

more than an approximation limited by human understanding. To any description given by Allāh of Himself in human terminology, the mind is required to apply the concept of absoluteness and perfection befitting Him. Ibn Taymiyyah stated consisely that true belief in Allāh (i.e., the correct Islāmīc '*aqeedah* of *Ahl as-Sunnah*) includes belief in whatever is described in His Book (the Qur'ān) or through His Prophet (Muḥammad ﷺ) – belief that is free from distortion,<sup>2</sup> suspension,<sup>3</sup> qualification<sup>4</sup> or comparison.<sup>5</sup> The same can be said for those aspects of the unseen, such as Paradise and Hellfire, which are beyond the limits of human language and human imagination.

In this edition particular attention has been given to the names "*ar-Raḥmān ar-Raḥeem*" (explained in a footnote to *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, verse 1). Since both express certain aspects of divine mercy, "the Most Merciful" was used for *ar-Raḥmān* and simply "the Merciful" for *ar-Raḥeem*. However, when they occur together, as in *Sūrah al-Fātiḥah*, the adjectives "entirely" and "especially" have been used to indicate the complementary relationship between the two.

To those who use this volume, it should be emphasized that whenever in doubt, one should refer to dictionaries of the classical language and to reliable Arabic *tafseer*. Despite the many technicalities involved in a work of this sort that can predispose it to possible imperfections, al-Muntadā is optimistic that the present effort will contribute to a better understanding of the Qur'ān for English-speaking people in every part of the world.

Ultimately, all success is from Allāh,  
and all praise is due to Him.

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<sup>2</sup>*Tahreef*: Applying an allegorical meaning which will inevitably be incorrect since it is not based upon knowledge.

<sup>3</sup>*Ta'ṭeel*: Desertion of the concept altogether or denial that Allāh would have such an attribute or quality.

<sup>4</sup>*Takyeef*: Attempting to explain how a certain attribute or quality could be, while such knowledge lies only with Allāh.

<sup>5</sup>*Tamtheel*: Supposing that divine attributes resemble those of creation, while Allāh has said, "**There is nothing like unto Him.**" (42:11)

## FOREWORD

Scholars have defined the Qur'ān as "the words of Allāh<sup>6</sup> revealed to Muḥammad (ﷺ), the recitation of which is a form of worship."<sup>7</sup> This definition can be applied to no other book or speech.

Reading and recitation of the Qur'ān is an important form of worship for which a Muslim can expect reward and benefit in the Hereafter. There was a definite purpose behind the strong encouragement given by the Prophet (ﷺ) in several authentic *ḥadīths* for recitation of the Qur'ān.<sup>8</sup> That purpose is clearly stated in the Qur'ān itself:

﴿كِتَابٌ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ مُبَارَكٌ لِيَدَّبَّرُوا آيَاتِهِ وَلِيَتَذَكَّرَ أُولُوا الْأَلْبَابِ﴾

***"A blessed Book which We have revealed to you, [O Muḥammad], that they might reflect upon its verses and that those of understanding would be reminded."***<sup>9</sup>

﴿أَفَلَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا﴾

***"Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'ān, or are there locks upon [their] hearts?"***<sup>10</sup>

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

***"Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'ān? If it had been from [any] other than Allāh, they would have found within it much contradiction."***<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>"Allāh" is the proper name of God and is not used to denote any other being. Therefore, this name is retained in translation to other languages.

<sup>7</sup>Al-Qaṭṭān, Mannā', *Mabāḥith fi 'Ulūm il-Qur'ān*, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup>The recitation whose merits are mentioned in the *ḥadīths* is that of the actual words of Allāh in their original Arabic form. Nevertheless, any effort toward understanding the Qur'ān's meanings in order to increase faith, obtain guidance and live by its ordinances is in itself a deed of great merit.

<sup>9</sup>*Sūrah Ṣād*, 38:29.

<sup>10</sup>*Sūrah Muḥammad*, 47:24.

<sup>11</sup>*Sūrah an-Nisā'*, 4:82.