

## Editorial

This is the first special issue of *al-Burhān Journal of Qur'ān and Sunnah Studies*. We have reached the half decade milestone, and this year the journal is being managed by a new line up of both the editorial and advisory board members, as announced in the previous issue. This special issue is dedicated for selected papers which were presented at the Inaugural Jamalullail Chair for Prophetic Sunnah International Conference. The main theme of the conference was “Engagement with Obscure Quranic Verses and Ḥadīth Texts.” Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, al-Burhān international editorial members are working online to ensure the publication of this special issue. In this edition, only six papers are published instead of the usual seven. Only one paper is in English. The rest are written in Arabic. However, notes and references are provided in English to comply with the new format of the journal.

The English article challenges the application of Bucaillist method in dealing with problematic ḥadīth by raising several issues surrounding the exploit of scientific commentary in solving what seems to be scientific errors observed in the ḥadīth texts. The article focuses on the suitability of *al-sharḥ al-‘ilmī* in explaining ḥadīths that belong to the subject of *al-ṭibb al-nabawī* (Prophetic medicine).

The second article addresses a methodological problem of choosing between *taḥlīl* (analysis) and *ta’wīl* (interpretation) in comprehending the meaning of Quranic texts. The author discusses some examples of deviation in applying *ta’wīl* from two main modes of exegesis: *al-tafsīr bi’l-ra’yi* (rational exegesis) and *al-tafsīr al-ishārī* (allegorical exegesis).

To benefit from the experience of past scholars in dealing with problematic Quranic verses, the third article explores the methodology of Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (606AH/1209CE) in solving this problem through his works, particularly his renown exegetical oeuvre, *Mafāṭīḥ al-Ghayb*, also known as, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*. Apart from explaining the wisdom behind the presence of problematic verses and its forms, the author has discovered nine strategies applied by al-Rāzī in addressing the prevailing issues. Suggestion has also been put forward to ensure the exposure of students to the science of dealing with problematic verses or better known by its Arabic term, *‘ilm mushkil al-Qur’ān*.

*Mushkil* or problematic meaning is also found in the texts of ḥadīth. The fourth article attempts to outline the methodology of dealing with problematic ḥadīth texts. It traces the development of a specific science called *ta’wīl mukhtalif al-ḥadīth*. After a brief explanation of the history of ‘problematising’ the Divine commandment and revelation, the authors review some prominent works in the field, namely, *Ikhtilāf al-Ḥadīth* of al-Shāfi‘ī, *Ta’wīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth* of Ibn

Qutaybah, *Muḥskil al-Āthār* of al-Ṭaḥāwī, *Muḥskil al-Ḥadīth wa Bayānuhu* of Ibn Fūrak, and *Kashf al-Muḥskil min Aḥādīth al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* of Ibn al-Jawzī,

The fifth article dedicates its attention exclusively to the following *ḥadīth*: “No prayer is more burdensome upon the hypocrites than the Fajr and the ‘Ishā’ prayers and if only they knew its rewards, they would have attended them, even if by crawling. Certainly, I felt the urge to order the *mu’adhdhin* to call for prayer, order a man to lead the people (instead of me), take a flame of fire and head to burn down houses of those who had not left for the prayer yet.” Several issues such as the religious status of congregational prayer and the desire to burn down houses are discussed extensively with relevant scriptural proofs being evaluated.

The last article in this issue alludes to the slight difference between *muḥskil* (problematic) and *muṣṭaḥkal* (problematised), particularly in *ḥadīth*. The authors stress the importance of verifying terms and tracing the chronology and reason for problematised religious texts. Other related terms such as *al-khafī* (hidden), *al-mujmal* (unconditioned), *al-mutashābih* (misidentified due to similarity) are brought to the attention of the readers. The authors also highlighted main reasons for the ‘problematising’ of religious commandments and scriptures, amongst others the neglect of specific aspects such as the socio-historical background of the text and the negative impact of some exchanges between civilisations. The issue of *muṣṭaḥkal* can be solved with more attention being given to the principles of *ḥadīth* criticism forwarded in the article.

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