اَلَّلهُمَّ جَعَلنَا مِنهُم وَمِنَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُو وَعَمَلُوا الصَّالِحَات وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْر.آمين يا رب العالمين

ثم عم بعد فاعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم.انا انزلنه قرآنًا عربياً لعلكم تعقلون

Inshaa Allahu t’ala in this hour and 15 minutes or so we are gonna have a session on the brilliance, as it’s entitled, the “Brilliance of the Book”. The way I am gonna conduct this session is not gonna be a lecture. And I know you have heard that before and then you still get a lecture. So I’ll be…try and set some ground roots inshaa Allahu t’ala.

Anyone here ever attended a class with me, anyone here? Ok, a good number of you. Those of you who haven’t, good for you. Um what we are gonna be doing inshaa Allah is I am gonna try and present a topic to you as though you and two other people are sitting here. Don’t pretend you’re sitting here with like, 300 people. And I am gonna be repeating things. I am gonna ask you to repeat them with me. And in the middle of it all, I am gonna start asking questions to see if you remember what we just talked about and then we are gonna build ideas one after the other to get to certain conclusions inshaa Allahu t’ala.

Before we talk about the amazing features and the brilliance and the inimitable, incomparable beauty of the Quran we have to set some ground work, some foundational work. So we have to talk about that first.

So the first thing I am gonna talk to about is, the 3 kinds of Arabic. If you are taking notes, take notes. If not, take mental notes.

3 kinds of Arabic. Now I am gonna over simplify. This is not an academic lecture so I am trying to present this in a way it’s easy to remember, easy to understand inshaa Allah. There are many more kinds of Arabic but for this discussion, 3 kinds of Arabic. I am not gonna list them on the screen. I am just gonna tell you what they are. We’ll call them Spoken Arabic.

#1 – Spoken Arabic

#2- Proper Arabic

And #3- ancient Arabic.

Who remembers? Don’t look in your notes.

Call it out. Call it out. Call it out.

Spoken. Proper. Ancient. Ok.

Spoken Arabic is like, another word for it is busted Arabic, or slang, or twisted, demented, mutated, ugly. Also called ‘Ammiyah. ‘Ammiyah is dialectal arabic meaning Egyptians have their own, Algerians have their own, Moroccans have their own, the Lebanese have their own, the people from Khaleej, from the Gulf States they have their own. Everybody has their own, which Arabic?

Spoken Arabic. They have their own spoken Arabic. Ok?

They can be as far apart for those of you that happen to be desi like, from urdu to Punjabi. Ok? Could be that far apart. Or in English, it could be like English VS Guyanese. If any of you know, if you have ever heard Guyanese, proper Guyanese, you can’t really understand it if you just know English unless the Guyanese fellow decides to use English with you. Otherwise you can’t understand ok? So though they are related, they are not the same. They are not the same.

Now, That’s spoken. What were the other two?

Proper and ancient. In that order. Remember them in that order. Spoken, proper and then ancient.

The newspaper, the Arabic newspaper, the Arabic, you know, news television program, Al-Jazeera or whatever, that’s all in proper Arabic. That’s all in proper Arabic. The Arabic term for that is Al-Fus’ha, Al-Fus’ha. Also if you have taken Arabic in college, they call it modern standard Arabic. What they mean by that is Fus’ha, proper Arabic ok? That’s proper language. It’s correct Arabic. It’s enunciated correctly. It uses the rules of grammar. Spoken Arabic, is it too concerned with grammar? No. But proper Arabic is. Proper Arabic is actually appropriate Arabic, correct Arabic. So when you’re learning proper Arabic, when you’re learning Fus’ha, you’re learning correct Arabic. There’s nothing wrong with it.

But I did give you a third category. Ancient Arabic. We have to understand the difference. It’s easy to understand the difference between spoken Arabic and proper Arabic. But the one you really have to understand, the one most people overlook, you know which difference it is? Between proper Arabic and ancient Arabic. Ancient Arabic is more far sophisticated, far more advanced, far more complex, far more intricate, far more involved than proper modern standard Arabic. In other words, if you go to Egypt, all your friends are going to study Arabic, so you say “I am gonna go study too”. You go to Egypt, you come back speaking proper Arabic. That still doesn’t mean you have an understanding of what? Ancient Arabic. They’re 2 different things. And for the most part, the subtleties, the complexities, the minor issues in ancient Arabic, the things that Arabs would be able to hear and tell “Oh that’s what’s going on”, that is no longer the case today. So even the average Arab, doesn’t hear what the Arab of 1400 years ago, heard. They hear a different kind of Arabic.

The first thing we have to understand is; why was proper Arabic even born? Why not just keep the Arabic of the ancient times? How come it changed? How come it went through a difference? So that’s what we are briefly gonna try and explain. Ok?

So far you are with me? Ok.

So what’s the mistake of the minister when he critiques the Quran?

He judges the book based on proper Arabic while it should be judged based on ancient Arabic. Actually it is the standard of ancient Arabic. It is the standard itself.

Ok. So now let’s talk a little bit about where this difference occurred.

You have these Arabs before the Messenger came, ‘Sallalahu ‘alaihi wassallam. You have these Arabs; they just hang out in the desert. They don’t have any buildings. They don’t have much of farming community. They haven’t even discovered oil yet. They’re just kinda hanging out in the sand. Their neighbor is the Persian Empire. Another neighbor is which Empire? Roman Empire. If you know anything about Empires, they’re always looking to increase the size of gher backyard. You know that about Empires right? They’re always looking to expand. But something interesting happens. Will they expand into the Arab territories? No. They’re like “Why should we send our soldiers out to get barbecued in the sand? What are we gonna get out of this anyway? Leave these Arabs alone, they are useless. They have nothing we can take over. If they have monuments, buildings, cities, you know natural resources, we shall go after them. But they got nothin’ so leave ‘em alone”. So the Arabs are by themselves. The Arabs are just hangin’ out by themselves.

Now when you are by yourselves, you’re isolated, for the most part. I mean there was some travel abroad and there were some influences from outside cultures but for the most part, the Arabs enjoyed an isolation that no other nation enjoyed. And when you are isolated, your language becomes refined. Your language becomes more and more pure because you are only talking among your own people. You are only talking among each other. The Arabs became so refined in their Arabic. You know every nation has this thing called nationalism or patriotism. You take something in your country and say “we make the best cricket bats or whatever”. You take something and this is your pride. This is what you have that nobody else has, right? This is the thing that you have. There’s even such a thing as state pride, right? You know, so state has something that they, you know “we have the best…whatever”, right? “We have the highest murder rate in the country” or something. So something to take pride in.

What did they Arabs take pride in? Did they take pride in the structures that they build? The armies that they have? What did they have to take pride in?

That’s it. That’s all they had was language. So when you take pride in something, you really take care of it. It’s a matter of national identity. So it became a matter of Arab identity to be focused, to excel, to drop everything else and worry about this: Language. So much so that language was the highest thing to know. So much so that if there was a poetry competition between tribes and you know there was an ancient form of diss in competitions ok? So you have 2 poets, and they are gonna diss each other’s tribes, literally. The one who wins, the one who wins has successfully humiliated the opponent tribes for generations to come. And the one who loses, chances are, has lost his head because of losing that competition, because he didn’t just lose a competition, he lost the pride of his tribe. He lost the dignity of his tribe. So they took poetry and literature very very very seriously. This was a very serious thing.

I’ll give you some things about how they took it so seriously. Or how they were pretty cool in the way they did poetry. It was some interesting things.

I am not gonna write Arabic on the screen because I don’t expect everybody to read it but I’ll tell you a small example of a poet. They spoke in riddles. They spoke in images and that’s the other thing I wanna mention to you.

What did they see when they woke up? When they looked outside, what did they see? Desert. Nothing.

When you see nothing, you develop a very vivid imagination. You know our kids have no imagination, they have no imagination. You know why? Cuz they watch stuff all the time so when you tell them to imagine something they imagine something they’ve already seen. But a good imagination is the one which can imagine things that it hasn’t seen. And this was the Arab imagination. So their words were very imaginative. If you’ve heard a good khutbah or you heard a tafseer class, you’ve heard a hadith class and the speaker, the scholar stops at one word and draws an entire picture inside that word. Why? Because the Arabs use very picturesque words. Their words were full of imagery.

So I’ll give you this poem. This poet he started making poetry about how generous he is; how much he gives in charity. And his wife complained to him, she said “we don’t have food to eat. What are you talking about? We’re bankrupt and you’re making poetry about how charitable you are.” And he turns to her and he responds to her in poetry “Fasaylu ‘harban ‘ala makaan al-‘aali” and I’ll tell you what that means in simple English. It means “heavy rain doesn’t get along with a house on top of a hill”. I’ll say that again “heavy rain doesn’t get along with what? A house on top of a hill”. What’s that has to do with being charitable or being poor? What’s he talking about? But you know what he was talking about?

No, Imagine. In your head, imagine a hill and then imagine what on top of it? A house. And what’s going on? Heavy rain. Does the water stay up there? Does the water come to the bottom of the hill? He says rizq (provision) comes from the sky and there are two kinds of people in the world. There are lowly people and there are high people. People that are closer to God and people that are worldly. If your house is above, aren’t you closer to the sky, right? So the water doesn’t stay with me: meaning the provision doesn’t stay with me, I keep giving it. And who does it stay with? Where does it create a puddle? So the people that are rich are actually lowly and I am high. And he says all of this by saying just what? “A high house doesn’t get along with heavy rain”.

So they spoke in these riddles. They wanted you to imagine what they’re trying to get at, they wouldn’t just say it. And if you didn’t get it they’d say “Ha! ‘Ajam (non-Arab/foreigner)”, you know. So this was a sensitivity to language that they enjoyed. Anyhow, the Quran comes to these people, upon the Messenger of Allah ‘Sallalahu ‘Alaihi wassallam, in this environment where they take a word and rip it apart. When you say something that is open to criticism, they will criticize it to the nth degree. They will shred it to pieces. They were extremely critical, I mean if you take movie critics to be critical, they were nothing compared to the poetic critics of the Arabs. They would critique words. They would try to outdo each other. Of course the best way to beat a poet is to do what? Not to attack his personality but to attack his what? His poetry. Attack his poetry and now you’ve got something.

The Quran is revealed and you know what, what are some of the things that the disbelievers said about the Quran? What did they say?

One allegation was it’s the word of a poet. Another allegation? Magic.

What else? Fortuneteller. Fortuneteller.

It’s plagiarized from the Bible right? It’s taken from another source.

All of these, none of these say except in one place in Quran we find: if we wanted we would have come up with something like this. “Laqulna mi’sla ha’zi”.

We could say something like this too. Did they say it? No. They just “aaa we could do it” and then they called it poetry, they called it poetry. And their own, their own poets, when they went to challenge the Messenger of Allah ‘Sallalahu ‘Alaihi wassallam, they came back swearing, Wallahi this is not what? It’s not poetry.

Then they said he’s a mind reader. See the thing is when you have contradictory allegations, like if you’re a Kahin, by the way the mind readers back in the ancient times, they spoke mumbo jumbo. They spoke these weird words that nobody understands and they would say that this guy is casting a spell, you know that’s what he’s doing. But did these words make sense? The words that the Messenger was saying? Did they make sense? They were thought provoking words. So they were clearly not words of a mind reader. Understand?

When they say ‘Kahin’, they don’t mean like our times; some kind of psychic abilities. They mean words that people that they knew that spoke this gibberish. And they were supposed to have some magical effect. But the one you have to acknowledge, it’s oft repeated in the Quran is the allegation that these are words of insanity and he’s possessed. And that these are magical words.

First of all, when you say this is magic, you’ve already accepted that this is not normal, this is paranormal right? By them, accepting that the Quran is magical or even alleging that the Quran is magical, they accepted its power. They accepted its power. It’s an acceptance of its power.

And to say that He is insane means that they couldn’t come up with any allegation against the Quran so if you can’t defeat the Quran, might as well accuse who? The Messenger (‘Sallalahu ‘Alaihi wassallam).

You know when you lose a debate of ideas, then you start attacking personalities, right? It’s very common. When there’s a debate on issues, you can’t beat them on the issues, might as well beat them on what? It’s called character assassination, right? So this is what they tried.

But even in itself, the Quran, they actually even in their criticisms, they acknowledged it is victory. They acknowledged it is victory.

Now a quick problem. Wanna go very very quickly inshaa Allah because we’re losing time.

Islam came. Allah gave it victory. It became a power.

Did it remain in the Arab world? No. Islam spread.

Did it continue to spread only among the Arabs or did it also start incorporating non-Arabs? Non- Arabs.

A point came where the vast majority of the Ummah happened to be Arabs or non-Arabs? Non- Arabs. Non-Arabs became the majority. Arabs became the minority; which means all the non-Arabs were now basically, Arabic one-on-one students, right? They were good at Persian or Roman or whatever else but now they were becoming students of Arabic. When you have the average taken of the level of the Arabic of the Ummah, has the average level gone down, when the Ummah becomes international? Yeah it goes down. Also the Arabs are now interacting with an entire global civilization. The Muslim Arabs, they are travelling all over the place. When you travel, does your language deteriorate? Sure.

My Urdu was awesome, until I had kids. I talk to them in Urdu, they say “Dad you’re talking in Urdu again”. So your language deteriorates over time because of influence from other languages. So the only part of your language you keep is the most essential part; to get the point across. The deeper things, the higher things, the literature, they start withering away.

The Arab scholars, the Muslim scholars realized this. They realized that Arabic as a phenomenon, what existed in the isolated desert, is now changing and this is a serious problem.

Why do you think this is a serious problem? What do you think?

Quran. In one word, the Quran.

Why? Because if we don’t appreciate the amazing Arabic of the desert then we won’t appreciate the amazing Arabic of what? Of the Quran. Our appreciation of the Quran is going to deteriorate. So we have to take measures to preserve the ancient Arabic. This starts happening even in the first century. You have lexicons, dictionaries of Arabic, collections of poetry written by the Arabs saying “Qaalal ‘Arabu” (The Arabs said…). Why are they saying “The Arabs said…” ? that this word means this, this and this. They’re Arabs too. What they mean is the desert Arabs; the ancient Arabs, the Original Arabs, the Arabs in whose tongue, in whose expression the Quran came. They said this. That’s how they understood it. It may have changed a hundred years from then. And we’re not talking a hundred years later now. We’re talking a millennium and a half. So the language changed quite a bit.

When we study the Arabic of the Quran, we’re not studying proper Arabic. What are we studying? Ancient Arabic. Do you understand how we got from ancient to proper, right? Globalization; the expansion of the Ummah. That’s how we got there.

But the study of ancient Arabic remain critical. It remains critical. The problem of our times in appreciating the Quran. Most people, what they know about the Quran, is in Arabic or in translation? Most people what they know about the Quran is in translation. It’s in translation. And most people that know the Arabic of the Quran, in Arabic, know it in proper Arabic or ancient Arabic? They know it in proper Arabic. They are themselves not students of ancient Arabic. So even their understanding, except the scholars; except those who dedicate themselves to that study, except them, is reduced. They have a very limited appreciation of what the Quran is actually saying.

It’s very very powerful stuff. And it’s been reduced to very very… we got a very shallow version of this incredibly sophisticated text. So this was the foundation. This was the first thing I wanted to share; the problem, the problem itself. But also, it has been held widely that you can only appreciate the beauty, the amazing perfection of the Quran in one language. In Arabic.

But you know Allah ‘Azzawjal revealed this Quran as a miracle. Not just a miracle for one group of people. This is a miracle for who? Humanity. Everybody, everybody. So even though we will never taste the Quran like the Arab at the time of the Messenger ‘Sallalahu ‘alaihi wassallam, we’re never gonna be able to get there because we can’t reverse time. We can still make attempts to display the beauty of the Quran in every language including English. We have to at least try. We have to try because it is a right of the people to know how beautiful this book is. We can’t just say “Oh it’s so awesome in Arabic, I can’t even tell you in English. Forget it”. We can’t do that. That’s not fair. You know and this is by the way, this is something you hear in khutbah all the time “Oh this word in ‘Arabi is so beautiful. English? Argh”. And they’re just like “What? What? Tell me something at least”.

So the Quran, it has this perfected eloquence, to the point when you have spoken Arabic. Then what? Proper Arabic. Then what? Ancient Arabic.

Which one if the most sophisticated?

And then you have Quranic Arabic. That’s number four.

Spoken Arabic, proper Arabic, ancient Arabic and then a category in on itself: Quranic Arabic like nothing else, like nothing else. There’s no poetry like it. There’s no other literature like it. There’s no literature in any language like the Quran. Nothing. There is not a book, not a chapter, not a line you can compare to anything else. You can’t.

And first we’ll talk about this very simplistic point of view then we’ll take some examples ok?

The Quran is made up of how many Surahs? 114 Surahs.

Now, what is the common translation of Surah? What is Surah translated into? Chapter, right? Surah is translated into chapter.

Now you tell me. Chapter 1, chapter 2, chapter 3, chapter 4. Is chapter 4 based on chapters 1, 2 and 3? No. And in every other book it is. In every other book you don’t repeat in chapter 4 what you already discussed in what? Chapters 1, 2 and 3. 4 is based on the first 3. There is no repetition. There’s some sort of logical sequence that you can decipher.

The Quran doesn’t repeat itself across its coat on coat chapters. So they’re not really chapters. It’s not really a chapter. We call chapters something else. This is something else. A story book has chapters too. But what happens, the chronology moves forward. Also, the Quran you can’t even divide it. You can’t call it unit 1, unit 2, unit 3. Can’t even do that. You know why? Because the Quran defies human logic.

Are the madni surahs or Makkan Surahs first and then the madni Surahs? No it’s all mixed together. Is the shortest Suran first and then the longest Surah last? Is the longest Surah first and the shortest surah last? No. It’s not going by size order. It’s not going by subject order. It’s not going by chronological order. It has its own unique order unlike what? Every other book. There’s nothing like it. It is incomparable, even in its structure.

Now the problem with human beings is when they have…when they get used to a structure; chronological order, numerical order, size order, these are all orders right? Subject order. When they find none of these you know what the accusation is against the Quran? Yeah, there is no order. The accusation against the Quran is ‘hey we didn’t find chronological order. We didn’t find subject order. We didn’t find you know, size order. So that must mean there is no order. It’s chaos.’ French orientalist, German orientalist: read their literary criticisms of the Quran and you’ll find them saying the Quran has no structure. It’s chaotic M’aa’zAllah.

Now, just on a side note, I do wanna mention. You’re thinking to yourselves “Ah! Who cares about these Kuffars? They’re saying the Quran has no structure. We believe.” Allah challenged them to look into the Quran. Allah challenged them, didn’t he? And when they’re critiquing the Quran, aren’t they doing what Allah had asked them to do? They are.

So when they are making criticisms of the Quran, there are actually fulfilling the destiny of the Quran. And we are in a position, we are in an obligatory position to respond. We’re in a position to respond. Our response isn’t “Ah we believe. Forget them”.

No, no, no. we believe with eyes open, we respond to criticisms. We have answers. When you have no answers you say “go away. You’re a disbeliever”. But we’re not a religion of no answers. We are an intellectual civilization. We have answers. We have answers.

So now, the first thing was about the structure of the Quran. Second thing is the word ‘ayah’. So there’s ‘Surah’, except we can’t really do anything with ‘surah’. Can’t really call it chapter. It’s a proprietary term; a unique term; it’s own file format right? Not compatible with anything else.

What’s the other thing? Ayah. What’s ayah translated as? Ayah is translated as verse. Now the word ‘verse’, think of it in English. Where does the word ‘verse’ get used? Don’t think of it, Religion. Don’t think of Islam. Think of the word verse in English. What is the thing that comes to mind when you hear ‘a verse’? Poetry. Song; verses of a song. Verses in lyrics. Verses of poetry, right?

If not, song and poetry, where does verse come up in English discussion? Bible.

The second connotation of verse is biblical. So either you’re thinking of poetry and song or you’re thinking of the Bible. Now, interestingly enough, the Quran is very adamant in letting us know “wa ma ‘allamna hu…” what? “Al-sh’air”.

‘Wa ma hua bi qauli sha’air”. This is not the word of a poet.

This is not poetry. We didn’t teach him poetry at all. The last thing you should be thinking about when you hear Quran is what? Poetry; any comparison to it. And the last thing you should be thinking is that this is plagiarized from where? The bible. But the two things that come to mind when you hear a verse, even subconsciously, maybe it doesn’t come to your mind but the average English speaker, does it come to their mind? Sure. And if we are doing dawah, we have to be clear of what words we use; what connotations; what messages we sent. So there’s a problem.

The word ‘ayah’ is, it’s unique. Nothing else has ayat. Nothing else has ayat. Nothing else has Surah. Quran has Surah and it has ayat; unique, unique forms. Can’t even call them sentences. Can you think of an ayah that’s just one word, that’s just on word can you think of an ayah? Anybody?

“wal ‘asr” is two words.

“Ar Ra’hmaan”. “Ar Ra’hmaan”. One word.

I can think of 3 ayat that go together to make one sentence.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ. مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ.

3 ayat. But grammatically one sentence.

The previous was one ayah which is one word. Now there are 3 ayat, but how many sentences? 1 sentence. And then there are entire passages of inheritance law or of giving loans like the entire page in Baqarah, right? On giving loans, entire paragraph but how many ayat? One ayah.

You can’t confine it to any literary form, except one term. There’s only one term you can use for the ayah. ‘Ayah’. There’s nothing else. Nothing else fits. Nothing else can describe it. So Allah gave us this unique literature which is incomparable to any other literature.

In the little bit of time that we have left, I wanna share with you what makes the Quran so incredible. We just talked about what makes the Quran unique but not what makes it incredible. We didn’t talk about what makes it incredible yet. Just wanna share with you a handful of ayat.

When you and I speak, and babies cry….When you and I speak, we organize our thoughts. I come to this speech, I say to myself first I am gonna talk about this, then I am gonna talk about this.

I bet you it was that child. “Laugh at me do you?” ah ok.

When you and I speak, we organize our thoughts but you and I are incapable when we speak, of organizing our words based on what we’re going to say later. We can’t organize our words based on what we’re going to say later.

Let me give you an example. I’ll write it on the screen so everyone can see.

Alright, look at this example. Read the first line with me.

“Kafa billahi..” “Kafa billahi…”. Repeat after me. “…Shaheedan baini ya bainakum”

“Kafa billahi baini ya bainakum Shaheedan”.

Do you notice the similarity? They’re very similar words. The words “Kafa billah” occurred twice. Is the word “Shaheedan” used in both ayat? Are the words “baini ya binakum” used in both ayat? They’re two different ayat, two different places. Your homework is to find out where. But notice, now the rough meaning. The rough meaning is “Allah is enough as a witness between me and yourselves”. I’ll say that again: “Allah is enough as a witness between me and yourselves”.

The second ayah says “Allah is enough between me and yourselves as a witness”. Very similar.

The first ayah, once again, says “Allah is enough as a witness…” what’s the Arabic word for ‘witness’? Shaheedan (شهيداً). “…between me and yourselves” (بيني و بينكم)

The second ayah says “Allah is enough between me and yourselves as a witness”.

So the difference is sequence. The difference is Allah said ‘witness’ first, ‘me and yourselves’ later. Then he said ‘me and yourselves’ first and He said ‘witness’ later.

The thing is, Quran is hypersensitive; microscopically sensitive to context. When Allah Sub’haanahu wa t’ala speaks, words are synchronized like beautiful architecture; perfect. You can’t move a brick from its place or the perfection will be lost.

The first ayah, Allah ‘azzawjal ends the ayah “إِنَّهُ كَانَ بِعِبَادِهِ خَبِيرًا بَصِيرًا”. Allah, no doubt, He has full news, has always had full news and has been full view of his slaves. The ayah ends speaking about Allah. The ayah ends speaking about Allah.

When the ayah ends speaking about Allah, the word for Allah ‘شهيداً’ used first. It came first. The next ayah ends ‘أُولَئك هُمُ الْخَسِرُونَ’, skipping some words but this speaks about people who are losers.

One ayah ends…they begin similarly but one of them ends speaking about Allah. The other one ends speaking, not about Allah, but people. When the ayah ends speaking about Allah it begins with mentioning Allah’s attribute as ‘Shaheed’ (شهيد) first. When Allah ends the ayah speaking about people, the ayah begins with mention of “between me and yourselves”. Isn’t that people? People first.

So what is about to be said in the future actually has an influence on how words are organized even before. We don’t have that ability when we speak. We don’t have that capability when we speak. Even when we write we’re not that sensitive but Quran was not revealed as a written word. It was revealed as what? A spoken word. It was revealed as a spoken word.

Allah ‘azzawjal says “[نحن نرزقكم *وإياهم*](https://www.google.com/search?newwindow=1&q=%D9%86%D8%AD%D9%86+%D9%86%D8%B1%D8%B2%D9%82%D9%83%D9%85+%D9%88%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%85&spell=1&sa=X&ei=iyhEUtztGYr4rQesvYHoBg&ved=0CCgQvwUoAA)”

“We provide you and them”. “We provide you…” and who? Them.

In another place He says “نحن نرزقهم و اياكم”.

“We provide them and you”.

One place he says “We provide you and them”. Other place he says what? “We provide them and you”. To us it’s the same thing. To us the sequence…I mean we would…normal people, when they speak they wouldn’t be so sensitive to ‘you’ came first, ‘them’ came later. It’s the same thing. But in the Quran this is hypersensitive.

“و لا تقتلو اولادكم من املاق”

“Don’t kill your children because of poverty”.

“Don’t kill your children…” what? “…because of poverty”. It says because of poverty. Poverty already exists. When poverty already exists, who are you worried about feeding? Yourself. So Allah says “We provide you and them”.

Then he says “و لا تقتلو اولادكم خشيته املاق”.

“Don’t kill your children out of fear of poverty”. Not because of poverty but fear of poverty. Fear is something in the future like the children who are coming in the future so He says “We provide them and you”. سبحان الله.

It is so perfect, the word when you study it. When you study it. This is just one area of the Quran’s perfection; the placement of words, the sequence of words. This is just one area.

Another area I’d like to share with you; perfection of the choice of words. Choice of words.

You know who the messenger Sho’aib is? Sho’aib? Which nation was he sent to?

He was sent to Madiyan.

والى مدين اخاهم شعيبا

“To madiyan we sent their brother…” what? The brother who? “Sho’aib”. Remember the phrases “والى مدين اخاهم شعيبا”. “To madiyan we sent their brother Sho’aib”.

Allah ‘azzawjal in Surah Ash Shu’ara, He speaks about lots of Prophets.

اذ قال لهم اخوهم نوح

“When their brother Noah said to them”

اذ قال لهم اخوهم هود

How should I translate? “When their brother Hood said to them”

اذ قال لهم اخوهم صالح

How should I translate that? “When their brother Sali’h said to them”

اذ قال لهم شعيب

“When Sho’aib said to them”

For everyone else He said their brother Noo’h said, their brother Sali’h said, their brother Hood said, their brother Loo’t said, but when it came to Sho’aib, what did He say? “Sho’aib said”. He didn’t say what? “Their brother Sho’aib said”. He didn’t say that. He skipped out on “their brother”.

Now in another place in the Quran He says, like I told you, “والى مدين اخاهم شعيبا”

“To madiyan we sent their brother Sho’aib”.

In this Surah, where everyone gets the label “brother, brother, brother, brother”, the only one who doesn’t get the label is who? Sho’aib عليه السلام. Why?

Why would Allah ‘Azzawjal take that word away? What nation was he sent to? Madiyan. Madiyan has another name in the Quran you know? اصحاب الايكه (As’haab ul Aikah). Another name is اصحاب الايكه.

Now, Madiyan is a race of people and it’s also a place. It’s a race of people and it’s also a place. Now, الايكه (Aikah) was a giant tree that they used to worship so when Allah calls them the people of الايكه, is that their racial name or their religious name? That’s their religious name. In the Suran where I told you “الى مدين اخاهم شعيبا”, “To madiyan we sent their brother Sho’aib”, when it comes to his race, is he their brother? When it comes to his race; it’s the same race, same people, same region, he is their brother. But in Surah Ash Shu’ara Allah ‘azzawjal says: “كذبت اصحاب الايكه المرسلين”

“The people of Aikah lied against the Messengers (when Sho’aib said to them)…”

He says ‘Sho’aib’, not “their brother Sho’aib”, because Allah used the name اصحاب الايكه (As’haab ul Aikah), the name of their religion. When it comes to their religion, is he their brother? So he says “Sho’aib said”. He doesn’t say “their brother Sho’aib said”.

There is this degree of sensitivity in the Quran in its literary form that you don’t find anywhere else. It’s impossible, and it’s consistent, over and over and over again. Look at this ayah. Allah ‘azzawjal says:

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ

Allah ‘azzawjal speaks of all heavenly bodies. Each of them in their own assigned space, floating, swinging, rotating. What’s He speaking about? Space, planets, stars, right? Galaxies. He’s speaking about all of them doing what? Rotating. Spell out the first words “كُلٌّ فِي فَلَك”. What’s the first letter in “كُلٌّ فِي فَلَك”? Keep going. When you and I…then what? Then what? Then what? What’s the last letter? What’s the first letter? What’s the second last and second? What’s the third last and third? You notice something? What are they rotating around? What letter are they rotating around? The word he used for rotating “يَسْبَحُونَ”; “; ي”. سبحان الله.

How’d you do that? How do human beings come up with that? Allah ‘azzawjal speaks. And this is not written form. This is not written word. This is spoken word. Allah ‘azzawjal gave this Quran to the Messenger صلي الله عليه و سلّم so he would recite it unto the people, so he would recite it as a word. We are baffled even the way it’s spelled, even the way it’s written. But it was baffling, mind boggling, stunning, really stunning in its perfected form.

A few very quick cases inshaa Allah and then we’ll take some questions.

You know the difference between past tense and present tense? The Quran uses past tense and also uses of course present tense and future tense.

When I say ‘killed, killed’, is that past tense, present or future?

Past.

When I say ‘kills’, that’s present tense.

### In Surat-ul-Maida Allah says [وَمَنْ قَتَلَ مُؤْمِنًا خَطَأً](http://www.e-quran.com/saady/images/saady-p93.htm)

### “Whoever killed a believer by mistake”

### “Whoever killed a believer by mistake” Is that past tense or present tense?

### Remember that ok?

### Which is past tense, by mistake or on purpose?

### “When you kill a believer by mistake”

### Then he says [وَمَنْ يَقْتُلْ مُؤْمِنًا مُتَعَمِّدًا](http://www.alro7.net/ayaq.php?langg=arabic&sourid=4&aya=93)

### “Whoever kills a believer on purpose”

### “Whoever killed a believer by mistake” and “Whoever kills a believer on purpose”

### So when it came to killing on purpose, which tense is used past tense or present tense?

### Present tense.

### Same passage. You would think you’d stick to the same tense. But no, when it came to killing by mistake, He uses past tense. When it came to killing on purpose, He used which one? Present tense.

### You know why? The past tense only happened once. “I went to the Texas D’awah convention”. What does that mean? One time.

### “I go to the Texas Dawah Convention”. What does that mean? I go every year. Right?

### So now here, Allah سبحانه و تعالي speaks of a person who killed by mistake. How many of you have killed someone by mistake? You only commit murder by mistake once. The second time you say ‘Oh mistake’ then…

### So the one who kills on purpose is a perpetrator and he should be punished because chances are what? He’ll do it again. Hence the present tense because it has continuity.

### A past tense murder because it’s mistaken. A present tense because it’s on purpose. There’s continuity سبحان الله.

### Even in the tense, even in the choice of words the tense of words, there’s such hypersensitivity that does not exist in any other literary form.

### These are the things that are lost. These are the things that are lost; when you stop becoming students of what language? Don’t say Arabic. Don’t disappoint me.

### Quranic Arabic with ancient Arabic. Ancient Arabic and its perfected form is? Quranic Arabic. Ancient Arabic never reached where Quranic Arabic reached even. So the pinnacle of it is Quranic Arabic. This is why the standard of Arabic is the Quran. The standard of Arabic, to judge whether something is good Arabic or bad Arabic, the standard of it is the Quran. This is even understood and appreciated by Non-Muslims. Non-muslim Arabic literaries. سبحان الله.

### Last 2 in shaa Allah examples and then I’ll take your questions if you have any.

### Allah ‘azzawjal says, and this is about the unique placement of words: [وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً anyone know? وَسَطًا](http://www.al-aqsa.org/index.php/kitab-sunnah/show/798/). [وَكَذَلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا](http://www.al-aqsa.org/index.php/kitab-sunnah/show/798/).

### “This is how we made you/and that is how we formed you a middle nation”. A balanced nation.

### “وَسَطً” literally is right in between. “[فَوَسَطْنَ بِهِ جَمْعًا](http://www.alro7.net/ayaq.php?sourid=100&aya=5)”; Surat ul ‘Adiyat.

### “They get right in the middle of the gathering”. The horses; they penetrate.

### So Allah made us a middle nation, a middle nation; a balanced nation. This is ayah no. 143 of Surat ul Baqarah. Ayah no. what again? 143; of a total of how many ayat of Surah Al-Baqarah? It is the middle ayah of Surat ul Baqarah. 143 half of 286. And the middle ayah says “we made you a middle nation”. سبحان الله. سبحان الله.

### Last one. There are many many many angles that we could talk about the subject from but we’ll hold off on that until the seminar in April in shaa Allah if you’re coming. We’ll talk about these areas of the Quran in depth. At the end I’ll share with you just some areas and we’re going to try and explore it.

### But as a last one. This is very subtle, very small. Two come to my head, so I’ll share two with you. Allah ‘azzawjal, I think this is the fourth or the, something like the fourth ayah of Surat ul A’hzaab.

### How much time do I have btw? 15 minutes, sweet! Ok.

### Question 2? Ok great.

### I’ll take this at the end inshaa Allah. Alright.

### So in Surat ul A’hzaab, Allah ‘azzawjal speaks about spousal issues, marital issues. The ayah begins with men and moves on to discussing women. The ayah begins with men and moves on to what? Women.

### مَا جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ

### “Allah did not put two hearts inside of any man”. He says Allah did not put two hearts inside of any man. “لِرَجُلٍ مِنْ قَلْبَيْنِ فِي جَوْفِهِ”.

### The rest of the ayah speaks about the Azwaaj; the spouses. Now the thing is Allah ‘azzawjal did not say “Allah did not put two hearts inside of any human being”. He excluded who? Yeah he just said he did not put two hearts inside of any? Man. And this is perfection in its literal form, not literary, but literal form because women can get pregnant and when they get pregnant, how many hearts are inside? Could be two or more. So Allah says He didn’t put two hearts inside of any man. سبحان الله.

### Even in its literary form, literal form, literally. You can’t play the devil’s advocate and say “What about women? You said inside. Women have two hearts”. No you can’t because he said “man”, “لِرَجُلٍ”.

### There’s this thing in Arabic called ‘Idghaam’. You may have heard of it in tajweed, also in ‘Saf. It’s a science of morphology of Arabic. What it does is, it lets you fuse words together and I’ll show you one thing in the Quran.

### Ok read the first word out loud for me.

### يَتَدَبَّرٌ. يَتَدَبَّرٌ.

### What’s the second word?

### يَدَّبَّرُ

### They’re actually the same word.

### The Arabs says “يتدبر” too much work so let’s just take the “ت” and the “د” and fuse them together, put the shadda on top, make life easier. So he says “يَدَّبَّرُ”. They’re the same word. This is called Idghaam; fusion, fusing two letters together for convenience.

### In modern Arabic, they’re the same. In classical Arabic, they’re a little bit different.

### Which is the abbreviated form? What do you think?

### The second one. يَدَّبَّرُ is abbreviated. يَتَدَبَّرٌ، يَتَدَبَّرٌ is the complete form.

### Now, تَدَبُّر means to reflect; to ponder, to ponder. Which is the more complete form of the word again? يَتَدَبَّرٌ.

### Allah ‘azzawjal when he speaks about the entire Quran He says “اَفَلاَ يَتَدَبَّرٌونَ القُرانَ”

### اَفَلاَ يَتَدَبَّرٌونَ القُرانَ. Did he use the complete form? Yeah. When He speaks of any part of the Quran not the whole thing, just some ayat; some word, guess what? He uses the partial form “ليَدَّبَّرُ آيَاتِهِ”. ليَدَّبَّرُ آيَاتِهِ.

### He used the partial form of the word when he speaks about a part of the Quran and He uses the complete form of the word when He uses what? Speaks of the complete Quran. “يَتَدَبَّرٌونَ القُرانَ”. Even in the way words are spelled, there’s a miracle. Even in the way they’re spelled, there’s perfection. There’s precision, there’s minute detail, there’s minute minute detail. So this is…We’re kind of…What I have shared with you goes far as, on the microlevel; meaning we’re zooming in on the ayah, zooming in on a word. We’re looking at a word, great great detail and trying to explore the sophistication of the Quran from that point of view.

### But there are other issues. For instance, Allah ‘Azzawjal, you know He gives many examples in the Quran. He gives many many examples. You wanna give an example before we go? This is one. One of my favorites.

### Ok we’ll do one of my favorites.

### Some of you may have heard this before but that’s Ok. It’s good to remember.

### Allah سبحانه و تعالي, He speaks in Surat ul Hajj. Surat ul Hajj is Surat No. 22, this I believe is ayah no. 31. “[حنفاء لله غير مشركين به](http://www.islamweb.net/newlibrary/display_book.php?idfrom=1168&idto=1168&bk_no=51&ID=1173)”.

### “May our solely dedicated to Allah, not committing any shirk with him none whatsoever”

### “وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ”

### “And whoever was to commit shirk with Allah” Or “…is to commit shirk with Allah”

### “فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ”

### “Then it is as though he fell from the sky”.

### Now I want you to remember this example. Whoever does shirk with Allah is like someone who fell from the sky. “فَكَأَنَّمَا خَرَّ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ”

### This is the first part of the example Allah gave us; the comparison, between the Mushrik and the guy falling from the sky.

### Then He says “فَتَخْطَفُهُ الطَّيْرُ”

### “Then birds are snatching off of him”. Birds are having lunch on this guy. Birds are eating him.

### “أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ”

### “And the wind is blowing him away to a far off unchartered place”.

### Three parts of the example.

### First part: He’s falling from where? The sky.

### Second part: What’s happening? Birds are eating him.

### Third part: huh? Wind blows him away to a far off place.

### Nodekiya; famous orientalist, one of the first pioneer orientalist who critiqued the Quran, he wrote an example; the point of an example is to make sense to the audience. After all, why does a teacher give an example? To make the subject easy right? The subject is hard, let me give you an example.

### Now if my example is harder than the subject then it kind of beats the point right? So you have to, you have to give examples to the audience, to the listener, to the student that makes the subject easy, that makes subject more approachable. It’s something you can relate to.

### Nodeki argues, look falling from the sky, nobody’s ever seen it. I can’t relate to it neither could the Arabs. Even in the day of airplanes who could have ever imagined falling from the sky? Example doesn’t make sense. Then he says birds are eating from him. He argues 9.8 something meters per Second Square, what kind of birds are these that this guy is falling with acceleration due to gravity and these birds are still eating him and what size of birds are these that are eating a live man as he’s falling from the sky? Beyond imagination, can’t see that happening. Then he says when you’re falling from the sky, if you fall off to an unchartered place or you fall in a famous place aren’t you equally dead? So what’s the point of falling in an unchartered place? So he critiques the example. He says the example doesn’t make any sense. The only problem once again is, criticism is based on proper Arabic without an understanding of what? Ancient Arabic.

### One of the things I didn’t tell you about ancient Arabic is that it has its own expressions; idioms. An idiom in English is “that’s cool”. If you said “that’s cool” a hundred years ago, they’d say “What are you talking about? It’s Florida. It’s not cool”. So you wouldn’t think of ‘that’s cool’ the same way. The words are the same but the meaning’s changed. Isn’t that true right? The words are exactly the same.

### We’re living in crazy times. Kids go to a basketball game. They come out and they say “That’s cool”. And the other kid says “That was hot” and they mean the same thing right? So expressions change. Expressions change.

### The Quran uses expressions of the ancient Arabs. Did those expressions change over time? Yes. You have to understand; if you take the expression and you understand it literally, you’ve lost the meaning. It’s not literal, it’s an expression. You have to understand the expression behind it. Like when someone says to you “No use crying over spilt milk”, you say “I didn’t spill milk. I lost my job man”. But you missed the point. That’s an expression.

### But anyhow, let’s quickly go to this example so we finish on time.

### I have how much time?

### Ok so I’ll take my time. Alright, 15 minutes. I’ll take less in shaa Allah.

### Alright, so here’s the thing. Allah ‘azzawjal speaks of the one falling from the sky. By the way, who was this person being compared to, the guy falling from the sky what’s he…?

### Mushrik; most of the Arabs at the time. Most of these Arabs didn’t believe in an afterlife. Most Arabs believed that the only thing you have to look forward to is what? Death. There’s nothing after that. It’s game over. That’s it.

### So the only thing ahead of you is what? Death. And you’re being reminded about hell fire and resurrection and the sun and the moon colliding and you say “aaahhh No. No man”

### “إِنْ هِيَ إِلَّا حَيَاتُنَا الدُّنْيَا”

### “This is just wordly life of ours”

### “نَمُوتُ وَنَحْيَا”

### “We live and we die” that’s it. There’s nothing more. I don’t understand this whole aakhirah stuff.

### Allah ‘azzawjal speaks to this adamant, this disbelieving mind, trying to relate to this audience. The only thing they have to look forward to, is not hereafter, it’s what again? Death. If you know anything about the Arabs, they were a warrior people. They were really big on their tribal warfare pride right?

### Now it is we have sports teams, right? We take pride in our sports teams. People paint their faces and all that kind of stuff.

### Their pride was their tribe and their battles. The worst kind of death, legacy you can leave behind is the death of a coward, the death of a loser because after all, once you’re dead and there’s no hereafter, what’s the only thing left of you? Your legacy, your reputation. That’s all that’s left.

### So now, to the Arabs, they used this expression “falling from the sky”, even before the Quran was revealed. They used to say “falling from the sky” all the time. You know what they meant by it? They meant that there are two tribes fighting. One tribe is on top of the cliff, the other tribe is on the bottom of the cliff. Which one has the advantage? The guys on top. Despite, being on top of the cliff, if they still lost in battle and the enemy did what with their bodies? Chuck ‘em off the cliff. They used to call this what? Falling from the sky.

### There are two scenarios. Either they are lost which means that they’re lousy fighters despite having the advantage OR they were running away, retreating from the enemy and in their retreat the trip and what happens? They fall so they die the death of a coward. Either they die the death of a loser or a coward. These are the worst legacies that the Arabs would ever wanna leave behind. The ugliest kind of end they could imagine would be captured in the words “Falling from the sky”.

### Allah speaks to these mushrik – the mushrik arabs – who don’t have any concept of the hereafter, who have no concept of the humiliation of the day of judgment so he gives them a word that will help them understand from their world view. What’s the ugliest thing you can imagine? Let me tell you Shirk is like that. Shirk is like falling from the sky.

### When you die in battle, you know this is ancient human tradition, when people die in battle, two sides collide. Corpses are lying all over the place. Once the battle is done what happens to those corpses? Each side comes with their people and takes their dead and gives them a proper burial. Isn’t that what happens? Unless you feel that your soldier was a traitor or a humiliation or an embarrassment to your tribe, then nobody comes for you. And when nobody comes for you, guess what comes for you? Birds. “الطير”. “ذاهل الشعر” in classical poetry is used more than often for vultures. Birds of carrion, eating dead meat. So now, birds are gnawing away at this humiliated corpse who is disassociated from his own tribe people. They don’t even wanna have anything to do him. These disgusting birds eat their lunch and even they don’t want anymore. Even they don’t want anymore.

### Now what comes? Now a wind comes and blows off whatever scum of you is left into unchartered territory. You’re just trash on the earth; decomposed trash on the Earth. The ugliest, ugliest ending that the Arab could imagine has been displayed in such beautiful terms with one example just you can get an idea what you’re dealing with, what you think Shirk is a small thing? Put things in your perspective. You see how powerful the Quran is in its examples? The thing of it is and there’s something that may be a point of confusion for some of you. In our times people say things like ‘Well the Quran says it’s clear. I should be able to understand it myself. All these mufassirs, they’re just tryin’ to give me their opinion. I am gonna figure it out for myself”, which is your way of saying “I wanna be a mufassir for myself”. But actually to be honest, the Quran does it say that it’s clear? It does. Does it say that it’s self-evident? Yes. But the Quran never says that it’s simple. We shouldn’t confuse clear and self-evident with what? Simple. Two different things. Two different things.

### The Quran presents us sometimes very clear solutions to very complex problems. I often give the example of a calculus problem. Imagine there’s a really hard calculus problem and your professor writes a really clear solution to the problem. Now the solution may be clear but is it simple? No. Don’t over simplify the Quran because in fact it has a great deal of complexity. Its complexity contains its clarity. Don’t confuse simplicity with clarity. They’re two different things and many places the Quran is simples, yes but in many many moe places the Quran is complex.

### Now, does the Quran have universal guidance, universal benefit across generations? It’s timeless?

### The other argument that you get is if the Quran is timeless, why do we have to study history to understand the Quran?

### The Quran’s message, the Quran’s lessons, the Quran’s wisdom, the Sunnah’s wisdom too they’re all timeless. They’re all timeless. But the Quran’s language, the Quran’s mode of communication is not timeless. It was revealed in a very particular time with very particular language. So if you wanna get the timeless lessons out of the Quran, you have to study what? Ancient Arabic. You have to go back in time. You have to go study that particular language in which the Quran was revealed. Not doing justice to that language, waters down, sometimes even…sometimes even deforms the message of the book. It sometimes even deforms the message of the book.

### The aspects of the Quran that I didn’t share with you today were from the grammatical point of view. I didn’t talk to you about the oaths in the Quran. I didn’t talk to you about the structure of the Surah. How Allah ‘azzawjal organizes the Surah. How the Surahs are laid out next to each other to form complete literary, you know, units and structures. We didn’t talk about these things.

### I just talked about here and there, sporadically, a few examples of the literary beauty and marvel of the Quran.