

THE USE OF THE VERB REPRESENTING PRAISE IN THE HOLY QUR'AN

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ABSTRACT

The Qur'an describes several ways to praise and rebuke. Praise is an Arabic word and is used in the sense of praising, complimenting, and elevating. One of the forms of praise in the Qur'an comes with the verb “نِعْمَ” (ne’ ma). This verb is used in the sense of “how nice, how worthy, how good”.

While “نِعْمَ” (ne’ma) appears in 15 verses in the Qur’an as a verb denoting praise, its alternative verb “بِئْسَ” (be’sa), which means “how bad”, is used in the same verses.

In Arabic grammar, these two verbs differ from other verbs in that they have their own rules and sentences.

There are three main forms of praising or complimenting using the word نِعْمَ “ne’ma” as the verb” as the noun. نِعْمَ “ne’ma” (performer of the action): ال (alif lām) as a noun, or ال (alif lām) as a noun with ‘مضاف’ (Mudaf)¹ or it has to as adjective come with the word ما (mā).

In 9 places in Qur'an, the performer that follow the verb “نِعْمَ” “ne’ma” is the noun with the litter ال (alif lām)

IN VERSE 173 OF SURAH AL 'IMRAN

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدَّ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَأَخْشَوْهُمْ فَرَّادَهُمْ إِيْمَانًا

Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, "Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in Faith,

وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

and they said: "Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)."²

IN VERSE 40 OF SURAH AL-ANFAL:

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ

And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your Maula (Patron, Lord, Protector and Supporter, etc.),

نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

(what) an Excellent Maula, and (what) an Excellent Helper!³

¹ The word مضاف “Mudaf” literally means: added, or better “the added” but Grammatically “thing being possessed/owned.

² Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

³ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

The repetition of the verb “نَعِمَ” in the verse and the fact that the conjunction "and" is not used indicate how worthy Allah is in praise. The purpose of the repetition of the verb was to exaggerate and to convey to the servants that He is unequal and powerful in praise.

IN VERSE 78 OF SURAT AL-HAJJ

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ

And strive hard in Allah's Cause as you ought to strive (with sincerity and with all your efforts that His Name should be superior).

هُوَ أَجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

He has chosen you (to convey His Message of Islamic Monotheism to mankind by inviting them to His religion, Islam), and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship,

مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

it is the religion of your father Ibrahim (Abraham) (Islamic Monotheism).

هُوَ سَمَّاكُمُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا

It is He (Allah) Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (the Quran),

لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

that the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) may be a witness over you and you be witnesses over mankind!

فَأَقِمْوهُ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ

So perform AsSalat (Iqamat-as-Salat), give Zakat and hold fast to Allah (i.e. have confidence in Allah, and depend upon Him in all your affairs) He is your Maula (Patron, Lord, etc.),

فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

what an Excellent Maula (Patron, Lord, etc.) and what an Excellent Helper!⁴

IN VERSE 31 OF SURAT AL-KAHF

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ

These! For them will be Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them,

يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ

therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk.

مُتَّكِنِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ

They will recline therein on raised thrones.

نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا

How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!⁵

The word “Adn (Eden) “ means residence. Also, this word is one of the names of heaven.

IN VERSE 75 OF SURAH AŞ-ŞAFFÂT:

وَلَقَدْ نَادَيْنَا نُوْحًا فَلَنِعْمَ الْمُجِيبُونَ

⁴ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

⁵ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

And indeed Nooh (Noah) invoked Us, and We are the Best of those who answer (the request).⁶

IN VERSE 30 OF SURAH AS-ŞĀD:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِذَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ

And to Dawood (David) We gave Sulaiman (Solomon).

نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

How excellent (a) slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)!⁷

IN VERSE 44 OF SURAT AS-ŞĀD

وَأَخَذَ بِبِيدِكَ ضِغْتًا فَأَضْرِبْ بِّهٖ وَلَا تَخَنْتَ

"And take in your hand a bundle of thin grass and strike therewith (your wife), and break not your oath .

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا

Truly! We found him patient.

نَعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

How excellent (a) slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)!⁸

IN VERSE 48 OF SURAH AZ-ZĀRIYĀT

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَلْهُدُونَ

And We have spread out the earth, how Excellent Spreader (thereof) are We!⁹

IN VERSE 23 OF SURAH AL-MURSALĀT

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ

So We did measure, and We are the Best to measure (the things).¹⁰

In the 5 places in Qur'an, the verb “نِعْمَ” “ne'ma” is preceded by the noun ال (alif lām)

IN VERSE 136 OF SURAH ĀLI-'IMRĀN

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاءُ هُم مَّغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

For such, the reward is Forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever.

وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

How excellent is this reward for the doers (who do righteous deeds according to Allah's Orders).¹¹

وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ – In the verse, the verb of the verb نِعْمَ is in the form of ال (alif lām) and comes in the form of “ma'rifa” (definite).

It is clear from the words, “How good is the reward of those who do good deeds!” Those who are not satisfied with eyewash words or symbolic deeds.

⁶ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

⁷ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

⁸ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

⁹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

¹⁰ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

¹¹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

IN VERSE 24 OF SURAH AR-RA'D

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ^{١٢}

"Salamun Alaikum (peace be upon you) for that you persevered in patience!

فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

Excellent indeed is the final home!"¹²

IN VERSE 30 OF SURAT AN-NAHL

وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ^{١٣}

And (when) it is said to those who are the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2) "What is it that your Lord has sent down?"

قَالُوا خَيْرًا^{١٤}

They say: "That which is good."

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ^{١٥}

For those who do good in this world, there is good,

وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ^{١٥}

and the home of the Hereafter will be better.

وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ

And excellent indeed will be the home (i.e. Paradise) of the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2).¹³

IN VERSE 58 OF SURAH AL-'ANKABŪT

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا

And those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to them We shall surely give lofty dwellings in Paradise,

تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

underneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever.

نِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

Excellent is the reward of the workers.¹⁴

IN VERSE 74 OF SURAT AZ-ZUMAR

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَّبِعُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ

And they will say:

"All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will;

فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!"¹⁵

In only one place in Qur'an is the performer of the verb “نِعْمَ” ne'ma used as a word ما:

¹² Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan¹³ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan¹⁴ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan¹⁵ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

IN VERSE 271 OF SURAH AL-BAQARAH

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ

If you disclose your Sadaqat (alms-giving), it is well, but if you conceal it, and give it to the poor, that is better for you.

وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

(Allah) will forgive you some of your sins. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.¹⁶

In Arabic grammar, the word mā often means “الأسماء الموصولة” “Al Asmaul mawsulah” (Relative Nouns). However, in the verse, the word ما mā is in the nakira (indefinite) state, and it is neither a relative noun nor adjectival. Rather, the word ما mā comes as a doer that follow the word “نِعْمَ” ne’ma, meaning “any charity is praiseworthy”.

The Qur'an describes several ways to praise and rebuke. Praise is an Arabic word and is used in the sense of praising, complimenting, and elevating. One of the forms of praise in the Qur'an comes with the verb “نِعْمَ” (ne’ma). This verb is used in the sense of “how nice, how worthy, how good”.

While “نِعْمَ” (ne’ma) appears in 15 verses in the Qur'an as a verb denoting praise, its alternative verb “بِئْسَ” (be’sa), which means “how bad”, is used in the same verses.

In Arabic grammar, these two verbs differ from other verbs in that they have their own rules and sentences.

There are three main forms of praising or complimenting using the word نِعْمَ “ne’ma” as the verb” as the noun. نِعْمَ “ne’ma” (performer of the action): ال (alif lām) as a noun, or ال (alif lām) as a noun with ‘مضاف’ (Mudaf)¹⁷ or it has to as adjective come with the word ما (mā).

In 9 places in Qur'an, the performer that follow the verb “نِعْمَ” “ne’ma” is the noun with the litter ال (alif lām)

IN VERSE 173 OF SURAH AL 'IMRAN

الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدَّ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاتَّخِذُوهُمْ قَرَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا

Those (i.e. believers) unto whom the people (hypocrites) said, "Verily, the people (pagans) have gathered against you (a great army), therefore, fear them." But it (only) increased them in Faith,

فَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ

and they said: "Allah (Alone) is Sufficient for us, and He is the Best Disposer of affairs (for us)."¹⁸

IN VERSE 40 OF SURAH AL-ANFAL

وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ مَوْلَاكُمْ ۗ

And if they turn away, then know that Allah is your Maula (Patron, Lord, Protector and Supporter, etc.),

¹⁶ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

¹⁷ The word مضاف “Mudaf” literally means: added, or better “the added” but Grammatically “thing being possessed/owned.

¹⁸ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

نِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

(what) an Excellent Maula, and (what) an Excellent Helper!¹⁹

The repetition of the verb “نِعْمَ” in the verse and the fact that the conjunction "and" is not used indicate how worthy Allah is in praise. The purpose of the repetition of the verb was to exaggerate and to convey to the servants that He is unequal and powerful in praise.

IN VERSE 78 OF SURAT AL-HAJJ

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ

And strive hard in Allah's Cause as you ought to strive (with sincerity and with all your efforts that His Name should be superior).

هُوَ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

He has chosen you (to convey His Message of Islamic Monotheism to mankind by inviting them to His religion, Islam), and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship,

مِلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

it is the religion of your father Ibrahim (Abraham) (Islamic Monotheism).

هُوَ سَمَّكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَفِي هَذَا

It is He (Allah) Who has named you Muslims both before and in this (the Quran),

لِيَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

that the Messenger (Muhammad SAW) may be a witness over you and you be witnesses over mankind!

فَأَقِمْوَا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ

So perform AsSalat (Iqamat-as-Salat), give Zakat and hold fast to Allah (i.e. have confidence in Allah, and depend upon Him in all your affairs) He is your Maula (Patron, Lord, etc.),

فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَىٰ وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ

what an Excellent Maula (Patron, Lord, etc.) and what an Excellent Helper!²⁰

IN VERSE 31 OF SURAT AL-KAHF

أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ عَدْنٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهِمُ الْأَنْهَارُ

These! For them will be Adn (Eden) Paradise (everlasting Gardens); wherein rivers flow underneath them,

يُحَلَّوْنَ فِيهَا مِنْ أَسَاوِرَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ وَيَلْبَسُونَ ثِيَابًا خُضْرًا مِنْ سُنْدُسٍ وَإِسْتَبْرَقٍ

therein they will be adorned with bracelets of gold, and they will wear green garments of fine and thick silk.

مُنكَبِينَ فِيهَا عَلَى الْأَرَائِكِ

They will recline therein on raised thrones.

نِعْمَ الثَّوَابُ وَحَسُنَتْ مُرْتَفَقًا

How good is the reward, and what an excellent Murtafaqa (dwelling, resting place, etc.)!²¹

The word “Adn (Eden) “ means residence. Also, this word is one of the names of heaven.

¹⁹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

²⁰ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

²¹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

IN VERSE 75 OF SURAH AŞ-ŞÂFFÂT

وَلَقَدْ نَادَيْنَا نُوْحًا فَلَنِعْمَ الْمُجِيبُونَ

And indeed Nooh (Noah) invoked Us, and We are the Best of those who answer (the request).²²

IN VERSE 30 OF SURAH AS-ŞÂD:

وَوَهَبْنَا لِذَاوُدَ سُلَيْمَانَ

And to Dawood (David) We gave Sulaiman (Solomon).

نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

How excellent (a) slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)!²³

IN VERSE 44 OF SURAT AS-ŞÂD

وَحُذِّ بِيْدِكَ ضِعْفًا فَأَضْرِبْ بِهِ وَلَا تُخَنْتْ

"And take in your hand a bundle of thin grass and strike therewith (your wife), and break not your oath .

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا

Truly! We found him patient.

نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ إِنَّهُ أَوَّابٌ

How excellent (a) slave! Verily, he was ever oft-returning in repentance (to Us)!²⁴

IN VERSE 48 OF SURAH AZ-ZÂRIYÂT

وَالْأَرْضَ فَرَشْنَاهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَاهِدُونَ

And We have spread out the earth, how Excellent Spreader (thereof) are We!²⁵

IN VERSE 23 OF SURAH AL-MURSALÂT

فَقَدَرْنَا فَنِعْمَ الْقَادِرُونَ

So We did measure, and We are the Best to measure (the things).²⁶

In the 5 places in Qur'an, the verb “ نِعْمَ “ “ ne'ma “ is preceded by the noun ال (alif lām)

IN VERSE 136 OF SURAH ÂLI-'IMRÂN

أُولَئِكَ جَزَاؤُهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَجَنَّاتٌ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

For such, the reward is Forgiveness from their Lord, and Gardens with rivers flowing underneath (Paradise), wherein they shall abide forever.

وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

How excellent is this reward for the doers (who do righteous deeds according to Allah's Orders).²⁷

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وَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ – In the verse, the verb of the verb نِعْمَ is in the form of ال (alif lām) and comes in the form of “ma'rifa” (definite).

It is clear from the words, “How good is the reward of those who do good deeds!” Those who are not satisfied with eyewash words or symbolic deeds.

IN VERSE 24 OF SURAH AR-RA'D

سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِمَا صَبَرْتُمْ ۗ

"Salamun Alaikum (peace be upon you) for that you persevered in patience!

فَنِعْمَ عُقْبَى الدَّارِ

Excellent indeed is the final home!"²⁸

IN VERSE 30 OF SURAT AN-NAHL

وَقِيلَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا مَاذَا أَنْزَلَ رَبُّكُمْ ۗ

And (when) it is said to those who are the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2) "What is it that your Lord has sent down?"

قَالُوا خَيْرًا ۗ

They say: "That which is good."

لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةٌ ۗ

For those who do good in this world, there is good,

وَلَدَارُ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ ۗ

and the home of the Hereafter will be better.

وَلَنِعْمَ دَارُ الْمُتَّقِينَ

And excellent indeed will be the home (i.e. Paradise) of the Muttaqoon (pious - see V.2:2).²⁹

IN VERSE 58 OF SURAH AL-'ANKABŪT

وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَنُبَوِّئَنَّهُمْ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ غُرَفًا

And those who believe (in the Oneness of Allah Islamic Monotheism) and do righteous good deeds, to them We shall surely give lofty dwellings in Paradise,

تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا

underneath which rivers flow, to live therein forever.

نِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

Excellent is the reward of the workers.³⁰

IN VERSE 74 OF SURAT AZ-ZUMAR

وَقَالُوا الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهُ وَأَوْرَثَنَا الْأَرْضَ نَتَّبِعُوهُ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ حَيْثُ نَشَاءُ ۗ

And they will say:

"All the praises and thanks be to Allah Who has fulfilled His Promise to us and has made us inherit (this) land. We can dwell in Paradise where we will;

فَنِعْمَ أَجْرُ الْعَامِلِينَ

²⁸ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

²⁹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

³⁰ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

how excellent a reward for the (pious good) workers!"³¹

In only one place in Qur'an is the performer of the verb “نِعْمَ” ne'ma used as a word ما:

IN VERSE 271 OF SURAH AL-BAQARAH

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۗ

If you disclose your Sadaqat (alms-giving), it is well, but if you conceal it, and give it to the poor, that is better for you.

وَيُكَفِّرُ عَنْكُمْ مِنْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

(Allah) will forgive you some of your sins. And Allah is Well-Acquainted with what you do.³²

In Arabic grammar, the word mā often means “الأسماء الموصولة” “Al Asmaul mawsulah” (Relative Nouns). However, in the verse, the word ما mā is in the nakira (indefinite) state, and it is neither a relative noun nor adjectival. Rather, the word ما mā comes as a doer that follow the word “نِعْمَ” ne'ma, meaning “any charity is praiseworthy”.

REFERENCES

- 1) The word مضاف “Mudaf” literally means: added, or better “the added” but Grammatically “thing being possessed/owned.
- 2) Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

³¹ Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan

³² Quran with English Translation Translator Dr M Taqi-ud-Din Hilali, Dr M Muhsin Khan