

## **A STUDY OF THE MISUSE OF *SŪRATU YĀSĪN* AMONG YORUBA MUSLIMS**

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### **Abstract**

The Glorious Qur'ān apart from serving the purpose of guidance also serves many other purposes to the Muslims, two of which are supplication and healing. Evidences of this assertion abound in both the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah*. Muslim scholars across the world have explored the Qur'ān with the aim of proffering solutions to all problems ranging from spiritual, physical and psychological. They have always believed that the Qur'ānic passages are quite potent and efficacious. One of such passages of the Qur'an is *Sūratu Yāsīn*. This study therefore takes a look at the hidden spiritual properties of the *sūrah* namely its merits, benefits and virtues. The various ways by which contemporary Yoruba Muslims put it to use are equally examined. The study reveals out that while righteous Muslims have always employed it for good ends, the fickle and vicious ones employ it for diabolical ends.

**Keywords:** Qur'ān, Spirituality, *Sūratu Yāsīn*, Yoruba Muslims, Misuse

### **Introduction**

Allāh created the world and all the attendant vicissitudes of life and He knows that by man's nature, structure and composition, and the complexity of the human environment, man will, from time to time, be in need of His assistance, and that he will earnestly seek Him for solving his problems. In view of this, Allāh gives man a free and fair opportunity and access to Him at all times (Q40:60). So, man is permitted, and is at liberty, to employ whatever part of the Qur'ān as solution to any problem he may have.

In actual fact, the Glorious Qur'ān contains several portions (*suwar* and verses) which are in prayer form. They are like petitions and supplications for achieving prosperity, success in worldly affairs, averting adversity, seeking

Allah's forgiveness, and other matters of the hereafter. Being aware of this, Muslims world over often select portions of the Qur'ān as means of approach to Allāh. This is borne out of their belief and conviction that portions of the Qur'ān are potent and efficacious.

Consequently, Yoruba Muslims, especially Muslim Clergies (*Alfas*) who are full time spiritual consultants, employ the use of certain Qur'ānic portions for solving problems ranging from ill-luck, bareness, sicknesses of all kinds, bewitchment, sorcery, ill-luck in business and mental derailment. Such Qur'ānic portions which are favourites in this regard include: *Sūratu'l-Fātiḥah* (Q 1), *Sūratu'l-Kahf* (Q18), *Sūratu Yāsīn* (Q36), *Sūratu'l-Fath* (Q48), *Sūratu'l-Wāqī'ah* (Q56), *Sūratu'l-Mulk* (Q67), *Mu'awwidhatayn* (Q113&114), *Āyatu'l-Kursiyy* (Q2:255) among others.

The focus of this study is on *Sūratu Yāsīn* which is regarded as 'the core' or 'heart' of the Qur'ān (*Qalbu'l-Qur'ān*). It has numerous valid uses according to the Qur'an and Sunnah but the focus of this paper is to highlight the misuse of this *Sūrah* by the Yoruba Muslims, an act which is not in consonance with the *Sharī'ah* provisions. This study will as well examine the *Sharī'ah* implications and Islamic rulings of such activities. This will be done using orthodox Muslim theologians' views and arguments on the correct use of Qur'ānic portions for supplication and healing.

### **Brief Analysis of the Status of *Sūratu Yāsīn***

*Sūratu Yāsīn* chronologically is the 36th chapter of the Qur'ān. It has 83 verses and it is decidedly of Makkan origin as it was revealed before the *Hijrah* of the Prophet. The *Sūrah* takes its name or title from its first verse which is a combination of two abbreviated letters known as *Ḥurūfu'l-Muqatta'ah*.<sup>1</sup> There are divergent opinions as to the meaning of these abbreviated letters. Where a consensus of opinion says that they belong to that category of verses that emphasise that true knowledge rests only with Allāh,<sup>2</sup> other views hold that the letters represent a name of Allāh,<sup>3</sup> or carry the meaning "O Mankind".<sup>4</sup> This last opinion is that of Ibn Abbās, Ikrimah, Dihāk and Sufyān as they interpreted the *sīn* as man or perfect man or for Sayyid meaning a chief or a leader.<sup>5</sup> Another opinion however suggests that the reference in these abbreviated letters is to Prophet Muḥammad.<sup>6</sup> He has been addressed as a 'Perfect Man' because humanity found its best and most perfect specimen in him. Additionally, he was so addressed because after his advent, great religious reformers and divine teachers were to rise only from among his followers.<sup>7</sup> However, the reality is that they belong to the category of verses that can be interpreted only by Allāh.

On the account of the importance of its subject matter, the *Sūrah* is analysed under three main themes: *Tawḥīd*, the Oneness of Allāh; *Risālah*, Messengership of Muhammad, a Messenger sent by Allāh to guide His creations through divine revelation; and reality of *al-ākhirah* (Last Day).<sup>8</sup> The *Sūrah* represents arguments appealing to reason and brings to witness some of the

visible signs of the unlimited power and ability of Allāh. Its quick and rhythmic verses present the message of the Qur'ān in an efficient and powerful manner.<sup>9</sup>

In other words, the *Sūrah* focuses mainly on establishing the Qur'ān as a divine source and it warns on the fate of those who mock Allah's revelation. It also refers to the punishments that plague past generations of the disbelievers as a warning to the present and future generations. Additionally, the *Sūrah* reiterates Allāh's sovereignty as exemplified by His creations through signs from nature. The *Sūrah* ends with the conviction that Resurrection exists.<sup>10</sup>

### Virtues and Benefits of *Sūratu Yāsīn*

*Sūratu Yāsīn* has been adjudged to be one of the most popular chapters of the Qur'ān as it contains spiritual, curative, preventive and protective powers.<sup>11</sup> In view of this; it is universally loved, admired, revered, respected and taken as one of the most favourites of all *suwar* (chapters) by Muslims when it comes to tackling their problems through prayer. It is of course, its acceptability in the heart of Muslims that alludes to it being referred to as the heart of the Qur'ān.

There are a few *Aḥādīth* (Prophetic traditions) that underscore the virtues and benefits that could be derived through recitation of the *Sūrah*<sup>12</sup>. The following is the most popular in this regard; in view of the fact that the *Sūrah* contains overwhelming proofs, decisive signs, subtle spiritual meanings, eloquent admonition, and stern warnings.<sup>13</sup>

إن لكل شيء قلب وقلب القرآن يس لوددت أنها في قلب كل إنسان من أمتي  
(رواه الترمذي)

Surely everything has a heart and the heart of the Qur'ān is *Yāsīn*. I would love that it be in the heart of every person of my people.  
(Narrated by At-Tirimidhī).<sup>14</sup>

Other *Aḥādīth* include the following:

عن معقل بن يسار رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يس قلب القرآن لا يقرؤها رجل يريد الله والدار الآخرة إلا غفر له وأقرؤها على موتاكم  
(رواه أبي داود)

Ma'qul bn Yasār (RA) narrates that the Prophet (SAW) said, *Yāsīn* is the heart of the Qur'ān. Whoever recites it for the sake of Allāh and for goodness in the hereafter then he will be forgiven. Recite it upon your deceased ones. (Narrated by Abū-Dāwud).<sup>15</sup>

عن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من قرأ يس في ليلة أصبح مغفورا (رواه البخاري)

Abū Hurayrah (RA) said: The messenger of Allāh (SAW) said: Whoever recites *Yāsīn* in the night, will wake up forgiven. (Narrated by Al-Bukhārī).<sup>16</sup>

عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من قرأ يس كتب الله له قراءة القرآن عشر مرات (رواه الترمذي)

Anas (RA) narrates that the Prophet (SAW) said: Whoever recites *Yāsīn* one time, Allah will record for him the recitation of the Qur'ān ten times. (Narrated by At-Tirimidhī).<sup>17</sup>

عن ابن عباس رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم من قرأ يس حين يصبح لم يزل في فرح حتى يمسي ومن قرأها حين يمسي لم يزل في فرح حتى يصبح (رواه الدارمي)

Ibn Abbās reported that the messenger of Allāh (SAW) said; whoever recite *Yāsīn* at the beginning of the day, there will be ease for him till evening. And whoever recites it in the evening there will be ease for him till morning. (Narrated by Ad-Dāramī).<sup>18</sup>

From the experiences of some Muslim scholars, *Sūratu Yāsīn* has been found to be potent and efficacious in view of what it has been able to achieve at one time or the other. For instance, sometime it was recited with the hope to recover a lost item which had been lost for years and all efforts at recovering it proved abortive; it was eventually found. Similarly, when it was read before a woman experiencing difficulty in child labour, she was delivered safely. In all of these instances, the *Sūrah* was recited perfectly, constantly and with humility..<sup>19</sup>

### **An Exposition of the Hidden Spiritual Values of *Sūratu Yāsīn***

Muslim scholars who have experimented with the immense power of *Sūratu Yāsīn* have reported it as potent and efficacious to tackle any form of problems. By way of illustration, the immense power of the *Sūrah* can be viewed from the event in which the Quraish planned to kill the Prophet Muhammad when he was about to migrate from Makkah to Madīnah. The Prophet got wind of this dangerous conspiracy. The last of the able Muslims to remain in Makkah after a considerable number of them had left for Madīnah were Abū Bakr, 'Alī and the Prophet himself.<sup>20</sup> The night in which the Prophet (SAW) was commanded to migrate happened to be the night appointed for his assassination by his enemies. He gave his cloak to 'Alī and instructed him to lie down on his bed so that anyone looking might think the Prophet laid there. The slayers were to strike him as he comes out of the house, whether in the night or early in the morning. He knew they would not injure 'Alī, and then he left the house reciting a verse in *Sūratu*

*Yāsīn*.<sup>21</sup> The Quraish outside became blind, deaf, and dumb to the extent that he put dust on their heads as he passed without them knowing it.<sup>22</sup>

*Sūratu Yāsīn* is widely believed among Muslims, to be a shield from all evils in this life and a source of salvation in the hereafter.<sup>23</sup> It is also believed that it provides *Shifā'* (Cure) from all physical illnesses such as fever, swelling, aches, blindness and insanity.<sup>24</sup> In other words, *Sūratu Yāsīn* covers all the vicissitudes of life, from an easy birth to a painless and peaceful death, and the blissful journey to paradise.

We shall now examine some of the numerous spiritual values of this *Sūrah*, following different prescriptions and formulas as put into experiment by Muslim scholars

According to some Muslim clerics, whoever wishes to win the affection of his beloved should recite this *Sūrah* and at each *Mubīn*,<sup>25</sup> he should tie a knot in a cord that he holds with his hand. When the recitation is completed he should nail the cord in to the ground. His desire will be achieved.<sup>26</sup>

The following formula of *Sūratu Yāsīn* has been prescribed to break or neutralise a curse on someone. The *Sūrah* is to be recited, and at every *Mubīn*, one should recite *Sūratu'l – Fīl* (Q105:1-5) seven (7) times in the midnight for seven (7) days. The intention should be recited at every *Mubīn* before the recitation of *Sūratu'l – Fīl*. One should endeavour to follow it up with *Ṣadaqah* (charity) within one's capacity.<sup>27</sup>

The following is for any purpose depending on one's intention. Observe two *raka'āt* (units of prayer) of *nāfilah* after *'Ishā'* prayer. Then recite *Sūratu Yāsīn* forty one (41) times. After recitation of each of the *Sūrah* recite this prayer: يا من يقول لشيء كن فيكون افعل كذا وكذا . (O You( Allāh) who says to something be and it shall be, accomplish so and so for me).<sup>28</sup>

Another application of the *Sūrah* is to repeat the word *Yāsīn* seven (7) times and start reciting the *Sūrah*. On getting to the **verse** الشمس تجري لمستقر لها وذلك تقدير العزيز العليم (And the sun runs on its fixed course for a term. That is the Decree of the All-Mighty, the All-Knower) (Q36:38), repeat it fourteen (14) times. Also on getting to the **verse** سلام قولا من رب رحيم (Peace - a word from the Lord the Most Merciful) (Q36:58), repeat it sixteen (16) times, and on getting to the **verse** بلى أو ليس الذى خلق السماوات والارض بقادر على أن يخلق مثلهم (Is not He who created the heavens and earth, able to create the like of them, yes, indeed ) (Q36:81), repeat it four (4) times, then recite up to the end of the *Sūrah*. When this *Sūrah* is recited following the above formula seven (7) times, one's needs would be achieved.<sup>29</sup>

For accumulation of lawful wealth, it is recommended that *Sūratu Yāsīn* should be recited once, and then at each of the seven (7) *Mubīn* of the *Sūrah*, recite the following verse of the Qur'ān: ياتيتها رزقها رغدا من كل مكان (Its provisions came to it plenty from every quarter) (Q16:112) seven (7) times for twenty-one days.<sup>30</sup> With strong belief and total sincerity, the objective would be realised.

A Yemeni manuscript written by a Muslim scholar on the topic of spiritual sciences prescribes that if the 58th Ayah of *Sūratu Yāsīn* i.e. *سلام قولا من رب رحيم* (Peace - a word from the Lord Allah Most Merciful), is written on a piece of paper and tied to the side of a person suffering with pneumonia, he would be healed. Also, when the paper is dipped in a glass of water and given to a person suffering from dysentery to drink, he will recover. Similarly, if one is suffering from tooth ache, verse 78 to the end of the *Sūrah* should be written on a paper and placed over the ear on the side of the painful tooth, it will provide relief from the pain<sup>31</sup>

### **An Appraisal of the Misuse of *Sūratu Yāsīn* by Yoruba Muslims**

It is a very common practice among Yoruba Muslims, particularly Muslim clergy acting in the capacity of consultants on spiritual matters, to indulge in sharp practices when it comes to *Sūratu Yāsīn* as means of supplication and healing. This is a clear departure from the right precept of the *Sharī'ah* on the beneficial uses of portions of the Qur'ān as enunciated in the previous sections. There are many cases which involve misuse of the *Sūrah* through bastardisation of its contents, i.e. twisting, adulterating and missing out some of its wordings. There are also cases of applying *ḥarām* substances to the written portions (*hantu*<sup>3</sup>) of the *Sūrah* for the purpose of supplication and healing. This is normally carried out in a number of ways. Portions of the *Sūrah* may be written on materials that are forbidden in Islām or *ḥarām* substances serving as ink for the written portion; and in most cases, *ḥarām* substances are mixed with the written portion or used as liquid content for washing the written portion. It is believed that following the above means will further boost the efficacy of the preparations.

In addition, in a bid to avoid copying or writing a large number of the *Sūrah* (based on prescription), Yoruba Muslims, often employ the use of an “economy of effort” whereby the whole *Sūrah* or a verse is reduced to a numerical value and later formed into a summarised diagrammatical representations called *Khātīm* or *Wafq*.<sup>33</sup> For instance, where the *Sūrah* has been prescribed to be written a thousand times, it could be reduced to just a *khātīm* or *Wafq* of ten holes depending on the calculations. Another instance is when the *Sūrah* or verses are to be repeated for a number of times that could be achieved in few minutes through a means whereby the portion of the *Sūrah* is rendered into a bizarre construction known in the local parlance as “*Opa*” (lit. lineargraph).<sup>34</sup> Instances abound, but in this study, we shall examine a few.

### **Tackling Enemies**

From our findings, there is a prominent case which entails the idea of reciting or writing the *Sūrah* in the reverse sorting in order to tackle enemies. This is commonly referred to in the local parlance as *Yāsīn Atorikodi*.<sup>35</sup> For instance, to attack an enemy, the *Sūrah* is recited in the reverse order (i.e.

beginning from *ترجعون* and end with *يس*), while the reciter is holding a threadbare shoe. On getting to each *Mubān*, the name of the intending enemy is mentioned and what manner of affliction to be meted out on him. This is in addition to some other preparations. In another instance, the leaflets of *Sūratu Yāsīn* are rearranged in such a way that its sequence and ordering are greatly distorted. In such a manner, the *Sūrah* is recited while beating the ground with a threadbare shoe in which the name of intending enemy has been inscribed. The *Sūrah* is also written in the reverse order at the back of leather of a particular animal. Thereafter, the leather is used as a mat for sitting and used to attack an enemy. Also for the same purpose, the *Sūrah* is written on an iron slate, with some of its contents missing and replaced with some bizarre constructions and the name of intending enemy. At the end of the preparation, the iron slate is placed on a burning fire. This manner of *Sūratu Yāsīn* is known in the local parlance as “*Yāsīn Alabe*”<sup>36</sup>

### **Protection/Evading Attack by Enemies**

For protection against the evil ones, the *Sūrah* is written on a wooden slate in the normal order, missing out some of its wordings and replaced with strange incantations and bizarre constructions. It is then washed and added with some substances called *Gaari Tira*<sup>37</sup> for drinking. Also, to guard against any eventuality, the *Sūrah* is written with some of its contents missing and replaced with some gibberish incantations on a white paper, some ingredients are added to it and afterwards weaved as *Talisman*. It is to be worn by a person or hung in the house.<sup>38</sup>

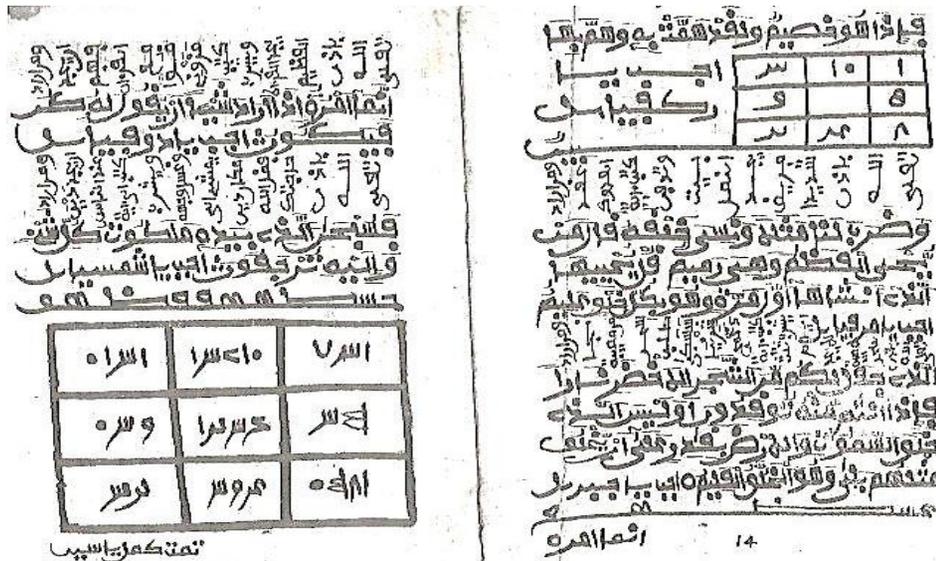


### Winning of Love and Affection

As love potion, *Sūratu Yāsīn* is written on a wooden black slate and washed with water. The liquid content among other items is mixed with the blood of the suitor and then drunk by the intended lover.<sup>39</sup> For the same purpose, the blood of a certain animal is used as ink to write the *Sūrah* on a white paper while some ingredients are added to it, after which the preparation is inserted into the heart of the same animal which is kept under a burning fire. Another instance is when the whole of the *Sūrah* is written and washed with an alcoholic drink (i.e. schnapps) in addition to other preparations. This is said to be effective against erectile dysfunction.<sup>40</sup>

### Wealth Acquisition

For accumulation of wealth, *Sūratu Yāsīn* is written ninety-nine (99) times, grinded bone of a dead person among other items are mixed with the written portion, and then mixed with black soap for bathing.<sup>41</sup> It is also written three (3) times on a black wooden slate and washed with water. The liquid content with other ingredients added is used to seek for sustenance (*ar-Rizq*). Similarly, the whole of the *Sūrah* is written nine (9) times and washed with schnapps in addition to other ingredients with the aim of amassing wealth.<sup>42</sup>



**Figure 2:** An extract from a *Kundi* (spiritual manuscripts) of *Sūratu Yāsīn* having *khawatim* and bizarre constructions (*opa*) from which we were granted permission to make copies by Sheikh Ḥabībullah ‘Abdur Raḥmān, Founder of Ḥabībullah Spiritual Home, Lagos, Nigeria.

***Sharī'ah* Rulings on the Misuse of *Sūratu Yāsīn***

The above instances, are nothing but distortions of the contents of the Qur'ān, which is a grave sin under the *Sharī'ah*. It should be realised that the Qur'ān is a divine Book revealed to Prophet Muhammad through Angel Jibril as guidance for mankind. The verses and chapters as well as the sequence were all vouch-saved to the Prophet unadulterated and uninterpolated. Therefore, the idea of distorting the Qur'ān in any form either by changing its letters and words, or altering its sequence and spirit, amounts to a very serious infraction punishable in the hereafter. This is in line with the tradition of the Prophet that says: **من قال في القرآن برأيه فليتبوأ مقعده من النار** "Whoever introduces his own idea into the Qur'ān should seek his abode in Hell fire".<sup>43</sup>

The above instances imply an attempt to mock the words of Allah. This is a major sin according to orthodox Muslim theologians as it shuts one out of the fold of Islām.<sup>44</sup> Evidence for this is found in the verse where Allāh addresses some hypocrites who mocked Allāh's signs, thus:

وَلَيْن سَأَلْتَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ إِنَّمَا كُنَّا نَخُوضُ وَنَلْعَبُ قُلْ أَبِاللَّهِ  
 وَءَايَاتِهِ وَرَسُولِهِ كُنْتُمْ تَسْتَهْزِءُونَ ﴿٦٥﴾ لَا تَعْتَذِرُوا قَدْ  
 كَفَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ إِيمَانِكُمْ إِنَّ نَعْفَ عَنْ طَائِفَةٍ مِّنْكُمْ نُعَذِّبُ طَائِفَةٌ  
 بِأَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا مُجْرِمِينَ ﴿٦٦﴾

If you ask them (about this) they declare:

"We were only talking idly and joking" say: "Was it Allāh and His signs and His Messengers that you were joking?" Make no excuse: You have disbelieved after you had believed. If We pardon some of you, we will punish others amongst you because they were disbelievers. (Q9:65-66)

Just as it constitutes *Kufr* (disbelief) to make a jest of the Qur'ān, it likewise amounts to *Kufr* to deliberately bastardise its contents in order to achieve certain aims. This is condemnable from the position of orthodox Muslim theologians. Therefore, whoever tries to bend the words of the Qur'ān to suit his own personal desire is in fact doing as the Jews did; taking the verses of the Torah out of context, and changing the meanings of the words knowingly. In this regard, reference is made to Qur'ān 4:46 where Allāh cursed them:

مِّنَ الَّذِينَ هَادُوا تُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَن مَّوَاضِعِهِ وَيَقُولُونَ سَمِعْنَا  
 وَعَصَيْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ غَيْرَ مُسْمَعٍ وَرَاعِنَا لَيًّا بِالسِّنِّتِهِمْ وَطَعْنًا فِي  
 الدِّينِ ۚ وَلَوْ أَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا وَأَسْمَعُ وَأَنْظُرْنَا لَكَانَ خَيْرًا  
 لَهُمْ وَأَقْوَمَ وَلَٰكِن لَّعَنَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِكُفْرِهِمْ فَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا ﴿٦٦﴾

Some of those who are Jews alter words from their places and say, we have heard and we disobey; and (say), hear without being made to hear, and (Say), that without being made to hear, and (Say), *Rā'inā*, distorting with their tongues and slandering religion. And if they had said, We hear and we obey, and hearken, it would have been better for them and more upright; but Allāh had cursed them on account of their disbelief, so they believe not but a little.

Elsewhere in the Qur'ān, Allāh proclaims:

فَوَيْلٌ لِّلَّذِينَ يَكْتُبُونَ الْكِتَابَ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ ثُمَّ يَقُولُونَ هَذَا مِن  
 عِنْدِ اللَّهِ لِيَشْتَرُوا بِهِ ۖ ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۗ فَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِّمَّا كَتَبَتْ  
 أَيْدِيهِمْ وَوَيْلٌ لَهُمْ مِّمَّا يَكْسِبُونَ ﴿٧٩﴾

Woe! then to those who write the Book with their hands then say, this is from Allāh; so that they may take for it a small price. So woe! to them for what their hands write and woe! to them for what they earn. (Qur'ān 2:79).

As far as Islamic theology is concerned, the idea of writing and drinking portions of the Qur'ān known in the local parlance among the Yoruba Muslims as *hantu* may not be reprehensible but such will amount to *Shirk* if what is written and drunk contain *shirk* or *Kufr* elements. This includes situations where the Qur'ānic portions are written in adulterated form or the ink used in writing the portion of the Qur'ān is of *ḥarām* substances or where the ingredients mixed with the written portion are forbidden in Islām.<sup>45</sup> While examining the above

instances, it should be noted that the *Sharī'ah* has enumerated those things that are lawful and unlawful for consumption. Dead meat, blood, pork, animals killed by strangling or by beating or by falling or being gored etc, have been categorised as forbidden (Q5:4). Likewise, all intoxicants such as alcoholic drinks are not only forbidden, but part of the devil's handiwork (Q5:90).

Therefore, from this premise, mixing such items like blood, alcoholic drinks and other impurities (*Najas*) like faeces and the hair of dogs and pigs with contents of the Qur'ān would amount to violation of the sanctity of the Qur'ān. More so, such a mixture repudiates one's profession of faith in Islām as it implies a two-fold faith: both in Allāh and other forces.<sup>46</sup> Simply put, whoever indulges in this is being syncretical.

As was previously mentioned, it is our opinion that wordings of the Qur'ān should not in any form be twisted or rendered into strange constructions, in order to serve the purpose of supplication and healing. The Qur'ān is expected to be preserved in its original form, free from all distortions, and precisely in the wordings in which it was sent down to the Prophet. Just as distortions should not be made to the Qur'ān when reading to understand, or as a normal *tilāwah* (recitation for '*Ibādah*'), so also, when reading it as a means of supplication, its contents should not be bastardised. The basic fact that it is condemnable to read the Qur'ān at any point in time without applying the rules of *Tajwīd* (proper recitation of the Qur'ān), let alone distorting its contents should always be realised.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, if the above means is to be taken as a *ruqyah*, it will still not be acceptable as lawful, because parts of the conditions for the lawfulness of *ruqya* is that the wordings should be intelligible and comprehensible.<sup>48</sup> This is said to be a necessary condition to eliminating many evil factors from a *ruqyah*, otherwise, it could contain *shirk*, magic or other evils that are hidden under cryptic characters and mysterious words.

## Conclusion

In the fore going, we have attempted to establish the position of *Sūratu Yāsīn* as indispensable for supplication and healing among Muslims, especially in Yoruba Land, South-west Nigeria. We have also been able to analyse with illustrations, the abuse to which Yoruba Muslim clergies put the *Sūrah* as supplication and healing. We argued that strict compliance with the *Sharī'ah* dictates in the use and recitation of any portion of the Qur'ān including *Sūratu Yāsīn* can give succor on earth and salvation of the hereafter to those who use the Qur'ān.

Using *Sūratu Yāsīn* or any part of the Qur'an by the scholars should strictly be in compliance with the *Sharī'ah* so as to remain in the fold of Islam. Such misuse of the *Sūrah* including mixing it with non-permissible contents may lead the perpetrators to syncretism i.e. *Shirk*. It is our opinion that Muslim scholars in the south-west of Nigeria and elsewhere should intensify on their level of reliance on the efficacy of the Qur'ān without mixing it in recitation or in

healing as such acts constitute distortion to the Glorious Book, which is a detestable act in the *Sharī'ah* of Islām.

### Notes and References

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2. Jalālu-ud-Dīn Al-Mahaly and Jalālu-ud-Dīn As-Suyūṭy, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, (Cairo, Matba'atu'l-Anwar Muhammadiyyah, n.d), 399
3. See, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (Abridged)*, (Riyādh, DāruSalām, 2003, vol. 8), 187
4. M.B. Mahmood Ahmad, *The Holy Qur'ān with English Translation*, vol.4, 2187, see also, Muhammad Ali, *The Holy Qur'ān with Translation and Commentary*, (U.S.A. Ahmadiyyah Isha'at Anjuman, 2002), 867
5. M.B Mahmood Ahmad, *The Holy Qur'ān with English Translation*, 868.
6. Ayatullah Dostghaib Shirazi, *Heart of the Qur'ān: A commentary to Sūratu Yāsīn* (Iran, Ansariyyah Publications. [http://surah\\_Yas-sin.com](http://surah_Yas-sin.com) retrieved 30/8/2014).
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10. See <http://www.Linguisticmiracle.com/Yasin>, (accessed 29/8/2014).
11. Shaykh Abdel Nasir Jangda, *Tafsīr Sūratu Yāsīn*, 76
12. Shaykh Abdel Nasir Jangda, *Tafsīr Sūratu Yāsīn*, 76
13. Ayatullah Dastghaib Shirazi, *Heart of the Qur'ān: A commentary to Sūrah Yāsīn*.
14. Ḥadīth related by Tirmidhī and Dārimi, cited in Jallālu'd-Dīn Abdu'r – Raḥmān As-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān Fī 'Ulūmi 'l-Qur'ān*, (Cairo, Al-Maktabat Daru't-Turath, 2010), 98.
15. See, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, vol.2, Hadith no. 28, cited in *Al-Itqān Fī 'Ulūmi 'l-Qur'ān*, 876
16. Shaykh Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri, *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr (Abridged)*, (Riyadh, DaruSalam, vol.8, 2003), 187
17. Imam Tirmidhī, *Sunan Tirmidhī*, (Egypt, Matba'at al-Halbi wa awlādihi), vol.5, (The book of virtues of Qur'ān, 1968), Hadith no.11.
18. So far, according to al-Albani this particular narration has been found to be *ṣaḥīḥ* as other previous *aḥādīth* are either weak or fabricated. See, *Sunan ad-Dārimi*, vol.1/457 authenticated by Zubair, cited in <http://www.linguisticmiracle.com/Yasin>
19. Muhammad al-Maliki al-Hasani, *Abwābu'l Faraj* (Beirut, Lebanon, Darul Kutub al-alamiyah, 1971), 10
20. A. Rahim, *Islamic History*, (Lagos, Islamic Publications Bureau, 1981), 24

21. The verse read by the Prophet was:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ ﴿٩﴾

(And We have put a barrier before them, and a barrier behind them, and We have covered them up, so that they cannot see) (Q36:9). See Safiur-Rahman Al-Mubarakpuri, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum The Sealed Nectar*, (Riyadh, Darus Salam, 2002), 204-205

22. See *Tafsīr Al-Qurtubi*, vol. 13, 15

23. Muhammad an-Nazili, *Khazīnatu'l-Asrār*, (Beirut, Lebanon, Darul Fikr n.d), 66

24. Ahmad Dayrabi, *Mujarabatu'd-Dayrabi'l-Kabīr*, (Beirut, Lebanon, Al-Maktabatu'sh-Shi'biyyah n.d), 9

25. All the *Mubīn* in *Sūratu Yāsīn* are found in Q36:12, 17, 24, 47, 60, 69 and 77

26. Abdul Fattah at-Tūkhī, *Ighāthatu'l Mazlūm Fī Kashfī Asrāri'l-<sup>c</sup>Ulūm*, (Beirut, Lebanon, Al-Maktabatu'sh-Sha'biyyah, n.d.), 96.

27. Ahmad Dayrabi, *Mujarabatu'd-Dayrabi'l-Kabīr*, 10

28. Ahmad Dayrabi, *Mujarabatu'd-Dayrabi'l-Kabīr*, 10

29. Abdul Fattah al-Tukhi, *Ighāthatu'l-Mazlūm*, 95

30. Abdul Fattah al-Tukhi, *Ighāthatu'l-Mazlūm*, 95

31. Shaykh Abbas Borhany, *Spiritual and Physical Healing by Qur'ān*, [www.durrenajaf.com](http://www.durrenajaf.com). (Accessed on 30/8/2014).

32. *Hantu* is adulterated form of the word *Khāṭṭ* (writing) used by Yoruba Muslims to denote written Qur'ānic portion or supplication prepared with black ink called *tadaa* and written with a fountain pen or local pen made from palm font being referred to as *kalamu* on black slate called *walaa*

33. *Khātim* is originally used as a term for the diagrammatical table filled with alphabet letters, while *Wafq* is used as a term for the diagrammatical table filled with figure numbers. But for long *Khātim* has been used to represent both *Wafq* and *Khātim*.

34. This view is expressed by Ustadh Abdul Hakeem Yusuf, at Imeke Town, (Badagry, Lagos on 28/2/2014), aged 45 years and corroborated by Ustadh Abdul Lateef Olohunloba at Ori Okuta Estate, (Ikorodu, Lagos on 9/8/2014), aged 48years. Both scholars are specialists in the knowledge of *Hisāb*

35. This idea is known with the term *At-Tankīs*, (anagramatisation of Qur'ānic wordings) whereby the sequence and ordering of wordings of the Qur'ān are distorted. See, Wahid Ibn Abdessalam Bali, *Sword Against Black Magic and Evil Magicians*, (London, Al-Firdaus Ltd., 2004), 86

36. This idea is expressed by Imam Abdul Hakeem Uthman, Chief Imam of Ajaguna Central Mosque, (Egan, Lagos on 27/4/2013) He is aged 40 years.

37. *Gaari Tira* is a term used by Yoruba Muslim Clerics to refer to items or ingredients in powdering form used in the preparation of Talisman and *hantu*. For details, see S.L Jimoh, "Between Orthodoxy and Syncretism: The place of *Turare* and *Gaari Tira* in Exorcism practices of Muslim *Aafas* in

- South-West Nigeria” in *Allawh, Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, (Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, vol. 11, No.9, 2011): 210.
38. This formula was explained to us by Sheikh ‘Isā Rūhullāh, Khalīfah Dayanbiu, at Epe, Lagos State on 23/4/2014. Aged 48 years.
  39. This formula was given to one of the researchers by late Shaykh Idris Ya‘qūb Alfa Ndagi at No. 12 Imam Street, Amukoko, Lagos during an occasion of *Mawlidu’n-Nabiyy* in 2009.
  40. This prescription is handed over to one of the researchers by Shaykh Abdur Rahman Habeebullah at Akesan Town, Lagos on 25/4/2014, aged 60 years.
  41. This idea is expressed by Ustaz Abdul Hakeem Uthman.
  42. Personal communication with Sheikh ‘Abdul Rasheed Jāmiu Adewunmi, popularly known as *Alagbara Omi*, Founder, *Anṣāru’l-warā* Islāmic Society, Ikotun Lagos at his residence in Ikotun on 10/3/2015. He is aged 63 years..
  43. *Jami‘u’t-Tirm idhi*, Hadith no.2894 and Musnad Ahmad Hadith no.2070
  44. Muhammad Abdul Wahhab, *Kitāb At-Tawhīd*, 138-140. See also, Muhammad Baqir Ansari, “*Tahrīf al –Qur’ān: A Study of Misconceptions Regarding Corruption of the Qur’ānic Text,*” in *Al-Tawhīd’, A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Thought and Culture*, Vol.1V, No.4 (1987): 13.
  45. Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Baz, et al, *Fatāwā Islāmiyyah*, Vol.1, (Jeddah, K.S.A, Darussalam, 2001), 50
  46. Yusuf Qaradawi, *Al-Ḥalāl wal Ḥarām Fīl Islām*, (Cairo, Darul Marifah, 1985), 105
  47. S.L. Jimoh, “Factors Responsible For the Commission of Solecism (*Lahn*) in Applied *Tajwīd* Among Yoruba Reciters of the Qur’an,” *Al-Ḥaḍārah, LASU Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, (Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos, 1999), 70.
  48. Shaykh Abdul Aziz bin Baz, *Fatāwā Islāmiyyah*, 46

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