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### A Linguistic Comparative Review of Aayat of Injunction in Pickthal and Arberry English Translations of the Holy Qur'an

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#### **Abstract**

The Holy Quran, a divine revelation from Allah Almighty, serves as a comprehensive guide for all of humanity. Recognizing the linguistic diversity and the need to convey its profound message to non-Muslims and those unfamiliar with Arabic, various translations of the Quran have been undertaken. Notably, English translations play a significant role in reaching a global audience, with the translations by Arbery and Pickthal standing out prominently.





This article aims to conduct a meticulous linguistic comparison specifically focusing on the verses of Injunctions in the translations by Arbery and Pickthal. Verses of Injunctions, elucidating legal rulings and their supporting evidence, encompass religious, practical, behavioral, and moral aspects. The analysis within this article aims to illuminate the nuances and differences in the translation of these pivotal verses, providing insights into the distinct interpretations offered by Arbery and Pickthal. Through this comparative exploration, we seek to enhance understanding and appreciation of the diverse linguistic approaches employed in conveying the essence of these profound verses.

**Keywords:** Arberry, Pikthall, Verses of Injunctions, Station of Ibrahim, Lewdness, Beasts of Sacrifice, Abomination, Touch, Chaste Women, Wedlock, Hajj, Umrah,

### Background

Allah created humans and preferred them over all other creatures, and taught them the names of the things, the Book and wisdom. He taught human language and expression to live a communal life, and these are all the signs of God. Every nation in the world is different from others and has different culture and way of life. In today's world, learning other languages is of fundamental importance to countries so they can develop cooperation with



other societies economically, educationally, culturally, and politically, which is why countries and societies value the teaching of other languages.

Translation has historical significance. Cicero is said to have been the first Roman orator who devised a method of translation. The Syrian princes wrote letters to is asking for money and assistance. The agreement between Ramses II (Pharaoh) and Abyssinian is known, as each party had an agreement in its own language. Hadhrat Umer was the first one who translated Persian books into Arabic. The Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs also transferred philosophy, economics, and science from other languages into Arabic, and this period in history is known as the "Era of translation". In this period the ideal human scientific heritage was established. The Islamic society at that time included Persian, Greek and Indian civilizations. During this period, the sciences of medicine, engineering, philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics were translated from other languages into Arabic. During the reign of Caliph Mamoon, a library called "House of Wisdom" (بيت الحكمة) was established, where Greek, Syriac, Indian, Persian, and Roman books were kept.

#### Introduction:

Translation is the bridge between cultures and the means that enables us to see what others have achieved in the fields of science, literature, and Arts. It is one of the basic cultural works in the exchange of thought, the interaction of culture and the growth of science. Translation is of paramount importance in the development of societies, ancient and modern. It is known that Translation was behind the two major shifts in human history. The first shift was represented in the Islamic Renaissance, when Muslims worked on translating and transferring Greek, Persian and Indian sciences into Arabic, so that this period witnessed a great prosperity in all kinds of sciences such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, and geography. It is known what the House of Wisdom did during the Abbasid Caliphate and its leaders such as Hunain bin Ishaq, Yohanna Ibn al Batriq, Ibn Naama al-Himsi and others.

Then the second shift came with the Age of Lights or the European Renaissance, where Muslims' sciences and their heritage were translated into European and Latin languages. This transfer was the basis of the development and progress reached by Western societies. Some of what was translated about Muslims continued to be taught in Western universities until the beginning of the twentieth century. In the first half of the nineteenth century, during the



reign of Muhammad Ali Pasha, the scope of translation expanded to include scientific works in addition to the literature. Rifa'a al-Tahtawi (رفاعة الطهطاوي) was one of the most prominent translators in that period, as he translated many scientific books for the benefit of the army. Founded between 1915 and 1916, the الرابطة القلمية translated many new works from and into Arabic in the early twentieth century.

#### Translation of the Holy Quran

Translations of Qur'an have made important and positive contributions to humanity. From past centuries, a large number of people from all over the world learned the message of the Qur'an through its translations. Qur'an is the complete word of God in its original Arabic language. Translating it into any other language is always limited to the translators' understanding of the meaning of the Qur'an. The text of Qur'an has some unique characteristics that its translation is bound to lose. The manner of expression in the Qur'an is special and unique. It has its own style and rhythm that is neither poetry nor prose. It has a rare and great beauty, which is sublime.

Moreover, Arabic is a very rich language, and many of its words have many meanings that are not easily found in some other languages, including English. Classical Arabic of Qur'an requires further study to fully appreciate and understand the depths of meanings. In addition, Qur'an as an inexhaustible source of meaning always continues to reveal its meaning to the changing needs of humanity as knowledge of life progresses. Quran has been translated into English by many people in the past few centuries. While there were very few translations made by non-Muslims between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, Muslims published about thirty translations during the twentieth century. In the last few years of the beginning of the twenty-first century, about 10 translations were published by Muslims. When so many translations of the same book are available, one would naturally think that they are more than enough. However, the error-free and most communicative translation of Qur'an is still an unfulfilled dream.

#### (أحكام) Verses of Injunctions





The injunctions of Qur'an are of paramount importance in the lives of Muslims. It constitutes the primary source of Sharia. Verses that have legal connotations in Qur'an constitute the code of conduct for every Muslim from birth to death. They provide the touchstone for distinguishing between the legitimate, halal and haram, and right from wrong in every area of life. That is why Qur'an is also called the standard (Al-Furqan). The injunctions of Qur'an, unlike any other man-made laws, are not subject to modification. Therefore, they have remained the same for the past 1400 years.

There are approximately 600 verses of injunctions in Qur'an. About 400 of them relate to worship, and the remaining 200, according to one census, are divided as follows:

About 70 verses relate to family law, 80 verses to commerce and finance, 13 verses to oaths, 30 to crimes and judgments, 10 to constitutional and administrative matters, and 25 to international law.

It should be noted that these numbers show the number of verses that deal directly with the laws. There are many other verses on other topics of the Qur'an, for example: the stories from which the rules are also derived.

Verses related to worship include purification, ablution, washing, tayammum, prayer, almsgiving, fasting, pilgrimage, oath, vows, remembrance of God, and supplication. Verses related to trade and finance include various types of contracts, donations, loans, licenses, restrictions, documentation, and guarantees. Family laws include laws relating to marriage, divorce, children, and inheritance. The laws related to crimes include murder, adultery, slander, theft, armed robbery, punishments, apostasy, rebellion against Islamic leadership, etc.

The language of injunctions in Qur'an often has a unique style. Many Qur'anic commands begin with a direct address to believers, such as "O you who believe." This means that the commands of the Qur'an can only be understood and appreciated by the believers of the Qur'an. And sometimes, even if they are not fully understood in a convincing way, a true believer is expected to be willing to apply commands as soon as they are heard or recognized.

### Arthur John Arberry<sup>I</sup>





He was an English scholar who excelled in Islamic theology and Persian literature. Arthur John Arberry was born on May 12, 1905, in Portsmouth, southern England, his father, William Arberry was an officer in the Royal Navy.

He says about his parents, "They were fond of reading good books, and they raised their children to be devout Christians, and to taste literature."

He attended Grammar School in Portsmouth. Owing to his eloquence, he won a scholarship to study the classics (Greek and Latin) at the University of Cambridge and entered Pembroke College of that university in 1924 as the first student of that year. He was awarded the Sir William Brown Medal, and he was also given the Edwards Scholarship. Brown Scholarship in 1927, Studentship with Wright, and First Student Scholarship with Goldsmith in 1930. In 1931 he was selected as a junior research fellow at Pembroke College, where he graduated.

He had studied Arabic from the great Professor Reynolds Allan Nicholson in 1927, and he had a great influence on him.

Arberry preferred to spend the first year of his fellowship in Cairo. He spent in the Faculty of Arts at the Egyptian University from October 1932 to June 1934. In the Journal of the Faculty of Arts, he published the Book of Plants attributed to Aristotle, which is in fact by Nicolaus, and provided with abundant comments.

During his stay in Egypt, he was able to visit Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria, to collect material for his future research. Here he also, published in 1933 a translation he made into English of the play "MAJNOON LAYLA" by the poet Ahmed Shawqi. He also published an investigation of the book "Knowing the People of Sufism" by Al Kalabadhi, which is one of the oldest books on Sufism. This book was translated into English under the title "The Doctrine of the Sufis. While he was spending the summer holidays of 1934 in England, he was appointed Assistant Librarian at the Office India Library in London, and before that, he had been employed by C. A. Storey.



In 1935 he published a great book on Sufism, "Al Mawqaf wal Mukhattabat" by Al Nufri, and translated it into English. This was by the invitation of Reynolds Nicholson.

The University of Cambridge awarded him a Doctor of Arts degree. This year, he published the "Index of Arabic Manuscripts" in the Indian Diwan Library. it was followed in 1937 by the "Index of Persian Books" in the same library. After that, his works continued in cataloging Arabic and Persian manuscripts as follows:

- I. A Second Complementary List of Islamic Manuscripts in Cambridge" (1952)
- 2. Catalog of Arabic Manuscripts in the Beatty Chester Collection in Dublin (1955-1964)
- 3. Catalog of the Persian Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection in Dublin (1959-1962).

In 1937, Al Harith Al Muhasibi's book "Al Tawahim" was published (the Committee for Compilation, Translation, and Publishing in Cairo, 1937). He also published Al Kharaz's book "Al Sidq" with an English translation. He published and translated poems by Al Iraqi, the Persian poet, entitled "Song of Lovers", and chose samples from Arabic and Persian fonts found in the Indian Diwan Library, and published them under the title: "Specimens of Arabic and Persian Paleography, 1939.

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Arberry was stripped of his useful scientific work and transferred to the Postal Control Department of the Ministry of War in Liverpool, where he spent six months, then he was transferred to the Ministry of Information in London, so he remained in this work for four years.

Arberry thought of presenting the East to the West by translating Arabic and Persian books and writing books and research papers to make Europeans understand the true nature of Islam: its civilization, morals, and belief.

In this regard, he says: "Before it is possible to establish the truth about the East and its people in the common conscience of the West, a huge crowd of falsehood, misunderstanding, and deliberate lies must be removed. And it is





part of the duty of the conscientious Orientalist to carry out this removal. But do not let him think that this is the easy task".

Arberry did a great job in this way, as evidenced by his production of books, investigations of manuscripts, translations, excellent scientific articles, and the books he supervised, which are close to a hundred in the form of books, and seventy in the form of scientific articles.

During his work in the Ministry of Information, he published a book entitled "The British Contribution to Persian Studies" in 1942, and another book titled: "British Orientalists" (1943).

When F. V Minorsky retired In 1944, Arberry was appointed Professor of Persian at the School of Oriental and African Studies. For this new work, they issued a decree to teach Persian. In 1944 he published: "A Reading Book in Modern Persian." In 1945 he published the first two chapters of Saadi's "Gulistan" with commentaries, and in 1958 he published a book entitled: "Classical Persian Literature." In 1965 he published his book: "Arab Poetry".

Two years after his appointment at the School of Oriental and African Studies, he became a professor of the ARABIC LANGUAGE CHAIR and was elected head of the Middle East department in that school. He became a professor at the University of Cambridge in 1947. This was, as he said about himself, "the greatest honor I aspired to: to be the successor of Wheelock, Ockley, Samuel Lee, Wright, Browne, and Nicholson." On the Chair of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge, he was immediately re-elected as a Fellow of his old college, Pembroke College, and delivered his inaugural lecture on 20/30/1947 entitled: "The Arab School in Cambridge". He praised the contributions of his predecessors in this position and their work, from 1632, the date of establishment of the Chair of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge.

In the same year, 1947, he published the following books:

- I. An investigation of the book "Al Riyadh" by Al Hakim Al Tirmidhi,
- 2. Fifty poems by Al Hafiz Al-Shirazi, with an English translation





- 3. Pages from the book Al Lum'a,
- 4. Translation of "The Lily of Sina" by Muhammad Iqbal, the great Indian poet. After that, he continued translating poems by Allama Muhammad Iqbal, which are:
- Persian Psalms 1948.
- 6. Asrar Bekhudi Asrar Asrar Al lazAzat
- 7. Jawed Namaa

In the early fifties, He took it upon himself to carry out a new translation of the Qur'an. He first published a translation of selections from some of the verses of the Qur'an, with a long introduction, and that was published under the title THE HOLY KORAN, which is the ninth volume of a series entitled: "The Moral and Religious Classics of East and West." He supervised the issuance of this series starting in 1950. In 1955 he published his interpreted translation of the Qur'an under the title: THE INTERPRETED KORAN in two volumes. As indicated by the title, this is not a literal translation, but rather an interpreted translation that gives the meaning in a graceful and beautiful style, without being bound by the literalness of the verses or the sequence of their linguistic structure. It is more beautiful to read than any other translation of the Qur'an into any language, but it does not replace accurate translations such as the English Rodwell translation, or the French Blucher translation. Yet it is for works of Orientalism, Arbery's magnum opus.

Since 1956, diseases and pains allied with him, and he continued to suffer from them severely until he died on 02 October 1969 in Cambridge.

He was easy-going, with a clear conscience, and loved by all who knew him. He had a delicate poetic sense, a graceful style, and a wide knowledge of all research related to his interests. He is more like his teacher Nicholson, in writing, morals, literary taste, and beauty of style.

#### MUHAMMAD MARMADUKE PICKTHALL

Born Marmaduke William Pickthall; 7 April 1875 – 19 May 1936 was an English Islamic scholar. He is best known for his English translation of the Qur'an in 1930, which is called The MEANINGS OF THE NOBLE QUR'AN. His translation of the Qur'an is one of the most popular and widely





read in the English-speaking world. A convert from Christianity to Islam, Pickthall was a novelist revered by DH Lawrence, H.G. Wells, and EM Forster, as well as a journalist and political and religious leader. He announced his conversion to Islam in a dramatic fashion after giving a lecture on "Islam and Progress" on November 29, 1917, at the Islamic Literary Society in Notting Hill, West London.

#### Early Life

Marmaduke William Pickthall was born in London, on 7 April 1875, the eldest of two sons of the Reverend Charles Grayson Pickthall (1822–1881) and his second wife, Mary Hale, née O'Brien (1836–1904). Charles was an Anglican clergyman, and rector of Chelmsford, a village near Woodbridge, Suffolk. Pickthall spent the first few years of his life in the country, living with several older half-siblings and a younger brother at his father's rectory in the Suffolk countryside. He was a sick child. When he was six months old, he contracted measles, complicated by bronchitis. On his father's death in 1881, the family moved to London. He attended Harrow School but left after six terms. As a pupil at Harrow School, he was a classmate and friend of Winston Churchill.

Pickthall traveled through many eastern countries, gaining a reputation as a Middle Eastern scholar, at a time when the institution of the caliphate was collapsing with the failure of the Muslim world to find consensus on the appointment of a caliph. Before converting to Islam, Pickthall was a staunch ally of the Ottoman Empire. He studied the East and published articles and novels on this subject. While serving the Nizam of Hyderabad, Pickthall published his English translation of the Qur'an, THE MEANINGS OF THE NOBLE QUR'AN. The translation was approved by Al-Azhar University and the Times Literary Supplement paid tribute to his efforts by writing:

"A famous translator of the Holy Qur'an into English, a great literary achievement."

Pickthall was conscripted in the last months of World War I and became corporal in charge of the influenza isolation hospital.





In June 1917, Pickthall delivered a speech defending the rights of Palestinian Arabs, in the context of the Balfour Declaration debate. In November 1917, Pickthall publicly testified at the Working Muslim Mission with the support of Khawaja Kamaluddin. He followed this up with rhetoric contrasting Christian and Islamic approaches to religious law, arguing that Islam was better equipped than Christianity to deal with the post-war world.

Pickthall, who now identified himself as a "Hanafi Sunni Muslim", was active as a "natural leader" in a number of Islamic organizations. He delivered Friday sermons at both Woking and London mosques. Some of his sermons were later published. He ran the Islamic Information Office in London for a year, which published a weekly newspaper, The Muslim Outlook. Pickthall and Qur'an translator Yusuf Ali were trustees of both the Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking and the East London Mosque.

In 1920 he went to India with his wife to work as editor of the Bombay Chronicle, returning to England in 1935, a year before his death in St Ives, Cornwall. In India, he completed his translation of "The Meanings of the Noble Qur'an".

Pickthall was buried in the Muslim section of Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey, England, where Abdullah Yusuf Ali was later buried.

#### TRANSLATION ASSESSMENT

Arberry: Therein is clear signs – the station of Abraham.

Pikhthal: Wherein are plain memorials (of Allah's guidance); the place where Abraham stood up to pray;

Maqaam Ibrahim: It is the stone on which Ibrahim, (PBUH), stood when the building of the Kaaba was raised, and there were the footprints of his feet on it. Some of the commentators went to the fact that what is meant by (the place of Ibrahim) is the place where he stood for prayer and worship. Imam Al Qurtubi said: "Mujahid explained Ibrahim's position in the entire sanctuary, so he went to the fact that among his signs are Al Safa, Al Marwah, Al Rukn, and Al Maqaam". So, what is meant by the Al Maqaam is the entire Sacred Mosque.





Arberry translated this word the station of Abraham, and Pikthal translates as the place where Abraham stood up to pray; And according to the different interpretations, both translations clarify its intended meaning.

Arberry: And the beasts of sacrifice – We have appointed them for you as among God's waymarks

Pikhthal: And the camels! We have appointed them among the ceremonies of Allah.

Al Budna is a name for camels, male or female, and it was named because of the greatness of its body.<sup>5</sup>

Arbery translated this word as a beast, which means: a four-footed mammal as distinguished from a human being, a lower vertebrate, and an invertebrate.

And Pickthall Translated by camels, which is the closest translation to the language in this sentence. This is what is meant by this verse.

Arberry: that is indecent and hateful; an evil way.

Pikhthal: Lo! It was ever lewdness and abomination, and an evil way.

Fahishah: its linguistic meaning is the end in ugliness. It was called obscene because it ended in ugliness and heinousness.

the root of maqta is hatred. Al Raghib said: Al Maqt is intense hatred for the one who commits ugliness, and the marriage of a man marrying his father's wife Nikah al Maqt.

Arbery translated the word Fahisha with indecent, and "Maqta" as hateful which means deserving of or arousing hate. While Pickthall translates the word Fahisha as lewdness, which means obscene, and vulgar<sup>8</sup>, and Maqta as which means extreme disgust and hatred.<sup>9</sup>





Pickthall's translation succeeded in clarifying the intended meaning in a more complete manner, but Arbery's mercy did not provide its meaning in a more complete manner.

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 أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ  $^{10}$   $^{10}$  أَن تَمَسُّوهُنَّ  $^{10}$ 

نَمَسُّوهُنَ: what is meant by touching here is "intercourse" according to the consensus of the Fuqaha, and the euphemism is well known for it and with the word touching. This expression is used for sexual intercourse in various aayat of the Quran.

Allah says:

Also says:

Thus, it is implied sexual intercourse by touching. And if what was meant in the verse was the actual touching of the hand, which is the attachment of the hand to the body, then the waiting period would be required if he divorced her after he touched her with his hand without intercourse or خلوة صحيحة, and none of the Fuqahaa said that.

Both Arberry and Pickthall translated this word as "touch," which is its linguistic meaning. It does not provide its complete meaning. What is meant in this verse is FULL PRIVACY (الخلوة الصحيحة) or sexual intercourse.

The correct translation of this word is "A woman is divorced before the spouse has had full privacy.

imeans, they slander with adultery, and the stoning continued to slander with stones or something solid, then it was borrowed to slander with the tongue because it is similar to sensual harm.





والتي : Chaste women are plural chaste in the sense of chastity. Allah says: والتي : And the one who guarded her chastity": i.e. she is chaste, and the origin of الإحصان is prevention, and from it is called "the fort." In Lisan al-Arab: It is said that a woman is a chaste woman, and Every married woman is

Arbery translated the word المحصنات as wedlock, which means the state of being married. As for Pickthall, he translated it as honorable which means to show appreciation, respect, or affection for (someone) with a public celebration. And What is meant here is the chaste women. Arbery's and Pickthall's translation fails to provide the required meaning. The correct meaning in this position is chaste which means free from any trace of the coarse or indecent.

inguistically means: prevention and confinement, it is said: confining him from traveling if he confined and prevented him.

It is said in Lisaan ul Arab: The restriction is that the pilgrim is prevented from reaching the rituals by illness or the like. Al Farra'a said: The Arabs say to the one who is prevented by fear or illness from reaching the completion of his Hajj or Umrah: He has been confined, and in confinement if a ruler, or an oppressor imprisoned him: He has been confined. Al Azhari and Abu Ubaidah said: The man was confined to prison, and he was confined to travel due to illness or interruption with it.<sup>14</sup>

الهدي: what is gifted to the House of Allah, whether it be a budna (camel) or something else. It is the plural of gift said by Ibn Qutaybah. Al Qurtubi said: It is called a gift because some of it is what is given to the House of Allah.

Arbery translated this verse as: but if you are prevented, then such offering as may be feasible, and Pikthall translated as and if ye are prevented, then send such gifts as can be obtained with ease.

As we mentioned above, what is meant by the gift is a camel or like. This meaning was not understood from the two translations. Both translations do





not provide the required meaning. And the most appropriate meaning for this verse is: "If you are restricted, then whatever is available of the animal offering."

#### Conclusion:

Given the fact that English is the dominant language in the world today and that a large number of the world's populations learn the Qur'an through its English translations, the question naturally arises: How accurate and how communicative are these translations? And to what extent truly reflect the original meaning. Accordingly, there is an ongoing need to evaluate and improve the quality of existing English translations of the Qur'an. We have chosen two English translations; Arberry & Pickthall.

Arbery's translation is one of the most important European translations of the Holy Qur'an. As it has wide acceptance by Westerners - it is distinguished by the subtlety of its literary style, Because of its author's abundant knowledge of English and Arabic languages.

Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall was a British scholar specializing in Islam. He was famous for translating the meanings of the Noble Qur'an into English, which he wrote in a literary and poetic style. He was a novelist, journalist, religious leader, and politician. He converted from Christianity to Islam.

After reviewing both translations we come to the conclusion that:

- I. A comparison of the two translations reveals that the Qur'an as a central text poses different problems for translators to deal with. The translation readers get the meaning as it was understood and produced in the target language. The intended meaning of the source text may be lost at the comprehension level.
- 2. This study also reveals the inadequacy of studying vocabulary out of context. To reach the intended meaning of the text being translated, the lexical elements must be contextualized. In other words, it is crucial to know what the words mean in each situation and cultural context.
- 3. It was found in the translation of aayat of injunctions that translators need to clarify and explain the different aspects of orders, such as the context, aspects of jurisprudence, the goals of Islamic law, and the issues of today's world.





- 4. In reviewing "The Subject of the injunctions of the Qur'an" in the two translations, it was noted that the different translators cover certain aspects in better ways than others.
- 5. This study showed that translating the verses of injunctions requires translators to have some specific knowledge that goes beyond language proficiency. The review identified some of the advantages, strengths, weaknesses, and preferences of the two translators.
- 6. This study confirms the conclusion that the Qur'an cannot be translated. There can be no complete translation of the Qur'an, no matter how skilled the translators are, and the sanctity of the Qur'an is lost when it is translated.

<sup>7</sup>۔ النساء:22

10ء الأحزاب: 49





<sup>. 1</sup>موسوعة المستشرقين، الدكتور عبد الرحمن بدوي دار العلم للملايين ط/2، 1993ء

<sup>2-</sup> آل عمران: 96-97

<sup>3 -</sup> تفسير القرطبي ج ٤ ص ١٣٩

<sup>4</sup> الحج: 36

<sup>5</sup> مفردات القرآن للراغب ولسان العرب لابن منظور

 $<sup>^{6}</sup>$  . https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/beast

 $<sup>^{8}\</sup> https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/lewdness$ 

 $<sup>^9\,</sup>https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abomination$ 

<sup>-</sup> النور: 4<sup>11</sup>

 $<sup>^{12}\,.\,</sup>https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/wedlock$ 

<sup>-</sup> البقرة: 196<sup>13</sup>