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See also: ABLUTION; ĀDAM, PEACE BE UPON HIM; ʿALAQA; ANGELS; ANIMALS; AVARICE AND GREED; BADR; BIRTH; BODY; CHILDREN; CLAY; COMPANION(S) OF THE PROPHET; DAY; DEATH AND THE DEAD; DISBELIEVERS; EARTH; ENORMITIES; FAILURE AND LOSS; GRAVE; INJUSTICE; JĀHILIYYA; KINDRED; LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY; LIMBS AND ORGANS; AL-MAJŪS; MARTYRS AND MARTYRDOM; NIGHT; POVERTY; PRAYER; RESURRECTION; RIGHTS AND CLAIMS; SUICIDE; SUPEREROGATORY PRAYERS AND DEEDS; SUSTENANCE; TIME; TWO SONS OF ĀDAM; UHUD; WATER.

MUZAFFAR IQBAL AND NASEER AHMAD

BUYING AND SELLING

AL-SHIRĀ², AL-BAY^ʿ, AL-TIJĀRA

This entry comprises the following sections: (i) Definitions and Usage; (ii) Buying and Selling with One's Soul; (iii) Buying, Selling, and the Hereafter; (iv) Forbidden Transactions; (v) Buying Misguidance; (vi) No Buying and Selling on the Day of Resurrection; (vii) Earning Livelihood; (viii) Bibliography.

Definitions and Usage

Three Qurʾānic terms refer to buying and selling: *shirāʾ*, *bayʿ*, and *tijāra*. The first two are defined as “when the owner confers the ownership of his property to someone else, for a compensation (*bi-ʿiwaḍ*) by which he is recompensed” (Ṭabarī, *sub* Q 2:90). They are auto-antonyms (*addād*), because the exchange of something and its price can both be called a sale or a purchase, depending on the perspective (Ibn al-Anbārī, *Addād*, §36, *wa-sharaytu*; Jawharī; Fayyūmī; Ibn Manzūr, *sub sh-r-y*). Al-Rāghīb al-Aṣfahānī (d. 502/ca.1108) says “buying and selling are two inseparables (*yatalāzimān*), because the buyer (*mushtarī*) gives price and takes the thing for which price is given and the seller (*bāʿ*) gives the thing in exchange for its price; this is when money is exchanged for a thing, but when things exchange hands through barter, then

both parties can be called buyers and sellers. This is why *bayʿ* and *shirāʿ* are used interchangeably... *al-shirāʿ* and *al-ishtirāʿ* are used for anything in exchange of which another thing is obtained” (Rāghib, *sub sh-r-y*).

Qurʾānic usage attests both perspectives: of sale, *And among people is the one who sells/ (yashrī) his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah* (Q 2:207), and *they sold him (sharawhu) for a paltry price* (Q 12:20); and purchase: *Verily Allah has purchased (inna-Llāha-shtarā) from the believers their lives and their wealth in exchange for the Garden* (Q 9:111). The eighth stem from the roots *b-y-ʿ* (*ibtāʿ/a/yabtāʿu/ibtāʿan*) and *sh-r-y* (*ishtarā/yashtarī/ishtirāʿ*) synonymously refer to buying, but the active participles retain their semantic difference and become antonym (*ḍidd*), thus *al-shārī* and *al-mushtarī* mean buyer, while *al-bāʿiʿ* is the vendor, the seller and the merchant (Zabīdī, *sub sh-r-y*; 38:363). In one verse (Q 62:9), the noun *bayʿ* refers to both buying and selling, which should be left *when the call to prayer is proclaimed on Friday* (Farrāʿ; Ṭabarī; Samarqandī).

Cognates of the root *b-y-ʿ* occur fifteen times in four derived forms: six times (Q 9:111; 48:10x2,18; 60:12x2) as the Form III verb *bāyaʿa* (“to pledge”); once (Q 2:282) as the Form-VI verb *tabāyaʿtum* (“to sell to one another”); once (Q 22:40) as the plural noun *biyaʿun* (sing. *bīʿa*, “churches”); and seven times (Q 2:254, 275x2; 9:111; 14:31; 24:37; 62:9) as the noun *bayʿ*.

The root *sh-r-y* appears twenty-five times: Form I verb (*sharā*) is used four times (Q 2:102, 207; 4:74; 12:20) and Form-VIII verb (*ishtarā*) occurs twenty-one times in various conjugated forms.

The noun *tijāra*, defined as “turning to purchasing goods (*li-ishtirāʿ al-ashyāʿ*) with the aim of selling them for a greater amount (of money) than that for which it was bought, in order to obtain profit and earn money” (Ibn ʿĀshūr, *sub Q 2:16*), from the root *t-j-r*—a rare sequence of letters among Arabic verbs (Ibn Fāris, *kitāb al-tāʿ*, *bāb al-tāʿ wa-l-jīm wa mā yuthallithuhumā*)—denotes commerce, that is, both buying and selling (Ibn Sīda, *al-jīm wa-l-tāʿ wa-l-rāʿ*) using capital (*raʿs al-māl*) in order to gain profit (Rāghib). Its eighth form (*ittajara/yattajirū/ittijāran*) carries the same meaning as Form I verb (Ibn Manzūr). Exegetes mention that the etymology of the tribal name *Quraysh* also refers to trade, for they were “traders-*tujjāran*” (Muqātil, Ṭabarī, Samarqandī, Māwardī, *sub Q 106:1*) – “*ahl tijāra* – people of trade”; the verbal noun *qarsh* means *kash* (earnings by trade) (Samʿānī); verbal forms I *qarasha*, V (*taqarrasha*) and VIII *iqtarasha* all convey the meaning of trading and

collecting [wealth] for the living of the family (Samʿānī, Baghawī; Khāzin; Farāhīdī, *al-thulāthī al-ṣaḥīḥ min al-qāf*; ʿAyn, Jawharī, *bāb al-sīn*, *faṣl al-qāf*; Ibn Fāris, *al-qāf*, *bāb al-qāf wa-l-rāʿ wa mā yuthallithuhumā*; Ibn Manzūr, *al-shīn*, *faṣl al-qāf*). There are nine occurrences of *tijāra* (Q 2:16, 282; 4:29; 9:24; 24:37; 35:29; 61:10; 62:11x2), which Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Fayrūzābādī (729-817/1329-1415) grouped into six contexts:

- i. the metaphorical trade of those engaged in *jihad* (*q.v.*) with their souls, physical selves, and wealth, as in Q 61:10-11, *O You who believe! Shall I guide you to a trade that will save you from a painful torment? Have faith in Allah and His Messenger and strive in His cause with your wealth and your souls*;
- ii. the metaphorical “profitless trade” of the hypocrites (*q.v.*), who buy misguidance in exchange for guidance, as in Q 2:16, *those who have purchased misguidance at the price of guidance, but their trade has brought no profit* (see GUIDANCE AND MISGUIDANCE);
- iii. “the never-perishing commerce” of the reciters of the Qurʾān *who recite the Book of Allah, perform the prayer, and spend from that which We have provided them secretly and openly hope for a commerce that will never perish* (Q 35:29);
- iv. the literal and metaphorical commerce of the “slaves of this world”, as in Q 62:11, *And when they see some commerce or diversion, they scatter toward it and leave you standing. Say, “That which is with Allah is better than diversion and commerce; and Allah is the best of providers”*;
- v. literal buying and selling, as in Q 4:29, *O you who believe! Consume not each other’s wealth falsely, but trade by mutual consent, and slay not yourselves. Truly Allah is Merciful unto you*;
- vi. the literal commerce of the chosen slaves (*khawāṣṣ al-ʿibād*), who turn away from all worldly trade, as in Q 24:37, *Men whom neither trade nor sale diverts from the remembrance of Allah*.

(*Basāʿir*, *baṣira fil-tijāra*, 2:295-296)

Buying and Selling with One’s Soul

There are two kinds of human beings who buy and sell with their souls: those who seek Divine Pleasure and those who pursue worldly gains, thus facing possible perdition in the Hereafter. In one of the most evocative metaphorical usages of buying and selling,