

*Shaykh al-Islām* Aḥmad bin Taymiyyah pointed out in his *Fatāwā* that even the ordinary words of men are spoken or written for the purpose of being understood by the listener or reader and that the Qur’ān is surely more worthy of being understood than the words of men. Many scholars have stated that it is the responsibility of all Muslims to learn the Arabic language in order to understand the Qur’ān. Ibn Katheer, author of the well-known Arabic *tafseer*, maintained that it is also the duty of Muslim scholars to make its meanings known to the people.

No person can afford to be ignorant of the Qur’ān, for it is the constitution revealed by Allāh to regulate and govern human life. It speaks with the perfect knowledge of the Creator about His creation. It exposes the truth and invites man to the way of truth. It contains important information about human destiny and that of the individual. It educates and raises men to the highest moral, intellectual and social level when they strive to comprehend it and apply its teachings to life.

Moreover, it is the actual words of Allāh – not created, but revealed by Him through the angel Gabriel to a human messenger, Muḥammad bin ‘Abdullāh (ﷺ), for the benefit of humanity. It is an eternal miracle given to the final prophet, Muḥammad (ﷺ), as proof of his prophethood and a challenge to all succeeding generations. It is of unique and inimitable quality. Revealed fourteen centuries ago, it remains today completely intact and unaltered in its original Arabic form.

What does one discover when he understands the meanings of the Qur’ān? The answers to this question can be classified in four main categories:

1. That he can know his Creator as He has described Himself
2. That he can know the purpose of life on this earth and what is expected of every person during this life
3. That he becomes aware of the consequences of his attitudes and his behavior
4. How he should relate to all things – to Allāh by worship and obedience, to his fellow man by justice to all or by

*iḥsān* (a higher degree),<sup>12</sup> and to the universe in general by putting those things under his control to good use

This divine message was revealed to confirm and renew the relationship between man and his Creator and to reinstate the sincere and correct worship of the one true God, Allāh (*subḥānahu wa ta'ālā*), who says:

﴿فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ﴾

***"Then let them respond to Me and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided."***<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>*Iḥsān* has been defined by the Prophet (ﷺ) as "worshipping Allāh as if you see Him" or generally, doing more than one's duty and expecting less than one's right.

<sup>13</sup>*Sūrah al-Baqarah*, 2:186.