

A CRITICAL STUDY OF QUR'ĀNIC ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY

N. J. DĀWOOD

(In the case of Chapter Al-Baqarh)

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Abstract

This research can be abridged by the topic thereof i.e. finding out the grammatical errors of the famous English translation made by N. J. Dāwood. Simultaneously, the corrigibilities have been shown and the corrections along with the suggestions have been given. Furthermore, only the main sense and theme have been considered. Actually, the holy Qur'ān has been translated in almost all the living languages of the world such as English, Urdu, and Persian etc. It has been tried much by both major communities i.e. Christians and Jews to make the sense of the holy Qur'ān doubtful as well as the life of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (blessings and peace be upon him). When the researcher went into the English translations of the Holy Qur'ān profoundly, he met with the grave errors found in the translation made by Nessim Joseph Dāwood. In fact, no crookedness or even corruptibility can be penetrated in the divine scheme, schemed by the Creator Himself as He says in the Holy Qur'ān: (1) "Praise be to Allāh Who hath sent to His Servant the Book and hath hallowed therein no crookedness". [18:1] Yūsuf (2) And furthermore He assures about the powerful supervision and security and says in the Holy Qur'ān: "Lo! We even We, reveal the Reminder, and lo! We verily are its Guardian". [15:9] Pickthall (3) Hence, Willium Muir (4) states the following words: "There is probably no other book in the world which has remained twelve centuries [now fourteen] with so pure a text." The significance of his translation can be estimated from the fact that it has been printed out at least 70 times as Richard Dāwood and James Stredder (5) said about it: "It is thought to be the best selling English language version; it has been reprinted at least 70 times since 1956." He himself confesses that he has done this knowingly, for instance, Dāwood's (6) most recent revision was published in May 2014. He said of it: "I used to omit "and" in every case, in Arabic every sentence begins with "and", even now, in a newspaper. So I decided to experiment with it, and found it can be very effective at the beginning of a sentence". It means he himself is declaring that he is the one who knows best than Allah (S.W.T). The Muslims have the faith that, in Qur'ān, if Allah Almighty has mentioned one word or sentence many times, so, each time it gives new meaning and not even a single word or phrase or sentence is useless, but he wants to say that "And" is useless that is why he has omitted that. So it is the need of time to mention these kinds of translations translated by translators through his own will, which has not the least relation to the Holy Qur'ān.

Worthiness of N.J. Dawood's Translation

The translation of the Holy Qur'ān by N. J. Dāwood is in such a style that the summary of verses is given in the form of paragraphs. N. J. Dāwood has translated the holy Qur'ān in a very comprehensive manner avoiding all the things which he considered worthless and tried his best to make the gist of divine theme and scheme.

It deserves the exceptional remarks for having the following distinctive qualities:

1. His brief style is so excellent.
2. Choosing the synonyms and ordering the sentences is very beautiful.

3. The usage of words for Allah and His Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) is accordingly.
4. His remarks about the holy Qur'ān are oftenly in the favor thereof.
5. His rendering style is the mixture of different translations and specially Muḥammad Sarwar's, Arberry's and Pickthall's, save a little, or in other words the ideas match to those of a Muslim's.
6. N. J. Dāwood's, Arberry's and Pickthall's are the only translations that have been made direct from the original Arabic text.
7. He has followed mostly the commentary Al-Jalālain specially and the other commentaries too in his translation.

Some examples of his translation are as follows:

Allāh Almighty's statement “اللَّهُ يَسْتَهْزِئُ بِهِمْ وَيَمُدُّهُمْ” has been translated as [God will mock them and keep them long]. The meaning of the word “مَدَّ” is ‘to keep long’. The root meaning of “وَيَمُدُّهُمْ” were difficult to make the sense clear here but what a fantastic try is being seen here to clear the sense of the Qur'ānic verse! [2:15]

Another place Allāh Almighty's statement “يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ” has been translated as [The lightning almost snatches away their sight]. The meaning of the word “كَادَ” is ‘almost’. He has tried his best to have an outstanding resemblance to the Qur'ānic text either inwardly or outwardly. [2:20]

“إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ” has been translated as [God has power over all things]. If he had written ‘Allāh’ instead of ‘God’, it would have been better. This is really more appreciable and preferable than that of “And He is able to do everything” because in this verse the ‘فَعَلَ’ [doing or performing] of Allāh is not being described but the ‘قُدْرَتُ’ [power] of Allāh is being mentioned and hence it is a great subject of debate or controversial discussion among the Muslims only because of the wrong translation i.e. ‘doing of Allāh’ that has been avoided and cared by N. J. Dawwod and the same is really a proof of his skillful scholarship. [2:20]

Furthermore, all the pronouns ascribed to Allāh are mostly given with capital letters. [2:54]

“وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا” has been translated as [Fight for the sake of God those that fight against you, but do not attack them first]. This is the beauty of his translation of this verse that it is more perfect translation seen ever. The translation “but do not attack them first” shows that he has positive thinking and true understanding about Jihad of Islam. [2:190]

“مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُمْ” has been translated as [before marriage consummated]. The meaning of ‘consummate’ is “to make a marriage or romantic relationship complete by having sex”. This is perfect translation according to the commentary of this verse because the commentary of “مَا لَمْ تَمْسُوهُمْ” is “while you have not had sexual intercourse with them”. So the meaning of “consummation of marriage” is quite nearer translation. [2:236]

If we desire to see his style of story writing, “قَالَ أَنَا أَحْيِي وَأُمِيتُ” has been translated as [I, too, replied the other, ‘have power of life and death’]. This is a beautiful style ever found in a translation of the Holy Qur'ān. [2:258]

“وَلَكِنْ لِيَطْمَئِنَّ قَلْبِي” has been translated as [but just to reassure my heart]. This is also the best translation of this phrase found ever. It seems more authentic than that of others for having accurate sense. The word reassure is fulfilling the meaning of “لِيَطْمَئِنَّ” perfectly

because “reassure” is showing that he was already sure but just for the peace of his heart, he wanted to be re-assured. [2:260]

Drawbacks of N.J. Dawood's Translation

N. J. Dāwood's translation is a commentary rather than a translation and even too comprehensive and brief. Its only interpreting style is being judged here otherwise this translation might have had too many errors wherein just missing of words “ مِنْ قَبْلُ ، فِيهَا ، ” “ وَلَقَدْ ، مِنْ ، فَ ، وَإِذْ ، ي ، أَلَا ، إِنَّ ، أَنْ ، وَ ، فَ ، لَنَا ” would have been in thousands.

Now we are going to write all the errors and blunders too.

Allāh Almighty's statement “إِنَّهُ هُوَ التَّوَّابُ” has been translated as “He is the Relenting One”.

The word “إِنِّ” [Truly] is missed. [2:37]

“مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ” has been rendered as “Sovereign of the Day of religion” instead of “Sovereign of the Day of judgment or day of recompense”.

This error, therefore, has been taken as a self-contradiction because in another place i.e. chapter 30, Section 107, verse 1, Allāh Almighty's statement “أَرَأَيْتَ الَّذِي يُكَذِّبُ بِالذِّينِ” has been rendered as: “Have you thought of him that denies the Last Judgement?” though not even a single translator made this translation as we can see in some of the foremost translations: “Sovereign of the Day of Recompense”. [1:4] (7), “Master of the Day of Judgment”. [1:4] (8), “Master of the Day of Judgment”. [1:4] (9) “Master of the Day of Judgment”. (10) [1:4], “The Only Owner (and the Only Ruling Judge) of the Day of Recompense (i.e. the Day of Resurrection)”. [1:4] (11)

“ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ” has been translated as [No doubt is there about that Book] whereas in chapter 2, Section 1, verse 5, “أُولَئِكَ عَلَىٰ هُدًىٰ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ” has been translated as [These are rightly guided by their Lord].

Both ‘ذَلِكَ’ [that] and ‘أُولَئِكَ’ [those] are distant demonstrative pronouns but in the former, he renders as a distant demonstrative pronoun [اسم اشاره بعيد] while in the latter, he renders as the near demonstrative pronoun [اسم اشاره قريب]. Thus, he makes contradiction to his own translation. This error, therefore, has been taken as a self-contradiction of N.J. Dāwood. [2:2]

“وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ” has been translated as [these shall surely triumph] instead of “and these shall [surely] triumph.” The word ‘و’ is missed while the adverb ‘surely’ is an addition without brackets. [2:5]

“فَهُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ (أَلَىٰ الطَّرِيقِ الصَّحِيحِ)” [they will never return to the right path] instead of [they will never return]. The phrase “to the right path” is an addition. [2:18]

“وَاللَّهُ مُحِيطٌ بِالْكَافِرِينَ” has been translated in brackets [(God thus encompasses the unbelievers)]. This is the main text of the Qur’ān which can not be put into the brackets because by doing like this, he has excluded this verse from Qur’ānc text. [2:19]

“وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ” has been translated as “وَادْعُوا أَصْنَامَكُمْ” [Call upon your idols] instead of [Call upon your witnesses]. The sense of this verse is perfect but the translation is not matching with the Qur’ānic text because the translation ‘شُهَدَاءُ’ is ‘witnesses’. The word ‘Idols’ should be in brackets because this is the commentary of this verse as Allama Suyūṭī (12) writes that “call your witnesses i.e. those other gods that you worship, besides God”. [2:23]

“وَأَعْلَمَ” has been translated as [and know] instead of [and I know]. The subject [I] is missed. Actually, the words ‘and know’ becomes an imperative sentence rather than the descriptive one and, hence, its sense is absolutely changed because it was actually “and I know” i.e. in a descriptive sense. [2:33]

“وَأَوْفُوا بِعَهْدِكُمْ” has been translated as [Keep your covenant] instead of [Keep my covenant]. The possessive case of second person plural pronoun i.e. ‘كُمْ’ [your] is being used instead of possessive case of first person singular pronoun i.e. ‘ي’ [mine]. [2:40]

“اسْتَعِينُوا” has been translated as “أَخِصِّنْ أَنْفُسَكُمْ” [fortify yourselves] instead of [Seek help]. In the ‘باب الاستفعال’ there is the meaning of ‘seeking’, which is missed along with the accurate translation of the word ‘اسْتَعِينُوا’. This is why ‘Allama Suyūṭi’s commentary translated by Feras Hamza (13) is thus: “**Seek help** i.e. ask for assistance in your affairs” while the transitive verb ‘fortify’ means in Cambridge Dictionary: “to strengthen something, especially in order to protect it” [2:45]

“هُمْ” has been translated as “هُ” [it] instead of [they]. The third person singular personal pronoun “هُ” [it] is being used instead of third person plural personal pronoun “هُمْ” [they]. [2:48]

“إِذْ” [when] has been translated as “كَيْفَ” [how]. The “اسم استفهام” i.e. interrogative pronoun is being used instead of “ظرف زمان” i.e. Adverb of time. [2:49]

“أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً” has been translated as “fortieth night” instead of “forty nights” i.e. the ordinal number is being given instead of cardinal number. The meaning of ‘fortieth’ out of forty but in Holy Qur’ān the word is written “أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً” i.e. forty nights that means complete forty nights not out of forty as Allama Ṭabari (14) writes that “أربعين ليلة بتمامها. فالأربعون ليلة كلها” i.e [All forty nights, The complete forty nights within the appointed time] [2:51]

“يَا مُوسَى” has been translated as “لِمُوسَى” [to Moses] instead of [O Moses]. The prefixed preposition “لِ” [to] is being used instead of prefixed vocative particle “يَا” [O]. [2:55]

“وَأَسْجُدُوا مَعَ السَّاجِدِينَ” has wrongly been translated as [kneel with those who kneel] instead of [bow with those who bow]. Because in every dictionary the meaning of ‘ارْكَعُوا’ is [bow] and English translation of ‘اسْجُدُوا’ is [kneel]. The meaning of kneel in Cambridge Advanced Learners’ Dictionary (15) is, “a position where one or both knees are on the ground.” But when someone does ‘Ruku’, his knees will never touch the ground. [2:43]

“مَوْتِكُمْ” has been translated as “حَالَتِكُمْ السُّكْرَ” [your stupor] instead of [your death]. The meaning of stupor in Cambridge Advanced Learners’ Dictionary is, “a state in which a person is almost unconscious and his thoughts are very unclear”. And the meaning has been written ‘at drunk’ [فِي حَالَةِ السُّكْرِ] but the translation of “مَوْتِكُمْ” [your death], is totally different i.e. the state opposite to ‘life’. [2:56]

“كُونُوا قِرَدَةً خَاسِئِينَ” has wrongly been translated as [you shall be changed into detested apes] instead of [be detested apes]. The words “(shall be changed into)” should be in brackets because passive voice sense is being used instead of imperative sense. The word “كُونُوا” is the plural and imperative and the root whereof is “كَوْنٌ” that is called “اجوف واوى” [the root

letters where the vowel is found in between]. The past and future is “كان يكون” while singular imperative is “كُنْ” and the plural imperative is “كُونُوا” and meaning of “كُونُوا” is [be you all]. This arrangement of words can be seen in ‘Ilm us Sarf [conjugal science] books (16). [2:65]

“عَلِمْتُمْ” has been translated as “سَمِعْتُمْ” [you have heard] instead of [you have come to know]. In this construction, the knowledge has been mentioned rather than just hearing because hearing is just a tool wherewith the knowledge is gained. [2:65]

“رَبِّكُمْ” has been translated as “رَبَّنَا” [our Lord] instead of [your Lord]. The second person possessive pronoun ‘your’ has wrongly been changed into the first person possessive pronoun ‘our’. [2:76]

“لَا يَعْلَمُونَ الْكِتَابَ” has been translated as “ignorant of the scripture, know of nothing” instead of “ignorant of the scripture”. The phrase “know of nothing” should be in brackets. [2:78]

“وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ” has been translated as [because of they did] instead of [And woe to them because of what they earned]. The words “وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ” [And woe to them] are missed whereas

“مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ” has been translated as “مِمَّا يَفْعَلُونَ” [of what they did] instead of [of what they earned]. The translation of the verb ‘كَسَبَ’ is earning. This is why Imam Suyūṭī says that ‘وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ أَيُّ مِنَ الرَّشَا جَمْعُ رِشْوَةٍ [and woe to them for their earnings i.e. by way of bribery] so the bribery can be earned not be did. [2:79]

“قُلْ أَتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ عِنْدَكُمْ عَهْدًا” has been translated as “هل أَتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ عِنْدَكُمْ عَهْدًا” [Did God make you such a promise] instead of [have you taken with God a promise]. In this sentence subject and object are used in contrary order. [2:80]

“دِيَارِهِمْ” has been translated as “دِيَارِكُمْ” [their dwellings] instead of [your dwellings]. [2:84]

“تَشْهَدُونَ” has been translated as [bore witness] whereas in chapter 2, verse 23, “شُهَدَاءَ” has been translated as [idols].

In both verses, the word “تَشْهَدُونَ” and “شُهَدَاءَ” are grammatically from same roots but he contradicts to his own translation. Because the actual translation of the word “شُهَدَاءَ” is [witnesses] but he has wrongly translated as ‘idols’. [2:84]

“يُرَدُّونَ” [they will be returned] has been missed. [2:85]

“مِنْكُمْ” has been translated as “مِنْهُمْ” [of them] instead of [of you]. [2:85]

“أَتَّخَذْتُمْ” has been translated as “عَبَدْتُمْ” [you worshiped] instead of [you took]. This is the commentary of this verse not the translation. so the word ‘worship’ should be in the brackets thus: “you took the calf (in worship)” [2:92]

“قَالُوا” has been translated as “قُلْتُمْ” [you replied] instead of [they replied]. The second person plural verb [you replied] is being used instead of third person plural [they replied]. [2:93]

“نَزَّلَهُ عَلَيَّ الْقُرْآنَ” has been translated as “نَزَّلَهُ عَلَيَّ الْقُرْآنَ” [has revealed to you the Korān] instead of [revealed upon your heart (the Qur’ān)]. The word “the Korān” is the commentary of this verse as ‘Allama Suyūṭī writes that “نَزَّلَهُ أَيُّ الْقُرْآنَ عَلَيَّ قَلْبِكَ” [revealed upon your heart (the Qur’ān)] so ‘the Qur’ān’ should be in brackets. [2:97]

“اتَّبَعُوا” has been translated as [they accept] instead of [they followed]. The meaning of the third person masculine plural verb “اتَّبَعُوا” is “they followed” not “they accept”. [2:102]

“فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ” has been translated as [who has by God's grace revealed to you the Korān as a guide and joyful tidings for the faithful, confirming previous scriptures] instead of [who has by God's permission revealed upon your heart (the Qur'ān), confirming what was before it, and a guide and joyful tidings for faithful]. In this verse “عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ” [upon your heart] has been translated as “عَلَيْكَ” [to you]. And “بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ” [by God's permission] has been translated as “بِعِزَّةِ اللَّهِ” [by God's grace]. And “لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ” [what was before it] has been translated as “الْكِتَابِ السَّابِقَةِ” [previous scriptures]. And the sentence making is undisciplined and the most important thing is that he has shown great irresponsibility while translating this verse by putting the brackets to whole verse. It means he is excluding this verse from the text of the Holy Qur'ān. [2:97]

“مَنْ” has been translated as “أُولَئِكَ” [those] instead of [whoever]. The demonstrative plural pronoun “أُولَئِكَ” [those] is being used instead of conditional pronoun “مَنْ” [whoever]. [2:112]

“رَبِّهِ” has been translated as “رَبِّهِمْ” [their Lord] instead of [his Lord]. The third person masculine plural possessive pronoun “رَبِّهِمْ” [their Lord] is being used instead of third person masculine singular possessive pronoun “رَبِّهِ” [his Lord]. [2:112]

“وَهُمْ” has been translated as “وَهُمَا” i.e. [and they both] instead of [and they]. The word “both” is an addition. [2:113]

“اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ” has been translated as “وُلِدَ” [God has begotten] instead of [God has taken]. The translation of the third person masculine singular perfect verb “اتَّخَذَ” is ‘has taken’ instead of “وُلِدَ” begotten. [2:116]

“تَأْتِينَا” has been translated as [give us] instead of [comes to us]. The translation of the third person feminine plural verb “تَأْتِينَا” is [comes to us] rather than [give us]. [2:118]

“وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ آدَمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ” has been translated as “وَعَهَدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ” [We enjoined Adam and Ishmael to cleanse Our House] instead of [We enjoined Abraham and Ishmael to cleanse Our House]. In this verse he has made a blunder because he has writtern the name of “Adam” instead of “Abraham”. [2:125]

“أَرِنَا” has been translated as [Teach us] instead of [show us]. The words ‘Teach us’ are the commentary of this verse rather than translation; so it should be in brackets. [2:128]

“الْعَالَمِينَ” has been translated as [the worlds] whereas in chapter 2, verse 122, “الْعَالَمِينَ” has been translated as [the nations].

In both verses the word “الْعَالَمِينَ” are same but translated differently, so he contradicts to his own translation. The actual translation of the word “الْعَالَمِينَ” is [the worlds] but he has translated as ‘the nations’. [2:131]

“سَيَقُولُ السُّفَهَاءُ” has been translated as [The foolish will ask] instead of [The foolish will say]. The third person masculine singular verb “سَيَسْأَلُ” [they will ask] is being used instead of “سَيَقُولُ” [they will say]. [2:142]

“يَنْقَلِبُ عَلَى عَقْبَيْهِ” has been translated as [disown him] instead of [turned on his heels]. The translation of the third person masculine singular imperfect verb “يَنْقَلِبُ” is [turns back] as ‘Allama Suyūṭi says that [turned on his heels i.e. and returned to unbelief] but N.J. Dawood has translated as ‘disown’ which is not suitable translation of this phrase. [2:143]

“وَالْأَنْفُسِ” has been translated as [and life] instead of [and lives]. The genitive feminine singular noun ‘life’ is being used instead of the genitive feminine plural noun ‘lives’. [2:155]

“يَعْرِفُونَ رَسُولَنَا كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ” has been translated as “يَعْرِفُونَ رَسُولَنَا كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ” [know our apostle as they know their own sons] instead of [know him (Muḥammad S.A.W) as they know their own sons]. [2:146]

الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ has been rendered as “Those to whom We gave the scriptures” instead of “Those to whom We gave the scripture”. The word “الْكِتَابَ” ‘scripture’ is singular noun but it has been written as plural. Another major misconception, this translation can create is that this verse is not specific for Muḥammad S.A.W but for all apostles. Basically, the word ‘scriptures’ is creating misconception for having multi-meanings, because it comprises Torah, Psalms, Gospel, and Qur’ān. [2:146]

“إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ” has been translated as “إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ” [God has knowledge of all things] instead of [God is All-grateful, All-knowing]. If we see the translation of Arberry (17) though he is also an orientalist but he has written right translation thereof as: “*God is All-grateful, All-knowing*”. [2:158]

“لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالنَّاسِ أَجْمَعِينَ” has been translated as [the curse of God,] instead of [the curse of God, the angels, and all mankind]. The rest of the translation is inserted in the next verse. [2:161]

“وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ” [though the love of God is stronger in the faithful]. He has put the brackets to this translation although this is the Qur’ānic text. And this is understood that the translation that is put into brackets, is interpretation not translation. Therefore, it has been excluded from the Qur’ān. [2:165]

“عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ” has been translated as “عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ” [sternly punished] instead of [painful punishment]. The meaning of ‘sternly’ is ‘a way that shows disapproval’ but the meaning of ‘painful’ is ‘causing emotional or physical pain’ which is according to the text of the Holy Qur’ān as ‘Allama Suyūṭi writes: “عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ” [painful chastisement i.e. of the Fire in the Hereafter]. Therefore, the translation ‘sternly’ is not suitable here. [2:178]

“يَوْمَيْنِ” has been translated as [second day] instead of [two days]. In other words, the ordinal number has been used instead of the cardinal number. [2:203]

“تَوَلَّوْا” has been translated as “تَوَلَّوْا” [do they leave you] instead of [does he leave you]. The plural perfect verb “تَوَلَّوْا” [do they leave you] is being used instead of singular perfect verb “تَوَلَّى” [does he leave you]. [2:205]

“وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ” [None disputed it save those to whom it was given, and that was through envy of one another, after veritable signs had been vouchsafed them.]. The brackets have been put to this translation and, hence, excluded from Qur’an. [2:213]

“يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ” has been translated as [they will ask you about almsgiving] instead of [they will ask you about expending]. The meaning of ‘almsgiving’ is “money that is given

to poor people i.e. charity” The translation ‘almsgiving’ is not perfect translation and it raises many questions, for example: If we accept this translation in the later verse, the list of those people is given who are being spent upon. And the first in list are parents, so it means ‘almsgiving’ i.e. charity is being given to parents who are the owner of children’s wealth in the light of this Hadīth:

”أَنْتَ وَمَالُكَ لِأَبِيكَ وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِنَّ أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ أَطْيَبِ كَسْبِكُمْ فَكُلُوا مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ

“you and your wealth belong to your father. And the Messenger of Allāh said: Your children are among the best of your earnings, so eat from their wealth”. Abu Dāwood (18), Aḥmad bin Hanbal (19), Nisāi (20) and Ibne Majah (21).

So, it is not permitted to give charity to parents because they are allowed to use their children’s wealth. Therefore, the word ‘expending’ is perfect instead of ‘almsgiving’. [2:214]

”وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَى” [And what was given to Moses] has been translated as [to Moses]. The phrase “وَمَا أُوتِيَ” [And what was given] is missed. [2:136]

”اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ” has been translated as [Have fear of God] whereas in same verse, the word “الْمُتَّقِينَ” has been translated as [righteous]. The imperative verb “اتَّقُوا” and the noun “الْمُتَّقِينَ” have same roots but there is a difference in the translation of the both. The actual translation of “الْمُتَّقِينَ” is [God fearing] that has been used for “اتَّقُوا”. [2:194]

”نِسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَكُمْ” has been translated as [women are your fields] instead of [your women are your fields]. The second person plural pronoun “كُمْ” [your] is missed. The translation shows that every woman is the field of every person; so what about the mothers/sisters etc? [2:223]

”آتَيْنَهُمْ” has been translated as [they have given them] instead of [you have given them]. The third person plural pronoun ‘they’ is being used instead of second person plural pronoun ‘you’. [2:229]

”فَإِنْ طَلَّقَهَا” has been translated as [if a man divorce his wife] instead of [Then if he divorces her]. The word “فَ” [then] is missed while it is must to be here because this “فَ” is giving the meaning of third divorce. This “فَ” is connected with the previous verse where two divorces are mentioned but after those two divorces, “فَ” [Then] is giving the meaning of third divorce i.e. if he gives her third divorce. [2:230]

”وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ” has been translated as: [God is cognizant of all your actions]. Whereas in chapter 2, verse 232, “أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ” has been translated as [God is cognizant of all your actions]. In both verses “خَبِيرٌ” & “بَصِيرٌ” are different words but translated as same, so he contradicts to his own translation. The actual translation of the word “بَصِيرٌ” is [sees], but he has translated as ‘cognizant’. [2:234]

”حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُحْسِنِينَ” has been translated as [This is the binding on righteous men]. Whereas in chapter 2, verse 240, “حَقًّا عَلَى الْمُتَّقِينَ” has been translated as [That is incumbent on righteous men]. In both verses “الْمُحْسِنِينَ” & “الْمُتَّقِينَ” are different words but translated as same, so he contradicts to his own translation. The actual translation of the word “الْمُحْسِنِينَ” is [virtuous] but he has translated as ‘righteous men’. And the actual translation of the word “الْمُتَّقِينَ” is ‘God fearing but he has translated as ‘righteous men’. In another place in

chapter 2, verse 177, “وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ” has been translated as [the righteous man]. There are three different words having their own translations but has translated as same. [2: 236]

“حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَى” has been translated as [Attend regularly to your prayers, including the middle prayer] instead of [Maintain the prayers and the middle prayer]. This is the totally wrong translation because in “الصَّلَوَاتِ” [prayers] the middle prayer is already included but Allāh Almighty has separately mentioned due to its importance, not for excluding it from five prayers and mentioning separately. As imam jalaluddīn Suyūṭī wrote in his commentary that “God has singled it out for mention because of its merit” [2:238]

“وَالَّذِينَ يُتَوَفَّوْنَ مِنْكُمْ” has been translated as [you] instead of [And those of you who pass away]. [2:240]

“أَلَمْ تَرَ” has been translated as “أَلَمْ تَسْمَعْ” [Have you no heard] instead of [Have you not seen]. [2:246]

“فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي” has been translated as [shall cease to by my soldier] instead of [is not of me]. The translation of this phrase is being done as ‘ceased to by my soldier’ although allama Suyūṭī has written that ‘فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي أَيُّ مِنْ أَتْبَاعِي’ [is not of me i.e. is not of my followers]. [2:249]

“فَأَنَّهُ مِنِّي” [he is of me] has been translated as [shall fight by my side]. [2:249]

“الْحِكْمَةَ” has been translated as [the wisdom] whereas in chapter 2, verse 247, “الْعِلْمُ” has been translated as [wisdom]. The words “الْحِكْمَةَ” & “الْعِلْمُ” are different words but translated as same, so he contradicts to his own translation. The actual translation of the word “الْعِلْمُ” is [knowledge] but he has translated as ‘wisdom’. [2:251]

“وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ” has been translated as [His throne is as vast as] instead of [His throne extends over]. The word “as” has limited meaning but “over” is suitable for Allāh Almighty because ‘as vast as’ means that His Throne ends there where the heavens and the earth ends but it is wrong. [2:255]

“أُخْضِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ” has been translated as “أَنْ تَكُونُ مَشْغُولًا كَلِيًّا بِالْقِتَالِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ” [being wholly preoccupied with fighting for the cause of God] instead of [who are constrained in the way of God]. This is specific translation of this verse because he is taking “فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ” just for the cause of fighting, although, there are many other virtuous works can be done for the cause of God. [2:273]

“لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَتَخَبَّطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ” has been translated as [they shall rise up before God like men whom Satan has demented by his touch] instead of [they shall not rise up before God except like one whom Satan has demented by his touch]. The words “لَا” [not] and “إِلَّا” [except] are missed and for no purpose he changes negative sentence into positive sentence by his own. [2:275]

“فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا فَأْذَنُوا” [But if you do not, then be warned] is missed. [2:279]

Summary of Research:

By the grace of Allāh Almighty, the difficult task of this research has come to an end rather a beautiful end wherein the following substance has been discussed:

1. The grammar of Qur’ān and dictions have been distorted and deformed by such Jews and chirstians whose qualification and struggle can never be denied. This misrepresentation and distortion of theirs have, therefore, been highlighted and falsified with irresistible arguments.

2. The Qur'ānic truth that has been excluded therefrom, has been taken back to its correct state and the misrepresentation that has been added therein, has been driven forth therefrom.
3. As we know that the Jews' and Christians' endeavour is really admirable, it has been focused as it deserved to be focused, particularly, the effort made by N. J. Dāwood does necessitate the concentration for its beautiful selection of words.
4. After mentioning the good features of N.J. Dāwood's translation, errors of different types are also mentioned, such as mistranslations, additions, omissions, misplacements, self-contradictions, and blunders.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from this whole task that the religion of Islām is being realized a threat to all the religions. The believers of Judaism and Christianity, therefore, try to cause the destruction thereof and the thing that they feel a threat for them is Islāmic sciences emerging from the Holy Qur'ān and being admitted by the researchers of the world as this is the age of intellectualism and only for this, the Qur'ānic truths are being veiled in the form of corruption and distortion.

Findings and Recommendations:

As a whole, the translation is really worth-studying and has an immense productive and prolific worth in the field of Qur'ānic research. I, personally, like to give special remarks regarding the best translations of Qur'ānic verses made by N.J. Dāwood that has appealed me much for having the following distinctive qualities:

1. Comprehensiveness style is much impressive.
2. Selection of the words and arrangement of sentences are really praiseworthy.
3. The Noun and Pronoun of Allāh Almighty are written mostly in capital letters.
4. The nobility of Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) has very rarely been damaged due to the beautiful selection of the words.
5. His comments regarding the holy Qur'ān are mostly in the favor thereof.
6. His translating style is nearly similar to the Pickthall, Arberry and Muḥammad Sarwar save a little.

If we talk about his mistakes that are as follows:

1. The translations of words “مِنْ قَبْلُ ، فِيهَا ، وَلَقَدْ ، مِنْ ، فَ ، وَإِذْ ، ي ، أَلَا ، إِنَّ ، أَنْ ، وَ ، فَ ، لَنَا” are almost omitted.
2. The attributes of Allāh Almighty are written with small letters.
3. Mostly uses commentary rather than the translation.
4. No arrangement of verses is available.
5. Mostly the brackets are missed where they are necessary to be put.
6. Sometimes, brackets are put for the Qur'ānic text.
7. Sometimes the translation is omitted.
8. Sometimes mistranslation is found.
9. Sometimes misplacement is found.
10. Sometimes he contradicts to his own translation.
11. Sometime he adds to the Qur'ānic text.

It is, therefore, recommended in general that the contribution of the Orientalists must be observed for the defence of our Holy Prophet (blessings and peace be upon him) and the heavenly gifted revelations, as the main and foremost target of orientalism is the deformation and defamation of both of these. Their endeavour must be assessed, particularly, concerning the translations of the Holy Qur'ān.

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