰ and “Ask forgiveness from your *Rabb*; Verily, He is Oft-Forgiving,”³¹ none of his people, in replying to him, said that Allāh is not their *Rabb*, He did not create the

²⁷ Ibid., 21.

²⁸ See Maududi, *Islamer Rajnayatik ...*, 6-8.

²⁹ Qur’ān, *al-Mu’minūn*: 24.

³⁰ Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 34.

³¹ Qur’ān, *Nūḥ*: 10.

earth, the heavens and themselves, nor is He the main processor over the universe. They did not deny that Allāh is their *Ilāh*, that is why Prophet Nūḥ (Peace be upon him) said, “You have no other *Ilāh* (God) but Him”³² instead of saying “accept Allāh as your *Ilāh*”, which was more appropriate if they had believed otherwise.³³

After describing the concept of *rubūbiyyah* of Prophet Nūḥ’s people, Maududi pointed out the false notions of ‘Ād and Thamūd. Although they lived in different eras and in different places, their notions were the same. All of them did not deny the existence of God, but they did not take Him as the indivisible Supreme Authority.³⁴

Then Maududi pointed out the concept of *al-rubūbiyyah* of the people of Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him). Referring to many verses of the Qur’ān regarding their concept, Maududi said Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him) had called upon people who had regarded others as partners besides Allāh in *rubūbiyyah*, in the first and second senses of the term, and in *ulūhiyyah*. That is why, there is no statement about Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him) that he had tried to convince his people about the existence of God, or His being the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb* of the universe. The core point of his *da‘wah* and that which he had emphasised a lot on was that Allāh alone is the *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*.³⁵ After that, Maududi described the notions of the people of Lūṭ, Shu‘ayb and Fir‘awn and said a conclusion can be drawn based on the abovementioned verses; the misconceptions about *rubūbiyyah* that had taken place throughout the nations since ancient times were similar to that of Fir‘awn of Nile Valley. On the other hand, the message or the *da‘wah* that had been delivered by the

³² Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 59.

³³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 43.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 46-47.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

Prophets (Peace be upon them) throughout the ages was the same as that which was spread by Prophet Mūsā and Prophet Hārūn (Peace be upon them).³⁶

SOME PREVAILING MISCONCEPTIONS

There are misconceptions about Namrūd and Fir‘awn that both of them did not believe in God yet they claimed godhood for themselves and their people neither knew Allāh nor did they believe in His *ulūhiyyah* and *rubūbiyyah*. However, the fact is that Namrūd did believe in the existence of God as well as regarded Him as the Creator and the Possessor of the universe. The claim that he did believe in His *rubūbiyyah* was in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term.³⁷ On the other hand, his people had belief in Allāh and regarded Him as *al-Rabb*, the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the Controller of the universe. They did not stop from worshipping Him. Their fault was that they had regarded the heavenly bodies as partners with Him in *rubūbiyyah* in the first and second senses, taking them as their gods. In addition, they had treated their kings as *rabbs* in the third, fourth and fifth senses of the term.³⁸

Referring to verses 77-79 of *Sūrat al-An‘ām* where he has underlined a few phrases, Maududi said that these phrases clearly indicate that the society where Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him) was born into did have a concept about the Creator of the heavens and the earth Who has been regarded as the *Rabb*, distinct from the *rubūbiyyah* of the heavenly bodies. It was natural to be so because this nation was from the offspring of those people who had believed in Prophet Nūḥ.³⁹

³⁶ Ibid., 75.

³⁷ Ibid., 48.

³⁸ Ibid., 49.

³⁹ Ibid., 50.

Regarding Fir‘awn and his people, Maududi said it is generally found that Fir‘awn did not only deny the existence of God but he claimed himself to be God. It means that he was so misguided that he assumed openly to be the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and the people had also shown their idiocy by accepting his claim which was clearly contrary to history and the Qur‘ān. The small difference that can be found in the case of the people of Fir‘awn is that a racial bias had developed against *Banī Isrā‘īl* because of their nationality and other political reasons, which caused Fir‘awn’s people not to acknowledge the *ulūhiyyah* and the *rubūbiyyah* of Allāh.⁴⁰ However, those who denied this actually regarded some other beings as partners with Him in the *ulūhiyyah* and the *rubūbiyyah*. A certain amount of the impact of Islam was still there until Prophet Mūsā (Peace be upon him) came to them. Based on verses 28-31, 34 and 41-42 of *Sūrat Ghāfir*, Maududi stated the evidence can be found in the statement given by a Coptic noble in front of Fir‘awn as described in the Qur‘ān. The statement was given by him when Fir‘awn shared his plan with his nobles to kill Prophet Mūsā (Peace be upon him) and that noble who concealed his Islamic faith could not hold himself after listening to Fir‘awn’s plan.⁴¹

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

To strengthen his view about Namrūd and his people’s concept about god, Maududi mentioned in the footnote that according to archaeological excavations of the city Ur where Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him) lived, it seems that the people of that city worshipped the moon which they called “Nannar”. On the other hand, the people of the surrounding area used to worship the sun and it was called “Shammash”. The

⁴⁰ Ibid., 60.

⁴¹ Ibid., 61.

person who established the kingdom where Prophet Ibrāhīm (Peace be upon him) used to stay was called King “Arnamu”. Later on, the word was arabicised into Namrūd, and this word later came to be the title of the kings of that country.⁴²

THE BIBLICAL SCRIPTURE

As Maududi referred to the archaeological excavations of the city Ur for his argument about Namrūd and his people’s concept about god, similarly, he referred to the *Tawrah* (Old Testament) to strengthen his view regarding Fir‘awn’s people and that they were not unfamiliar with the true concept of god. He said that based on the historical fact that has been narrated by the *Tawrah*, it appears that nearly one-fifth of the population of Egypt had accepted Islam (then religion). According to the narration of the Old Testament, the total number of the Israelites who left Egypt with Prophet Mūsā (Peace be upon him) was about two million while the total population of Egypt was not more than ten million. The *Tawrah* mentions all those who migrated with Prophet Mūsā (Peace be upon him) as the children of Israel. It is not rational, yet seems to be impossible that the descendants of the twelve sons of Prophet Ya‘qūb (Peace be upon him) had reached two million within five centuries. Therefore, the only plausible illation that can be reached is that a large number of Egyptians had also accepted the religion of the Israelis and migrated with them. The impact of the *da‘wah* of Prophet Yūsuf (Peace be upon him) and his successors can be realised from here.⁴³

⁴² Ibid., 50.

⁴³ Ibid., 61.

EXPLAINING THE QUR'ĀN WITH THE QUR'ĀN

Among the methods of *tafsīr*, this is the best way of explanation. Ibn al-Kathīr pointed out “If somebody asks about the best methods of *Tafsīr*, the answer, that the best method is to explain the Qur’ān with the Qur’ān itself. What is mentioned briefly in one place, is usually explained in another place.”⁴⁴ Therefore, before seeking an explanation or interpretation elsewhere, the Qur’an must be relied upon to explain itself, for Allāh knows best what He intended.⁴⁵ An observer of Maududi’s explanation will find that he had given a great importance to the Qur’ān in explaining these terms and shaping his thoughts. That is why, it can be seen in his *tafsīr* that whenever he wanted to explain something, he gathered all the similar verses that contain the same information. Generally, he was very cautious in using metaphoric meaning, but in explaining these terms, it seems that he never used it.

For each term, Maududi explained broadly through Qur’ānic verses after examining it from a linguistic perspective. For example, in explaining the term *‘ibādah* through the deep study of the Qur’ān, it could be found that the word *‘ibādah* is used in several places to indicate these three meanings, i.e. slavery, total submission and worshipping (as shown previously in the linguistic discussion). On some occasions, it could be seen that the word used to indicate the first and the second meanings, in another place it indicates only the second meaning or the third, while in other places it indicates all three together.⁴⁶ For example, referring to verses 45-47 of *Sūrat al-Mu’minūn*, Maududi explained that the Qur’ān narrates the word *‘ābidūn* from Fir‘awn’s statement. It means that Fir‘awn asked them arrogantly if they should follow them (Mūsā and Hārūn) while their nation *Banī Isrā’īl* is in bondage to them

⁴⁴ Ibn Kathīr, Vol. 1, 12.

⁴⁵ Bilal Philip, 41.

⁴⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 98.

and fully subservient to them. In another place, narrating about Prophet Mūsā (Peace be upon him), Allāh says, “And this is the past favour with which you reproach me, that you have enslaved (*‘abbadta*) the Children of Israel.”⁴⁷ Likewise, the word *‘abbadta* from Prophet Mūsā’s reply to Fir‘awn means “You, O Fir‘awn, enslaved the *Banī Isrā’īl*, so they have to act according to your command and wish.”⁴⁸ Both of these words, *‘ābidūn* and *‘abbadta*, refer to bondage, submission and obedience. Among many other places, one may also find the same meaning of *‘ibādah* in *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*⁴⁹, *al-Nahl*⁵⁰ and *al-Zumar*⁵¹. In all these places, *‘ibādah* of *tāghūt* means bondage to *tāghūt* or being obedient to it.⁵²

A reader of the Qur’ān can get the example of the usage of *‘ibādah*, which indicate *itā‘ah* (submission or obedience) in many places of the Qur’ān, such as in *Sūrat Yāsīn* where Allāh says, “Did I not ordain for you, O Children of Adam, that you should not worship *Shayṭān*. Verily, he is a plain enemy to you.”⁵³ Maududi maintained that it is known to everybody that nobody worships *Shayṭān*, rather everyone always curses *Shayṭān*. On the Day of Judgement, mankind will not be charged by Allāh because of their worshipping before *Shayṭān*, yet they will be charged because of their obedience towards *Shayṭān*, and because of their following the path that has been prescribed by *Shayṭān*.⁵⁴ Another example for this can also be

⁴⁷ Qur’ān, *al-Shu‘ara’*: 26.

⁴⁸ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 99.

⁴⁹ Say (O Muḥammad to the people of the Scripture): “Shall I inform you of something worse than that, regarding the recompense from Allāh: those (Jews) who incurred the Curse of Allāh and His Wrath, those of whom (some) He transformed into monkeys and swines, those who worshipped *tāghūt*. (Qur’ān, *al-Mā’idah*: 60).

⁵⁰ And verily, We have sent among every *Ummah* (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): “Worship Allāh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) *tāghūt*. (Qur’ān, *al-Nahl*: 36).

⁵¹ Those who avoid *al-tāghūt* by not worshipping them and turn to Allāh in repentance, for them are glad tidings. (Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 17).

⁵² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 101.

⁵³ Qur’ān, *Yāsīn*: 60.

⁵⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 102.

found in *Sūrat al-Şāffāt*⁵⁵ where Allāh says, “Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils) and what they used to worship (*ya‘budūn*)... And they will turn to one another and question one another.”⁵⁶

Maududi asserted that this dialogue had not taken place between an *‘ābid* (worshipper) and a *ma‘būd* (object of worship), i.e. those gods and idols whom they used to worship through the performing of various rituals. However, it had taken place between an *‘ābid* and religious or other leaders who came to the people by the name of well-wishers or saviours of the nation or liberators, etc. people followed them blindly but these leaders betrayed them and led them astray which caused mischief in the land. The Qur’ān calls this blind obedience to such leaders and following their instructions as *‘ibādah*.⁵⁷

The third sense or meaning of *‘ibādah* is worship and Maududi stated that worship has two aspects. The first aspect is that of performing various rites or rituals before someone or something, such as *rukū‘*, *sujūd*, *qiyām*, *ṭawāf*, kissing holy places, offering sacrifices, etc., which is actually performed as an act of worship. The second aspect is to believe in a person having control over the realm of cause and effect, therefore, people pray to him, invoke him in times of distress or trial, and seek his protection against danger or disaster.⁵⁸ Maududi viewed that according to the Qur’ān, both of these aspects are considered as worship.⁵⁹ Evidence for this view can be

⁵⁵ (It will be said to the angels): “Assemble those who did wrong, together with their companions (from the devils) and what they used to worship.” Instead of Allāh, and lead them on to the way of flaming Fire (Hell);...And they will turn to one another and question one another. They will say: “It was you who used to come to us from the right side [i.e. from the right side of one of us and beautify for us every evil, order us for polytheism, and stop us from the truth i.e. Islamic Monotheism and from every good deed].” They will reply: “Nay, you yourselves were not believers.” And we had no authority over you. Nay! But you were transgressing people. (Qur’ān, *al-Şāffāt*: 22-23 & 27-30).

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 102.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 103.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 104.

found in several places in the Qur’ān, such as the words ‘*a’budu*’ in *Sūrat Ghāfir*⁶⁰, ‘*ya’budūn*’ in *Sūrat Maryam*⁶¹ and ‘*ibādātihim*’ in *Sūrat al-Aḥqāf*⁶², all refer to prayer and invocation.⁶³

In *Sūrat Saba*’ where angels are narrated, Allāh says, “Nay, but they used to worship the *jinn*; most of them were believers in them.”⁶⁴ Worshipping *jinn* or believing in them respectively means seeking protection or shelter from them and believing that they have the authority to do so.⁶⁵ This explanation can be found in *Sūrat al-Jinn* where Allāh says, “And verily, there were men among mankind who took shelter with the masculine among the *jinn*.”⁶⁶

More examples can be found in *Sūrat al-Zukhruf*,⁶⁷ *Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt*,⁶⁸ *Sūrat al-Raḥmān*,⁶⁹ *Sūrat al-Isrā*’,⁷⁰ *Sūrat al-Rūm*,⁷¹ *Sūrat Hūd*,⁷² and in *Sūrat Maryam*.⁷³

⁶⁰ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “I have been forbidden to worship [*a’budu*] those whom you worship besides Allāh, since there have come to me evidences from my *Rabb*. (Qur’ān, *Ghāfir*: 66).

⁶¹ “And I shall turn away from you and from those whom you invoke besides Allāh. And I shall call on my Lord; and I hope that I shall not be unblest in my invocation to my Lord.” So when he had turned away from them and from those whom they worshipped [*ya’budūn*] besides Allāh, We gave him Ishāq and Ya’qūb, and each one of them We made a Prophet. (*Qur’ān, Maryam*: 48-49).

⁶² And who is more astray than one who calls (invokes) besides Allāh, such as will not answer him till the Day of Resurrection, and who are (even) unaware of their calls (invocations) to them? And when mankind are gathered (on the Day of Resurrection), they (false deities) will become enemies for them and will deny their worshipping [*ibādātihim*]. (Qur’ān, *al-Aḥqāf*: 5-6).

⁶³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 104.

⁶⁴ Qur’ān, *Saba*’: 41

⁶⁵ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 105.

⁶⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Jinn*: 6.

⁶⁷ And they make the angels who themselves are slaves to the Most Beneficent (Allāh) females. (Qur’ān, *al-Zukhruf*: 19).

⁶⁸ And they have invented a kinship between Him and the *jinn*, but the *jinn* know well that they have indeed to appear (before Him) (i.e. they will be brought for accounts). (Qur’ān, *al-Ṣāffāt*: 158).

⁶⁹ The sun and the moon run on their fixed courses (exactly) calculated with measured out stages for each (for reckoning, etc.). And the herbs and the trees both prostrate. (Qur’ān, *al-Raḥmān*: 5-6).

⁷⁰ The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. (Qur’ān, *al-Isrā*’: 44).

⁷¹ To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and the earth. All are obedient to Him. (Qur’ān, *al-Rūm*: 26).

⁷² There is not a moving (living) creature but He has grasp of its forelock. (Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 56).

⁷³ There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes unto the Most Beneficent (Allāh) as a slave. Verily, He knows each one of them, and has counted them a full counting. And everyone of them will come to Him alone on the Day of dResurrection. (Qur’ān, *Maryam*: 93-95).

The above discussion shows that the word ‘*ibādah*’ in the Qur’ān has been used in some places to mean slavery and obedience, or only to mean obedience, while in some other places it means worship.

After being proved that all those who are being worshipped besides Allāh are His slaves and powerless in front of Him, the Qur’ān calls upon all human being as well as *jinn* to worship Allāh alone. All bondage, submission and worship belong to none but Allāh alone. Not even the slightest part of any sense of ‘*ibādah*’ should be performed for anyone besides Allāh.⁷⁴ This Qur’ānic *da‘wah* towards people can be found in several places. Allāh says in *Sūrat al-Naḥl*, “And verily, We have sent among every *Ummah* (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): ‘Worship Allāh (Alone), and avoid (or keep away from) *tāghūt*.’”⁷⁵ In another place Allāh says, “Those who avoid *al-tāghūt* by not worshipping them and turn to Allāh in repentance, for them are glad tidings.”⁷⁶

Based on the above arguments, Maududi asserted that it is therefore not difficult for a knowledgeable person to understand that wherever the Qur’ān speaks about ‘*ibādah*’ of Allāh, obviously it encompasses all three senses i.e. bondage, submission, and worship.⁷⁷ For example, the following verses can be analysed in this regard. Allāh says in *Sūrat Ṭāhā*, “Verily! I am Allāh! *Lā ilāha illā Ana* (none has the right to be worshipped but I), so worship Me,”⁷⁸ and in *Sūrat al-An‘ām*, “Such is Allāh, your Lord! *Lā ilāha illā Huwa*, the Creator of all things. So worship Him (Alone), and He is the *Wakīl* (Trustee, Disposer of affairs, Guardian, etc.) over all

⁷⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 111.

⁷⁵ Qur’ān, *al-Naḥl*: 36.

⁷⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 17.

⁷⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 113.

⁷⁸ Qur’ān, *Ṭāhā*: 14.

things.”⁷⁹ Further examples can be found in the following places: in *Sūrat Yūnus*,⁸⁰ *Sūrat Yūsuf*,⁸¹ *Sūrat Hūd*,⁸² *Sūrat Maryam*⁸³ and *Sūrat al-Kahf*.⁸⁴

In these verses or in other similar verses, while the word ‘*ibādah*’ has been used, it is not proper to mean by this word only any one of these three senses. In fact, there is no reason to mean only one. In addition to this, the purpose of the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* is none other than that our bondage, submission, and worship should all be exclusively for Allāh.⁸⁵ Therefore, in the above verses, restraining the meaning of the word to only one of these three meanings is actually confining the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* to a limited circle. As a consequence, those who embrace Islam with such a confined and narrow understanding of the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* would not be able to follow Islam fully and their following would be considered as incomplete.⁸⁶

EXPLAINING THE QUR’ĀN WITH THE *SUNNAH*

The second most important tool to explain the Qur’ān is through the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). It is because nobody is more knowledgeable about the content of the Qur’ān other than Prophet Muḥammad (peace

⁷⁹ Qur’ān, *al-An‘ām*: 102.

⁸⁰ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “O you mankind! If you are in doubt as to my religion (Islām), then (know that) I will never worship those whom you worship, besides Allāh. But I worship Allāh Who causes you to die, I am commanded to be one of the believers. (Qur’ān, *Yūnus*: 104).

⁸¹ You do not worship besides Him but only names which you have named (forged), you and your fathers, for which Allāh has sent down no authority. The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allāh. He has commanded that you worship none but Him (i.e. His Monotheism), that is the (true) straight religion. (Qur’ān, *Yūsuf*: 40).

⁸² And to Allāh belongs the *Ghayb* (unseen) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him return all affairs (for decision). So worship Him (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) and put your trust in Him. (Qur’ān, *Hūd*: 123).

⁸³ To Him belongs what is before us and what is behind us, and what is between those two, and your Lord is never forgetful. Lord of the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, so worship Him (Alone) and be constant and patient in His worship. (Qur’ān, *Maryam*: 64, 65).

⁸⁴ Say (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]): “I am only a man like you. It has been inspired to me that your *Ilāh* is One *Ilāh* (God i.e. Allāh). So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord, let him work righteousness and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord. (Qur’ān, *al-Kahf*: 110).

⁸⁵ See, Maududi, *Islamer Rajnayatik...*, 19-20.

⁸⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 115.

be upon him). The Qur'ān was revealed to him and he was commanded to explain it to people: “And We have also sent down unto you (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him] the reminder and the advice (the Qur'ān), that you may explain clearly to men what is sent down to them, and that they may give thought.”⁸⁷ On this method, Ibn Kathīr said: “When one does not find this easily, he should look at the *Sunnah* because its purpose is to explain the Qur'an and elaborate its meanings.”⁸⁸ Considering it, Maududi referred to a number of *aḥādīth* in explaining these four terms, which indicate that he gave great importance to *aḥādīth* besides the Qur'ān. He used most of these *aḥādīth* to strengthen his linguistic analyses.

Maududi asserted that the *ulūhiyyah* includes monarchy and lordship and *tawḥīd al-ulūhiyyah* obliges that there is no share for anyone in the Supreme Authority. Allāh says:

The Day when they will (all) come out, nothing of them will be hidden from Allāh. Whose is the kingdom this Day? (Allāh Himself will reply to His Question): It is Allāh's the One, the Irresistible!⁸⁹

It means that on that Day the secrets of everyone will be laid bare and it will become manifested to men that none of their actions are hidden from God. A caller will call with a loud voice, “Today, to whom belongs the Dominion?” And the answer will none other than that, “To none but Allāh alone, Whose power and authority transcend that of all others.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Qur'ān, *al-Naḥl*: 44.

⁸⁸ Ibn Kathīr, Vol. 1, 12.

⁸⁹ Qur'ān, *Ghāfir*: 6.

⁹⁰ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 33.

Maududi said this verse is interpreted excellently in a *ḥadīth* narrated on the authority of ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Umar (may Allāh be pleased with both). He says,⁹¹ on one occasion the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace) stated, while he was on the pulpit, that Allāh will take both the heavens and the earth in His hand, and will proclaim to all before Him: “I am the King; I am the Mighty one: I am the Self-exalted one; Where are the people who used to claim themselves as kings upon the earth, those who called themselves mighty, and who were ‘their Majesties?’”⁹²

How the Jews and the Christians regarded their religious scholars as *rabb* or *ilāh* rather than Allāh is shown through the verse 31 of *Sūrat al-Tawbah*.⁹³ The explanation can also be found in the Prophet’s tradition which was collected by *al-Tirmidhī* and narrated by ‘Adī ibn Ḥātim.⁹⁴ It says, Once ‘Adī visited Prophet (peace be upon him) wearing a golden cross on his neck, while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was reciting this verse (verse 31 of *Sūrat al-Tawbah*). Hearing this verse, ‘Adī objected the Prophet (peace be upon him) that they do not worship them (religious scholars). In reply the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, yes they do, they (religious scholars) had made *ḥarām ḥalāl* and *ḥalāl ḥarām*, and they obey them; obeying them itself is *‘ibādah*.⁹⁵ The same *ḥadīth* has also been used to prove that *‘ibādah* means *itā‘ah*.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1st edn., 1998), Vol. 4, 291-292. Abū Ḥātim Muḥammad ibn al-Tamīmī, *Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥabbān*, (Arranged by ‘Alā’ al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Balbān al-Fārisī and named as *al-Iḥsān fī Taqrīb Ṣaḥīḥ ibn Ḥabbān*), (Lebanon: Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyyah, 2004), 1277. Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī, (Musil: Wajārat al-Awqāf wa al-Su‘ūn al-Dīniyyah Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, al-Jamhūriyyah al-‘Irāqiyyah, 2nd edn., 1984), Vol. 12, 389.

⁹² Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 33.

⁹³ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 2, 189-190.

⁹⁴ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 22.

⁹⁵ Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā al-Tirmidhī, *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, ed. Khalīl Ma’mūn Shīḥā (Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifah, 2002), 1189.

⁹⁶ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 103.

THE BOOKS OF *TAFSĪR*

It is not fair to pass a judgement against Maududi that he did not refer to the early *tafāsīr*. A critic of his explanation of these terms will find that sometimes he referred to some authentic *tafāsīr*, such as *Jāmi' al-Bayān fī ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān*, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm*, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Furqān* and *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* while at other times he may not refer to other *tafāsīr* although his explanation was in line with other *tafāsīr*.

In explaining the term *Ilāh* from a linguistic perspective, he used the explanation of *tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* and *tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*.⁹⁷ Sometimes he also quoted poetry from *tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*.⁹⁸

Similarly in discussing the term *'ibādah*, Maududi quoted verses 45-47 of *Sūrat al-Mu'minūn* and verse 22 of *Sūrat al-Shu'arā'*. In explaining the word *'Ābidūn*' and *'Abadta'* he took *Ṭabarī*'s interpretation.⁹⁹ There are also a few other places where he referred to *tafsīr al-Ṭabarī*.

In explaining the phrase *'yubbaddila dīnakum'* from the statement of Fir'awn, he referred to *Rūh al-Ma'ānī* in his *Tafhim*, where the meaning of the phrase *'yubbaddila dīnakum'* should be properly understood on account of which Fir'awn wanted to put Prophet Mūsā (peace be upon him) to death. The word *dīn* here implies the system of government, and what Fir'awn meant to say was this: I fear that he will change your king.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ See Ibn Kathīr, Vol. 1, 31. See also, al-Nīsāburī, Vol. 1, 138-140.

⁹⁸ See footnote, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 36.

⁹⁹ See footnote 1-2, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 98.

¹⁰⁰ See Abū al-Faḍl Shahāb al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Alūsī, *Rūh al-Ma'ānī fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm wa al-Sab'u al-Mathānī* ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn al-'Arab, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1997), Vol. 13, part 24, 94-95.

SYSTEMATIC PRESENTATION

In order to comprehend the central idea of *ulūhiyyah* and *sulṭah*, Maududi suggested that readers should analyse it according to the following premises and deductions which it sets forth¹⁰¹ in brief:

1. Fulfilling needs, removing crisis, giving shelter or protection, extending helping hands, taking care of or grooming up, and so on, may seem to be very trivial matters to a person. In reality, they are not so. Nevertheless, they have a strong relation with the Authority Who has controlling power over the whole universe. For example, a glass of drinking water or just a grain of wheat used for nourishing life, does not appear automatically. The sun, the earth, the wind and the seas all have a vital role in its production. Therefore, responding to prayers or fulfilling needs requires the same authority, which is essential for governing and maintaining the discipline of the whole universe.¹⁰²
2. This authority is an indivisible authority. It is impossible that the authority of creation is in one's hand, while the authority of providing food and drink is in the other hand; the sun is under one authority while controlling the earth is under another. Therefore, all the power should belong to one Supreme Authority, to whom all the things of the heavens and the earth have to return.¹⁰³
3. In view of the fact that all the power belongs to one Sovereign only and none has the least share in it, that is why *ulūhiyyah* too should belong to

¹⁰¹ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt...*, 29.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

one only. He is the unique possessor of *ulūhiyyah* where there is no portion for others.¹⁰⁴

4. The essence of a central Supreme Authority is that the various dimensions of sovereignty over the universe should ultimately be centred on one and only one Supreme Sovereign. Not even the least share of it should be vested in anyone else. Since He is the Only Creator Who provides shelter, governs over the universe and where nobody has the least contribution, all these attributes urge the human reasoning to accept none but Him as the Only Lord and the Lawgiver.¹⁰⁵

PROVIDING CONCLUDING REMARK

After discussing each term from a linguistic, pre-Islamic, Qur'ānic or other perspectives, Maududi gave a concluding remark. For example, after interpreting the term '*dīn*' from all aspects that he usually used, he presented verses 19 and 85 of *Sūrat Āl 'Imrān*, verse 33 of *Sūrat al-Tawbah*, verse 39 of *Sūrat al-Anfāl* and *Sūrat al-Naṣr* and gave his concluding remark on these. In all these places, the word '*dīn*' refers to a complete way of life which includes belief, ideology, moral principles and behaviour; in other words, all aspects of life.¹⁰⁶

From the above discussion, it becomes obvious that Maududi had used the methodologies developed by early Muslim scholars in the field. In addition, he explained these terms through many other dimensions, such as the notions of previous nations or referring to archaeological excavations. In his explanation Maududi started his discussion with linguistic analysis. There is no doubt that language is one of the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 32.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 129.

tools or sources in explaining the Qur'ān but it does not deserved to be the first source. Maududi also emphasises a lot on this source, thus, some people like Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī may think it is excessive. However, after all, it can be said that he adopted new approaches, expression and style in interpreting the four terms. His purpose behind this writing was to give a comprehensive and authentic interpretation about these terms that people can accept without questioning, and hopefully it has been successfully accomplished.

Maududi has been criticised by many scholars because of his explanation of the four terms, these criticisms are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SCHOLARS' CRITIQUE OF MAUDUDI'S VIEWS

Abul Ala Maududi was a leader of an enthusiastic movement and the founder of a school of thought. Millions of people have been motivated by his sublime character and noble ideas. Although a large number of people admire him for his contributions to the Muslim world, he is not beyond criticism. He has been criticised by many scholars. He is blamed to have written many controversial books and articles in explaining about Islam. He is also regarded as one of the founding fathers of the so-called terrorism or radical Islam, besides Ibn Taymiyyah (d.1328), Muḥammad ibn Abdul Wahhāb (d.1792), Ḥasan al-Bannā (d.1949), Sayyid Quṭb (d. 1966) and others. Nevertheless, Wahiduddin Khan and some other people categorised him as a political interpreter of Islam.

Wahiduddin Khan said that Marxism is an economic interpretation of History. This is because in Karl Marx's understanding of life, the economic factor dominates everything else. In the same way, Maududi projected Islam in such a way that every aspect of it seemed to acquire a political hue. Accordingly, one can term his ideology as a political interpretation of the *dīn* or the religion of Islam.¹

Referring to Maududi's view about Islamic state Muhammad Yusuf al-Bannury labelled Maududi as a politician who struggled to be a leader of a kingdom.² Bannury also authored a book entitled *al-Ustādh al-Mawdūdī wa shayyūn min Ḥayātihi wa Afkārihi*. In this book, he strongly criticised Maududi for his statement

¹ Wahiduddin Khan, *Din ki Siyasi Ta'abir* [Political interpretation of Religion], (New Delhi: Maktaba al-Risala, 1990), 11.

² Muhammad Yusuf al-Bannury, *al-Ustādh al-Mawdūdī wa shayyūn min Ḥayātihi wa Afkārihi*, (Istanbul: Ḥaqīqat Awi, 1986), 31.

regarding the explanation of the four terms. Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (d.1999) has written a book entitled *al-Tafsīr al-Siyāsī li al-Islām fī Mira‘āt Kitābāt al-Ustādh Abū al-A‘lā al-Maudūdī wa al-Shahīd Sayyid Quṭb*.

Like many others Nadwi acknowledged that Maududi had added a lot to the Islamic literature. However, his new formulation of Islamic thought causes a question mark on his works, which he considered as an intellectual basis for the renaissance of Muslims in reuniting them. His book *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-arba‘ah fī al-Qur‘ān* is notable in this regard, said Nadwi. He explained the terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *‘Ibādah* and *dīn* in this book. Based on these explanations, he established his thought about *Iqāmat al-ḥukm al-Islāmī* or *iqāmat al-Dīn*, *ḥākimiyyat al-Ilāh*, *Sulṭat al-Rabb* and so on.³

According to Muḥammad ‘Imārah, the unique part which Maududi added to the Islamic awakening movements that was not mentioned by other scholars is his categorizing of present day Muslim societies as *al-Jāhily* societies and labelling them as infidels.⁴ This judgement was given by Maududi because these societies are not living in accordance with Allāh’s rule in their daily life. In other words, according to Maududi, *al-ḥākimiyyah* (Sovereignty) of these states belongs to other than Allāh.⁵

Obviously some of these criticisms could be accepted while others are not. The scholars’ criticisms on Maududi’s view are provided bellow:

³ Abul Hasan Nadwi, *al-Tafsīr al-Siyāsī li al-Islām fī Mira‘āt Kitābāt al-Ustādh Abu al-A‘la al-Maudūdī wa al-Shahīd Sayyid Quṭb*. (Cairo: Dār Āfāq al-Ghad, 2nd edn., 1980). 15-16.

⁴ Muḥammad ‘Imārah, *Abu al-A‘la Maudūdī wa al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah*, (Beirut: Dār al-Waḥdah, 1986), 77.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 78.

CRITICISMS OF THE FOUR TERMS

According to Maududi, the terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *‘Ibādah* are the core teachings of the Qur’ān and Islamic *da‘wah*.⁶ He asserted that when the Qur’ān was revealed, the terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *‘Ibādah* were familiar to the Arabs because for a long time they were using these terms and knew them connotatively and denotatively. Therefore, whoever declared it, they did it consciously and those who denied it also did it after thinking about its consequence and knowing that they have to change their lifestyle with this declaration.⁷ However, with the passing of time, the real meanings of these terms known to the people during the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him) had gone away gradually from people’s mind. The meanings of these terms have been narrowed down from the wider meanings to their very limited meanings. The change that took place in the later years was because of two reasons. Firstly, the gradual decline of interest in the Arabic language. Secondly, the original meanings of these four terms had not remained with those people who were born and brought up in Islamic society. These reasons caused contemporary linguists and commentators to use the meanings of later generations instead of the original meanings in explaining the Qur’ānic words.⁸ Many scholars criticised Maududi for such an opinion, some of these criticisms are discussed in the following paragraph.

Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi praised Maududi for his scholarly and beneficial writings. He said some of these writings are sharp criticisms of western civilization and stinging comments on progressive, reformist, and modernist movements while others are on various Islamic issues. After praising Maududi, Nadwi wished that

⁶ Abul Ala Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-Arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān*, (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 5th edn., 1971), 5.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

Maududi had continued his writing on these issues only. Nevertheless, his formulation of Islamic thoughts, which he considered as an intellectual basis for the renaissance of Muslims and reuniting them, raised questions on his work; his book *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān* is especially notable in this regard.

Referring to the statement, i.e. the real meanings of the four terms had gone away gradually from people’s mind, Nadwi questioned, whether these four Qur’ānic terms have remained unknown to people for many centuries? Were they unaware of the real spirit of Islam?⁹ He also warned that this statement can cause those people who do not have proper knowledge to lose their firm belief about the preservation of the Qur’ān, although the excellence of the Qur’ān is its explanation and clarification.¹⁰ Such type of statement will cause people to be doubtful about the authenticity of the Book and scholars’ understanding of this Book as well as to be doubtful about the previous interpretations of this Book which will make them to feel the necessity to interpret according to everybody’s wish as done by *Bāṭiniyyah*.¹¹

Furthermore, Nadwi said this is contrary to the fundamental characteristics of the Qur’ān. The reality is that, this *Ummah* do not take their religious teachings from the Book only but have taken its meanings and explanations from early generations and have learnt its practice from them too.¹² Similarly, it is contrary to the Tradition of the Prophet, who stated, “My *Ummah* will never agree upon an error”¹³ because this view of Maududi indicates that the *Ummah* have borne in a misunderstood

⁹ Nadwi, 29.

¹⁰ Ibid., 33.

¹¹ Ibid., 34.

¹² Ibid., 36-37.

¹³ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr*, ed. Ḥamdī ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Salafī, (Musil: Wajārat al-Awqāf wa al-Su‘ūn al-Dīniyyah Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, al-Jamhūriyyah al-‘Irāqiyyah, 2nd edn., 1984), Vol. 12, 447.

atmosphere about these four terms for centuries.¹⁴ In addition, it is also not supported by sound mind that these terms were unknown to the people especially to the people who came immediately after the era of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the time when the *Ummah* produced a huge number of genius scholars in various fields.¹⁵

Based on the Prophet's Tradition,¹⁶ "There will always be a group amongst my *Ummah* that will be triumphant and Allāh will cause them to triumph"¹⁷ and referring to authentic history, Nadwi said, there is continuous attempt to reform and revive Islamic history; this reality also goes against his view.¹⁸ This view can cause those people, who read only his writings, to think that Islam was never presented properly except in recent years, particularly after the 1940s through *Jama'at-i Islami* and its founder in the Indian subcontinent although we believe Maududi never meant it.¹⁹

Maududi in his discussion emphasised on the issue of *iṭā'ah* where it seems that he focused more on slavery or bondage. He highlighted the issue of a slave and what should be done towards his Master, as he neglects the love towards Allāh from His devoted slave. Some people may consider it as a materialistic approach.

Referring to Ibn Taymiyyah Nadwi opined that,²⁰ only by being obedient or subjugated, which are the rights of *Ilāh* and *Rabb*, does not fulfil the duty of *al-ʿubūdiyyah* in the real sense. In addition, there should be the ultimate love of a *ʿAbd*

¹⁴ Nadwi, 42.

¹⁵ Ibid., 45.

¹⁶ Ibid., 59.

¹⁷ Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿil al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 3rd edn., 2003), 1324. Abū al-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj, *Mukhtaṣar Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, ed. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (Asyut: Lajnat Iḥyāʾ al-Sunnah, 1980), 549. Abū Dāwud Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath, *Sunan Abī Dāwud*, (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām li al-Nahsr wa al-Tawjiʿ, 1st edn., 1999), 359-360. Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Yazīd, *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, ed. Aḥmad Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1st edn., 2002), 15.

¹⁸ Nadwi, 60.

¹⁹ Ibid., 62-63.

²⁰ Ibid., 81.

towards his *Ma'bud*. *Ma'bud* deserves this love because of His attributes and virtue.

21

In explaining the word '*Ilāh*', Ibn Taymiyyah said, "*Ilāh* is one who is deified by the heart with absolute love and veneration, reverence and honour, fear and hope and so on."²² Ibn Taymiyyah argued that the relation between '*Abd*' and *Ma'bud* is not just as ruler and subject; it is a comprehensive relation, which includes knowledge, repentance, love, devotion, remembrance, and so on. In contrast, a ruler deserves only submission and obedience.²³

Referring to the Maududi's warning about the consequence that may take place in the absence of proper understanding of the four terms, Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī (d.1973), the second *Murshid al-Ām* of Muslim Brotherhood asserted that based on this opinion, some people come to a conclusion that as they are not Muslims so the social transaction with them will be done accordingly. In addition, other group extend the judgement and say it should be affirmed that they should act accordingly and their deeds must match their statements, otherwise they cannot be considered as Muslims.²⁴

Indicating to Maududi's statement that the meanings of these terms have been lost with the passing of time, al-Huḍaybī said this statement does not go with reality. Whatever meanings were known to the people of *jāhiliyyah* and whatever is meant by these terms, the Qur'ān explains it clearly in detail and it is the standard to be followed. There is abundant evidence in the Qur'ān, which explains these terms clearly. For example, the first thing that can be found by a reader of the Qur'ān is *Bismillāh al-Rahmān al-Rahīm* which is a brief description of the holy word, Allāh.

²¹ See Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Taymiyyah, *al-'Ubūdiyyah*, (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 4th edn., 1976), 44.

²² Ibid., 51.

²³ Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmū'at al-Fatāwā*, ed. Farīd 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Jundī & Ahsraf Jalāl al-Sharqāwī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 2006), Vol. 1, 185.

²⁴ Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī, *Du'āt la Quḍāt*, (Cairo: Dār al-Tawjī' wa al-Nashr al-Islāmiyyah, 1987), 32-33.

Immediately after this brief definition a full *sūrah* (*Fātiḥah*) talks about Allāh that glory be to Him, all praises and thanks belong to Him and He is the *Rabb* of ‘*Ālamīn*.²⁵ Claiming such thing without any authentic documentation can be considered merely a statement, not evidence. It should not be followed and no ruling or judgement should be based upon it.²⁶

Pointing to the statement that the meaning of these terms were known to the people during the revelation of the Qur’ān,²⁷ al-Huḍaybī argued if by this statement Maududi meant that everybody who used to live in Najd and Ḥijaz as well as in other parts of Arab during the Prophet’s time, knew the real understanding of *tawḥīd* and its comprehensive meaning, then it needs to be supported by evidence for its authenticity. In other words, claiming, “It was commonly known” alone is not enough to establish that fact because of two reasons. Firstly, to whatever degree reaches this commonness, it cannot be generalised that each and every member of the community know these terms with certainty. Al-Huḍaybī then questioned who found that everybody knew it in detail? Secondly, not all the people of Najd and Ḥijaz at that time were original Arabs; it is recorded in history that there were many people who came to these lands from Persia, Roman and Ethiopia. The *da‘wah* of the Prophet was to all, regardless whether they were Arabs and non-Arabs. To support his argument, al-Huḍaybī mentioned the *ḥadīth* of *dhāt al-Anwāt*.²⁸ Despite their little knowledge in

²⁵ Ibid., 34.

²⁶ Ibid., 40.

²⁷ See Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt*., 8-9.

²⁸ Narrated by Abu Waqid al-Laythī, he says, “We were still new Muslims when we went to the battle of Hunain with the Prophet. We found that the Mushrikeen had a tree, called ‘*Dhāt al-Anwāt*’, which they revered and on which they hanged their weapons on. When we passed by a similar Sidrah we said: “O Messenger of Allāh, make for us ‘*Dhāt al-Anwāt*’ as they have. Prophet said: “Allāhu Akbar! It is the *Sunnan* (traditions of the Mushrikeen). You said by He Who has my soul in His Hand, what the children of Israel said to Moses: “Make for us gods as they have gods. He said: ‘Verily! You are a people who know not.” (Qur’ān, *al-A‘rāf*: 138) and he said: You will follow the traditions of those before you (Jews and Christians)”.

tawhīd, the Prophet accepted their Islam. Therefore, he asked, is it proper to claim that they had comprehensive knowledge about *tawhīd*?²⁹

Based on this discussion, al-Huḍaybī established another argument that lack of proper understanding of *shahādatayn* does not nullify *īmān*. A proper understanding of *shahādatayn* was never a condition for being a Muslim, rather the declaration of this *shahādatayn* alone is enough for one to be a Muslim. There are many incidents that took place during the Prophet's time which showed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not require from a person his understanding of *shahādatayn* to be a Muslim. The story of 'Adī ibn Ḥītim and the people of *dhāt al-Anwāt* is notable here.³⁰

Moreover, al-Huḍaybī said that the action is not a condition for a person to be a Muslim. He mentioned the story of Abū Ṭālib, the uncle of the Prophet (peace be upon him). When Abū Ṭālib was on his deathbed, the Prophet insisted on him to declare the *shahādatayn*, which could be a means to intercede for him before Allāh. Al-Huḍaybī asked, if *shahādatayn* itself is not enough to make a *kāfir* Muslim then why did the Prophet insist on his uncle for a mere declaration of it? Furthermore, according to al-Huḍaybī, the Prophet (peace be upon him) considered pronouncement of *shahādatayn* itself as action. There is a *ḥadīth* narrated by Abū Hurairah where the Prophet (peace be upon him) was asked about the best *a'māl*. He replied belief in Allāh and His Messenger. Again he was asked, then what? He replied, *Jihād fī Sabīl Allāh*. Again he was asked, then what? He said, blessed Ḥajj.³¹ The *ḥadīth* narrated

²⁹ Huḍaybī, 46-47.

³⁰ Ibid., 48-49.

³¹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 282. Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān Aḥmad ibn Shu'ayb al-Nasā'ī, *Sunan al-Nasā'ī*, ed. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif li al-Nashr wa al-Tawjī', 2nd edn., 2008), 410.

by Ibn ‘Abbās regarding the group of ‘Abd al-Qais³² can also be mentioned here. For the sake of argument, if the action is considered as condition to be Muslim, al-Huḍaybī asked then define what this action is. In addition, describing its scope is not possible. If it says that in reality, people are not following the *Sharī‘ah* of Allāh in their social, economic and political life, then it is true for many people and they are disobeying Allāh’s command. It does not mean that they are not Muslims. There are certain sayings and actions described by *Sharī‘ah* that if a Muslim says it or acts it then he will be out of the fold of Islam. Likewise, if these sayings and actions spread among some people of the society, then the *Sharī‘ah* does not permit to describe the whole society as an infidel society as long as they observe prayer, fasting and Ḥajj.³³

Regarding the above issue, Yusuf al-Bannury criticised Maududi and said that it is clear from his discussion that linguists and commentators, without any exception, did not know the explanation of these names as intended by Allāh. There is no doubt that it is a very big claim that nobody understood these terms except Maududi. Incredibly surprising, Maududi took the explanation of these words from scholars like al-Athīr al-Jazarī, Ibn Manẓūr al-Afriqī and al-Fayrūz Abādī where they cited the abovementioned terms in the dictionaries of *al-Nihāyah*, *al-Lisān* and *al-Qamūs*, respectively. However, Maududi was totally heedless towards ancient scholars like Abū ‘Ubaydah, Abū ‘Ubayd, Abū Ḥanifah al-Daynūrī, Ibn Quṭaybah and those who came after them like al-Azharī and al-Jawharī. Bannury asked how it is proper for Maududi to take the explanation and the connotative as well as the denotative

³² Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 34.

³³ Huḍaybī, 50-53.

meanings of these terms from those who did not know the intended meanings of these terms to the Arabs since they were born in Muslim house?³⁴

Bannury warned that this type of claim can open the door of deviation as well as it can cause distrust about linguists and *mufassirūn* of previous centuries. People will simply interpret the Qur'ān without referring to the linguists or renowned *mufassirūn*. Discrediting Maududi he said, Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī did not know and neither did al-Jurjānī, al-Zamakhsharī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Kathīr, earlier or later scholars, none of them knew. Only Maududi after this long period of 14 centuries was able to understand it.³⁵

Safī al-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri criticised Maududi regarding the issue of *'ibādah* (worship) and *itā'ah* (continuous obedience). In his speech, he clarified that *'ibādah* and *itā'ah* are not same. He said that sometimes a deed is *itā'ah* but not *'ibādah*; likewise a deed might be *'ibādah* but not *itā'ah*. To support his view, he gave an example which was taken from the Qur'ān where Allāh narrates about Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him). The people of Prophet Ibrāhīm (peace be upon him) were worshipping the idols but the idols were not obeyed by them because the idols could not command them to obey. Therefore, it was worshipping not following.³⁶

On the same issue, a similar statement was given by Ibn Bāz. According to Ibn Bāz, the obedience to or following someone has a wider scope than *'ibādah*. All acts of *'ibādah* a person does to please Allāh will be considered as obedience or *itā'ah* but not all acts of *itā'ah* done for other than Allāh will be considered as *'ibādah*.

³⁴ Al-Bannury, 18-19.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ <http://www.salafitalk.net/st/viewmessages.cfm?Forum=16&Topic=6348> taken date: 28/12/2011. [Translated from urdu to english by Sameer ibn Haneef Semna. Urdu post made by Tariq Ali in noortv mailing list (which is a transcript of speech made by Shaykh Safī al-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri rahimahullah).]

Obedience towards a ruler or authority who is not favoured by Allāh is not considered as an act of *‘ibādah* because people do not believe in it as a part of *Sharī‘ah*. They obey them out of fear of oppression. Therefore, by obeying them they will turn to be sinners not *Mushrikūn*.³⁷

CRITICISM ON THE ISSUE OF *HĀKIMIYYAH*

In explaining verses 44, 45 and 47 of *Sūrat al-Mā‘idah*, Maududi opined that Allāh describes three rulings for those who do not rule according to the rule of Allāh that has been sent down. Firstly, they are *kāfirūn* because they undermine the rule of Allāh and reject to implement it. Secondly, this rejection is like going away from justice because whatever Allāh has prescribed is justice, replacing it with others is injustice and *Zulm*. Thirdly, being a slave of Allāh, it is obligatory for a person to follow Allāh’s rules and whoever rejects it and practises other rules is like going out of the circle of *‘ubūdiyyah* of Allāh as well as going out of His obedience, which is *Fisq*.³⁸ Therefore, whoever does not rule according to the rule of Allāh because it is not perfect or the ruling that has been prescribed by himself or by others is more perfect than Allāh’s ruling; obviously, he is *kāfir*, *fāsiq* and *zālim*.³⁹

Quoting verse 59 of *Sūrat al-Nisā’* Maududi said the principles that are introduced through this verse are (1) Allāh is the first source and the Supreme Authority of the Islamic system; a Muslim is His slave who follows His rule and obeying Him is the ultimate goal, individually as well as collectively, (2) Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) is the second source in this system, being obedient

³⁷ <http://www.ahlalhdeth.com/vb/showthread.php?t=107107> taken date 29/12/2011. [Answer from a letter of Sheikh Ibn Baz to al-Mawdūdī rahimahumullah regarding the difference between *‘ibādah* (worship) and obedience, (On 2/4/1392 AH, Abū Al-A`la al-Mawdudī sent me a letter no. 1526, dated 2 Safar, 1392 A.H.)].

³⁸ Maududi, *al-Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyyah*, (Cairo: al-Mukhtār al-Islāmī: 1980), 80.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 81.

to the Prophet (peace be upon him) is part of obedience to Allāh, (3) The obedience of *Ulū al-Amr* as long as they practise *Iqāmat al-ṣalāh* and their ruling does not go against Allāh's ruling, comes after these two sources, (4) The ultimate sources to return to in case of dispute between Muslims and their leaders are still the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Whatever system that does not go in line with these characteristics is a *kufr* system that is not Islamic, added Maududi.⁴⁰

On *al-Sulṭah al-'Ulyā'* or *Sulṭatu Amīr*, his opinion can be found in the comment on verse 62 of *Sūrat al-Nūr*. Allāh says, "Give permission to whom you will of them"⁴¹ Maududi commented that, it means that the *Rasūl* as well as the *amīr* of *al-Jamā'ah* after him have the right to give permission even when the situation is clear to him. If the *Rasūl* as well as the *amīr* of *al-Jamā'ah* after him feel that the society's needs are greater than individual needs, then he has the right not to give permission. In this case the person should not misunderstand him or doubt him.⁴²

Nadwi quoted few passages regarding *ḥākimiyyah* of *Ilāh* and *Rabb* from *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba'ah fī al-Qur'ān*, and referred to al-Huḍaybī's refutation on this aspect.⁴³ Nadwi criticised the issue of *al-Sulṭah* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* of Maududi and Sayyid Quṭb. Although Nadwi agreed with many scholars about establishing an Islamic state based on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, however, he did not agree with their understanding of these terms. Nadwi argued that the relationship between Allāh and His slaves is not just a relationship between a ruler and the ruled but it is a relationship between slave and his Lord; Creator and creatures. In this book, he mentioned that the main purpose of *'Ibād* is to worship Allāh while in Maududi's views, the main

⁴⁰ Ibid., 83-85.

⁴¹ Qur'ān, *al-Nūr*: 62.

⁴² Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 3, 426.

⁴³ Nadwi, 63.

purpose is worshipping Allāh by establishing His sovereignty in the state, for example, by implementing Allāh’s law in all aspects of human life. According to Nadwi, *al-Sulṭah* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* are some of Allāh’s Attributes; it does not refer to all Attributes of Allāh.⁴⁴

In the Qur’ān there are many Attributes of Allāh. If any person observes these names and attributes properly, it will cause him to seek Allāh’s love and pleasure. Nadwi presumed those people who confine all these attributes to *al-Sulṭah* and *al-ḥākimiyyah* and make it the sole reality of Godhood and first demand of Lordhood, to be fitted for the statement of Allāh “They made not a just estimate of Allāh such as is due to Him”.⁴⁵ The love and pleasure of Allāh cannot be attained except proper observation of all the attributes. This love and pleasure can be seen in the Prophets’ and their Companions’ lives. They believed in Allāh not only as a Supreme Authority or Sovereign but also regarded Him as God and Lord, the Beloved, the Source of love and the Perfect One.⁴⁶

In addition, according to Maududi, the essence of godhood is *sulṭah* (power, authority),⁴⁷ both godhood and authority necessitate each other as there is no difference between these two in meaning and spirit.⁴⁸ The Qur’ān uses the *rubūbiyyah* as synonym of *ḥākimiyyah* and *milkiyyah* (Sovereignty).⁴⁹ Since *‘ibādah* or acts of worshippers means obedience, subjugation and loyalty, hence, the central point of both *rubūbiyyah* and *ulūhiyyah* refers to none but *al-Sulṭah*. That is why Maududi considered the outer expression of *‘ibādah*, such as *ṣalāh*, *ṣiyām*, *Hajj* etc. as

⁴⁴ Ibid., 77-78.

⁴⁵ Qur’ān, *al-Zumar*: 67.

⁴⁶ Nadwi, 79-81.

⁴⁷ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt...*, 23.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 29.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 93.

secondary acts of worshippers.⁵⁰ In contrast, Nadwi said since the beginning of Islamic *da'wah* until today all Islamic scholars have given the first priority to *ṣalāh* and other acts of worship besides the *aḥkām* of *Shari'ah* and its implication on life.⁵¹ The Qur'ān mentions the acts of worship repeatedly and encourages doing them in this regard evidence from *Ḥadīth* can also be found, added Nadwi. Because of this of Maududi, the relation between man and his *Rabb* will be weak, narrow and superficial. On the other hand, emphasising on this issue will dwindle down the perception of divine love or God's pleasure and success of the Hereafter.⁵²

It seems that according to Maududi, the four pillars of Islam such as *ṣalāh*, *ṣiyām*, *zakāh* and *hajj* are not but *wasā'il* (means) to reach the main purpose which is establishing an Islamic state. On the other hand, referring to the Qur'ān⁵³ Nadwi said, it makes *Jihād* and the Islamic state as *wasā'il* to establish *ṣalāh*.⁵⁴ There is no doubt that the relation of a person with *wasā'il* is temporary and for certain circumstances; it is used in transitional period only and it cannot be the measure of perfection. It can neither be enjoyed nor be satisfied within, he added. The tradition of the Prophet showed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) considered *ṣalāh* as a source of

⁵⁰ Nadwi, 95.

⁵¹ Ibid., 97-98.

⁵² Ibid., 101-102.

⁵³ Permission to fight is given to those (i.e. believers against disbelievers), who are fighting them, (and) because they (believers) have been wronged, and surely, Allāh is Able to give them (believers) victory. Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: "Our Lord is Allāh." - For had it not been that Allāh checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allāh is mentioned much would surely have been pulled down. Verily, Allāh will help those who help His (Cause). Truly, Allāh is All-Strong, All-Mighty. Those (Muslim rulers) who, if We give them power in the land, (they) order for *Iqāmat-as-Ṣalāt*. [i.e. to perform the five compulsory congregational *Ṣalāt* (prayers) (the males in mosques)], to pay the *Zakāt* and they enjoin Al-Ma'ruf (i.e. Islamic Monotheism and all that Islam orders one to do), and forbid Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and all that Islam has forbidden) [i.e. they make the Qur'an as the law of their country in all the spheres of life]. And with Allāh rests the end of (all) matters (of creatures). (Qur'ān, *al-Ḥajj*: 39-41).

⁵⁴ Nadwi, 103-105.

tranquillity. He said to Bilal, “O Bilal, comfort us by the call to *ṣalāh*”.⁵⁵ In another occasion he said, “The coolness of my eyes is in the prayer.”⁵⁶ The Qur’ān makes these *‘ibādah* as primary requirements to a person. Therefore, for any type of shortcoming in this matter, he will be asked on the Day of Judgement. The Qur’ān narrates about the people of the Hellfire, “What has caused you to enter Hell? They will say: ‘We were not of those who used to offer their *ṣalāh*. Nor we used to feed the poor...And we used to belie the Day of Recompense’.”⁵⁷ These and other evidence of the Qur’ān and traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him) indicate that these pillars of Islam are the cornerstone of the whole system of religion. Hence, a person will be regarded for it, then he will be either rewarded or punished. However, other matters of religion such as establishing an Islamic state based on goodness and success is not but a means. It is a secondary requirement in religion, according to Nadwi.⁵⁸

In this regard al-Huḍaybī drew attention to the phrase “*ḥākimiyyat Allāh*” where some people talk about *ḥākimiyyah* which is actually an expression based on Qur’ānic verses as well as traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him). This word is related to Allāh’s name and is called “*ḥākimiyyat Allāh*” and many rulings have been derived from this phrase, such as “*ḥākimiyyat Allāh*” which means so and so, it requires so and so, the person who believes in it must do so and so, otherwise, he will be out of this folder, etc. Al-Huḍaybī argued, despite this term either in the Qur’ān or in the traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), it has broad acceptance among people and they regard it as the original source. Besides this, people have forgotten

⁵⁵ Al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-Kabīr*, Vol. 6, 277. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Shaybānī, *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal*, (Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1st edn., 1998), Vol. 7, 653.

⁵⁶ Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān ibn Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Mu’jam al-Ṣaghīr*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt, (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Kutub al-Thaqāfiyyah, 1st edn., 1986), 274.

⁵⁷ Qur’ān, *al-Muddaththir*: 42-47.

⁵⁸ Nadwi, 105-107.

that the verses and the traditions of the Prophet from where this phrase comes to existence is the original source. He opined that it is based on people's opinion; therefore, it is not beyond error or assumption. In this case, nobody should be attached to this, rather attachment should be with the *Kalām* of Allāh and His infallible Messenger.⁵⁹

Obviously, al-Huḍaybī said Ruling belongs to Allāh alone,⁶⁰ the authority of command or prohibition exclusively for Him,⁶¹ only Allāh's *Sharī'ah* is true and others are invalid.⁶² This *Sharī'ah* has the right to prescribe what is *ḥalāl* and what is *ḥarām* and it must be followed and obeyed.⁶³ Whatever prescribed by it as *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām* will remain until the Day of Judgement.⁶⁴ Therefore, after receiving true knowledge, whosoever believes that so and so person, organization, or group has the authority to make *ḥalāl ḥarām* or vice vers, introduce new *ḥadd* and *Sharī'ah*, which was neither there during the Prophet's time nor supported by verses of the Qur'ān or the Prophet's traditions, would be considered as *kāfir* or *Mushrik*,⁶⁵ out of the fold of Islam.⁶⁶ Likewise, who regards any person's authority to prescribe *ḥalāl* or *ḥarām*

⁵⁹ Huḍaybī, 91-92.

⁶⁰ The command (or the judgement) is for none but Allāh. (Qur'ān, *Yusuf*: 40)

⁶¹ Surely, His is the Creation and Commandment. (Qur'ān, *al-A'rāf*: 54)

⁶² And with truth We have sent it down (i.e. the Qur'an), and with truth it has descended. (Qur'ān, *al-Isrā'*: 105) So after the truth, what else can there be, save error? (Qur'ān, *Yunus*: 32)

⁶³ It is not for a believer, man or woman, when Allāh and His Messenger have decreed a matter that they should have any option in their decision. And whoever disobeys Allāh and His Messenger, he has indeed strayed in a plain error. (Qur'ān, *al-Aḥzāb*: 36). But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muḥammad [peace be upon him]) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission. (Qur'ān, *al-Nisā*: 65).

⁶⁴ This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (Qur'ān, *al-Mā'idah*: 3). And the Word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His Words. And He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower. (Qur'ān, *al-An'ām*: 115).

⁶⁵ Or have they partners with Allāh (false gods), who have instituted for them a religion which Allāh has not allowed. (Qur'ān, *al-Shūrah*: 21).

⁶⁶ Huḍaybī, 97-98.

without being sanctioned by Allāh, then he has made that person as *Sharīk* with Allāh.⁶⁷

Muḥammad ‘Imārah said, the abovementioned comment on Maududi about *Sulṭah* is much closer to the opinion of *Shī‘ah*. It should be noted that the *bay‘ah* of the *Amīr* is not in the same status of the *bay‘ah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) because the *bay‘ah* of the Prophet (peace be upon him) is the standard of transformation from *shirk* to *īmān* and *Islām*. Therefore, whoever goes out from this *bay‘ah*, actually, he is going out of the circle of Islam to the circle of *jāhiliyyah*. It is different from the *bay‘ah* of *Amīr* or *Khalīfah*, for example, Sa‘ad ibn ‘Ubādah passed away without taking the *bay‘ah* of Abū Bakar or ‘Umar but nobody blamed him as he passed away in the state of *jāhiliyyah*.⁶⁸

On categorising the society as *jāhiliyyah* ‘Imārah said, this judgement given by Maududi is because these societies are not ruled in accordance with the rule of Allāh in their daily life. In other words, according to Maududi, *al-ḥākimiyyah* (Sovereignty) of these states belongs to other than Allāh.⁶⁹ *Kufr* is denying and rejecting *uṣūl* (fundamentals) of *dīn* and its *arkān* (pillars). Based on these, *uṣūl* can be differentiated between Islam and *jāhiliyyah*. On the other hand, *al-Shī‘ah al-Imāmiyyah* regards the *imāmah* or *al-sulṭah al-‘ulyā’* as an *aṣl* or *rukn* of *dīn*, hence, whoever denies it would be considered as *kāfir*. However, *sunnī* scholars consider it as *furu‘* (branch), not *uṣūl* of *dīn*. Therefore, based on this, it can be considered as a standard of right or wrong, not standard of *īmān* and *kufr*. Any shortcoming in this issue will not categorise a person or society as *kufr* or *jāhili*.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid., 100.

⁶⁸ ‘Imārah, *Abu al-A‘la Mawdūdī*..., 50-51.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 78.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 79-80.

Al-Ghazālī in his *al-Iqtisād fī al-I'tiqād* clarified this issue by saying that the issue of *imāmah* is neither an important issue nor is it rational, yet it is a *fiqhī* issue and a point of controversy. The person who stays away from it is better than a person who is involved in it even if he is in right direction. What then about the person who is not in the right direction? Al-Ghazālī added this issue at the end of his book because it is the tradition of the field of *‘aqīdah* to add this issue at the end.⁷¹

Ibn Taymiyyah opposed the view that the issue of *imāmah* is one of the most important issues of *dīn*. To support his view, Ibn Taymiyyah added, a disbeliever will not be a believer until he bears witness that there is no god but Allāh and Muḥammad is His Messenger. This is the same witness the Prophet (peace be upon him) was fighting for with the disbelievers.⁷² Referring to Allāh’s statement “But if they repent and perform *al-ṣalāh*, and give *zakāh*, then leave their way free” of *Sūrat al-Tawbah*, Ibn Taymiyyah said this verse makes repenting, performing *al-ṣalāh* and giving *zakāh* as the prerequisites to be freed without mentioning the issue of *imāmah*. Likewise, during the Prophet’s time whoever accepted Islam, he used to introduce them the *Ahkām* of Islam without mentioning *imāmah*.⁷³

Denying this issue, Ibn Taymiyyah said if it is the noblest issue for Muslims and greatest requirement of *dīn* then it should have been discussed in the Qur’ān as well as explained by the Messenger. Despite its significance, it is not mentioned in the Qur’ān but there are many verses of the Qur’ān that talk about *tawḥīd* of Allāh, His Names, Attributes, Angels, Books, Messengers, the Hereafter, stories, commands, prohibitions, penalties and punishments, and so forth. Therefore, how is it logical that

⁷¹ Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *al-Iqtisād fī al-I’tiqād*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1983), 147.

⁷² Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm ibn Taymiyyah, *Minhāj al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah fī Naqḍi kalami al-Shī‘ah al-Qadariyyah*, ed. Muḥammad Rashād sālim (n.p., 1st edn., 1986), Vol. 1, 75.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 76.

the less important issues were discussed without mentioning the noble issue? Allāh makes the obedience to Him as well as His Messenger as the prerequisite of happiness without mentioning *imāmah*.⁷⁴

Similar statement was also given by Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah*. He mentioned, in this issue (*imāmah*), all groups of *Sunnī* school of *fiqh* have agreed unanimously that the statement of *Shī'ah*, “*imāmah* is a pillar of *dīn*” is invalid.⁷⁵

Based on these opinions, it can be said since *imāmah* or state is not a pillar among the pillars of *dīn* but among the *fiqhī* issue, then any type of disagreement on this issue, shortcoming in its implication, or inadequacy in fulfilling some of its requirements will not cause the *ḥukm* of *kufṛ* and change a individual, nation or society from Islam to *jāhiliyyah*.

However, in relating to the above issue of *kufṛ*, Maududi said the Qur’ān repeatedly mentions those who considered themselves as absolute *ḥākim* other than Allāh are *ṭāghūt* and opposite of *‘ūbūdiyyah* of Allāh. In Arabic, *ṭāghūt* literally refers to everyone who goes out of *Sharī‘ah*. On the other hand, the Qur’ān uses the term *ṭāghūt* to refer to a person who crosses the limit of slavery, claims to be the (supreme) authority and godhood, and makes Allāh’s slaves as his slaves and subjects. After quoting the verse “Have you seen those who claim that they believe in that which has been sent down to you... and they wish to go for judgement to the *ṭāghūt* while they have been ordered to reject them.”⁷⁶ Maududi asserted that, this verse regards those people who judge with the system that has been prescribed by other authority, without referring to Allāh’s rules or *Sharī‘ah* as *ṭāghūt*. *Ṭāghūt* also refers to the judging

⁷⁴ Ibid., 98.

⁷⁵ ‘Imārah, *Abu al-A‘la Mawdūdī...*, 82. See also Abū Zayd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn al-Ḥaḍramī, *Muqaddimah*, (Beirut: Dār al-Qalam, 5th edn., 1984), 212.

⁷⁶ Qur’ān, *al-Nisā*: 60.

system which does not obey the Supreme Authority of Allāh. Likewise, this verse indicates that seeking ruling to *tāghūt* to solve daily problems and affairs, is contrary to *īmān* and so it nullifies *īmān*.⁷⁷

Contrary to this view of Maududi, previous scholars like al-Ghazālī in his *Iqtisād fī al-I'tiqād* wrote a chapter entitled “Clarification of those groups who deserved to be declared as *kuffār*.” In this chapter, while discussing about *Mu‘tazilah* and *Mushabbihah*, al-Ghazālī said that judging about them is a point of *ijtihād*. Therefore, there is a need to be more cautious in labelling them as *kuffār* as long as there is other alternatives. Someone who prays towards the *Qiblah* and declares his *shahādah*, it is wrong to seize his property and proscribe his blood. Doing mistake in releasing thousands of *kuffār*’s lives is nothing much compared to doing mistake in shedding a cup of blood of a Muslim.⁷⁸ Then he referred to the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, “I was commanded to fight against people until they declare that there is no god but Allāh, and Muhammad is His Messenger...”⁷⁹

Ibn Taymiyyah, who lived under the *Mamlūk* reign, witnessed their going astray from the *Sharī‘ah* and died in their prison, has demonstrated the issue of *kufir* or *jāhili* more clearer. Despite their deviation from the right track of *Sharī‘ah*, Ibn Taymiyyah did not categorise them as *kufir* or *jāhiliyyah*. He fought under *Mamlūk* leadership against the *Tatār*.⁸⁰ Muqrīzī, a famous historian described the *Mamlūk* by saying that they mixed right with wrong, good with bad; the religious issues such as *ṣalāh*, *ṣiyām*, *zakāh* and *ḥajj*, and others, the endowment fund, the issue related to orphans, were all given under the *Qāḍī al-Quḍāt*. On the other hand, official issues

⁷⁷ Maududi, *al-Ḥukūmah al-Islāmiyyah*..., 81-82.

⁷⁸ Al-Ghazālī, *al-Iqtisād*..., 157.

⁷⁹ Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 20. Muslim, *Mukhtaṣar Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 8-9.

⁸⁰ ‘Imārah, *Abu al-‘la Mawḍūdī* ..., 82.

related to the state were governed through *al-Yasah*, the law of Changez Khan.⁸¹ Despite their deviation and uncompromising stand, Ibn Taymiyyah did not brand them as *kuffar* or *jāhiliyyah*. It is because their deviation was in *furū'* of *dīn* not in its *usūl*. Nevertheless, he described them in his writing by saying:

They are the battalion of Islam, honour of Islam depends on their honour, and their degradation will cause degradation to Islam. This group is the upright group in Islam for their knowledge, practice and *Jihād*, at the East of the world as well as at the West...honour of Muslims that in the East and West is because of their honour, if *Tatār* becomes victorious against them then there would be no honour for Islam or voice for it. They deserve to be the victorious group about whom Prophet gave the good news.⁸²

Among the contemporary scholars, Muhammad 'Abduh compared *usūl* al-Islam with the *usūl* of Christianity and said staying away from *takfīr* is one of the basic principles of Islamic ruling. This is the standard, which makes Islam different and superior than Christianity. He highlighted the uniqueness of Islam on this issue. It is widespread among Muslims and well-known through its ruling system that if a statement comes from a person, which can be judged as *kufīr* from hundred angles but can be judged as *īmān* from one aspect, then it should be regarded as *īmān* not *kufīr*.⁸³

Further commentaries from several *tafāsīr* are provided bellow to justify Maududi's view on the issue of *ḥākimmiyyah*, some *Mufasssirūn*'s views are given as follows:

Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 944), a classical *Mufasssir* and *usūlī*, in commenting upon verses 44, 45 and 47 of *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* said in his *tafsīr Ta'wīlāt ahl al-Sunnah* that the term *kāfirūn* has been used in one place, in another place it is *zālimūn* and in another it is *fāsiqūn*. These three terms could indicate the same thing;

⁸¹ Ibid., 83. See also, al-Khuṭaṭ, Vol. 3, 63.

⁸² Ibid., 83-84. See also, *al-Fatwa al-Kubra*, (Cairo: n.p. 1965), Vol. 4, 345-347.

⁸³ Muḥammad 'Imārah, *A'mal al-Kāmilah li Imām al-Shaykh Muḥammad Abduh*, (Bayrūt: Dār al-Shurūq, 1993), Vol. 3, 302.

the person who underestimates the rule of Allāh and denies implementing it, then this person is *kāfir*, *zālim* and *fāsiq*. Another possibility is that, the term *kāfir* has been used for non-believer who denies the ruling of Allāh while the terms *zālim* and *fāsiq* are applied for believer who ignores the ruling of Allāh and follows his desire.⁸⁴

Referring to al-Barā' ibn 'Āzib, Abū Ishāq al-Tha'labī (d. 1036) said that all these terms *kāfirūn*, *zālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* have been applied for non-believers (*kāfir*). Ibn 'Abbās and Ṭāūs opined that this *kufir* does not mean one's going out of his religion. It is an act of *kufir* but not similar with the act of disbelieving in Allāh or in the Hereafter. Likewise, 'Ata' said⁸⁵ this *kufir* is inferior than *kufir*, this *zulm* is inferior than *zulm* and this *fisq* is inferior than *fisq*.⁸⁶ Referring to *Tafsīr al-Qāsimī*, Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī claimed that, the condition of *kufir*, *zulm* and *fisq* of a Muslim is not like that of a *kāfir*.⁸⁷ 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Tha'ālabī (d. 1468) pointed out that a notable group of scholars opined that the verse includes all those who do not rule according to Allāh's ruling. However, for the rulers of this (Muslim) *Ummah*, it is *kufir* because of disobedience, it will not take them out of the fold of *īmān* and this explanation is good.⁸⁸

Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī (d. 1058) said in his *al-Nukat wa al-'Uyūn* that there are four opinions regarding the ruling of *kāfirūn*, *zālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*. First, Ibn

⁸⁴ Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī, *Ta'wīlāt ahl al-Sunnah*, (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risālah Nāshirūn, 2004), Vol. 2, 44.

⁸⁵ In Arabic the sentence is written thus: "هو كفر دون كفر وظلم دون ظلم وفسق دون فسق". It seems that the words *kufir*, *zulm* and *fisq* here do not refer to the major *kufir*, *zulm* and *fisq* which may cause for a person to go out from the fold of Islam, rather it is minor *kufir*, *zulm* and *fisq*, which may occur within a believer.

⁸⁶ Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tha'labī, *al-Kashf wa al-bayān 'an tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. Abū Muḥammad ibn 'Āshūr (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1st edn., 2002), Vol. 4, 70.

⁸⁷ Muḥammad Sayyid Ṭanṭāwī, *al-Tafsīr al-Wasīṭ li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*, (Cairo: Dār Nuḥḍat Miṣr li al-Ṭabā'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī':1997), Vol. 4, 169.

⁸⁸ 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muḥammad al-Tha'ālabī, *al-Jawāhir al-ḥisān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwid & 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1997), Vol. 2, 386.

Mas‘ūd, Ḥudhifah, al-Bara’ and ‘Ikrimah opined that this ruling is for Jews, not for Muslims. Second, according to Ḥasan and Ibrāhīm, this ruling is for all although these verses described the people of the Scripture. Third, al-Sha‘bī said that the ruling *kāfirūn* is for Muslims, *zālimūn* for Jews and *fāsiqūn* for Christian. Fourth, Ibn ‘Abbās said who denies ruling according to Allāh’s ruling is *kāfir*, who does not rule according to Allāh’s ruling although he acknowledges it, is *zālim* and *fāsiq*.⁸⁹

The view of al-‘Izz ibn ‘Abd al-Salām (d. 1262) is also very close to the above opinions. Referring to verse 44 of *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*, he said that this verse as well as the other two following verses have been revealed about the Jews not about Muslims, or they are about the people of the Scripture though its ruling is for all people. It may also be possible to apply the term *kāfirūn* on Muslims, *zālimūn* on Jews and *fāsiqūn* on Christians. Otherwise, those who deny ruling according to Allāh’s ruling are *kāfirūn*, if they do not deny it but follow other’s ruling they are *zālimūn* and *fāsiqūn*.⁹⁰

Commenting on these verses of *Sūrat al-Mā’idah*, al-Qurṭubī (d. 1272) was of the view that the terms *kāfirūn*, *zālimūn* and *fāsiqūn* were revealed about the *kuffār*. He argued that this view is proven through the *ḥadīth* of al-Bara’ in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, because despite committing *kabā’ir*, a Muslim could not be labelled as *kāfir*. It is said that there is something hidden, which indicates that whoever does not rule according to Allāh’s ruling because of his rejection of the Qur’ān and denial of what was said by the Prophet is considered *kāfir*. This opinion is given by Ibn ‘Abbās and Mujāhid. Ibn Mas‘ūd and Ḥasan opined that this ruling is general for all those who do not judge according to Allāh’s ruling, whether Muslims, Jews or *kuffār* by regarding it as permissible. However, if the person knows that he is committing *ḥarām* then he

⁸⁹ Abū al-Ḥasan al-Māwardī, *al-Nukat wa al-Uyūn*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1992), Vol. 2, 43.

⁹⁰ Al-‘Izz al-Dīn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn ‘Abd al-Salām, *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān*, (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1st edn., 1996), Vol.1, 389.

would be considered as *fāsiq* Muslim, his judgement is in Allāh's hand; if He wishes He will punish him or forgive him. There is another narration from Ibn 'Abbās where he said ruling not accordance with Allāh's ruling is an act, which can be paralleled to the actions of a *kāfir*. There is another opinion by al-Qurṭubī that whoever does not rule in accordance with Allāh's rule at all, then he is *kāfir* and whoever judges in accordance with *tawḥīd* but in some cases does not follow the *Sharī'ah*, this *hukm* is not for him.⁹¹

Ibrāhīm al-Qaṭṭān commented on verse 44 of *Sūrat al-Mā'idah* in his *Taysīr al-Tafsīr* by exposing the decree of Allāh that:

Do not be afraid of people in implementing the *aḥkām*, fear Me, I am your Lord, Lord of the universe. Do not follow your desire and change the *aḥkām* described by Me for the sake of worldly pleasure, such as bribery, honour, etc. therefore, whoever turns away from the ruling of Allāh or hides it and rules with other ruling, then he is *kāfir*, he is hiding truth with exposing the false.⁹²

Then al-Qaṭṭān questioned the position of today's rulers.⁹³ In the next verse after presenting a few rulings regarding *qiṣās* Allāh strictly declares those rulers who do not rule according to the ruling of Allāh but follow their own desire then they are considered as *ẓālim*. In the previous verse, they are called *kāfir* while here it is *ẓālim*; it does not mean that the second position does not describe them as *kāfir* while the second criteria is an addition to the first.⁹⁴ Commenting on verse 47 of this *sūrah*, he said the third criteria has been added; they are *kāfir* by denying the *Sharī'ah*, *ẓālim* because they impose on people other's ruling instead of Allāh's, *fāsiq* because they go astray from the right path that has been prescribed by Allāh. Qaṭṭāni maintained that

⁹¹ Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li aḥkām al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr li al-Ṭabā'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1999), Vol. 3, 110-111.

⁹² Ibrāhīm al-Qaṭṭān, *Taysīr al-Tafsīr*, (n.p.: n.d.), Vol. 1, 404. [Taken from al-Maktabah al-Shāmilah, first edition].

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 405.

Allāh clarifies that there would be either *īmān* or *kufir*; nothing inbetween. Believers are those who implement Allāh’s ruling, on the other hand, those who do not practise Allāh’s ruling are *kāfir*, *zālim* and *fāsiq*. Rulers should act according to the *Shari‘ah*, only then they would be considered as people of *īmān* or they would be considered as *kāfir*, *zālim* and *fāsiq*.⁹⁵

Based on these commentaries it is not possible to say that Maududi’s views in this issue are not in line with the the *Mufasssirūn*’s views.

CRITICISM ON THE ISSUE OF JĀHILIYYAH

In commenting on verse 50 of *Surah al-Mā'idah*, “Do they desire judgement according to the Law of Ignorance?”, Maududi described the term *jāhiliyyah* (ignorance) as an antonym to Islam. Islam is the way of *‘ilm* (true knowledge). In contrast, *jāhiliyyah* is the way that diverges from Islam - the path of ignorance. The pre-Islamic period in Arabia was designated as *jāhiliyyah* because this was the era when human beings derived their norms from either superstitious beliefs, conjectures and imaginations or from their desires. Whenever such an attitude is adopted, it is bound to be designated as ignorance. The appellation ‘*jāhiliyyah*’ can be applied to every aspect of life which is developed in disregard of the knowledge made available by God, based on man’s partial knowledge, blended with imaginations, superstitious fancies, conjectures and desires.⁹⁶

In commenting on verse 33 of *Sūrat al-Aḥzāb*, Maududi said *jāhiliyyah* in the Islamic terminology covers all such conduct, which go against Islamic culture and civilization, Islamic morality and etiquette, and Islamic way of thinking and

⁹⁵ Ibid., 406.

⁹⁶ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 1, 479.

behaviour. Referring to the present situation, he stipulated that now everybody can see for himself whether the culture which is made popular in a Muslim country is the culture of Islam, according to the Qur'ān, or the culture of ignorance.⁹⁷ According to 'Imārah, the unique part that has been added by Maududi is his categorizing the present Muslim societies as *al-jāhilī* society and labelling it as *kufr* (infidelity).⁹⁸ In explaining verse 50 of *Sūrat al-Mā'idah*, a very similar statement to Maududi's in this regard was given by Sayyid Quṭb in his *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*.⁹⁹

Explaining *jāhiliyyah* Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣābūnī also has given similar view of Maududi and Sayyid Quṭb. He stated briefly in his *Ṣafwat al-Taḥāsīr* that *jāhilī* ruling is the ruling of human beings above human beings, slavery of man above man, rejecting the Godhood of Allāh, and going out of His bondage to the slavery of others. It is a divider, either the rules of Allāh or the rules of the *jāhiliyyah* or desire. *jāhiliyyah* is not a certain period, it is a situation; it can be found in the past, at present and in the future as well. People should either rule in accordance with the *Sharī'ah* of Allāh by accepting it with complete submission so that they would be considered as Muslims, or they should rule according to the laws made by human beings, which is a *jāhiliyyah* system for which they are out of the circle of Islam.¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, the views of Ibn Taymiyyah, Ḥasan al-Bannā and others, on the issue of *kufr* or *jāhilī* are contrary to the above mentioned views of Maududi, Sayyid Quṭb and 'Alī Ṣābūnī. Ibn Taymiyyah lived under the *Mamlūk* state and witnessed their going astray from the *Sharī'ah*. Despite their deviation from the right track of *Sharī'ah*, Ibn Taymiyyah did not categorise them as *kufr* or *jāhiliyyah*.

⁹⁷ Maududi, *Tafhim...*, Vol. 4, 90.

⁹⁸ 'Imārah, *Abu al-A'la Mawdūdī...*, 77.

⁹⁹ Sayyid Quṭb, *Fī Zilāl al-Qur'ān*, (Beirut: Dār al-Shurūq, 1985), Vol. 2, 888.

¹⁰⁰ Muḥammad 'Alī al-Ṣābūnī, *Ṣafwat al-taḥāsīr*, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr li al-Ṭabā'at wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzī'), Vol. 1, 321.

Like Ibn Taymiyyah, Ḥasan al-Bannā was also aware about using this term. Despite the Egyptian society being affected by the Western and materialistic culture, he did not label with the term *jāhiliyyah*. It is because there were still remained many Islamic principles in the Egyptian society, thus, according to Bannā, it is not proper to label it as *kufri* or *jāhili* society.¹⁰¹ He was very careful of branding somebody with this term i.e. *kufri* or *jāhili*, and obviously, he was more cautious to brand a society with this term than a person. In this regard, he said in his *Rasā'il*:

We do not categorise a person as a *kāfir* whoever acknowledge the *shahādātayn*, acts accordingly and fulfils the obligations. However, except the person who recognizes any *kufri* word or act, denies any obvious matter of *dīn*, denies any thing that said by the Qur'ān, explains it in strange way not recognized by Arabic style or act something that there is no way to explain it except as *kufri*.¹⁰²

In another place of his book, Maududi said:

Therefore, whoever regards someone's words or ruling system, which one is not sanctioned by Allāh, as an obligatory to follow would be considered as *shirk* as like as the act of a person who prays to someone other than Allāh. Likewise, whoever claims himself to be the *Mālik al-Mulk*, *al-Musaytir*, *al-Qāhir* and *al-Ḥākim al-Muṭlaq* (Possessor of the kingdom or absolute monarch), even in the political sense, is like the person who claims *ulūhiyyah* for himself and addresses people by saying that he is their patron, helper, and protector in the supernatural sense.¹⁰³

Referring to the abovementioned statement of Maududi, Nadwi said this phrase reflects that *shirk* (associating) in *hukm* (governance) is like *shirk* in *ulūhiyyah* or *'ibādah*. These two aspects of *shirk* are equal without any distinction. Therefore, following somebody and being obedient to his rules and regulations, even in the political sense is like worshipping somebody other than Allāh. It seems from this statement that, Maududi meant by this political obedience to somebody as being

¹⁰¹ 'Imārah, *Abu al-A'la Mawdūdī*..., 86-87.

¹⁰² Ḥasan al-Bannā, "*Risālat al-Ta'ālīm*" in *Majmūat Rasā'il al-Imām al-Shahīd Ḥasan al-Bannā*, (Iskandariyyah: Dār al-Da'wah, 1st edn., 2002), 375.

¹⁰³ Maududi, *al-Muṣṭalahāt*..., 31-32.

subjugated to his authority by acknowledging his sovereignty and legislative power. Maududi spent a lot of effort through his writings to establish this thought as well as emphasised more on *shirk* in *hukm* than *shirk* in *ulūhiyyah* or *‘ibādah*. According to him, *shirk* in *‘ibādah* is regarding someone as the central point to seek help, supplicating and being obedient to him or prostrating before him, as well as other manifestations of deification and sanctification. All these are the characteristics of primitive *jāhiliyyah* while the human mind was immature in its childhood while the developmental phase of knowledge, culture and civilization was also in its early stage. Therefore, nowadays giving importance to this, i.e. *shirk* in *‘ibādah*, and struggling for it seems to be giving priority to something which is not so.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, Nadwi said this is contrary to the main theme of *da‘wah* of all Prophets. Their struggle was against the paganism and awakening people about its dangers.¹⁰⁵ The Qur’ān calls it *al-shirk al-akbar*, *al-rijs* (abomination) and *qawl al-zūr* (false statement).¹⁰⁶ That is why upon the victory of Makkah the first thing that the Prophet (peace be upon him) did was to wipe out the 360 idols¹⁰⁷ saying, “Truth (i.e. Islamic Monotheism or this Qur’ān or *Jihād* against polytheists) has come and *bātil* (falsehood, i.e. Satan or polytheism, etc.) has vanished. Surely! *bātil* is ever bound to vanish.”¹⁰⁸ According to Nadwi, *shirk* in *‘ibādah*, worshipping idols and making a person as the centre of *‘ibādah* are supposed to be highlighted. It is the core point of awareness of the Prophets and their Companions¹⁰⁹ and it is the main characteristic of

¹⁰⁴ Nadwi, 85.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 86.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 87.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 88.

¹⁰⁸ Qur’ān, *al-Isrā’*: 81.

¹⁰⁹ Nadwi, 92.

jāhiliyyah. Other aspects of *jāhiliyyah* like being obedient to others, following others' rules and regulations that are not sanctioned by Allāh are not but its subsequence.¹¹⁰

Muhammad 'Imārah says:

This is the nature of Islam and its thinking style, since the beginning of Islam until today. Despite many diversions in the Islamic society and oppression, against what scholars were fighting against, did not judge the country or the society, where they were living, as *jāhilī* or *kufri* society.¹¹¹

People may disagree with Maududi about the absence of the true understanding of the four terms and its consequence i.e. the absence leads people gradually to *shirk*, but it seems to be proven practically in recent Muslims atmosphere. In addition, it might not have been absent from the scholars' minds as such detailed explanation has not been given by anyone before him. However, it may be because the meanings of these terms are very clear and do not need be discussed as said by Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī. Maududi in his discussion emphasised much on the issue of *itā'ah* where it seems that he focused more on slavery or bondage, as if he did it to promote his political thought. Nevertheless, a researcher on Maududi's life and thought will find it is because he wanted people to be more serious in performing their duty towards their Lord Whose bounties and facilities they are always consuming. It does not mean that he ignored the fact or did not realise that people should worship Allāh with love. Al-Mubarakpuri criticised Maududi regarding the issue of *'ibādah* (worship) and *itā'ah* (continuous obedience) where he said *'ibādah* and *itā'ah* are not the same. However, Maududi did not categorise all types of *itā'ah* as *'ibādah*; rather he meant only those type of obedience that people consider as obligation like *shar'ī* obligation. This is clear from his indication towards the *ḥadīth* of 'Adī ibn Ḥātim. Whenever Maududi

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 93.

¹¹¹ 'Imārah, *Abu al-A'la Mawdūdī...*, 87.

warned that the absence of true understanding may cause some people to commit some sort of *shirk* unconsciously, he did not categorise them as *Mushrik*. The state or society where the Sovereignty of Allāh or *shar‘ī* rules is absent is considered as *jāhilī* state or society. Maududi’s view regarding *jāhiliyyah* should also be analysed in the same way as *shirk*; he meant that the present Muslim society has some characteristics of *jāhiliyyah*.

Regarding seeking permission from *al-sulṭah al-‘ulyā’* or *sulṭatu amīr*, Maududi referred to verse 62 of *Sūrat al-Nūr*. In commenting this verse other *mufasssirūn*, such as al-Tha‘alabī, al-Samarqandī, Ibn ‘Aṭīyah, al-Zamakhsharī and many others opined, in the absence of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him), the permission should be sought from the *amir* or *imām* while Maududi opined that it should be sought from the *amīr al-Jamā‘ah*, which may mean the same authority.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

It is clear that today's Muslim society is distorted by the impact of Western colonialism and imperialism. It is a regret that Islam as a complete code of life has become ambiguous to many Muslims, which resulted in the Muslim world to be affected socially, politically, culturally as well as economically and remain stagnant in many of its affairs. In this crucial situation, we can find some scholars who have given valuable suggestions to reform the Muslim world. Their suggested remedies are not from out of Islam, rather they are from Islam itself. Maududi is one of those contemporary Muslim thinkers who contributed in wakening up the Muslims from their deep slumber and to enrich the Muslim mind to stand up against the Western thinkers. Like Farūqi, Iqbal and many others, he also realised the necessity to make *tawhīd* as the cornerstone of all reforms of the Muslim world. In projecting his thoughts, he wrote many books and pamphlets where he tried to convince Muslims to return to the original teachings of Islam and to fortify them with renewed vigour in order to overcome this crucial situation. Masudul Hasan described this struggle of Maududi by saying:

He challenged the spell of the Western thought and developed a new *Ilm al-Kalam* to meet the intellectual challenge of the West. He expounded the original message of Islam with a contemporary freshness and expression that Islam is a complete way of life with its own belief system, values and principles and its own unique social, political, economic, cultural and educational system.¹

¹ Masudul Hassan, *Sayyid Abul A'ala Maududi and his Thought*, (Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1984), Vol. 1, xi.

Through his observation, Maududi found that the failure to properly understand *tawḥīd* is one of the greatest obstacles towards the success of the Muslims.

To clarify the understanding of *tawḥīd* properly, he authored the book *al-Muṣṭalahāt al-arba‘ah fī al-Qur’ān* where he elaborated the concept of God from different angles. In this book, he explained four key terms of the Qur’ān namely *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *‘ibādah* and *dīn*. Through these explanations, firstly, he clarified the true understanding of *tawḥīd* and secondly, he established his views on *Iqāmat al-ḥukm al-Islāmī* or *Iqāmat al-Dīn*, *ḥākimiyyat al-Ilāh*, *sulṭat al-Rabb* and so on.

He opined that the proper meaning of *tawḥīd* was clearly understood by the people during the time of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him). The demands and the requirements of these four terms were very clear to them. Whenever these terms were addressed, the people knew that they had to change their lifestyle. However, this clear picture of *tawḥīd* was gradually lost from the people’s mind with the passing of time. That is why it could be seen that recent linguists and commentators use the meaning given by later generation instead of the original meaning in explaining these terms. According to Maududi, the satisfaction with these narrow explanations makes people think that they are observing the religion properly and exclusively for the sake of Allāh. As a result, they fail to grasp the real message as well as the great spirit of the Qur’ān. Whatever shortcoming can be seen in people’s belief, faith and actions is because of this narrow understanding. Therefore, he explained all these four terms in detail.

In explaining the central idea of *Ilāh*, Maududi argued that fulfilling needs, removing crisis, giving shelter or protection, extending helping hands, etc., are some of the functions of *Ilāh* towards His worshippers. These functions can only be performed by an indivisible Authority Who has controlling power over the whole

universe. In view of the fact that all the power belonged to One and Only Sovereign that is why, *ulūhiyyah* too should belong to One and Only. He is the unique possessor of *ulūhiyyah* where there has no portion for others. The essence of the central Supreme Authority is that the various dimensions of sovereignty over the universe ultimately should be centred on the one and only one Supreme Sovereign. It is worthless to think that someone other than He responds to the call, accepts the prayers, fulfils the needs and gives shelter in difficulties in His kingdom. In addition, it is illogical to regard someone other than Him as the independent and absolute authority, who has the right to legislate. Therefore, whoever regards someone's word or ruling system, which is not sanctioned by Allāh, as obligatory to follow would be considered as *shirk* like the act of a person who prays to someone other than Allāh.

On the term *Rabb*, Maududi said, although the famous description, “grooming something, stage to stage to reach into its verge” is used to indicate the meaning of *al-rubūbiyyah*, it is one of its many different meanings. Through the proper analysis of this phrase, one can find that it is used sometimes to indicate a person who takes care, brings up, nourishes and is responsible to fulfil the needs (of others) or, a guardian or a patron who supervises and is responsible to carry out improvement. It could also be the leader who occupies the central position of his tribe and people gather around him or, the leader whose command is obeyed, who has the authority to implement the law, whose supremacy is acknowledged, and has authority to dispose or, it could be the Owner or master.

Through a chronological study of the verses that discuss *rubūbiyyah*, Maududi asserted that, it clearly indicates that the Qur'ān uses the word *rubūbiyyah* as synonymous with sovereignty, and the concept of the word *Rabb* has been described as Absolute Monarch of this universe, the Lord and the Master, without being

associated with other. Therefore, He is the Cherisher, Provider and Sustainer of the universe. He is the One Who looks after His slaves, protects them from harm and fulfils their needs. In this sense, obedience to Him is natural and the only right on which social life can be based upon properly. The attachment to His central Personage is capable to unite different individuals and groups as an *Ummah*. He alone is worthy to be worshipped and obeyed by all humanity and other creatures; He alone is the Lord, Master, and Ruler over them.

Based on linguistic analysis, Maududi demonstrated that the term *‘ibādah* is used in the Qur’ān to convey five different meanings, though all related to each other. According to him, the first three meanings, such as slavery, total submission and worshipping are its basic meanings while the remaining two are secondary. Maududi asserted that the word *‘ibādah* has been used in several places throughout the Qur’ān to indicate these three meanings.

Maududi concluded that wherever the term *‘ibādah* has been used in the Qur’ān, it is not proper to mean by this term only any one of these three senses, in fact, there is no reason to mean only one. The Qur’ān presents its *da‘wah* in a complete manner. In addition to this, the purpose of the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* is none other than the fact that our bondage, submission and worship should all be exclusively for Allāh. Therefore, confining the meaning of the word to only one of these three meanings is similar to actually as confining the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* to a limited circle. As a consequence, those who embrace Islam with such a confined and narrow understanding of the Qur’ānic *da‘wah* would not be able to follow Islam fully; their following would be considered as incomplete.

Through the usage of the Arabs of the term *dīn*, Maududi came up with four meanings, which are (a) dominance or subjugation from the supreme authority, (b)

obedience, servitude and worship of the one who submitted to the authority, (c) rules, regulations or code of life which is followed and (d) accountability, justice, reward and punishment.

Maududi affirmed that before Islam, although the Arabs had different connotations in using this term, their use of it and its various derivatives revolved around one or the other of the abovementioned connotations. However, these connotations were not clear to the Arabs and this word did not attain a terminological position in any systematic and recognised school of thought; rather their understanding of this word was vague and wispy. With the revelation of the Qur'ān, the word received clear and definite connotations. The Qur'ān uses the word for its own purpose which represents a complete code of life with four components which are (a) sovereignty and supreme authority, (b) obedience and submission to that authority, (c) intellectual and practical system formed under that authority and (d) repayment by that authority for loyalty in obedience or rebellion and transgression against it.

Providing many verses from the Qur'ān, Maududi concluded that, in all these places, the word *dīn* refers to a complete way of life which includes belief, ideology, moral principles and behaviour; in other words, all aspects of life.

His views on this issue can be summarised as the universal call of the Qur'ān is that, Allāh is the only One *Ilāh* and the *Rabb*. Therefore, it is obligatory for man to acknowledge Him and accept Him as *Ilāh* and *Rabb*. No one other than He should in the least be believed to possess the attributes that are implied by these terms. The *sulṭah* and sovereignty should be exclusively for Allāh alone and all aspects of life should be governed by Allāh. Consequently, it also requires a person to worship Him

alone, and not anyone else, and make his *dīn* exclusively for Allāh by rejecting all other *dīn*.

Maududi's explanation of these four terms is beneficial to alert the Muslims. The unique features of the book, *al-Muṣṭalaḥāt al-arbaʿah fī al-Qurʾān*, lie in its convincing presentation, its thorough and unrelenting dealing with the issue, its objective analysis and investigation, its discovery of underlying messages of these terms, its style of arguments, its new approaches, expression, and style in interpreting, and most importantly, proving textually and rationally that Allāh is the *Ilāh* and *Rabb* of this universe, He is deserved to be worshipped exclusively; likewise, Sovereignty belongs to Him, and His Ruling is superior above all rulings, and finally, Islam is not just like other religions as it is a complete code of life.

In explaining these terms, Maududi combined *tafsīr al-Riwāyah* with *tafsīr al-Dirāyah*. Although it is enough to prove this issue using Qurʾānic verses and *aḥādīth* as claimed by Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī, he used the linguistic explanation and archaeological excavations to make it more convincing and rational.

He used various means to explain these terms, first explaining each term from the linguistic perspective, then describing pre-Islamic nations' notions and finally, explaining the Qurʾānic point of view. In every step, he gave all the probable views, combined all these views and made a conclusion. In his explanation, he tried to remove some prevailing misconceptions regarding the previous nations' notions about god. He remained objective and followed a strict and sound methodology in dealing with these terms. He always tried to be free from pre-conceived ideas and approached the Qurʾān with an unbiased mind. It has been seen that these terms were strongly supported by evidence. His biography shows us that he travelled to many places mentioned in the Qurʾān in order to get its real understanding and to know its

implications. Thus, one may find in his *tafsīr* (*Tafhim al-Qur'an*) that he provided geographical maps of the important places referred to in the Qur'ān.

It was actually in his plans that he would not explain these terms without strong evidence because without evidence many people will not be convinced. Thus, he used various means to explain these terms. The main purpose of these explanations was to bring people to the true understanding of *tawhīd*.

Maududi adopted a religio-political ideology that centred on the concept of *tawhīd*. According to him, *tawhīd* consisted of three elements, which are *tawhīd al-ulūhiyyah*, *tawhīd al-rubūbiyyah* and *tawhīd al-hākimiyyah*. One of the fundamental requirements of *tawhīd* is that the *sultāh* and sovereignty should be exclusively for Allāh alone. Maududi believed that all aspects of life should be governed by Allāh. He opined that, the decline among Muslims regarding the proper meaning of these terms started a long time ago, which gradually led Muslims to the present condition.

In view of the above distinctive features, some minor mistakes that may be found (by some readers) in his explanation can be ignored. Since nobody is above mistakes, in other words, above criticisms, it is also true for Maududi. Pointing out the grave of the Prophet (peace be upon him), Imām Mālik uttered his universal statement, "Every body's views or ideas can be accepted or rejected, but only the owner of this tomb is not to be rejected."² Whatever shortcoming can be seen in his explanation, it is not intended. His objectives and the style of his expression may also contain minor errors which make people misunderstand him. Whatever he did, it is his *ijtihād*, therefore, he will receive for it one *ajr* or two based on his intention and perfection.

² Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Hādī al-Jarrāhī al-'Ajlūnī, *Kashf al-Khafā wa muzīl al-ilbās*, ed. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Khālīdī, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2001), Vol. 2, 109.

As is mentioned earlier the main purpose behind this explanation is to clarify this issue with strong evidence in order to establish the proper understanding of *tawhīd* as well as Maududi's thoughts on *Iqāmat al-ḥukm al-Islāmī* or *Iqāmat al-Dīn*, *ḥākimiyyat al-Ilāh*, *Sulṭat al-Rabb* and so on. In doing so, he had given extreme importance to these terms. He tried to prove that the purpose of all the Prophets was for the establishment of *Iqāmat al-ḥukm al-Islāmī* or *Iqāmat al-Dīn*. It has been found from his explanation that the main purpose of sending *Khalīfah fī al-Arḍ* was to establish the *ḥākimiyyat al-Ilāh* in the world and the other acts of *ʿibādah* are its means (*wasā'il*). Therefore, he had given more importance in establishing *Iqāmat al-ḥukm al-Islāmī* without neglecting the other acts of *ʿibādah*. This opinion of him caused some scholars like Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, Yusuf al-Bannury, Wahiduddin Khan and many others to label him as a politician. Therefore, it would be better if he avoid such type of expression. However, through various writings, Maududi proved the soundness of his thoughts. He affirmed that Islam cannot express its full beauty unless the Islamic state is established and Islamic rulings are implemented in all aspects of life. However, an unbiased reader of his writings will find how much importance he gave to the other acts of *ʿibādah* to build an Islamic personality for a member of his *Jama'at*. He considered the other acts of *ʿibādah* as undeniable prerequisites for a sound Islamic state and its subjects.

According to Maududi, the absence of real knowledge regarding these terms can affect the proper understanding of the whole Qur'ān. The reader of the Qur'ān who does not know what is meant by *Ilāh* or *Rabb*, what is meant by *ʿibādah*, what Qur'ān means when it uses the word *dīn* may not be, in fact, able to grasp the real understanding of the Qur'ān. Therefore, he will not be able to understand the concept of *tawhīd* clearly. In other words, he will not be saved from *shirk*. This statement

deserves to be questioned; are not those people, who accept Islam through uttering the *shahādatayn* without knowing its deep meaning, Muslims? The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to accept people as Muslims when they uttered the *shahādatayn*. However, the importance of the proper knowledge of *shahādatayn* was not emphasised by Maududi alone, rather there are many scholars who put seven conditions for *shahādatayn* and one of them is proper knowledge about it. Still it is a sensible issue; some people may think that Maududi was very eager to drive people out from the circle of Islam.

In Maududi's discussion, he categorised the relation of man with his Creator as the relation of 'the Ruler and the ruled' or 'the Master and the slave' instead of 'ʿābid and Maʿbūd'. Maududi's admirers may look at it as a mere style of expression. According to them, he tried to encourage people to the Islamic way of life. Furthermore, as he was a folksy speaker and writer, sometimes he used his emotion to convince people that, since they are the slaves of Allāh they have no choice except to abide by Allāh's rules and regulations. Nonetheless, his expression faced criticisms by many people like Abul Hasan Nadwi and others. They compared this 'Ruler and ruled' with the worldly 'Ruler and ruled' and refused to accept it by saying, in the world people follow the ruler out of their fear of him but in our Creator's case, we worship Him not only out of fear but with love that He deserves for His bounty and mercy on us.

It appears that Maududi paralleled 'ibādah to itāʿah; in doing so, he concluded that obedience to the ruler who does not follow Allāh's ruling is following some kind of tāghūt. Maududi may not categorise all types of itāʿah as 'ibādah, or he meant only those types of obedience that people consider as obligation like sharʿī obligation, which is clear from his indication of the ḥadīth of ʿAdī ibn Ḥātim. However, many

people criticised him for this parallelism; people are following the rulers out of their fear and without considering their instructions as part of *Shari'ah* while they only follow Allāh with love and fear. Thus, it would be better if Maududi avoided this extreme expression.

Regarding seeking permission from *al-Sulṭah al-'Ulyā'* or *Sulṭatu Amīr*, Maududi referred to verse 62 of *Sūrat al-Nūr*. In commenting this verse, other *mufassirūn* such as al-Tha'alabī, al-Samarqandī, Ibn 'Aṭīyyah, al-Zamakhsharī and many others opined, in the absence of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be upon him) the permission should be sought from the *Amīr* or *Imām* while Maududi opined that it should be sought from the *Amīr al-Jamā'ah*, which may mean the same authority.

Maududi opined that when the Qur'ān was revealed, terms *Ilāh*, *Rabb*, *dīn* and *'ibādah* were familiar to the Arabs but their original meanings have been lost with the passing of time. Before giving such statement, it would be better for him to be more cautious. In doing so, he faced criticisms by people like Ḥasan al-Huḍaybī, Yusuf al-Bannury and many others. Nadwi questioned, have these four Qur'ānic terms remained unknown to people for many centuries? Al-Huḍaybī stated that people from all parts of Arabia knew well these terms but such statement without any evidence cannot be accepted. On the other hand, based on this opinion, some people may be confused about the clarity of the Qur'ān, although the Qur'ān declares itself as *tibyān* for everything and Allāh declares its preservation by Himself. In addition to this, Maududi's followers who read only his writings may neglect the writings of previous *Mufassirūn* by thinking that they did not explain it properly.

It is a point of debate who first described today's Muslim society as *al-jāhili* society. According to Muhammad 'Imārah, the unique part that Maududi added to modern Islamic awakening movements is not mentioned by other scholars in this

field, when he categorised present day Muslim societies as *jāhili* and *kufri* societies. This judgement given by Maududi is because these societies are not ruled in accordance with the rules of Allāh in their daily life style. In other words, according to Maududi, *al-ḥākimiyyah* (Sovereignty) of these states belongs to other than Allāh. However, Abul Hasan Nadwi in his *Mādhā khusira al-‘Ālam bi Inḥiṭat al-Muslimīn* described the whole world as a fast moving train by *al-jāhiliyyah* and materialistic to its objectives; Muslims being its passengers also follow it without any choice. Not only Maududi and Nadwi, there are also many other Muslim scholars who warned about the presence of *jāhili* symptoms in the Muslim society. Anyway, it would be better if Maududi had avoided this sensitive issue.

The terms that have been used by Maududi in labelling our society have become the point of disagreement among his critics and admirers. However, readers should bear in mind that, Maududi grew in a society where the majority were non-Muslims and the Western culture and thought controlled the Muslims’ mind. He was a popular speaker and leader who criticised Western culture and thought and was enthusiastic in trying to awaken people. Whenever he labelled the society with terms and characteristics, these were warnings of things which may take place if the situation was not improved. The readers should also bear in mind that Maududi was an Islamic thinker; his thoughts are not but Islamic political thoughts.³ Another suggestion given by ‘Imārah is that before criticising Maududi it is best to know first about the situation that influenced him to do what he had done, the circumstances that played role to produce the ideas, the gathering of all the information about the same

³ Muḥammad ‘Imārah, *Abu al-A‘la Mawdūdī wa al-Ṣaḥwah al-Islāmiyyah* (Beirut: Dār al-Waḥdah, 1986), 18.

topic, placing these thoughts accordingly, and observing and hoping the audiences will reach a plausible conclusion.⁴

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FURTHER RESEARCH

Some people think that Maududi's explanation of Islām was political and devoid of spirituality. Hence a research project focussing on this dimension is necessary to see the validity of the accusation.

Another possibility is that a research may be carried to explore the minimum requirements to be a steadfast Muslim.

A research concerning the fact who used the term *jāhiliyyah* to label the Muslim society for the first time can be conducted.

As Farūqi, Iqbal and Maududi have suggested to reform the Muslim world based on *tawḥīd* as the cornerstone, there can be a comparative research on the nature of their suggestion.

⁴ Ibid., 25.

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