

# The Jerusalem Question in International Law: The Way to a Solution

Eugene Cotran

## Status of Jerusalem in International Law

The question of the legal right of legal ownership over Jerusalem – what lawyers call sovereignty – has been claimed by many peoples over the ages. Historians have devoted time and energy to stressing that Jerusalem has been occupied respectively by the Canaanites, the Philistines, the Israelites or Hebrews, the Greeks, the Romans and Byzantines, the Arabs and the Ottoman Turks.

Jews, Christians and Muslims, from the three monotheistic religions, each in their turn and with equal vigour and fervour, have emphasised that Jerusalem (in particular the Old City and Holy Places) has a special meaning and significance for them, so that it has rightly been said that Jerusalem belongs to the “whole world”.

I do not intend in this paper to delve into historical or religious rights. In the first place, these have been amply documented elsewhere by historians and others more qualified than I. Secondly, I do not consider that such a historical survey will help in any way towards a practical solution to the problems which exist now between Israel and the Palestinians.

The way to a solution to the present impasse lies not in ancient history, nor in using the argument of who got there first or who has the better historical or religious right. The starting point, it seems to me, is modern rather than ancient history, and a recognition by Israel of three basic principles:

- (1) The truly international character of Jerusalem;
- (2) That might is not right; and
- (3) That the only possible solution to Jerusalem (and indeed to the whole of the Palestine problem) will necessarily be based not on exclusive ownership or sovereignty, but on a sharing arrangement with the Palestinians, by whatever name that is called.

56. Al-Mu'min/14
57. Cameron, D.A., *An Arabic-English Dictionary*. (Beirut: Lirbairie Du Liban, 1979), P. 180.
58. *The Universal Message*, vol. 15, No.1 (1993), p.4.
59. MASS Journal of Islamic Science. p. 46.
60. Cameron, D.A. *An Arabic-English Dictionary*, p.243.
61. Al-Mu'min/14
62. *The Universal Message*, vol. 15, No.1 (1993)
63. MASS J. of Islamic Science, p. 46.
64. Ibid, p. 47.
65. See Abdullah Yusuf Ali. *The Holy Qur'an-Translation and Commentary*, p. 329.  
Also Daryabadi, Abdul Majid, *Tafsir-ul-Qur'an* (Islamabad: Islamic Book foundation) vol. III, p. 184.
66. Burq, Dr. Ghulam Gilani, *Dow Qur'an* (Lahore: Asad Publications, first edition was published in 1943) p. 212.
67. Abdul Wadud, Dr., *Phenomena of Nature and the Qur'an*, p. 143.
68. Al-Qadri, Dr. Muhammad Tahir, *Creation of Man* (Lahore: Idarah Minhaj al-Qur'an 1992), p. 15.



and took out the heart from it and then extracted a blood clot (*alaqah*) out of it.

34. According to Abdullah Yusuf Ali and N.J. Dawood '*alaq*' is clot of congealed blood; Pickthall and Daryabadi had translated it into a clot. Arthur J. Arberry and M: H. Shakir had rendered it into blood clot but La'l Muhammad Chawla and Ahmed Ali consider it as "an embryo" and according to Muhammad Asad it is a germ cell. For detail consult author's book "*Sirat-e-Mustafa aur 'Asri Sa'insi Tehqiq*" (Lahore: Bazm-e-Rizwiyya,2000) PP.15-17.
35. MASS Journal of Islamic Science, op.cit., p.44.
36. Steingass, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, p.721.
37. Salmone H. Anthony, *An Advanced Learner's Arabic Dictionary* (Lahore: al-Beruni, al-Rehman Building the Mall), p. 594.
38. Bucaille, *The Bible The Qur'an and Science*, p. 204.
39. MASS Journal of Islamic Science, op. Cit., p. 44.
40. Moore, K.L., A Scientist's Interpretation of References to Embryology in the Qur'an in "*Insan aur Ka'inat Ki Takhliq-'o'-Irtiqa* (Lahore Adarah Minhaj al-Qur'an, 1992) pp 34-35.
41. Al-'Alaq/1-2
42. Al-Mu'minun/14
43. Al-Ghafir/67
44. Al-Qiyamah/37-38
45. Anees, M.A., *Islam and Biological Future*, (London, Mansell Publishing Ltd. 1989) pp. 145-46.
46. MASS J. of Islamic Science, op. Cit., p.46.
47. Ibid, p. 44.
48. Raghīb, *Mufaradat al-Qur'an*. (Karachi, Noor Muhammad Karkhana Tijarat) p. 469
49. MASS J. of Islamic Science, op cit, p. 45.
50. Stiengass, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, p. 1016.
51. Al-Mu'minun/14
52. Al-Hajj/5
53. Razi, *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*, vol. 12, p. 126.
54. MASS J. of Islamic Science, p. 45.
55. Alusi Baghdadi, *Ruh al-Ma'ani*.. (Beirut: Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi) cf. MASS Journal of Islamic Science, p.44.

13. Bucaille, op.cit., P.201.
14. *The Universal Message*, Monthly Journal of Islamic Research Academy Karachi, vol, 14, No.11 (April 1993), p.8.
15. Farooqi, M. Moin, *Early stages of Human Development in the light of the Qur'an, Hadith and Science*; MASS Journal of Islamic Science, vol, 8, No. 2,P.
16. Anees, Dr. M.A., *Islam and Biological Future* (London: Mansell Publishing Ltd., 1989), pp. 145-46.
17. Muhammad Aftab Khan, Dr. *Qur'an Aur Ilm al-Janin* (Lahore: Idarah Matbu, at-e-Sulaiman; 1990) P. 165.
18. Shamsuddin Ahmad, Mulla, *Al-Qur'an and Human Embryology*, The Universal Message vol. 14, NO.11, (April, 1993), pp 8-9.
19. Al-Qiyamah/37.
20. Al-Nahl/4.
21. al-Bar, Muhammad Ali, *Khalq al-Insan bayn al-Tibb wa'l Qur'an* (Jeddah: al-Daral-Saudiyyah, 1986) p.14.
22. Al-Dahr/2
23. MAAS Journal of Islamic Science, vol.8, No.2, p. 42.
24. Ibid.
25. Bucaille, M., op.cit. p. 202.
26. MASS Journal of Islamic Science vol.8, No.2. p. 42.
27. Ibid, p.43  
Also; Moore L. Keith, *The Developing Human with Islamic Notes* by S.A. M. Azzindani, (Jeddah: Dar-ul-Qibla, 1983).
28. *Musnad Ahmad* (Beirut; Dar al-Sadar) vol.1, p.465.
29. *Lisan al-'Arab*, 10/261,262,267.
30. Lane, E.W; *Arabic-English Lexicon*, (Cambridge, The Islamic Text Society, 1984), p. 2134.
31. MASS Journal of Islamic Science, vol.2 No.2 (July-December 1992), p.44
32. Ibid
33. Muslim *Sahih*, *Kitab al-Iman* has quoted the following *Hadith*:  
"Gabrail came to the Messenger of Allah (Peace be upon him) while he was playing with his playmates. He took hold of him and lay him prostrate on the ground and tore open his breast

Dr. Muhammad Tahir al-Qadri writes that the new creation described in the later part of the verse refers to the human like embryo which is formed by the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> week and then in embryology it is termed as fetus. At other places the Qur'an further described the order in which other systems of the body develop Qur'an describes the creation of man<sup>68</sup>.

The above discussion proves that the facts regarding human embryology as underlined by the Holy Qur'an are completely in accordance with the established knowledge of this field.

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2. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri *Creation of Man* (Lahore: Idarah Minaj-ul-Qur'an, 1992) P. 16.
3. Al-Mu'minun/12-14
4. Al-Hajj/5
5. Abdul Wadud, Dr., *Phenomena of Nature and the Qur'an*, (Lahore, 1971), P. 141. Also Daryabadi, Maulana Abdul Majid, *Tafsir-ul-Qur'an*. (Islamabad: Islamic Book Foundation) vol. 111, p. 108.
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11. Al-Mu'minun/12
12. Stiegass, *Arabic-English Dictionary* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publication), p 1128. Also, MAAS Journal of Islamic Science, vol. 8, No.2, (Aligarh 1992), p. 42.

When the bones have taken their shapes only then muscles start clothing them. At this stage the muscles of trunk, the limbs and the head are well defined<sup>62</sup>.

In recent decades two authors Hertig and Rock have published a great deal of literature on the anatomy of early human embryos. In 1945, they described an embryo which was 9 days old. It has been reported that during the eight week of development the human embryo develops a skeleton mostly cartilagenous. It is around this time that the primordia of muscles make up their position along the developing bones. As bones of the appendages being to differentiate the muscle cells aggregate in masses on their dorsal and ventral aspects and in course of time surround them from the sides.<sup>63</sup>

It is in the light of this discovery that the beauty of the Qur'anic expression becomes evident. The Ayah clearly states that the bones are formed first followed by muscles. Such a precise and accurate observation about a developing tiny tot barely a few mm long, concealed within three veils of darkness' and revealed 1400 years ago cannot be but Divine in origin.<sup>64</sup>

## 7. KHALQ AKHAR

This is the final stage of human embryo in uterus. *Khalq* means creation or creature and *Akhar* means end or last days; so *khalq akhar*' can be interpreted as final stage in the development of embryo or fully developed embryo. Some commentators have rendered *khalq akhar* into "another creation"<sup>65</sup> while modern scholars have used the words new creation for the translation of *khalq akhar*: Dr. Ghulam Gilani Burq thinks that human embryo possesses the shape of Leech, bird and animal in mother's uterus. At final stage, it is given the shape of human being that is, in fact, a new creation<sup>66</sup> it is true that embryonic stages of animals belonging to a class or even to a phylum present remarkable resemblances to one another. However, zygote of one species cannot develop into embryo of another species. Dr. Abdul Wadud has pointed out that human embryo resembles those of fish and rabbit in certain respects, it does not mean that an egg of man becomes a fish and rabbit in certain respects, it does not mean that an egg of man becomes a fish embryo first, changes to rabbit embryo next and becomes a human embryo last.<sup>67</sup>

## 5. AL-'IZAM :

The Holy Qur'an has elucidated that when the *mudghah* stage is accomplished, development of bones starts. The Holy Qur'an announces :

فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُصَفَّةَ عِظْمًا<sup>56</sup>

Then we made out of that chewed mass (*mudghah*), the bones (*izam*)

The Arabic word "*izam* means bones<sup>57</sup> but in biological terms we can translate this word into skeleton or skeletal system.

"This is exactly what the present day embryologists tell us. They say it is the somites which give rise to most of the bones, such as occipital, cervical, thoracic, lumbar, carcal and coccygeal pairs. somites are also asociated with musculature as well as much of the dermis of the skin. This stage is, thus, one of the most important stages and during this period, the somites are used as one of the criteria for determining the embryo's age<sup>58</sup>.

In this stage various organs take up their respective positions, for which this stage is considered to have a special significance. Since when bones take their respective shapes, the embryo starts taking human appearance. According to Azzindani the human embryo by beginning of the seventh week acquires a skeleton mostly cartilaginous which give form to the body of embryo<sup>59</sup>.

## 6. LAHM

In Qur'anic terminology *lahm* is the next stage to "*izam*. It means meat or flesh<sup>60</sup> Some interpreters have used the words 'muscles' or 'muscular system' for *lahm* that are more appropriate. The Holy Qur'an states:

فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا<sup>61</sup>

Then we clothed the bony framework (*al izam*) with muscular system (*lahm*).

خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تَرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ  
عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُضْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ 52

We created you out of dust, then out of sperm, then out of leech like clot, then out of a morsel of flesh, partly formed and partly unformed.

Al-Razi has interpreted this part of the Ayah as follows:

By *Mukhallaqah* is meant a *mudghah* in which the formative processes proceed normally to achieve differentiation while "*ghair Mukhallaqah*" represents a form of imperfect *mudghah* into two types: in one the features, senses and outlines have been completed, the other still remains imperfect. In this way the Almighty has stated that after the formation of *mudghah* some are made into perfect human beings without any defect, others remain incomplete. According to al-Razi same view is held by Qatada (d. ) and Dahhak (d. )<sup>53</sup>.

Another point needed to be mentioned here is that, in the Ayah quoted above the word *mukhallaqah* proceeds *ghair mukhallaqah* which may appear to suggest a reversal of the order of nature's formative process. Since during course of development, the less differentiated (incomplete) *mudghah* will give rise to a better differentiated (complete) one, why then the later should have precedence over the former? The wisdom behind this is that Allah's rule of creation ensures perpetuation of the race as a cardinal principle and, therefore, a large majority is viable enough to give rise to new individuals. Only a small percentage fails to develop at all and are, therefore, of secondary importance<sup>54</sup>.

Allamah Alusi Baghdadi elucidates, "The reason for reversing the order in the narrative by using *mukhallaqah* first is that *ghair mukhallaqah* is incapable of qualifying as a living entity"<sup>55</sup>



The zygote undergoes a series of mitotic cell divisions. Within three days of fertilization, the rapid cell division produces a solid, spherical mass called morula. In the next two days, it develops a fluid-filled cavity and is identified as blastula. Within a week after conception, the enzymes secreted by the blastula help it burrow into endometrium the uterine lining. It eventually reaches the underlying blood vessels and firmly implants itself in the uterine wall<sup>45</sup>. The embryo after 24 days of development enters into the '*alaqah* stage and lie suspended by the body-stalk into the chorionic cavity surrounded by the fluid medium<sup>46</sup>. Such a situation conforms strictly to the definition of "*alaqah* as thing suspended from the surface.

#### 4. AL-MUDGHAH

After the thing which clings' the Qur'an informs us that embryo passes through a stage of chewed flesh. This is the next stage in order of development of embryo and is denoted by the word *mudghah* which has been used three times in the Holy Qur'an. In Arabic language it means: that small piece of flesh which man can put in his month<sup>47</sup>.

According to Raghīb Isfahani a *mudghah* is a piece of flesh large enough to be chewed<sup>48</sup>. Similar view is held by Abu Hayyan Andulusi<sup>49</sup>. According to Dr. Stien-gass *mudghah* means lump of flesh<sup>50</sup>.

The Holy Qur'an has described this stage in the following words:

51 ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً

Then We made the sperm into a hanging mass (*alaqah*); then from that '*alaqah* We made a chewed like mass (*mudgah*)

'something which clings' corresponds to today's firmly established reality<sup>38</sup>. Dr. Shaykh Abdul Majeed Azzindani writes:

"The concept of this term(*alqaqah*) which meant blood clot, was used by ancient scholars, who depended on the external appearance of aborted conceptus. Instead its resemblance to leech on the basis of external appearance of the presomite embryo is preferable"<sup>39</sup>.

Dr. Keith L. Moore, a Professor of Anatomy at the University of Toronto elucidates '*alqaqah* as follows:

"The word "*alaca*" refers to a leech or blood sucker. This is an appropriate description of the human embryo from days 7-24 when it clings to the endometrium of the uterus, in the same way that a leech clings to the skin. Just as the leech derives blood from the host, the human embryo derives blood from the decidua or pregnant endometrium. It is remarkable how much the embryo of 23-24 days resemble a leech"<sup>40</sup>.

'*Alqaqah* is described in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:

41  
اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ☆ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ☆

Read, in the name of thy Lord Who fashioned, fashioned man from something which clings.

42  
ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً

We fashioned the sperm into something which clings then out of *mudghah*.

هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تَرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ 43

It is He Who has created you from dust, then from a sperm and then from something which clings.

44

أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِنْ مَنِيٍّ يُمْنَى ☆ ثُمَّ كَانَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقَ فَمَا سَوَى ☆

Was he (man) not a small quantity of sperm which has been poured out? After that he was something which clings; then Allah fashioned him in due proportion.

### 3. AL-ALAQAH

This is the third stage in human creation. This word has been used five times in the Qur'an. The linguists have elucidated this word in different ways.

According to Ibn Manzur *'alaqah* is used for the following meanings:

1. Anything hanging or suspended from a surface is called *'alaqah*.
2. thick clotted blood with a deep red colour and still moist is called *'alaqah*.
3. Equatic creature which sucks the blood (Leech) is also called *'alaqah*. Its plural is *'alaq*.

According to E.W. Lane *'alaq* means anything hung or suspended and *'alaqah* signifies clay that clings to hand, blood in general sense or intensely red blood or thick blood or clotted blood before it become dry, thick blood because of its clinging together<sup>30</sup>. Imam Raghīb Isfahani has mentioned that clotted blood is called *'alaq* in Arabic from which *'alaqah* is derived<sup>31</sup>. Likewise Imam Abu Bakr Sajistani and Abu Hayyan Andulusi held similar view<sup>32</sup>. In Hadith literature this word has been used to mean clot of blood<sup>33</sup>.

Most of the commentators have depended upon these meanings but these meanings are not appropriate when modern embryological knowledge is kept in view<sup>34</sup>. Modern commentators have used words like "a hanging mass", "something which clings" and "leech-like clinging mass"<sup>35</sup>. The lexicographers like Dr. F. Stiengass<sup>36</sup> and H. Anthony Salmone<sup>37</sup> have used words 'what sticks to', 'hold on to' and sticking or clinging for *'alaq*. According to Maurice Bucaille, 'Something which clings' is the translation of the word *'alaq*. It is the original meaning of the word. A meaning derived from it, 'blood clot', often figures in translation; it is a mistake against which one should guard: man has never passed through the stage of being a 'blood clot'. The same is true for another translation of this term, 'adhesion' which is equally inappropriate. The original sense of

Verily We created man from a mixed or mingled fluid.

*Nutfah Amshaj* in the above verse means a mixture of male and female fluids (sperm and ovum) to form a zygote. This is view of Hadrat Ibn 'Abbas, Ikramah, Mujahid and Rabi' bin Anas<sup>23</sup>. Ibn Qutaibah has mentioned Razi, Qurtabi and Tabari all are unanimous on this point<sup>24</sup>. However, Dr. Maurice Bucaille<sup>25</sup> thinks that *nutfah amshaj* refers to spermatic liquid. It is formed by various secretions which come from the following glands:

- a) the testicles: the secretion of the male genital gland contains spermatozoa, which are elongated cells with a long flagellum; they are bathed in serofluid liquid.
- b) the seminal vesicles: these organs are reservoirs of spermatozoa and are placed near the prostate gland; they also secrete their own liquid but it does not contain any fertilizing agents.
- c) the prostate gland: this secretes a liquid which gives the sperm its creamy texture and characteristic odour.
- d) the gland annexed to urinary tract: Cooper's or Mery's glands secrete a stringy liquid and Littre's glands gives off mucous.

According to Bucaille *nutfah amshaj* is a mixture of the supra-mentioned secretions. According to Arabic grammar the word *al-nutfah* is a singular noun and the grammar rules permit singular noun or pronoun to be described by a singular adjective. *Amshaj* is plural adjective capable of agreeing with the concept of *nutfah* being a multi-faceted single entity<sup>26</sup>. It is mixture of male and female gametes which has become a single unit after fertilization.

Dr. Azzindani and Dr. Keith L. Moore think that *nutfah* is a comprehensive term and includes male and female gametes and part of their natural environments of fluid. It also includes zygote, morula and blastocyst till implantation in the uterus<sup>27</sup>. So *nutfah* neither refers to male and female geametes nor zygote but is also used for the early stages of embryo.

The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) replied to a question of a Jew:

"Man is created from the reproductive cells (*nutfah*) of both man and woman"<sup>28</sup>

the Qur'an with varying shades of meaning according to the context. According to the Holy Qur'an, whole of the semen emitted in a single ejaculation is not utilized for fertilization; rather a very small quantity or a microscopic quantity of the seminal fluid is required for fertilizing the female reproductive cell that is called ovum.<sup>16</sup>

Modern embryologists say that during a single intercourse, a normal man usually ejaculates about 3.5 ml of semen<sup>17</sup> and this much quantity of semen normally contains about 350 millions of sperms. There are about 5 millions of sperms in a single drop of semen. One can, thus, imagine how tiny little are the sperms. A few thousands of them if bundled together even then the bundle will not perhaps be visible to a naked eye and one would be surprised to know that only one such sperm is required to fertilize an ovum to form the zygote. This confirms that a microscopic quantity of germinal fluid causes the fertilization. This is exactly what, Al-Qur'an told us about fourteen hundred years ago<sup>18</sup>. The Holy Qur'an narrates:

19

أَلَمْ يَكُ نُطْفَةً مِّن مَّنِي يَمْنَىٰ ☆

Was not he a cell from semen which was introduced, (or gushed forth)?

20 خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ

(Allah) created man from reproductive unit.

The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have said:

21 مَا مِنْ كَلِّ إِطَاءٍ يَكُونُ الْوَلَدُ

The whole semen (ejaculated) is not utilized in the creation of baby.

### ***Nutfah Amshaj***

The Holy Qur'an has also described that man is created from *nutfah amshaj* in the following verse:

22 إِنَّا خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ أَمْشَاجٍ نَّبْتَلِيهِ

## 1. SULALAT MIN TIN

This word means extracts of clay<sup>5</sup> or quintessence of clay<sup>6</sup> or elements of earth<sup>7</sup> or product of wet earth<sup>8</sup>. This is inorganic stage of human creation. Man eats food whose constituents are directly or indirectly derived from earth. These elements of earth, taken in the form of food, are assimilated after digestion to form organic molecules which are raw material of seminal fluid. Shahid Athar, who is an Associate Professor at Indiana University School of Medicine, states that the seminal fluid has all ingredients (protein, carbohydrates, minerals) as earth has<sup>9</sup>. Qadi Mohammad Thana Ullah Panipati has also pointed out that the ingested food is transformed into semen after passing through a series of changes<sup>10</sup>.

It becomes clear that the ingredients of sperm and ovum are indirectly derived from the earth. That is why, the Holy Qur'an has described "*Sulalat min Tin*" as the first stage of human life. The Holy Qur'an tells the creation of man from the extract of clay in the following verse:

11  
 ☆ وَالْقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِّنْ طِينٍ

We did create man from a quintessence (of clay)

## 2. AL-NUTFAH

Most of the exegetes and lexicographers agree that *nutfah* means a drop of sperms<sup>12</sup>. Dr. Maurice Bucaille translates the word *nutfah* by the words 'small quantity (of sperm)'. He narrates that we do not have the terms that are strictly appropriate. This word comes from a verb signifying 'to dribble, to trickle', it is used to describe what remains at the bottom of a bucket that has been emptied out. It, therefore, indicates a very small quantity of liquid<sup>13</sup>. Aulla Shamsuddin Ahmed of Decca (Bangladesh) has translated *nutfah* into 'a microscopic quantity of germinal fluid<sup>14</sup> that is the most appropriate meaning of this word. It can also be rendered into 'reproductive unit' as it is implied for both male and female reproductive cells<sup>15</sup>. The word '*nutfah*' has been used twelve times in

And indeed We created man from elements of dust (quintessence of clay). Then We placed him as *nutfah* in a safe custody (secure place). Then out of that *nutfah* We created '*alaqah* (a hanging mass). Then out of *mudghah* We made '*izam* (bones) and clothed '*izam* with *lahm* (flesh or muscles). Then We brought him forward as *khalq Akhar*, (a new creation): so blessed be Allah, the best to create.

Another verse also underlines some stages of developing human embryo:

خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ

4 مِنْ مُصْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ

We created you out of dust, then out of *nutfah* (reproductive unit), then out of '*alaqah* (leech like hanging mass), then out of *mudghah* (a morsel of flesh), partly formed and partly unformed, in order that We may manifest (Our Power) to you.

In the above quoted verses the development of human embryo is told to be completed in seven stages that in Qur'anic terminology are as below:-

- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Sulalat min tin | (سُلَالَةٌ مِنْ طِينٍ) |
| 2. Al-Nutfah       | (النُّطْفَةُ)          |
| 3. Al-'Alaqah      | (الْعَلَقَةُ)          |
| 4. Al-Mudghah      | (الْمُصْغَةُ)          |
| 5. Al-'Izam        | (الْعِظَامُ)           |
| 6. Lahm            | (لَحْمٌ)               |
| 7. Khalq Akhar     | (خَلْقًا آخَرَ)        |

## STAGES OF HUMAN IN VIVO DEVELOPMENT AS REVEALED BY THE QUR'AN

Dr. Muhammad Sultan Shah\*

The Holy Qur'an has described the development of human embryo in mother's womb very explicitly. The Qur'anic description corresponds exactly to the facts as revealed by embryological research. Dr. Maurice Bucaille has acknowledged this fact in the following words:

"The Book (Holy Qur'an) mentions precise mechanisms in many places and describes clearly-defined stages in reproduction, without providing a single statement marred by inaccuracy. Everything in the Qur'an is explained in simple terms which are easily understandable to man and in strict accordance with what was to be discovered much later on"<sup>1</sup>

If human knowledge regarding embryological development is reviewed, it is revealed that the first known illustration of a fetus in the uterus was drawn by Leonardo da Vinci in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Although it was believed that its development takes place in stages but these stages could not be illustrated until 15<sup>th</sup> century. After the invention of the microscope in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, descriptions were made of the early stages of chick embryo. But the methodical staging of human embryo was not described until 20<sup>th</sup> century. Streeter in 1941 developed the first system of staging which now is replaced by a more accurate system proposed by O' Rahilly in 1972.<sup>2</sup>

The Holy Qur'an has told seven stages, by the completion of which human baby is delivered by mother. The following verse describes these stages:

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ ۖ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ ۖ  
ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظْمًا فَكَسَوْنَا  
الْعِظْمَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ فَبَارَكِ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنَ الْخَالِقِينَ ۖ 3

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\*Lecturer, Department of Islamic Studies, Government College, Lahore



# **The Bi-Annual Journal**

*Published by*

Sheikh Zayed Islamic Centre,  
University of the Punjab, Lahore  
Ph: 5863909 Fax:5882533  
E-Mail: SZIC @ nexlinx.net.pk.

## **Annual Subscription**

	In Pakistan	Outside Pakistan
Annual Subscription	Rs.100	\$ 10
Single Copy	Rs. 70	\$ 15

**December 2001**

**Note:** All correspondence should be addressed to "The Editor Al-Adwa, Sheikh Zayed Islamic Centre, University of the Punjab, Quaid-e-Azam Campus, Lahore (Pakistan)".

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# Al-Adwa'

Vol.XI

No.16

Dec.2001

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