

A. Zysow, Şadaqa, in *ET*<sup>2</sup>, viii, 708-16; M.C. Wilson, The Hashemites, the Arab revolt, and Arab nationalism, in R. Khalidi et al. (eds.), *The origins of Arab nationalism*, New York 1991, 204-21; A. Zysow, Zakāt, in *ET*<sup>2</sup>, xi, 407-22.

## Teaching

The act of instructing; imparting knowledge and information. Most of the numerous teaching-related passages in the Qurʾān are dedicated to the sound instruction of the believers in the faith (q.v.) and to their spiritual growth as individuals and members of the community (see BELIEF AND UNBELIEF; KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING; IGNORANCE). These passages include instruction on the creed, worship and other aspects of religious life. Some passages in the Qurʾān, however, also provide detailed instruction on secular matters (human relations; political, social, and legal affairs, etc.; see ETHICS AND THE QURʾĀN; VIRTUES AND VICES, COMMANDING AND FORBIDDING; LAW AND THE QURʾĀN).

Matters related to teaching are dealt with in the Qurʾān in a wide variety of ways and are to be found in passages containing the following lexemes and concepts:

- 1) *ʿallama*: to teach, instruct, train; to make somebody know; 2) other terms implying the idea of teaching; 3) teaching principles; 4) certain approaches and techniques promoting the Qurʾān's teaching(s), such as:
  - a) passages devoted to specific instructions;
  - b) language signs and literary devices used as didactic tools (see PARABLE; SIMILES; METAPHOR; SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE; NATURE AS SIGNS; LITERARY STRUCTURES OF THE QURʾĀN); and 5) pedagogical and didactic elements significant for a more general context.

### *To teach, instruct, train*

The verb *ʿallama* (with various subjects and objects) is found a total of forty-two times:

as *ʿallama* (perfect active, twenty-two times), *yuʿallimu* (imperfect active, sixteen times), *ʿullima* (perfect passive, three times), and the passive participle *muʿallam* (once).

### *God teaches prophets*

God “taught Adam the names of all [things]” (Q 2:31; see ADAM AND EVE; ANIMAL LIFE; CREATION; COSMOLOGY). After David (q.v.) slew Goliath (q.v.), David was given “the kingship, and the wisdom (q.v.), and he taught him such as he willed” (Q 2:251; see KINGS AND RULERS). David was also taught “the fashioning of [armor]... to fortify [his people] against [the] violence [q.v.; they directed against each other]” (Q 21:80). David’s heir, Solomon (q.v.), “said, ‘People, we have been taught the speech of birds (*manṭiqa l-ṭayri*)’” (Q 27:16; for this topic and for relevant biblical passages, see Speyer, *Erzählungen*, 384-5). Jacob (q.v.), ancestor of all the Israelites, “was possessed of knowledge for that we had taught him” (*la-dhū ʿilmin li-mā ʿallamnāhu*, Q 12:68; see also ISRAEL). Joseph (q.v.), one of Jacob’s sons, was taught the interpretation of tales and events (Q 12:6, 21, 101; see NEWS) and of dreams (Q 12:36-7; see DREAMS AND SLEEP). Moses’ (q.v.) servant (*fatā*, associated by most commentators with al-Khiḍr; see KHAḌIR/KHIDR) “had [been] given mercy (q.v.) from us, and... taught... knowledge proceeding from us” (Q 18:65); thus Moses asked his servant: “Shall I follow you so that you teach me of what you have been taught?” (Q 18:66; see also Wensinck, al-Khaḍir). Jesus (q.v.) had been taught “the book (q.v.) and the wisdom, the Torah (q.v.), and the Gospel” (q.v.; Q 5:110), in order to “be a messenger (q.v.) to the Children of Israel” (q.v.; Q 3:48-9). To Muḥammad, God revealed “the book and the wisdom, and taught [him] that which [he] knew not [before]” (Q 4:113; see UMMĪ; ILLITERACY; REVELATION AND INSPIRA-

TION). Muḥammad was “taught by one mighty in power” (Q 53:5), the archangel Gabriel (q.v.), “who brought [the Qurʾān] down upon [his] heart (q.v.) by the leave of God, confirming what was before it, and for a guidance and good tidings of the believers” (Q 2:97; see GOOD NEWS; ASTRAY). Muḥammad, however, had not been “taught poetry, [for] it [was] not seemly for him” (Q 36:69; see POETRY AND POETS).

*God teaches humankind/common people*

Q 96 (Sūrat al-ʿAlaq, “The Clot”), which the Islamic tradition usually considers to be the very first revelation to Muḥammad, gives priority to the fact that God “taught man that which he knew not” (Q 96:5) and that God did so “by [the use of] the pen” (Q 96:4), possibly indicating that God taught humankind “the holy scriptures” or “writing” (cf. also Q 2:282; see LITERACY; WRITING AND WRITING MATERIALS; ORALITY AND WRITING IN ARABIA; and Günther, Muḥammad, 4-5).

God taught humankind the Qurʾān (Q 55:2) and “the explanation” (*al-bayān*, Q 55:4; see also NAMES OF THE QURʾĀN), i.e. “articulated speech” (*nutq*; cf. *Jalālayn* and others on Q 55:4; see also Q 43:52, *wa-lā yakādu yubīnu*); or “the names of all things” (*asmāʾ kullī shayʾin*) or “all the languages” (*al-lughāt kullahā*; Qurṭubī, *Jāmiʿ*, xvii, 152-3; see LANGUAGE, CONCEPT OF; ARABIC LANGUAGE). It is said to “remember God, as he taught you the things that you knew not [before]” (Q 2:239; see REMEMBRANCE; MEMORY; REFLECTION AND DELIBERATION).

God orders Muḥammad to warn people about the previous generations (q.v.) who did not measure God “with his true measure” (see WARNER; PUNISHMENT STORIES; WEIGHTS AND MEASURES), denying that God had “sent the book... [to] Moses... as a light (q.v.) and a guidance to humankind (*bashar*)...” (see LIE). The unbelievers are

addressed directly: “you were taught what you knew not, you and your fathers” (Q 6:91; see also Q 2:151, 239; 4:113; and Q 2:282; 96:4). That God taught humans how to train (“teach”) animals is stated in Q 5:4.

*God teaches the angels*

God taught the angels (see ANGEL) so they said “We know not save what you have taught us” (Q 2:32). Nonetheless, the angels did not have Adam’s knowledge, for God had taught him the names of all things — which resulted in God’s setting Adam and humankind on the earth as his viceroy instead of the angels (see CALIPH).

*Prophets teach*

God’s messengers (see PROPHETS AND PROPHETHOOD) were sent to the people to “teach them the book and the wisdom, and to purify them” (Q 2:129; cf. 2:151). Muḥammad was instructed “to recite his signs (q.v.) to them, and to purify them, and to teach them the book and the wisdom, though before that they were in manifest error” (q.v.; Q 62:2).

Pharaoh’s (q.v.) accusation that Moses taught sorcery is implied in Pharaoh’s threat to his sorcerers: “Have you believed him (Moses) before I gave you leave? Why, he is the chief of you, the same who taught you sorcery” (Q 20:71; cf. 26:49; see MAGIC; MIRACLES; MARVELS).

*Humans teach*

Certain humans (Muslims) are warned against wanting to “teach” God; this is evident in God’s command to Muḥammad: “Say: ‘What! Would you (people) teach God what your religion (q.v.) is...?’” (Q 49:16).

The *rabbāniyyūn*, “masters (in the scripture), people of the lord (q.v.),” are reminded of their twofold obligation: to teach and to continue studying. It is stated:

“Be you masters in that you teach the book [to your brethren in faith], and in that you [yourselves] study [it]” (*kūnū rabbāniyyīna bi-mā kuntum tu‘allimūna l-kitāba wa-bi-mā kuntum tadrusūna*, Q 3:79). According to Ibn ‘Abbās (d. 68/687-8), “the father of Qur’ānic exegesis” (Veccia Vaglieri, ‘Abd Allāh b. al-‘Abbās; see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR’ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL), the *rabbāniyyūn* are “scholars” and “teachers,” for he remarks: “Be *rabbāniyyūn*, wise, erudite and learned men; and it is said that a [good] *rabbānī* is someone who [starts] instructing people in simple [things], before [dealing with] complex ones” (*kūnū rabbāniyyīna ḥukamā’, fuqahā’, ‘ulamā’; wa-yuqālu: al-rabbānī lladhī yurabbī l-nāsa bi-ṣiḡhāri l-‘ilmi qabla kibārihi*; cf. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *K. al-‘Ilm*, *bāb* 10; Khan, *Translation*, i, 59-60). *Rabbāniyyūn* is also a synonym for “erudite men” (*ḥukamā’*; see Dārimī, *Sunan*, n. 329). A different nuance in meaning is stressed by al-Rāzī (d. 606/1210) quoting Sībawayhi (d. ca. 180/796): “A *rabbānī* is [somebody] belonging to the lord, in the sense of his being knowledgeable of him and being persistent in obeying him” (*al-rabbānī l-mansūb ilā l-rabb, bi-mā nā kawnihi ‘āliman bihi wa-muwāḏiban ‘alā ṭā’atihi*; Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, xviii, 119; and the etymology offered in Horovitz, *Proper names*, 57; ed. Ohio, 201). In Q 5:44, 63, *rabbāniyyūn* is used in conjunction with the *aḥbār* (Jewish/non-Muslim doctors, teachers; see also Horovitz, *KU*, 63-4; *Proper names*, 53-4, 56-7; ed. Ohio, 197-8, 200-1; Paret, *Kommentar* 39, 122; for the Aramaic word *rabb*, *rabbī*, and the derived form *rabbūnī*, meaning “[my] master/teacher,” also a title of a Palestinian scholar, see Sokoloff, *Aramaic*, 511, 513, 514; Buttrick, *Interpreter’s dictionary*, iv, 522-4). In this context, it is worth noting that *al-rabb* in the Qur’ān — when referring to God, mostly translated as “the lord” — implies the meaning of the “supreme master, divine teacher,” to whom humans feel close

despite his omnipotence (see CLIENTS AND CLIENTAGE; POWER AND IMPOTENCE).

Humans shall “train, teach” animals as God has taught them before, as it is mentioned in the context of slaughtering animals and dietary rules (see SLAUGHTER; FOOD AND DRINK; LAWFUL AND UNLAWFUL): “The good things are permitted to you, and such hunting creatures you teach, training them as hounds, and teaching them as God has taught you (see HUNTING AND FISHING) — eat what they seize for you, and mention God’s name over it!” (Q 5:4; see BASMALA).

Furthermore, mention is made of Muḥammad’s opponents (see OPPOSITION TO MUḤAMMAD) and of their attempts to discredit him and his message by claiming that he had not been receiving revelations but was being “taught” instead by a human teacher: “And we know very well that they say, ‘Only a human (*bashar*) is teaching him’” (Q 16:103) — perhaps an allusion to a monk known as Sergius (Sargis Bahīrā; cf. Günther, Muḥammad, 25-6, n. 124; see CHRISTIANS AND CHRISTIANITY; MONASTICISM AND MONKS; INFORMANTS). Along these lines, Muḥammad was accused of being a man “tutored (*mu‘allam*), possessed” (Q 44:14; see INSANITY).

#### *Angels/devils teach*

The Qur’ān refutes the idea that Solomon knew and taught sorcery: “Solomon disbelieved not, but the satans (*al-shayāṭīn*) disbelieved, teaching the people sorcery, and that which was sent down [from heaven] upon the two angels in Babylon, Hārūt and Mārūt (q.v.); they [the two angels] taught not anyone [sorcery] without saying, ‘We are but a temptation; do not disbelieve’” (Q 2:102), for Solomon was considered to be the originator of sorcery, an idea apparently prevalent among the Jews in Medina (q.v.; see Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, ii, 408; Fück, *Das Problem*, 5-6; Asad, *The*

message, 21 n. 82; for *shayṭān* meaning satan, cf. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, ii, 405, and passim; abr. Eng. trans. Cooper, *The commentary*, 475-91; see DEVIL; JEWS AND JUDAISM).

#### Other terms

This account of Solomon includes the only two qur'ānic references to *ta'allum*, "learning," the linguistic counterpart of *ta'līm*, "teaching." It is said that the people in Babylon "learned [from the two fallen angels Hārūt and Mārūt] how they might separate a man from his wife...; and they learned what hurt them, and did not profit them..." (Q 2:102; see also Fahd, *Siḥr*).

Also relevant here is the concept of *dirāsa*, "to investigate, search [the scriptures]" (see Q 3:79; 6:105, 156; 7:169; 34:44; 68:37; also Horovitz, *Proper names*, 199, and the references given there; see also TRADITIONAL DISCIPLINES OF QUR'ĀNIC STUDY; TEACHING AND PREACHING THE QUR'ĀN).

Most of the numerous other expressions, implying more or less directly the idea of "teaching," relate to the notion of "God teaching the prophet(s)" and "the prophet Muḥammad instructing the people"; examples are *amara*, "to order" (cf. Q 3:80), *dhakara*, "to mention" (e.g. Q 7:2), *dhakkara*, "to remind" (cf. Q 14:5; 51:55), *qara'a* and *talā*, "to read aloud, recite" (e.g. Q 11:17; 18:27; see RECITATION OF THE QUR'ĀN). *Adrā*, "to cause to know, to teach" (occurring seventeen times) is used in God's orders to Muḥammad and the Muslims to reply to those who doubt the message of the Qur'ān (see UNCERTAINTY): "Say, 'Had God willed, I would not have recited it to you, neither would he have taught you it'" (Q 10:16; see also the rhetorical questions introduced by *mā adrāka*, "What will teach you? What makes you conceive?" in Q 69:3; 74:27; 77:14; 82:17, 18; 83:8, 19; 86:2; 90:12; 97:2; 101:3, 10; 104:5; and *mā yudrīka*, Q 33:63; 42:17; 80:3; see EXHORTATIONS).

Further relevant terminology includes *tadabbara*, "to ponder, contemplate, seek to understand" (e.g. Q 4:82; 47:24), *istaftā*, "to ask for a legal opinion" (cf. Q 4:127), the indicative designation "those who were given knowledge" from God (*ūtū l-'ilma*, Q 16:27; 17:107; 22:54; 28:80; 29:42; 30:56; 34:6; 47:16; 58:11), and terms for "explanation," such as *bayān*, *tabyīn*, *tafṣīl*, *tafṣīr* and the like.

In addition, the Qur'ān often employs *'alima*, "to know," to mean "to gain knowledge of something, to receive knowledge of something." Its qur'ānic counterpart, *jahila*, connotes "to be ignorant, not to know" (see AGE OF IGNORANCE). *Darā* is often used figuratively in the Qur'ān to mean "to learn of something, to know," while *sha'ara* connotes "to know, to realize," and its counterpart *ghafala*, "not to know, to be unmindful" (for these latter terms, see Fück, *Das Problem*, 12-19). *Tadrīs*, "teaching," and *ta'dīb*, "educating," do not occur in the Qur'ān. While *sharḥ* can imply "explanation, explaining," in the Qur'ān, derivatives of *sh-r-ḥ* connote "acceptance, opening, expanding," so they are not included in this overview.

#### Teaching principles

The Qur'ān seems to suggest a number of teaching principles, such as to be patient (Q 17:11; 18:60-82; 75:16; see TRUST AND PATIENCE), and to be attentive (Q 7:204; 50:37) while receiving instruction; to train the mind and improve the memory by reading aloud, repeating and pondering (Q 4:82; 38:29; 47:24; 87:6); to instruct people in their native language (Q 12:2; 14:4); to dispute only in matters of which one is knowledgeable (Q 3:66; see DEBATE AND DISPUTATION); to argue in a courteous manner (Q 16:125; 29:46); and to instruct by use of examples and evidence, as the many biblical narratives (q.v.) in the Qur'ān illustrate (for instance, by

suggesting that lessons be drawn from the past and the experiences of others; e.g. Q 5:32; 11:89); similarly for the passages teaching humans confidence (Q 11:38, 120; see also Speyer, *Erzählungen*, 87, 462-92; al-Gisr, *Islamic education*, 18-21; Jamālī, *Falsafa*, 13; Siddiqi, *Qur'ānic concept*, 1-10).

#### *Methods and techniques*

As for the question of what methods and techniques the qur'ānic text utilizes to promote its teaching(s), two points must be made. First, there are passages expressly dedicated to teaching; Q 2:282-3, for example, provides detailed instruction on how to handle legal matters:

O believers, when you contract a debt (q.v.) one upon another for a stated term, then write it down! And let a writer (*kātib*) write it down between you justly. And let not any writer refuse to write it down, as God has taught him (i.e. the art of writing). So let him write it down. And let the debtor dictate!... And if the debtor be a fool, or weak, or unable to dictate himself, then let his guardian dictate justly... (see MATURITY; GUARDIANSHIP). And be not loath to write it down, whether it (i.e. the amount) be small or great...! That is more equitable in God's sight... And take witnesses whenever you are trafficking one with another (see WITNESSING AND TESTIFYING)! And let neither a scribe nor a witness suffer harm.... And if you are upon a journey (q.v.), and you do not find a writer, then a pledge (*rihān*) in hand [should be required].

Second, there are textual characteristics and literary devices that emerge as sophisticated pedagogical and didactic tools. Examples are rhetorical questions, such as "Have you not seen...?" "Do you not know...?" (see RHETORIC AND THE

QUR'ĀN); textual elements that add force to already powerful passages (cf. Welch, *Formulaic features*, 77; see FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE QUR'ĀN); notions of forensic activity, such as proving (see PROOF), explaining, making manifest, and debating (cf. McAuliffe, *Debate*, 164); and literary signs, such as parallelism, repetition, metaphor, parable, simile (see also PAIRS AND PAIRING). The question as to how and to what extent the Qur'ān actualizes itself — as an aesthetic object — in the consciousness of its recipients seems to gain in significance in the context of "teaching and the Qur'ān" (see also Kermani, *Gott ist schön*, chap. 2; see LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE QUR'ĀN; TEACHING AND PREACHING THE QUR'ĀN).

#### *Pedagogical and didactic elements*

If "teaching (and learning)" were to be understood in a wider sense, the pedagogical and didactic elements in the Qur'ān extend to issues such as the developmental stages, habits and socialization of the human being (for the child, see Q 2:233; 40:67; 46:15; 65:6; see CHILDREN; PARENTS); ethical norms and values related to education (for orphans [q.v.], see Q 2:215; 76:8; 90:15-16; 89:17; for piety [q.v.] towards parents, see Q 2:83; 4:36; 6:151; 17:23-4; 18:80; 19:14; 29:8; 31:14-15; 46:15; see also Izutsu, *Concepts*, 207-10); human psychology (Q 3:135; 11:9-10; 12:53; 17:11; 21:37; 41:49; 96:6-7); and the appeal to the mind, reason and understanding (also in matters of faith) evident, for example, in the frequent phrase *a-fā-lā ta'qilūna*, "do you not understand?" (Q 2:44; see INTELLECT), and in the epitome of qur'ānic praise for the learned: "[Only] the erudite among his servants [truly] fear God" (Q 35:28).

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## Teaching and Preaching the Qur'ān

Since the earliest days of Islam, the Qur'ān has been considered the foundation of all knowledge and moral behavior. Originally, its study and transmission took place via lessons and sermons in the mosque from which the informal educational model of *madrasa* schools developed, as well as the master-student model, where students sought out teachers for their particular knowledge and studied with them for varying lengths of time. These two models formed a more or less uniform system that lasted for over a thousand years and actually still exists in modernized forms in various countries. There were no exams, no tables or chairs, and no distinction between religious and secular subjects. In some countries venerable mosque-universities developed, such as al-Azhar [University] in Cairo.

Students moved in and out of these educational structures and, depending on the years and intensity of their study, took up positions in the hierarchy of scholars (see KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING; SCHOLAR). Some, wearing the mantle of their teacher's scholarship, became *ulamā'*: scholars of Islam who were qualified to participate in the science of interpreting the Qur'ān (*tafsīr*; see EXEGESIS OF THE QUR'ĀN: CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL) and developing jurisprudence (*fiqh*; see LAW AND THE QUR'ĀN). They were expected to have a deeper knowledge of the Qur'ān and its sciences than imāms (see IMĀM), leaders in the mosque who on Friday delivered the ritual sermon (*khuṭba*), or held a variety of religious positions outside the mosque. The prophet Muḥammad was the first preacher, addressing his followers in his house-mosque in Medina (q.v.; beginning in 622 C.E.), and those preaching the Friday sermon (*khaṭīb*) still stand in the