

# QUR'ANIC HERMENEUTICS FOR STUDENTS AT FEC ACADEMY

Following is the method we will begin to analyse the text of the Holy Qur'an:

## 1. Grasp the Basics

- To include the name of surah
- Why** and **how** it's named and its meaning.
- Where** the surah was revealed – Makkah or Madinah

## 2. **Read** the Surah or page carefully (you may read it three times)



## 3. **Categorise** the sets of verses into the **five categories** illustrated by Shah Waliyullah in his *Al-Fawz al-Kabir*

- Bullet point the **five categories** for each set of verses  
(See page 3)

## 4. **Asbab al-Nuzul** (**WHY** was the surah or verses revealed):

- What was the reason or context of the verses?
- What was the 'Historical Context'? Keep in mind not every verse would have a specific event or *asbab al-nuzul* (see page 4-5).

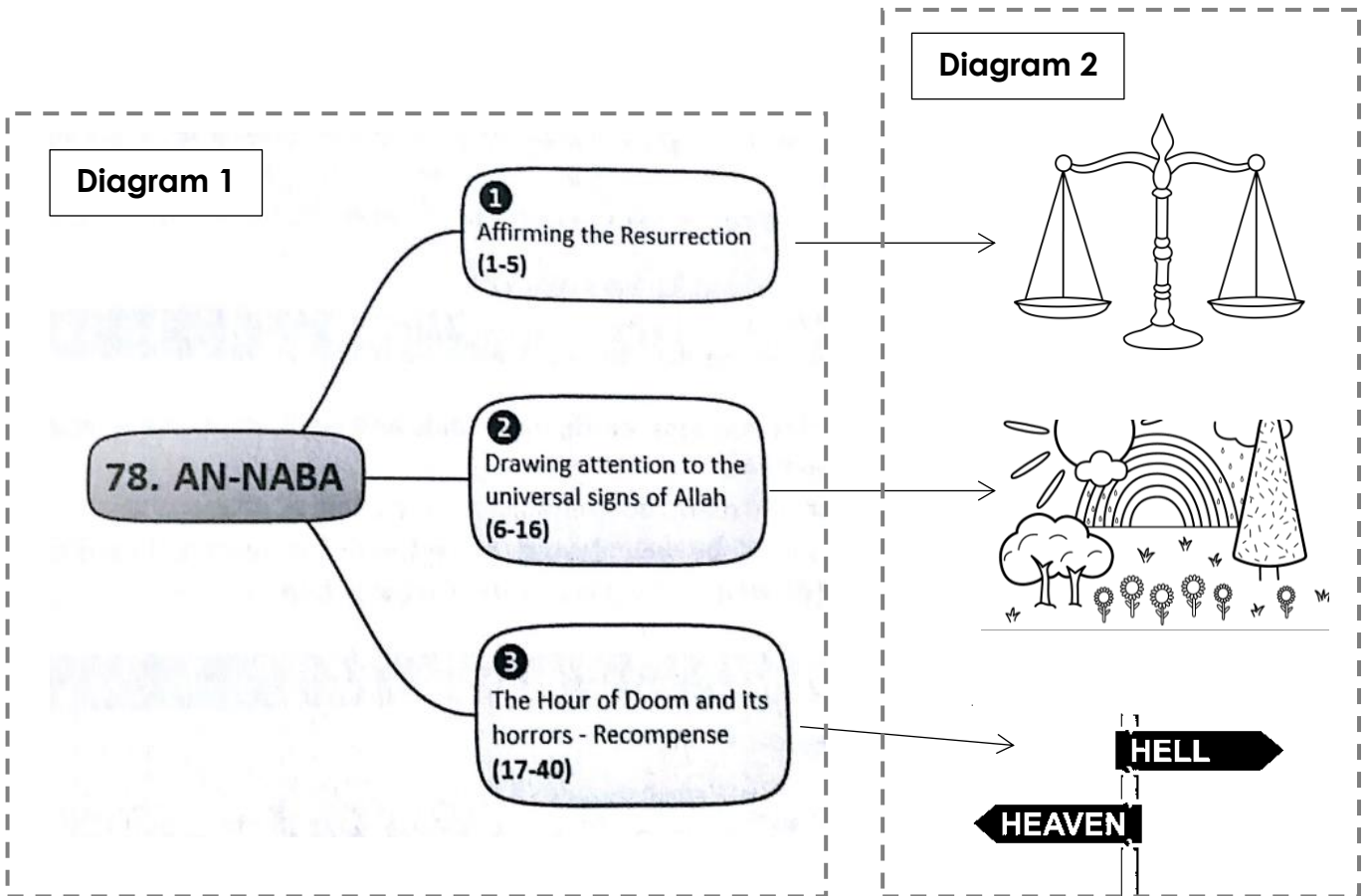
## 5. **Grasp the thematic overview**



- To draw chart of the verses themed together so that you get a good grasp of the overview (see diagram 1 on p.2)
- With each theme of verses draw a very quick sketch (picture – without drawing living things) that could help you remember the theme (see diagram 2)

## 6. **What message are you taking away** from each theme of the surah for **implementing** in your life or developing your **world view**. Lastly, what message do you take away from the surah?

## 7. **Questioning via question matrix** – Ask as many questions as possible (approximately 10) (See Diagram 3) and then finding answers from English Tafsirs on [www.altafsir.com](http://www.altafsir.com)

USTADH HAMID



		<b>IS?</b> <b>DOES?</b> (PRESENT)	<b>HAS?</b> <b>DID?</b> <b>WAS?</b> (PAST)	<b>CAN?</b> (POSSIBILITY)	<b>SHOULD?</b> (OPINION)	<b>WOULD?</b> <b>COULD?</b> (PROBABILITY)	<b>WILL?</b> (PREDICTION)	<b>MIGHT?</b> (IMAGINATION)
<b>WHAT?</b> (EVENT)								
<b>WHERE?</b> (PLACE)								
<b>WHEN?</b> (TIME)								
<b>WHICH?</b> (CHOICE)								
<b>WHO?</b> (PERSON)								
<b>WHY?</b> (REASON)								
<b>HOW?</b> (MEANING)								

**Diagram 3**

# Shah Waliyullah's

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## Categories



One should know that the meanings which the Qur'an contains never go beyond the [following] five categories of knowledge:

1

1. The science of judgements (*ahkām*): those which are obligatory (*wājib*), recommended (*mandūb*), permitted (*mubāḥ*), detested (*makrūh*) and forbidden (*ḥarām*), whether acts of worship (*ʿibādāt*), ordinary transactions (*muʿāmalāt*), domestic management or civil polity. The detailed study of this field is entrusted to the care of the *faqīh* (the jurisprudent).

2

2. The science of polemic and of refutation of the four deviant groups: the Jews, the Christians, those who associate partners with Allah and the hypocrites. The clarification of this field of science is entrusted to the care of the scholar of rational theology (*mutakallim*).

3

3. The science of reminding others of the favours of Allah ﷻ by clarifying the creation of the heavens and the earth, and inspiring the slaves of Allah ﷻ with what they need, and making clear the perfect attributes of Allah ﷻ.

4

4. The science of reminder of the Days of Allah ﷻ. This is the description of the occurrences that Allah ﷻ has caused to take place such as favouring the obedient and punishing criminals.

5

5. The science of reminding about death and what comes after it, such as the Rising from the dead, the Gathering, the Reckoning, the Scales, the Garden and the Fire.

9

# Furthur Information on Waliyullah's *FIVE* Categories

Memorisation of the details of these [last] three sciences and connecting the appropriate *ḥadīths* and traditions to them is the function of the remembrancer and admonisher.

## THE STYLE OF THE NOBLE QUR'ĀN IN EXPRESSING THE FIVE SCIENCES

These five sciences have been explained according to the first Arabs' method of demonstration and not according to the later scholars' method of demonstration. Hence, unlike textual scholars, Allah ﷻ did not engage in abridgement when mentioning the *āyāt* of judgements (*āyāt al-aḥkām*),<sup>29</sup> and unlike legal theoreticians (*uṣūlī*), He did not revise the principles [removing] unnecessary restrictions.<sup>30</sup> With regards to the *āyāt* relating to polemic (*mukhāṣamah*), Allah ﷻ chose to argue with antagonists regarding beliefs that were widely accepted among them as well as delivering wholesome addresses to them and He chose not to debate them about the intricacy of proofs, contrary to what logicians would do. Allah ﷻ did not Himself choose to advance structurally from topic to topic as is the principle among later litterateurs. In fact, He gathered all that was important to present to the slaves, irrespective of sequence.

29 The divine laws were revealed in a detailed and intelligible manner so that they would be understandable by people of all levels of intelligence. The modern trend in drafting laws is to be brief and comprehensive, but the defect in this is their need for professional interpretation.

30 Modern theoreticians formulate certain restrictions, rules and regulations that govern the subject matter of a science or art or canon of law. Allah ﷻ did not provide such injunctions, and hence the author, Shāh Waliyyullāh, maintains his lack of affiliation with those principles that he deems unnecessary.



EVERY *ĀYAH* DOES NOT NEED TO HAVE A CAUSE OF REVELATION

Most commentators have linked every *āyah* in the Noble Qur'ān relating to polemic and every *āyah* about legal rulings to an event, and they believe that such an event is the cause for that *āyah* being revealed.

The truth is that the underlying purpose of the revelation of the Noble Qur'ān is to instruct the human being, to obliterate false beliefs and to repudiate corrupt actions, because the existence of false beliefs amongst legally responsible persons is the reason for the revelation of the *āyah* relating to polemic, and the existence of corrupt actions and the prevalence of injustices among legally responsible persons is the reason for the revelation of the *āyah* relating to legal judgements. People's lack of alertness and caution in relation to remembrance (*dhikr*) of the favours of Allah ﷻ, the Days of Allah ﷻ, the events of death and of that which follows it are all the reasons for the revelation of the *āyāt* of reminder (*āyāt adh-dhikr*).

As for those specific reasons and stories that [some] commentators have undertaken to explain, they have no significant part in the revelation except for in the case of a few Qur'ānic *āyāt* that refer to some events that took place during or before the lifetime of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Thus, when the reader reads or listener hears that reference he awaits and anticipates the explanation of that particular event.

Otherwise, it is necessary for us to explain these sciences in such a manner that it does not call for the narration of irrelevant stories.