
The Qur’ān is a universal message with eternal and perennial realities. The comprehension of its meaning and message is crucial for Muslim generations of all times and climes. Many translators have undertaken the arduous task of translating the Qur’ān. However, the most difficult and challenging task of English translation of the divine text is that the translator must remain faithful to its Arabic text and be considerate enough towards English readers, with regard to their linguistic and comprehension difficulties, religious and cultural conventions, and temporal and spatial differences, ensuring better communication and comprehension of the message of the Qur’ān.

The translation of the Qur’ān, entitled, *Quraan Made Easy* is a modern and comprehensive English translation with inline commentary, completed under the supervision of Afzal Hoosen Elias. The translator has used the modern English lexis to inculcate better comprehension of the Qur’ānic message. The *Quraan Made Easy* is divided into different sections (i.e., introduction, glossary of terms and names, translation and inline commentary of 114 sūrahs of original Arabic version of the Qur’ān, and an index). Each section carries its own substantial features, which are as follows: (1) The *Quraan Made Easy* includes translation and inline commentary along with the Arabic text of the Qur’ān. It employs simple and easy lexis, and leaves no room for ambiguity and confusion for the common English reader. (2) The introduction exhibits an elaborative sketch of the revelation, collection, and compilation of the Qur’ān, coupled with a short introduction to the earlier prophets and their books, including a precise gist of different kinds of Qur’ānic commentaries. (3) The book introduces the reader to important terms and vocabulary used in the Qur’ān, before getting into the arduous task of understanding the divine text; (4) It is an abridged English version of 114 sections of the Qur’ān with precise and comprehensive communicative dimensions.

The present review looks into the text in two ways (i.e., at one end, it knocks at the linguistic form utilised in the introduction and at another end
maintains dialectical interaction with the stylistic features of the text). It is pertinent to mention that the title of the book should carry the definite article before the word “Quraan” in order to comply with the grammatical rules.

In introduction, the translator’s use of locutions and redundant expressions need to be addressed upon, which mark a radical departure from precise and succinct expression and serve to camouflage the immediate insight of the meaning. For instance, the translator has used different words for the name of Prophet Muḥammad (peace be on him), at one place he mentioned the word “Nabi” and at another place the “Prophet,” yet at some other “Rasullullah.” The use of different words for the same personality may create confusion and misunderstanding for the novice reader. In addition to this, excessive use of adjectives and auxiliary verbs also call attention to be looked into it. For example, the adjective “complete” in the translation of the verse: “rejecting it is, in reality, a rejection of the complete wisdom of Allaah Ta’āla” (p. 5) is redundant. Because God’s wisdom cannot be divided into part and whole or complete and incomplete. He is Wise, All-knowing, and All-encompassing. Furthermore, the sentence, “The Qur’aan has been documented in book form and has been transmitted to us in succession” (p. 6) could have been formulated as “The Qur’aan has been documented in book form and transmitted to us in succession.” Here, the repetition of “has been” seems unusual. In addition to this, the use of the phrase, “the Qur’ān” or “the Holy Qur’ān” is compatible with the grammatical norms as the Qur’ān is a divine scripture but the expression with capital letter, “The Qur’ān” in the middle of a sentence violates these norms and looks awkward. In a similar vein, in terms of its lexis, the translator’s use of the word “prophesied” (p. 11) for Allah seems inappropriate as the expression carries worldly attributes that spoil the divinity of the message. The expression manifests more of human attributes as everything is in the knowledge of All-knowing Allah.

In translation and inline commentary of the Qur’aan Made Easy, the translator at the beginning of each surah has provided its background, brief summary, and a gist of its most crucial aspects. In introduction to almost all surahs, the author tried to maintain the link between two surahs by highlighting similarities of their contents. The scholars of Rhetorics (balāghah) have explained this particular aspect as internal relationship. The concept of internal relationship reinforces the idea that some parts of the Qur’ānic text clarify and strengthen the meaning of other parts of the text. This technique is crucial for the reinforcement and explanation of the meaning and message of the Qur’ān to the common reader. The link between the surahs also reveals the relevance of their linguistic and social context. The social context adds connotative meaning to the text. Therefore, the translator should keep in
mind the sociocultural context in which the revelation took place, in order to throw light on the true meaning of the Qur’anic message. To achieve this objective, the translator beautifully utilised parenthetical explanation and inserted within the text exegetical information that adds to the receptor’s comprehension. The translation also provides supplementary information to the reader and gives clues about the social background of the revelation.

The translator borrowed expressions of the source language at places where he found no appropriate equivalent in English language. Borrowing is the simplest method of translation to overcome metalinguistic problems. For instance, the word “Subhaan” has no equivalent in English. The phrases “Glory be to Him,” “Glory to Allah,” and “limitless in His glory is He” are used as substitutes for the word “Subhaan” but no word denotes all shades of its meaning. In this context, the translator’s purpose of using so many Arabic words is to maintain divinity of the Qur’anic message as well as to provide intended meaning of the text in its linguistic context. However, the excessive use of source language words reduces the scope of the translation. For example, the translator has utilised Arabic and Urdu transcription for many words (i.e., Mu’mineen, Aakhirah, Kuffaar, Rabb, Jahannam, Qiyaamah, Kabah, Ruku, Aadam, and Shaytaan), throughout the translation.

The translation contains lexical and syntactic expansion or explanation of elliptical, lexical items or clauses. At many places, it provides synonymous expressions and pronoun references in parentheses for the ease of the receptor. Following example will suffice to illustrate this point: “There (in Jannah) they shall have spouses (partners) who have been purified (from all impurities) and they will live there forever (neither will they die nor will they be removed from Jannah)” (p. 65).

The incessant rhythmic sounds of strong vowels in the text move a person to tear and ecstasy but this ornament of the Qur’an gets completely lost in translation. The translator tried to maintain the sound and rhythm in the text by doubling the vowel sounds at many places (e.g., “aa” “ee” and “oo” sounds in numerous expressions like “the Quraan,” “Allaah” “Injeel,” and “Tawaaf.” Here, the author intentionally avoided transliteration symbols to enhance communicative comprehension of the message for the common reader.

There are many English writings on Islam, the Qur’an, and Prophet Muhammmad (peace be on him) but they have been mostly written by non-Muslims. The cultural bias and prejudice may not be restrained by anyone be it a Muslim or a non-Muslim. However, need of the hour is to do a thorough, descriptive, and exploratory research by the Muslim scholars in English language, focusing on the Qur’anic literature. All such concerted endeavours may underpin the crumbling edifice of a long lost and forgotten treasure of
knowledge. The *Quraan Made Easy* with its unique features would prove to be one of them.

Fahmeeda Gulnaz