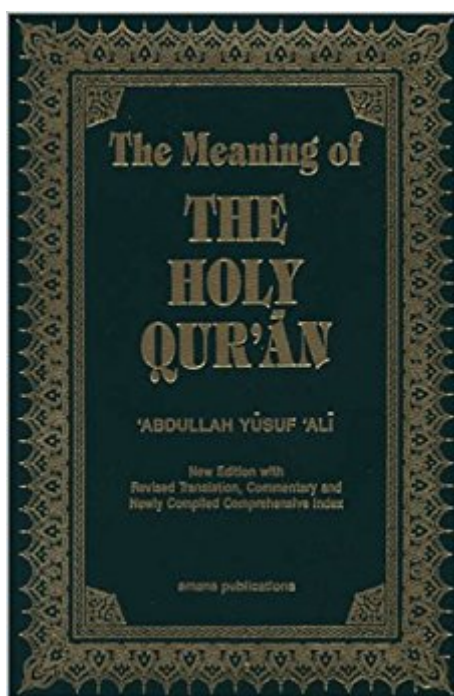


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The Meaning Of The Holy Qur'an (English And Arabic Edition) - Pocket Size



Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

The Best in English translation, Quality of Print and Binding and not least the Price. -- Book Review January 25th, 2001 --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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Salam-Shalome-Peace be upon you! If there were only 1 translation of the Holy Quran that I could take with me on a desert island, it would be an indecisive choice between Asad and Yusuf-Ali. The Holy Quran, without the commentary, is roughly three-fourths the size of the New Testament. IT does not read like the Bible. It talks about a story, deals with the theme and moral, and then moves on to another point. It is very emphatic (I.E., it emphasizes particular themes over and over again, but with a different aspect to each passage. This current Arabic-English(-no transliteration) edition is compact enough for easy (big-pocket) transportation. The paper, however, is very thin, requiring care. The Message of the Qur'ân (the current edition includes an invaluable transliteration and beautiful artwork) is a translation of the Holy Quran by Muhammad Asad (who, interestingly, was a Jew before he became a Muslim), which seeks to present this holy text through a reasoned faith-based approach, citing and referencing many classical texts along the way. In contrast, The Meanings of the Holy Qur'ân, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (which lacks an accompanying

transliteration), presents the Quran in an annotated fashion, stressing the symbolism and interconnectedness application of each passage (rarely citing classical references to augment a point). As compared with the Yusuf Ali translation, Asad's text, which uses brackets (allowing translation-based explications without diverging from the original Arabic meaning to augment the text), is more concise, stressing the fundamental, elemental, and symbolic aspects of the messages of the Quran (sometimes elucidated through juxtaposition [as he points out]), without focusing on the details to the exclusion of all else. Ali's translation, however, provides a deeper meaning to many passages, further illustrating and elaborating (through copious and sometimes overwhelming footnotes) the themes and symbols found therein. As an invaluable compliment, Ali's translation (1) provides section divisions and a summary of each surah (both in pros and in thematic content), presenting concise introduction to the unfamiliar reader; (2) elucidates the inherent underlying symbolism of each passage, while logically connecting it to those around it (sometimes contextually and historically); And (3) provides judgments as to why such a word or event occurred and what the resulting beliefs and outcomes should be (which at points retracts from the otherwise subjective commentary). In other words, Asad's translation is technical and academic, explaining words and concepts through (frequently-referenced) linguistic and classical sources, while alluding to, and explaining, but not elaborating on, inherent symbolism. Ali's translation (which rarely references classical texts and opinion), provides the symbolism and resulting application/interpretation of the text. It is my humble opinion that the following three translations of the Quran are needed for a nuanced understanding of the text: (reference to classical sources with an emphasis on faith understood through reason) The Message of the Qur'an: The full account of the revealed Arabic text accompanied by parallel transliteration (English and Arabic Edition) by Muhammad Asad (ISBN-9781904510352) (illustration of symbolism and intertextual connectedness) The Meanings of the Holy Qur'an (English and Arabic Edition) by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (ISBN-9781590080160): (literal rendition with no [impeding/interpretive] footnotes) The Koran Interpreted: A Translation by A. J. Arberry (ISBN-9780684825076) For comparison of style, word choice, and commentary (where applicable), see (below) the translations of 2:163-164 and 24:35) by A. J. Arberry (who must be commended for his high literal translation which does not use parentheses or brackets), Yusuf Ali, and Asad, respectively.

2:163-164 Your God is One God; there is no god but He, the All-merciful, the All-compassionate. Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day and the ship that runs in the sea with profit to men, and the water God sends down from heaven therewith reviving the earth after it is dead and His scattering abroad in it all manner of crawling thing, and the turning about of the winds and the clouds

compelled between heaven and earth -- surely there are signs for a people having understanding. A.J. Arberry-The Koran

Interpreted.2:163. And your God is One God: There is no god but He, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.2:164. Section 20. Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the Night and the Day; in the sailing of the ships through the Ocean for the profit of mankind; in the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith to an earth that is dead; in the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth; In the change of the winds, and the clouds which they trail like their slaves between the sky and the earth; (here) indeed are Signs for a people that are wise.165.

Where the terrible consequences of Evil, i.e., the rejection of Allah, are mentioned, there is always stress laid on Allah's attributes of Grace and Mercy. In this case Unity is also stressed, because we have just been told about the Qibla symbol of unity and are about to pass the theme of unity in diversity, in Nature and in the social laws of human society.166. This magnificent Nature passage stands out like a hill in a landscape, enhancing the beauty of our view, and preparing us for the every-day laws and ordinances which follow. Note its literary architecture. Allah is one: and among His wondrous Signs is the unity of design in the widest diversity of Nature. The Signs are taken from the features of beauty, power, and utility to man himself, and lead up to an appeal to Man's own intelligence and wisdom. We begin with the glory of the heavens and the earth, the wide spaces covered by man's imagination, remote and yet so near to his own life. The most striking every-day phenomenon resulting from the interrelations of the heavens and the earth is the alternation of day and night, regular and yet changing in duration with the Seasons and the latitudes of our globe. The night for rest, and the day for work: and we can think of the work in terms of nature's beauty; the stately ships "flowing" (as the original text has it) across the seas, for communications and merchandise as between men and men. The seas thus serve us no less than land, and the give-and-take as between sea, sky, and land, is further exemplified by the rain. The rain leads to the fertility of land, and here we are reminded of the contrast between the Winter's death of Nature and her revivification in the Spring. Here we are reminded of agriculture and the use we make of cattle and all kinds of living creatures. The word translated "beasts" has a wide meaning, including crawling creatures, insects, etc.-all contributing to the round of Nature's operations. This leads us on to the wonderful winds, the region of the air, which man is just beginning to explore and navigate. The personified winds drive the clouds in the sky like "slaves." Here is another aspect of clouds besides that of giving rain. The fleecy clouds are things of sunset beauty; at midday they temper the glare of the sun; at all times they affect radiation and other processes going on in the sky. So we

come back to the sky, rounding off the argument, and correlating our human life with the Will and Power of Allah, if we had the wisdom to see! Abdullah Yusuf-Ali The Meanings of the Quran 2:163 AND YOUR GOD is the One God: there is no deity save Him, the Most Gracious, the Dispenser of Grace. (2:164) Verily, in the creation of the heavens and of the earth, and the succession of night and day: and in the ships that speed through the sea with what is useful to man: and in the waters which God sends down from the sky, giving life thereby to the earth after it had been lifeless, and causing all manner of living creatures to multiply thereon: and in the change of the winds, and the clouds that run their appointed courses between sky and earth: [in all this] there are messages indeed for people who use their reason.¹³⁰ This passage is one of the many in which the Qur'an appeals to "those who use their reason" to observe the daily wonders of nature, including the evidence of man's own ingenuity ("the ships that speed through the sea"), as so many indications of a conscious, creative Power pervading the universe. Muhammad Asad-The Message of the Qur'an. 24:35 God is the Light of the heavens and the earth; the likeness of His Light is as a niche wherein is a lamp (the lamp in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star) kindled from a Blessed Tree, an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West whose oil wellnigh would shine, even if no fire touched it; Light upon Light; (God guides to His Light whom He will.) (And God strikes similitudes for men, and God has knowledge of everything.) A.J. Arberry-The Koran Interpreted 24:35 Section 5. Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His Light is as if there were a Niche and within it a Lamp: The Lamp enclosed in Glass: The glass as it were a brilliant star: Lit from a blessed Tree, an Olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose Oil is well-nigh Luminous, though fire scarce touched it: Light upon Light! Allah doth guide whom He will to His Light: Allah doth set forth Parables for men: and Allah doth know all things.²⁹⁹⁶ Embedded within certain directions concerning a refined domestic and social life, comes this glorious parable of light, which contains layer upon layer of transcendent truth about spiritual mysteries. No notes can do adequate justice to its full meaning. Volumes have been written on this subject. In these notes I propose to explain the simplest meaning of this passage.²⁹⁹⁷ The physical light is but a reflection of the true Light in the world of Reality, and that true Light is Allah. We can only think of Allah in terms of our phenomenal experience, and in the phenomenal world, light is the purest thing we know, but physical light has drawbacks incidental to its physical nature: e.g. (1) it is dependent upon some source external to itself; (2) it is a passing phenomenon; if we take it to be a form of motion or energy it is unstable, like

all physical phenomena; (3) it is dependent on space and time; its speed is 186,000 miles per second, and there are stars whose light takes thousands of years before it reaches the earth. The perfect Light of Allah is free from any such defects.²⁹⁹⁸ The first three points in the Parable center round the symbols of the Niche, the Lamp, and the Glass. (1) The Niche (Mishkat) is the little shallow recess in the wall of an Eastern house, fairly high from the ground, in which a light (before the days of electricity) was usually placed. Its height enabled it to diffuse the light in the room and minimized the shadows. The background of the wall and the sides of the niche helped to throw the light well into the room, and if the wall was white-washed, it also acted as a reflector. the opening in front made the way for the light. So with the spiritual Light; it is placed high, above worldly things; it has a niche or habitation of its own, in Revelation and other Signs of Allah; its access to men is by a special Way, open to all, yet closed to those who refuse its rays. (2) The Lamp is the core of the spiritual Truth, which is the real illumination; the Niche is nothing without it; the Niche is actually made for it, (3) The Glass is the transparent medium through which the Light passes. On the one hand, it protects the light from moths and other forms of low life and from gusts of wind, and on the other, it transmits the light through a medium which is made up of and akin to the grosser substances of the earth (such as sand, soda, potash, etc.), so arranged as to admit the subtle to the gross by its transparency. So the spiritual Truth has to be filtered through human language or human intelligence to make it intelligible to mankind.²⁹⁹⁹ The glass by itself does not shine. But when the light comes into it, it shines like a brilliant star. So men of God, who preach Allah's Truth, are themselves illuminated by Allah's Light and become the illuminating media through which that Light spreads and permeates human life.³⁰⁰⁰ The olive tree is not a very impressive tree in its outward appearance. Its leaves have a dull greenish-brown color, and in size it is inconspicuous. But its oil is used in sacred ceremonies and forms a wholesome ingredient of food. The fruit has a specially fine flavor. Cf. Verse note 2880 to Sura 23:20. For the illuminating quality of its oil, see Verse note 3002 below.³⁰⁰¹ This Olive is not localized. It is neither of the East nor of the West. It is universal, for such is Allah's Light. As applied to the olive, there is also a more literal meaning, which can be allegorized in a different way. An olive tree with an eastern aspect gets only the rays of the morning sun; one with a western aspect, only the rays of the western sun. In the northern hemisphere the south aspect will give the sun's rays a great part of the day, while a north aspect will shut them out altogether, and vice versa in the southern hemisphere. But a tree in the open plain or on a hill will get perpetual sunshine by day; it will be more mature, and the fruit and oil will be of superior quality. So Allah's light is not localized or immature: it is perfect and universal.³⁰⁰² Pure olive oil is beautiful in color, consistency, and illuminating power. The world has tried all kinds of

illuminants, and for economic reasons or convenience, one replaces another. But for coolness, comfort to the eyes, and steadiness, vegetable oils are superior to electricity, mineral oils, and animal oils. And among vegetable oils, olive oil takes a high place and deserves its sacred associations. Its purity is almost like light itself: you may suppose it to be almost light before it is lit. So with spiritual Truth: it illuminates the mind and understanding imperceptibly, almost before the human mind and heart have been consciously touched by it.³⁰⁰³ Glorious, illimitable Light, which cannot be described or measured. And there are grades and grades of it, passing transcendently into regions of spiritual height, which man's imagination can scarcely conceive of. The topmost pinnacle is the true prototypal Light, the real Light, of which all others were reflections, the Light of Allah. Abdullah Yusuf Ali The Meanings of the

Quran 24:35 God is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of His light is, as it were, that of a niche containing a lamp; the lamp is [enclosed] in glass, the glass [shining] like a radiant star: [a lamp] lit from a blessed tree - an olive-tree that is neither of the east nor of the west - the oil whereof [is so bright that it] would well-nigh give light [of itself] even though fire had not touched it: light upon light! God guides unto His light him that wills [to be guided]; and [to this end] God propounds parables unto men, since God [alone] has full knowledge of all things.⁵⁵ The particle ka ("as if" or "as it were") prefixed to a noun is called kaf at-tashbih ("the letter kaf pointing to a resemblance [of one thing to another]" or "indicating a metaphor"). In the above context it alludes to the impossibility of defining God even by means of a metaphor or a parable - for, since "there is nothing like unto Him" (42:11), there is also "nothing that could be compared with Him" (112:4). Hence, the parable of "the light of God" is not meant to express His reality - which is inconceivable to any created being and, therefore, inexpressible in any human language but only to allude to the illumination which He, who is the Ultimate Truth, bestows upon the mind and the feelings of all who are willing to be guided. Tabari, Baghawi and Ibn Kathir quote Ibn 'Abbas and Ibn Mas'ud as saying in this context: "It is the parable of His light in the heart of a believer."⁵¹ The "lamp" is the revelation which God grants to His prophets and which is reflected in the believer's heart - the "niche" of the above parable (Ubayy ibn Ka'b, as quoted by Tabari) - after being received and consciously grasped by his reason ("the glass [shining brightly] like a radiant star"): for it is through reason alone that true faith can find its way into the heart of man.⁵² It would seem that this is an allusion to the organic continuity of all divine revelation which, starting like a tree from one "root" or proposition - the statement of God's existence and uniqueness - grows steadily throughout man's spiritual history, branching out into a splendid variety of religious experience, thus endlessly widening the range of man's perception of

the truth. The association of this concept with the olive-tree apparently arises from the fact that this particular kind of tree is characteristic of the lands in which most of the prophetic precursors of the Qur'anic message lived, namely, the lands to the east of the mediterranean: but since all true revelation flows from the Infinite Being, it is "neither of the east nor of the west" - and especially so the revelation of the Qur'an, which, being addressed to all mankind, is universal in its goal as well.⁵³ The essence of the Qur'anic message is described elsewhere as "clear [in itself] and clearly showing the truth" (cf. note 2 on 12:1); and it is, I believe, this aspect of the Qur'an that the above sentence alludes to. Its message gives light because it proceeds from God; but it "would well-nigh give light [of itself] even though fire had not touched it": i.e., even though one may be unaware that it has been "touched by the fire" of divine revelation, its inner consistency, truth and wisdom ought to be self-evident to anyone who approaches it in the light of his reason and without prejudice.⁵⁴ Although most of the commentators read the above phrase in the sense of "God guides unto His light whomever He wills", Zamakhshari gives it the sense adopted in my rendering (both being syntactically permissible).⁵⁵ I.e., because of their complexity, certain truths can be conveyed to man only by means of parables or allegories: see notes S and 8 on 3:7. Muhammad Asad-The Message of the Qur'an.

A beautifully written translation. If you're curious about Islam and want to read for yourself the holy book of the Muslims, this is the book for you. The language is clear and easy to read. There are literally tons of books which promise a "guide to Islam" in one form or another but why not just go to the actual source? The Quran isn't actually that long. It's not like the Bible. It's much shorter but it's separated out into chapters and verses just like the Bible. This edition includes notations which aid in understanding but. This is an excellent English translation, highly recommended.

I purchased the kindle version of this. Everything looked great until I realized that around 50% of the commentary is missing. This is probably just a problem with how they formatted the book into kindle. I find it unlikely the print version would have this problem.

I'm not sure exactly what's going on with this publisher, but the text is poorly presented. First, the format of the text is strange -- instead of having the commentary in footnotes, the commentary is right underneath the main text in a slight smaller font. In addition, the numbering of the commentary starts at (19). Am I missing a first 18 notes in an unprinted introduction of some sort? Second, It seems almost as if there was a bad OCR job -- sometimes apostrophes show up as periods,

Muhammad's name is broken up into "Muh ammad", and the word "Signs" appears as "Sings" (e.g. p. 185, CH20, 127). All in all, this version of the Qur'an and its accompanying commentary is pretty sketchy. Would not recommend despite its astronomically high rating; the score was obviously skewed if you look through the reviews.

Before i ordered it, I did read a good part of Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translations at the mosque. Recently I was studying some more religious books and making notes on my findings and understanding, I thought I should have this of my own. But I never knew they actually have this in such a small size. This is so impractical. Trying to fit all of the arabic, translations and the references in such a small space is ridiculous. The size only makes sense for the translation only, called "mass paperback copies" or something, which I also have. They should mention clearly the dimensions of it. I have to return it, and will be searching for the one which does not look like a pocket dictionary. i finally got the original size one.. which is actually known as "hard-cover" (does not make sense to me). So far so good, but the pages are too thin. other than that i am satisfied.

My family owns several copies of this version of Abdullah Yusuf Ali's English translation with the actual Arabic text side by side. The translation is very clear and easy to understand and his use of detailed transliteration within his footnotes is impeccable. I have read several translations of the Holy Quran over the years and this version by far has been the most helpful for me. I highly recommend Abdullah Yusuf Ali's translation by Amana Publication for those looking to understand the meaning of the Quran in both a clear, concise and indepth perspective. The biography of Abdullah Yusuf Ali in the prologue alone demonstrates this man's dedication and life's work to convey the Quran in English text without spoiling the Quran's integrity. From my understanding this version is the most widely read version in the world and I can see why. Truly a beautiful gift for family or friends.

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