



An INVITATION
to PEACE

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PUBLICATIONS

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Introduction

We live in fast moving times. Look how much the world has changed since you were a child – look how much has changed in the last ten years. People lead such busy and hectic lives just trying to get by that most of them hardly ever get round to stop and seriously ask what exactly this life is about anyway. Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? And since this life is going to end one day, is there anything we need to achieve before it is all over? Because, all of the outer developments aside, take away all the layers and you find we're still the same as we always were deep down. Our basic needs are still the same, our basic fears, our basic hopes. And if there's one thing that we all desire, it's to be happy, to be at peace.

With all the advances in technology and all the ways life is easier for us than it was for our parents and grandparents, you'd expect people in this time would be the happiest people that ever lived. But are they? Are you? Depression seems to be an epidemic that's plagued this age like none before it, as well as anxiety and restlessness – at least, inner restlessness. Why is that?

The trouble with this age seems to be that with all the progress we've made and all the new things we possess, we've lost something people before us had. We've lost a real purpose to live for. Deep down inside, we know that these bits and pieces we're surrounded by can't be the purpose of it all – we're all the time getting nearer to when we have to leave them all. Yet it is these material things that most people have made the target of their lives, and got themselves believing will deliver that basic goal of ours: happiness and peace. And so we continue working so hard to achieve them, and continue finding when we get to them that we were wrong. But maybe the next thing will bring real happiness...

This book has been written to help you find that you do have a meaning beyond simply going through the motions of life – eating, drinking and procreating – and that there is a way for you to achieve happiness by living a meaningful, fulfilling life, a life that still means something after the material things have ended. It's really an answer that's already within you, furnished with some information from around you, that is going to be presented before you. For your part, you must open your heart and mind and be sincere in order to recognise the truth when you see it. The truth, after all, is no small matter.

Peace.

Why Believe?

Is it really all that important to believe? Actually, it's a matter of life and death – literally. You are alive now, and so you're able to read these words. Life, therefore, is a fact. Another fact you will no doubt agree to is that it is fast moving on. However old you are, just look at how fast those years have flown! Doesn't it seem like just yesterday that you were a care-free child, the world a very different place through your young and ever-intrigued eyes? How enchanting everything seemed, how much there was to be amazed at in the innocence of childhood... But look at yourself now, barely a blink of an eye later, and how things have changed!

What it means, of course, for life to be moving on is that it's coming to its end. Even if you are young and feel you have many more years to live, there is still no escaping the fact that every day that passes you by brings you one day closer to that end. If it's been, let's say, two minutes since you picked this booklet up, you're now two minutes closer to that end (dying) than you were then. An alarming, even frightening, thought I know, but a reality nonetheless – in fact, the most important reality of our lives, and so one we need to face. Death, then, is the other great fact of our existence. And so, since we are all marching unstopably towards this end, we have to ask ourselves: Where is it that we're going?

The only way to find out the answer to this question, apart from dying and actually getting there, is to start at the beginning. That is, we need to ask ourselves another question first: Where did we come from?

The Beginning

We know we had a beginning. So did everything else we have ever seen, touched or known physically of. That means all of these things were once non-existent and then came to be. We can call this temporal (i.e. of time) or finite (having an end, be it of the past or of the future). Now, for things which were first non-existent to suddenly come into being means that they had to be *brought* into existence, because something which doesn't exist can't bring itself into being.

(In case you think the idea of a 'Big Bang' explains how the universe came to be, it still doesn't do away with the fact that whatever it is that went 'bang' to begin with had to be put into 'infinite space' in the first place. So there still had to be an Originator.)

For it to have been possible, then, for every finite thing that exists to exist means that there must have already been a Being who *made* it, that is, a being brought it from not being or existing into being.

This Being must be infinite and non-temporal (always there), because if *he* was non-existent to start with too, *he* never would have existed; being the First, there wouldn't have been anyone to bring *him* into existence. In which case, he wouldn't have been there to bring about anything else into existence, and so *nothing* would have existed. But things do exist. So, the existence of things means the existence of the Originator of things. An Originator who is without beginning. An Originator who always was.

Some people think that by saying everything was caused by something before it which was also finite they can get away from having to accept an Infinite Originator. Let's think of the example of a great row of dominoes stood perfectly upright and still. None of them can move

because no force is working on them. Then you suddenly see them all topple one after the other. While individual dominoes are being caused to drop by the ones before them, we know that the first one to drop and start the chain reaction couldn't have caused itself to drop, nor could it have just dropped from nowhere – without a force acting on it. So, its falling must have been caused by a force that was already moving and didn't need a domino to fall on it to put it into motion. The presence of things which had a beginning must have similarly been caused by a being which already existed and didn't need anything else to bring it about.

As this Being had always been and was not caused by anything, His existence must be absolute, that is, not dependent on anything outside itself. He must therefore also be eternal and everlasting, as He needs nothing to continue to exist and so will never cease to be. And as He is infinite and absolute, so must everything about Him be infinite and absolute, because both of these, like perfection, do not have degrees. Something's either absolute or it isn't; it can't be part absolute and part not because that contradicts the meaning of being absolute.

Now, for this Being to have been able to make such a vast universe, He must be extremely powerful. To give you an idea of the magnitudes we're talking about, our sun is a medium-sized star, yet if it were hollow, it would be able to contain thousands of Earths within it. The Sun with the planets that surround it forms the solar system. Every single star that we see is also a sun with its own group of planets orbiting around it, forming its own solar system. A large group of solar systems together makes up a galaxy. Just our galaxy on its own, called the Milky Way, consists of an approximate one hundred million billion stars. Scientists estimate that there are altogether more stars than there are seconds since the universe began!

Now consider this: light travels at the terrific speed of 186,000 miles per second – that’s seven and a half times around the earth in a second! Distances in space are measured in light years, i.e. the distance that would be covered in a year travelling at 186,000 miles per second. The closest star to us after our sun is 4.3 light years away. That’s over twenty-five thousand billion miles away! A gigantic star explosion, the Supernova 1987a, was observed in 1987 in the ‘nearby’ galaxy, the Large Magellanic Cloud, which is 190,000 light years away. So what we saw in 1987 actually happened 190,000 years before then! The most distant object astronomers have been able to see in the universe was 18 billion light years away – it took 18 billion years travelling at 186,000 miles per second for its light to reach us! And that’s just what we’ve been able to see!

And yet, throughout the vast reaches of the outer space of the cosmos all the way to the microscopic realm of the atoms that make us, if there’s one thing we find again and again, it’s that perfect balance and order govern them all. Every scientist has absolute faith that the laws of the universe, from the macro to the micro level, do indeed represent one overall system, every piece of which fits into an intricate design with perfect logic and necessity.

The unbelievable complexity with which a single cell is formed was unknown in Darwin’s days. Each one contains power stations to produce the energy the cell needs, enzyme- and hormone-manufacturing plants, a databank of the vast information of everything that’s to be produced, complex transportation systems for handling raw materials, advanced laboratories and refineries to break them down and process them and a specialised control unit monitoring everything that enters or leaves the cell. All this is just a small part of an incredibly complex system. Scientists have had to admit that “the most elementary type of cell constitutes a mechanism unimaginably more

complex than any machine yet thought up, let alone constructed, by man.”¹

Leaving alone such an intricate system, even the building-blocks that make cells, proteins, are mind-blowing. Because *their* molecules are arranged in such a complex structure, the chance of one forming at random is in the region of one in ten to the power of 113 (one with 113 zeros after it) – a number larger than the estimated total number of atoms in the universe! A prominent evolutionist scientist had to acknowledge, “The spontaneous formation of a polypeptide of the size of the *smallest known protein* seems beyond all probability.”² Yet many people still like to maintain that a universe so vast and whose tiniest particles are so complex just fell together by chance – a notion which requires considerably more faith to believe in than it would to accept an infinitely powerful and limitlessly skilful Designer!

Call this Infinite Being the Source of Existence, the Primary Cause, the Architect of the Universe, or whatever you wish: this is what is meant of by God. The fact that you are, is proof that God is too. As He is limitless and absolute, so too are His power and knowledge, as a glance at His creation has proved. And, going back to the original question, this, then, is where you came from. And this, too, is where you’re going to.

¹ W. H. Thorpe, quoted by W. R. Bird in *The Origin of Species Revisited*, pp. 298-299

² Harold F. Blum, *ibid.*, p. 304

God... and Us

Exploring the questions of where we have come from and where we're going brings us to another very important question: Why are we here?

From the precision with which the whole of the universe has been exquisitely structured – of which we are a tiny speck – and the intricate design that governs everything down to the minutest atom, it is evident that there must be a purpose to it all. Even scientists who don't believe in God cannot deny that there is an amazing order to the way everything in existence is orchestrated (which is why they're able to describe 'systems' and their 'laws'), and that everything they've looked at fulfils a function, and so has a purpose. Purpose is evident through design; everything we've ever been able to know of has some kind of meaning. How can it be conceivable, then, that the human being who has been *designed* to throw off ignorance and to grasp some of these meanings through the intellect could himself have no purpose and no meaning?

We are by nature rational beings and feel a need to understand things. Of all creatures on this planet, man alone has been endowed with the faculty of thinking and reasoning. Slow-moving, puny and defenceless though we might be, thanks to this one redeeming factor of ours, the human mind, we are kings of the animal world. Man has been able to tap into the earth's resources and use them to his advantage like no other. We have been given the gifts of learning and understanding, the ability to observe and contemplate, and the power to plan and harness.

And yet we are completely helpless against the forces of nature; we are unable to control our own fate, let alone the workings of nature. We are placed at a distance from the sun that is crucial to our existence, we

have been protected from lethal rays and gases by an atmosphere composed of just the right amount of just the right gases, we consist of a chemical build-up vital for our survival, but we had no say in a single one of these matters. Each of the approximately 350 billion cells that make up our bodies is an independent living organism in itself, eating, growing and reproducing on its own. And yet, each of them has only one goal: ensuring *our* well-being and survival. There are whole armies of cells inside us that lay down their lives to preserve us from harm, because that's what they've been *designed* to do. Isn't that a humbling thought? And we had no control over this or over a thousand other things besides. How utterly dependent we are; how helpless yet how privileged!

So, our purpose? It is to recognise the magnificent Designer who made all that exists with such artistry and maintains it with such authority. It is to consider His glory and splendour, His love and mercy, and so to adore Him; to get beyond the created to the Creator and so to seek His pleasure by doing good and establishing goodness with the gifts entrusted to us. This is what we've been designed to do; this is the purpose of our lives. The meaning of our lives is to live for Him, the greatest meaning. Look inside yourself and you'll find the proof of this. Why else did you think you are able to recognise beauty and love it, and see ugliness and abhor it? Why do even small children understand fairness from injustice, and demand one and hate the other? Why else does good please us, and wrong (even to others) anger us? And what could be more wrong than to deny Him who made us, gave us everything we've ever had, and to whom every day we are returning?

And why else, in times of desperate need, does every instinct inside us tell us to reach out to One greater than we, One who we feel knows us intimately and cares for us? All of us, no matter what clever names we give ourselves – atheists, agnostics or whatever – are, in this sense, natural believers. Belief in God is part of our natural disposition.

Take meaning away from a thing and it becomes empty. After all the material progress and developments we've made, and all the ways we've found to make our lifestyles more 'advanced' than those before us, deep down in their hearts many people know they've lost something; there's an emptiness in the soul that no amount of cosmetic commodities can fill. We've realised that inner fulfilment doesn't come in fancy packaging; it can't be bought with money. People run about chasing so many goals, trying to fulfil so many dreams, and all the while they're chased themselves by a feeling of inevitable loss, knowing that everything they're running after is ultimately in vain, soon to be all over. Every passing second brings that time of great loss a moment closer, so we know deep down in our hearts that none of it has any meaning. How lonely is life and how empty without finding and being able to live for something that will truly remain forever, a real meaning! It's to try to shut this out, the 'yearning of the heart', that people turn to alcohol and drugs and drown themselves in loud music and entertainment. Ultimately, we will always be restless and discontented until we fulfil the role that we were *designed* for: to recognise the One who made us and the whole vast universe, and to find our place in its harmony by submitting before Him. He is the Supreme to whom the whole universe submits. Only when a person does the same does he or she step out of the abyss of dissatisfaction and discontent, for 'only in the remembrance of God do hearts find peace'³.

It stands to reason that a God so benevolent and caring would reveal guidance to human beings telling them about Himself and themselves – that is, how we are to live for Him and so to achieve our purpose and find peace, satisfaction and happiness. But with so many religions out there that claim to be from Him, how can we know which one is really revealed from Him, the guidance that will take us to Him?

³ The Qur'an 13:28

The Test of True Religion

Since religion is supposed to be revelation from God to man, its ultimate objective must be bringing man to recognise and obey God. Logically then, for a religion to be true it must meet certain standards or criteria:

1) The focus of the religion and central point around which it revolves must be God and nothing else. This has to be what is at the heart of its teachings.

This is because a religion can't be true if its focal point is not the ultimate Truth: God. If the core of its message is about anything apart from God, like revering a certain person or people or set of rituals, then its objective has been lost; its focus has become creation instead of Creator.

2) Its basic message has to be universal – one that's equally applicable to all people of all times.

Since God is equally the Creator and Sustainer of all who have ever lived, the basic purpose of all people must essentially be the same, and so the basic teachings of a true religion must be relevant to everyone. It can't, therefore, be based around a certain figure in history or tribe, because that would then have no meaning for those who lived before that historical figure or have nothing to do with that tribe.

3) It should not attribute to God anything which goes against His absoluteness.

As God is perfect, good and absolute, anything that teaches that God has weaknesses or flaws cannot be true. Therefore, if a religion says

that God was ever a man, for example, or any man was in some way God, it could not be true as that would be ascribing to His nature the limitations of being human or saying His power could be shared. Other examples are to say that God ever tired and needed to rest, or regretted having done anything; this is ascribing human weaknesses to God. Similarly, if it is taught that there is more than one God it could also not be true as that would be against His absoluteness. Think about it: if there were two or more gods, one would either be greater than the other, in which case the outdone could not be God, or they would both be equally great and so unable to overpower each other, in which case both are limited and so neither could be god. The Absolute, therefore, can only be one.

4) It should not attribute to any created being godhood or divinity, or anything which is exclusive to God.

All apart from the Creator are created. Everything created is finite – limited in itself and all its qualities, while the Creator is infinite and unlimited. To claim that any created being is infinite and unlimited too is obviously nonsense as to be created means it had a beginning – a limit in how long it's existed. Nothing that it possesses, therefore, can be infinite and unlimited either. So to say any being apart from God has unlimited power or knowledge cannot be true. All power and knowledge and anything else that any created thing has is given to it by the Creator, so we can only have as much as He has given us and no more.

5) At no point should it teach that anybody or thing other than Him should be worshipped as well as, or instead of, the One True God.

For all the above reasons, only God is worthy of being worshipped. Any good or beautiful characteristic that any created being has, has been

given to it by God and so it's His goodness and beauty that we admire, not its, and so it's Him that we should give credit to. All things created, from the tiniest ant to the greatest mountain, are ultimately equal in that they both had not existed and were then brought into being by a greater Power, and so both are equally dependent on Him. It doesn't make any sense then that one created thing should worship another.

6) The person who claims to have received this revelation from God and has to convey it to others must be someone who is known to be upright and truthful.

Since God is good and is pleased with goodness, the people that He would be pleased with from among all humanity to be the bearers of His message of goodness would have been the very best of people. Anyone whom we know to have been a sinful or immoral person could not, therefore, have been a messenger of God. Besides, what kind of an example would it set to everyone else if the bringer of divine guidance didn't follow it himself? God would be either stupid or hard-pressed to choose such a person, and we know He's neither. Such a claimant of revelation must then be a liar (or insane).

Any prophecies made by a person must also have been fulfilled for him to be a true messenger of God, otherwise the source of his knowledge is flawed, which God isn't.

7) The revelation must be free of all mistakes and contradictions.

As God is perfect and sublime, His revelation must also be immaculate and free of blemishes. A book that's supposed to be from God could not contain anything that's known for a fact to be wrong, whether historical, scientific, or otherwise. All information in it, be it of the past,

present or future, must correspond with fact, otherwise it can't be true. Any prophecies that it makes must not be ultimately contradicted. A book that gives the age of the earth as some thousands of years old, for instance, when we know it to be in the millions, or one that says that there was day and night before there was a sun, or the earth had been made before the heavens even started could not therefore be from God. Divine revelation must also not contradict itself by containing two or more statements which can't all be true, like quoting someone's genealogy twice with different ancestors in each account.

8) The revelation should contain some sign or proof that it is from God.

As well as meeting all the above standards, divine revelation ought to have some distinguishing features showing that it can't be the work of man. This may be in the form of prophecies or information which could not have been known at the time of its revelation and has since been discovered, or something else that is beyond human ability.

The very first point mentioned above is probably the easiest one to identify; you can nearly always determine what the central-most theme of a religion, its greatest teaching and the axis around which it revolves is even without studying it too deeply. In fact, the very name of the religion often gives this away. If it's anything but God and our relationship with God, rest assured it's not from God.

Of all the religions that exist today, most do not meet all of these criteria. Which is not surprising really, since only one can be true. It's not possible here to go through every single religion individually to demonstrate this; you are invited to apply these criteria to any religion of your choice to see for yourself whether or not it stands up to the test. However, God must have preserved divine guidance in its

completeness even today as we're just as much in need of being guided as anyone before us. There must then be one religion which does meet all the standards of judging divine revelation, which means there is a way, even now, for you to be able to know God and be able to lead a meaningful life at peace with the Creator and at peace with creation. That way of life is Islam.

Islam

Unlike all the other major religions, Islam is not named after a particular historical figure like Christianity, a tribe like Judaism, or a nation like Hinduism. This is because Islam is not a religion in the sense that it is based around a certain person or the beliefs of a certain people. Islam is the completion of the divine guidance that God has sent down to people from the beginning of time, and it is the expression of the divine guidance which God has created all people upon, what we call human nature. How is this? Because *Islam* literally means to submit, to surrender.

Submission is the natural state of everything in existence. Remember how we looked at the amazing order and design at everything in this vast universe, down to its most tiny yet incredibly complex particles? What this means is that the whole of this vast universe, down to its most tiny yet incredibly complex particles, is in submission. Islam is to enter into submission in what you have been given a choice in, just as you are in submission in what you have no control over.

Everything in nature obeys laws and so everything in nature is in harmony. The word *Islam* also means to make peace. You're in peace with someone when you're not contesting or opposing them. Entering into submission before God is to enter into peace with the all-Powerful, most Wise, the One whose Will the whole universe obeys. This is what the purpose of religion has always been and what every man of God has called towards. And this is the call of every person's nature too, and the reason you consider good as good and bad as bad. Islam is therefore to enter into peace with your own nature too.

“Long before any thought that Islam might become my own faith entered my mind, I began to feel an unwonted humility whenever I

saw, as I often did, a man standing barefoot on his prayer rug, or on a straw mat, or on the bare earth, with his arms folded over his chest and his head lowered, entirely submerged within himself, oblivious of what was going on around him, whether it was in a mosque or on the sidewalk of a busy street: a man at peace with himself.”⁴

Islam is simply to submit to the truth you know inside yourself, that there is only one God. Everything other than Him is, like yourself, dependent on Him and so does not deserve your worship. And it is to submit to the truth that comes from Him when it reaches you.

Throughout history, God revealed the truth through a long line of teachers sent to mankind whom we call messengers. Starting with Adam and including Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, the last of these was Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon them all). Anyone anywhere who ever accepted the truth brought by one sent by God was a *Muslim* – that is, one who submitted.

⁴ Leopold Weiss, *The Road to Mecca*, p. 89

Islam – Put to the Test

The final revelation of the truth from God to man is in particular known of as Islam. The name of God in Islam is Allah; the messenger to whom it was revealed to convey to others is Muhammad (PBUH)⁵; the name of the divine scripture revealed to him is the Qur'an.

Let's measure Islam against the standards true revelation must meet:

1) The focal point around which the religion revolves must be God and nothing else.

As its very name signifies, the whole of Islam is about your relationship with God. All but one chapter of the Qur'an opens with the words 'In the name of Allah, most Merciful, most Compassionate.' Islam recognises no mediator between the individual and God, not even messengers are that. Hence, there is no priesthood or any other hierarchy to get to God, and so no need for confessions before anyone but God, nor for anyone else's sacrificing before our sins can be forgiven to receive 'salvation'. No original, inherited sin stands between the individual and God's grace. Purity is man's birthright, and sin means no more than a lapse from the innate beauty with which God has blessed every human being.

At the heart of the Islamic teaching is an intensely intimate relationship between the Creator and the created: "And when My servants ask you of Me, I am indeed close; I answer the call of the one who calls when he calls unto Me; let them, then, listen to My call and believe in Me that they may be led aright."⁶

Indeed, God Himself calls personally on man's conscience, both

⁵ This stands for peace be upon him, a benediction Muslims make when mentioning Messengers of God.

⁶ Qur'an 2:186

individually: “O human being, what has seduced you from your Lord, most Beneficent—? He who created you, then fashioned you perfectly and gave you due proportion...”⁷, and collectively: “O mankind, adore your Guardian-Lord who created you and those who came before you, that you may achieve piety.”⁸

Remembering God is central to every aspect of Islam, the essence and ultimate objective of every act of worship. God says, for example, regarding the *Salah*, the daily prayers: “establish prayers for My remembrance”⁹, and about fasting: “O you who believe, fasting has been prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those who were before you that you may achieve God-consciousness”¹⁰. Being a way of life and not just a set of ritual acts of worship, Islam transforms the whole of life into worship by making it revolve around remembering God: “Say: Truly my prayer and my service of sacrifice, and my living and my dying are (all) for Allah, Lord of all the worlds; no partner has He (in any of this)...”¹¹

According to the Qur’an, God is “closer to man than his jugular veins,”¹² – in fact, “Allah comes in between man and his own heart.”¹³

It is only natural, then, that Islam applies itself to every aspect of man’s life. Islam, submission to God, means living the whole of life based on consciousness of this God who is always so intimately near; even the most commonplace and ordinary becomes sacred and godly to the Muslim.

⁷ Qur’an 82:6-7

⁸ Qur’an 2:21

⁹ Qur’an 20:14

¹⁰ Qur’an 2:183

¹¹ Qur’an 6:162-163

¹² Qur’an 50:16

¹³ Qur’an 8:24

“I became aware how near their God and their faith were to these people. Their prayer did not seem to be divorced from their working day; it was part of it – not meant to help them forget life, but to remember it better by remembering God.”¹⁴

Allah, by the way, is not the name of the god of the Arabs or the Muslims. It is the same God, the One and Only, to whom all true divine traditions called. *Allah* simply means *the* God, that is, the only One to whom divinity belongs and, therefore, the only One who is justifiably worshipped, as opposed to the false forms and images that people’s minds have qualified for worship. The word *Allah* is so exclusive to the One, True God that it has no plural, feminine¹⁵, or diminutive, unlike *god* with *gods*, *goddess* and *godling*. Allah transcends everything which is from the nature of created beings. *Allah* stands for the completeness of all that God is.

“Say: He, Allah, is One,
Allah the Eternally Besought (of all),
He is born of none and none is born of Him,
And there is none comparable to Him.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Leopold Weiss, *The Road to Mecca*, p. 127

¹⁵ Not that Allah is masculine of course, – the Absolute is unique and so has no opposites and gender.

¹⁶ Qur’an 112:1-4

2) Its basic message must be universal.

The universality of the message of Islam is unparalleled among all world religions and the reason for its tremendous interracial, intercultural success from the very beginning. By waking man up to the unity of God, Islam also woke us up to the unity of man. "Truly this nation of yours is (but) one nation, and I am your Lord, so worship Me."¹⁷

Islam does not demand belief in anything that is in conflict with man's reason or the practice of anything repulsive to his better judgement. There are no 'great mysteries' which make no sense but have to be accepted. In fact, Islam demands that man apply the intellect. After all, was it not God who honoured him with it among all creatures? The Qur'an abounds with the instruction to "think," "contemplate," and "see."¹⁸ It congratulates "people of understanding,"¹⁹ and condemns those who choose to remain blind to reason as "deaf, dumb and blind,"²⁰ and "like cattle – nay, even further removed from guidance!"²¹ There is no clash between the soul and the flesh, no life-denial and 'self-mortification' required to be able to get to Him. After all, did God not create him both as body and soul? Islam taught that "truly your Lord has a right upon you, and your body has a right upon you, and your family has a right upon you, so give unto each rightful one its due."²² These teachings, which echo the voice of man's own nature, meant Islam struck a chord in the conscience of all who heard its message. Man's nature is the same the world over.

¹⁷ Qur'an 21:92

¹⁸ Cf. Qur'an 2:164, 2:266, 3:191, 32:27, 38:29

¹⁹ Qur'an 3:190

²⁰ Qur'an 2:18

²¹ Qur'an 7:179

²² Saying of the Prophet Muhammad, Related by al-Bukhari v. 2, p. 694

“It (Islam) replaced monkishness by manliness. It gives hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature.”²³

“The word of such a man [Muhammad] is a voice direct from nature's own heart. Men do and must listen to that as to nothing else, – all else is wind in comparison.”²⁴

“It was obvious to me that the decline of the Muslims was not due to any shortcomings in Islam but rather to their own failure to live up to it.

“For, indeed, it was Islam that had carried the early Muslims to tremendous cultural heights by directing all their energies toward conscious thought as the only means to understanding the nature of God’s creation and, thus, of His will. No demand had been made of them to believe in dogmas difficult or even impossible of intellectual comprehension; in fact, no dogma whatsoever was to be found in the Prophet’s message: and, thus, the thirst after knowledge which distinguished early Muslim history had not been forced, as elsewhere in the world, to assert itself in a painful struggle against the traditional faith. On the contrary, it had stemmed exclusively from that faith. The Arabian Prophet had declared *Striving after knowledge is a most sacred duty for every Muslim*²⁵: and his followers were led to understand that only by acquiring knowledge could they fully worship the Lord. When they pondered the Prophet’s saying, *God creates no disease without creating a cure for it as well*²⁶, they realized that by searching for unknown cures they would contribute to a fulfilment of God’s will on earth: and so medical research became invested with the holiness of a

²³ Canon Taylor, Paper read before the Church Congress, Oct. 7 1887, quoted by Arnould in *The Preaching of Islam*, pp. 71-72

²⁴ Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, 1840, p. 71

²⁵ Ibn Majah, v. 1, p. 81

²⁶ *Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by al-Hakim*, v. 4, p. 218

religious duty. They read the Koran verse [sic], *We create every living thing out of water*²⁷ – and in their endeavour to penetrate to the meaning of these words, they began to study living organisms and the laws of their development: and thus they established the science of biology... And in the same way they took to chemistry and physics and physiology, and to all the other sciences in which the Muslim genius was to find its most lasting monument. In building that monument they did no more than follow the encouragement of their Prophet that *Whoever treads a path in search of knowledge, God will make easy for him the path to Paradise*²⁸; that *The student of knowledge walks in the way of God*²⁹; that *The superiority of the learned over the mere pious is like the superiority of the full moon over the stars*³⁰...

“Throughout the whole creative period of Muslim history – that is to say, during the first five centuries after the Prophet’s time – science and learning had no greater champion than the Muslim civilization and no home more secure than the lands in which Islam was supreme.

“Social life was similarly affected by the teachings of the Koran. At a time when in Christian Europe an epidemic was regarded as a scourge of God to which man had but to submit meekly – at that time, and long before it, the Muslims followed the injunction of their Prophet which directed them to combat epidemics by segregating the affected towns and areas. And at a time when even the kings and nobles of Christendom regarded bathing as an almost indecent luxury, even the poorest of Muslim houses had at least one bathroom, while elaborate public baths were common in every Muslim city (in the ninth century, for instance, Cordoba had three hundred of them): and all this in response to the Prophet’s teaching that *Cleanliness is part of faith*³¹. A

²⁷ Qur’an 21:30. We when used by God is a royal plural and not in any way numerical.

²⁸ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by Muslim v.4, p. 2074

²⁹ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by at-Tirmidhi, v. 5 p. 29

³⁰ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by Abu Dawud, v. 3, p. 317

³¹ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by Muslim, v. 1, p. 203

Muslim did not come into conflict with the claims of spiritual life if he took pleasure in the beautiful things of material life, for, according to the Prophet, *God loves to see the sign of His bounty on his servants*³²...

“Little wonder, then, that as soon as it emerged beyond the confines of Arabia, Islam won new adherents by leaps and bounds. Born and nurtured in the world-contempt of Pauline and Augustinian Christianity, the populations of Syria and North Africa, and a little later of Visigothic Spain, saw themselves suddenly confronted with a teaching which denied the dogma of Original Sin and stressed the inborn dignity of earthly life: and so they rallied in ever-increasing numbers to the new creed that gave them to understand that man was God’s vicar on earth. This, and not a legendary ‘conversion at the point of the sword’, was the explanation of Islam’s amazing triumph in the glorious morning of its history.

“It was not the Muslims that had made Islam great: it was Islam that had made the Muslims great.”³³

Allah speaks in the Qur’an not only of the expected ‘spiritual’ matters, but also of the very ‘trivial’ parts of everyday life, since the purpose of Islam was never reduced to purely theological teachings or rituals, but rather a programme of personal and social behaviour *based on* the consciousness of God. The whole of life was to be made sacred, and the way we treat one another was to be of great importance within that we are told:

“O you who believe! Let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that they (that are laughed at) are better than those (who laugh); nor let some women (laugh) at others: it may be that they (that

³² Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by at-Tirmidhi, v. 5 p.123

³³ Leopold Weiss, *The Road to Mecca*, pp. 190-193. Quotations from the Qur’an and sayings of the Prophet reworded based on the originals.

are laughed at) are better than those (who laugh). Nor speak hurtfully to each other, nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness (to be used of one) after he has believed³⁴: and those who do not desist are indeed wrongdoers.

“O you who believe! Avoid suspicion (of each other) much: indeed, suspicion in some cases is a sin. And spy not (on each other), nor let some of you speak ill of others behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?³⁵ Nay, you would abhor it! And fear Allah; truly, Allah is Oft-Returning, most Merciful.”³⁶

All men and women had been created with a single purpose, and nothing other than this is to determine their rank:

“O mankind! Verily We created you from a single (pair of) male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another: truly the most honourable of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-conscious of you. Truly, Allah is all-Knowing, well Aware.”³⁷

And so over fourteen centuries ago, in a world steeped in racism, sexual prejudice and bigotry, among a society who for centuries had been nurtured on a cruel caste system of self-glory and loathing disdain for others, Islam announced that all men were born equal and none was to bow before any but God. The Messenger of God put it so eloquently at the time of his farewell sermon:

³⁴ Another possible translation is: ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness (to be used by one) after having believed.

³⁵ Eating one's brother's flesh is revolting enough, but to think of doing it of one dead for some time and starting to rot is even more repulsive. Speaking ill of one's brother in faith, or even humanity, when he is unable to defend himself is similarly so much worse than hurting a person's feelings to his face.

³⁶ Qur'an 49:11-12

³⁷ Qur'an 49:13

“O people hear well! Truly your Lord is one and truly your father is one. Know that no Arab has superiority over any non-Arab, nor does any non-Arab have superiority over any Arab; neither does the white man hold any status over the black man, nor does the black man hold any status over the white man, except by piety.”³⁸

High and low in a social sense were non-existent, as was the concept of class, for “all men are from Adam, and Adam was made from dust.”³⁹ This was to be demonstrated five times a day when man bowed shoulder to shoulder with his fellow brother, and king and slave knelt side by side before God. Perhaps the most moving portrayal of the brotherhood forged by Islam between people of all colours is witnessed in the annual Hajj pilgrimage at Makkah:

“Never have I witnessed such sincere hospitality and the overwhelming spirit of true brotherhood as is practiced by people of all colors and races here in this ancient Holy Land, the House of Abraham, Muhammad, and all the other Prophets of the Holy Scriptures. For the past week, I have been utterly speechless and spellbound by the graciousness I see displayed all around me by people of *all colors* . . .

“There were tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blonds to black-skinned Africans. But we all participated in the same ritual, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experiences in America had led me to believe never could exist between the white and the non-white.

“America needs to understand Islam, because this is the one religion that erases from its society the race problem. Throughout my travels in the Muslim world, I have met, talked to, and eaten with

³⁸ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by Ahmad, v. 5, p. 411

³⁹ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) , at-Tirmidhi, v. 5, p. 735

people who in America would have been considered 'white' – but the 'white' attitude was removed from their minds by the religion of Islam. I have never before seen *sincere* and *true* brotherhood practiced by all colors together, irrespective of their color...

"During the past eleven days here in the Muslim world, I have eaten from the same plate, drunk from the same glass, and slept in the same bed (or on the same rug) – while praying to the *same God* – with fellow Muslims, whose eyes were the bluest of blue, whose hair was the blondest of blond, and whose skin was the whitest of white. And in the *words* and in the *actions* and in the *deeds* of the 'white' Muslims, I felt the same sincerity that I felt among the black African Muslims of Nigeria, Sudan, and Ghana....

"I could see from this, that perhaps if white America could accept the Oneness of God, then perhaps, too, they could accept *in reality* the Oneness of Man..."⁴⁰

What else could be expected of a faith that taught all believers are brothers, and "none of you can have faith until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself"⁴¹?

"No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavours so many and so various races of mankind... Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition."⁴²

⁴⁰ The Autobiography of Malcolm X with the assistance of Alex Haley, pp. 454-455

⁴¹ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), al-Bukhari, v. 1, p. 14

⁴² H.A.R. Gibb, *Whither Islam*, London, 1932, p. 379

3) It should not attribute to God anything which goes against His absoluteness.

Islam re-introduced man to the vastness of the Reality that is God, and re-asserted His purity. While rejecting all ideas of anthropomorphism, or projecting onto God the image of human beings (or anything else created, for that matter), Islam like all true religions before it taught that God, High in grandeur and majesty, could not be grasped by any mind, but could be reached out to by every heart. Intimately near to His creation, He nonetheless supremely transcends all the limitations of the created, above all blemishes and flaws. Islam destroyed false idols and fabricated deities and restored man to the recognition of the One, Supreme Creator and Cherisher of all existence with the simple words, 'there is no god but Allah.'

"'I believe in One God and Mahomet [sic] the Apostle of God,' is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol..."⁴³

The Creator of all things and their laws, He is bound by no laws. He "feeds, but is not fed"⁴⁴, He creates but does not need to rest. The Verse of the Throne demonstrates beautifully His magnificence:

"Allah, there is no god but He, the Living, Self-subsisting. Neither slumber seizes Him nor sleep. His are all things in the heavens and the earth. Who is there that can intercede in His presence except as He permits? He knows what (appears to His creatures as) before or after (or behind) them, while they shall compass nothing of His knowledge except as He wills. His Throne does extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them, and He is the Most High, the Supreme."⁴⁵

⁴³ Edward Gibbon and Simon Ocklay, *History of the Saracen Empire*, London, 1870, p. 54

⁴⁴ Qur'an 6:14

⁴⁵ Qur'an 2:225

God embraces all things with His Power, His Knowledge and His Glory. He encompasses the minutest detail of the finest of things, even those that are invisible to all else, like vision itself. "Vision cannot grasp Him, and He grasps (even) vision, and He is the infinitely Subtle, fully Aware."⁴⁶

Mighty and Just, He is also Merciful and Compassionate: "With My punishment I visit whom I will; but my Mercy does extend to all things..."⁴⁷ He is the Absolute, the Perfect, the One from whom all goodness and beauty emanate.

"And We shall set up Scales of Justice for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul will be wronged in the least; even if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forward (for reckoning): and sufficient are We for taking account."⁴⁸

"All that is in the heavens and the earth hymns the praises and glory of Allah; the Sovereign, the Holy, the Exalted in Might, the Wise."⁴⁹

Words cannot suffice in describing His boundless Being; indeed, the finite always remains infinitely short of reaching the Infinite.

"Say: 'If the ocean were ink for (writing out) the words of my Lord, sooner would the ocean be exhausted than would the words of my Lord end, even if we were to replenish it with more of its like.'"⁵⁰

And so the bottom line in dealing with God is simply that "there is nothing like unto Him"⁵¹, and so there can also be "nothing that is comparable to Him".⁵²

⁴⁶ Qur'an 6:103

⁴⁸ Qur'an 21:47

⁵⁰ Qur'an 18:109

⁵² Qur'an 112:14

⁴⁷ Qur'an 7:156

⁴⁹ Qur'an 62:2

⁵¹ Qur'an 42:11

4) It should not attribute to any created being godhood or divinity, or anything which is exclusive to God.

5) At no point should it teach that anybody or thing other than Him be worshipped as well as, or instead of, the One True God.

In declaring none but God has the right to be worshipped, Islam said very clearly that everything else apart from Him, the Magnificent, is low and humble in comparison to Him, however great it may seem to others. Since He is the Source of all existence, there is also “no power or might except with God.”⁵³ Nothing has the power to bring about good or cause harm except God; the properties of all things are from Him alone.

“Young man, I shall teach you some words (of advice): Be mindful of Allah and He will protect you. Be mindful of Allah and you will find Him in front of you. When you ask, ask Allah; when you seek help, seek help of Allah. And know that if the Nation were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would not benefit you except with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and that if they gathered together to harm you with anything, they would not harm you except with something that Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried.”⁵⁴

“O mankind! Here is set forth a parable – listen to it well! Those on whom you call besides God could never create a (mere) fly, even if they were to assemble together for the purpose! And if the fly should snatch away something from them, they would have no power to release it from the fly. Feeble is the seeker (of anything from such a ‘god’) and (feeble) the one who is sought!”⁵⁵

⁵³ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), related by al-Bukhari, v. 1, p. 222

⁵⁴ Saying of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) related by at-Tirmidhi, v. 4, p. 667

⁵⁵ Qur’an 22:73

As the completion and fulfilment of a long line of Semitic, prophetic religious traditions that share an uncompromising monotheism, Muslims, like Christians and Jews, are the Children of Abraham, since all trace their communities back to him. Islam came to re-establish the completeness of monotheism so staunchly preached by Abraham and all true messengers before and since him, peace and blessings of God be upon them all. Later communities of the previous messengers had lost the essential purity of the message of the Oneness of God by going to extremes in adulating men of God until they were elevated to being gods. The Qur'an rectified this in very clear terms and showed that this was against everything these devoted servants of God had stood for:

“Truly they have disbelieved who say: ‘God is Christ the son of Mary.’ But Christ said, ‘O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord...’”⁵⁶

Compare this with what Jesus says in the Bible: “The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel; the Lord our God is One Lord.”⁵⁷

The Qur'an goes on to say:

“Christ the son of Mary was but a messenger; many were the messengers that passed before him. His mother was a woman of truth. They both used to eat food. See how plainly We explain for them the signs...

“Will you worship instead of God something which has no power to harm you or benefit you? And God is the all-Hearing, all-Knowing.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Qur'an 5:75

⁵⁷ Mark xi. 25

⁵⁸ Qur'an 5:78-79

Indeed, all who were sent by God had only one call: towards God:

“It befits not a man that God should give him the Book and wisdom and apostleship that he should then say to people: ‘Be you worshippers of me rather than God!’ On the contrary, (he would say): ‘Be you people of the Lord...’”⁵⁹

Careful to ensure the followers of the last revelation would not make the same mistake, God makes it repeatedly clear that “Muhammad is but a messenger,”⁶⁰ and that he was, “a man like yourselves, though the recipient of divine revelation.”⁶¹

“Say: ‘I do not own (even) for myself (the power to) benefit or harm, except as God wills. And if I had knowledge of the unseen, I should have had a great deal of good, and no evil should ever have touched me: I am but a warner, and bringer of glad tidings to those who have faith.’”⁶²

The Messenger of God was anxious to make certain that there was no mistake after he left this world: “Do not exaggerate in venerating me as the Christians exaggerated in venerating Jesus son of Mary, but say you: ‘(Muhammad was) the slave of Allah, and His Messenger.’”⁶³

“‘I believe in One God and Mahomet [sic] the Apostle of God,’ is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honours of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and

⁵⁹ Qur’an 3: 9

⁶⁰ Qur’an 3:144

⁶¹ Qur’an 18:110

⁶² Qur’an 7: 188

⁶³ Related by al-Bukhari, v. 6, p. 2505

his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.”⁶⁴

This lesson had been learnt thoroughly by the followers of Muhammad (PBUH):

“At Muhammad's own death an attempt was made to deify him, but the man who was to become his administrative successor killed the hysteria with one of the noblest speeches in religious history: ‘Hear well! If any had worshipped Muhammad, let him know that Muhammad is dead and no more; but if it be God that you worship, then know that truly God lives and never dies.’”⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Edward Gibbon and Simon Ockley, *History of the Saracen Empire*, London, 1870, p. 54

⁶⁵ James A. Michener, *Islam: The Misunderstood Religion*, in *Reader's Digest* (American edition), May 1955, p. 70; I have reworded the quotation of Muhammad's successor, Abu Bakr, according to the original as related by al-Bukhari, v. 3, p. 1341.

6) The person who claims to have received this revelation from God and has to convey it to others must be someone who is known to be upright and truthful.

The person of the last messenger of God Muhammad (PBUH), like all of his brother messengers before him, was the embodiment of virtue, righteousness, fear of God and humility. He lived for forty years among his people in Makkah before revelation was sent to him being known as an honourable man from an honourable ancestry. He was from the Banu Hashim tribe of Quraysh, who traced their lineage back to Abraham through his firstborn, Ishmael. God had made His covenant with Abraham and his seed and promised to make them a “great nation.”⁶⁶ So honest was his reputation that he was known among his tribesmen as *as-Sadiq*, the Truthful, and *al-Ameen*, the Trustworthy. He was a man sensitive to wrong and injustice, and a society built around the worship of idols and the cruelty of man towards fellow man pained him. He would often retreat to a cave in a nearby mount to pray and meditate in solitude, searching for light and truth, and it was while he was thus engaged one night that a brilliant light illuminated the cave, and he found, standing before him, an angel.

“Read!” commanded the angel,

“And Muhammad, who, like most of the people of his environment, had never learnt to read and, above all, did not know what it was he was expected to read, answered: ‘I cannot read.’ Whereupon the angel took him and pressed him to himself so that Muhammad felt all strength leave him; then he released him and repeated his command: ‘Read!’ and again Muhammad replied: ‘I cannot read.’ Then the angel pressed him again until he became limp and he thought he would die; and once more came the thundering voice: ‘Read!’ and when, for the third time, Muhammad whispered in his anguish, ‘I cannot read...’ the angel released him and spoke:

⁶⁶ Cf. Genesis. 17

*Read in the name of thy Sustainer, Who created
– created man from a germ-cell!
Read, and thy Sustainer is the most bountiful:
He who taught the use of the pen,
Taught man what he knew not...⁶⁷*

And thus, with an allusion to man's consciousness, intellect and knowledge, began the revelation of the Koran...⁶⁸

These were the first verses of the Qur'an. For the next twenty-three years of his life, the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) was to face an unending struggle in his mission of conveying to people the guidance of the heavens that had once more come to earth. Those that had always known him as a man of truth now cursed him as a liar; those that had always respected his judgement now called him a madman; those that knew his uprightness and decency now claimed he was a dark magician. He was turned out of his hometown by his own tribesmen, and those that had believed in him – largely the poor and weak – were persecuted and killed. But in the end truth always prevails in the battle against falsehood; the darkest of nights has to make way for the piercing light of dawn, and no amount of brute force could stop the message of truth striking a chord in the hearts of people. The Prophet's cousin, Ja`far ibn Abi Talib, told the King of Abyssinia what it was that the Prophet called towards when he was asked about the faith preached by Muhammad:

“O King, we were a people steeped in ignorance. We would worship idols, eat unsanctified dead animals, commit shameful deeds, break ties of kinship and disregard the rights of neighbours. The strong among us would devour the weak. Thus we were, until God sent us a Messenger from out of our midst, one whose lineage we knew, and his honesty, his trustworthiness and his purity. He called us unto God, that we should testify to His Oneness and worship Him and renounce what

⁶⁷ Qur'an 96:1-5

⁶⁸ Leopold Weiss, *The Road to Mecca*, p. 287

we and our fathers had worshipped in the way of stones and idols; and he commanded us to speak truthfully, to fulfil our promises, to respect the ties of kinship and the rights of our neighbours, and to refrain from the unlawful and from bloodshed. He forbade us from committing shameful deeds, giving false testimony, devouring the property of the orphan and slandering the chaste woman. He commanded us to worship God alone, setting none along with Him, and he commanded us to pray and give alms and to fast... So we accepted him as true and believed in him and followed him in what he brought to us and so worshipped God alone, setting none along with Him, counting as forbidden what He has forbidden and as permissible what He has allowed. For these reasons have our people turned against us, and have persecuted us to make us forsake our religion and revert from the worship of God to the worship of idols..."⁶⁹

When the Quraysh realised that their efforts to stop the spread of the Prophet's call by force were unsuccessful, they appealed to his uncle, Abu Talib, to persuade him to leave his mission or suffer the hostility of the whole clan. Abu Talib had never embraced Islam, but his love for his nephew had made him a supporter of the Prophet, which offered the Prophet some protection as he was an elder of the Quraysh. When that also failed, they tried to seduce him by offering to make him their king, the wealthiest man amongst them and to marry him to the most beautiful of their daughters if only he would leave this call of his which had split their community into two and threatened the authority of their elite. The Messenger of God (PBUH), however, was unmoving:

"If they were to place the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left (to force me from leaving my mission), I would still not leave it until either I had discharged my duty or perished in its path."⁷⁰

The Messenger died at the age of sixty-three, having served his mission

⁶⁹ Musnad Ahmad, v. 1, p. 202

⁷⁰ Dala'il an-Nubuwwah, al-Asbahani, v. 1, p. 197

of calling people towards the Oneness of God and doing good and abstaining from evil for twenty-three years. In that short span, the whole of Arabia had bowed before the purity of his call and the warring tribes of the desert had become united in the brotherhood of Islam. And yet he left the world without the pomp and glory of kings or the wealth of rulers; he left as humbly as he had lived, a man who had said,

“I wish to eat to my fill one day and remain hungry another, that I may implore You with humility when I am hungry and remember you, and thank You when I am full and praise You.”⁷¹

“He was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without Pope's pretensions, Caesar without the legions of Caesar: without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue; *if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammed*, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports.”⁷²

“I doubt whether any man whose external conditions changed so much ever changed himself less to meet them.”⁷³

“The day of Mohammad's greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his grandest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Koraysh [sic] all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn in which they had afflicted him and gave an amnesty to the whole population of Mekka... The army followed his example, and entered quietly and peacefully: no house was robbed, no woman insulted... Through all the annals of conquest there is no triumphant entry comparable to this one.”⁷⁴

These two aspects of him – his sincerity and his success – are among the greatest proofs of his bearing the apostleship of God.

⁷¹ Related by at-Tirmidhi, v. 4, p. 575

⁷² Reverend Bosworth Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, London, 1874, p. 92. Italics mine.

⁷³ R. V. C. Bodley, *The Messenger*, London 1946, p.9

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Liar or Madman?

They called him a liar, but a liar's only aim is to achieve some worldly benefit, and Muhammad, like all messengers before him, had accepted no return for his services from people and chosen a life of rugged simplicity and devotion to God until the very end. He had always been known for his scrupulous honesty, before Islam and after. On the day his beloved son Ibrahim died there was an eclipse. The people were quick to conclude that this was a sign of the Prophet's status that even the sun shared in his sorrow and that God had expressed His personal condolence. This was an ideal opportunity to exploit if he had been a liar and to strengthen the people's faith in him. Instead, the Messenger summoned the people and declared, "The Sun and the Moon are signs from the signs of God. They do not eclipse for the death of anyone or for his birth."⁷⁵

And what liar seeking self-glory would compose verses to be regarded as God's that admonished him? Once while the Messenger was engaged in speaking to some of the leaders of Quraysh, leaders whose conversion would have meant a great deal to Islam and the Muslims in those early days, a blind believer, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktoom, approached the Prophet and, not aware of his preoccupation, began asking him to teach him something of his religion. Ibn Umm Maktoom was considered among the low and undignified in pre-Islamic Makkah, and the tribal leaders began turning their noses up at his approach. The Messenger, sensing the loss of what had seemed a promising opportunity, frowned. While the blind companion probably hadn't even noticed what the Prophet's reaction had been to him, God Almighty decided this was not becoming of His Messenger and accordingly sent down revelation:

(Continued from page 40)⁷⁴ Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Speeches and Table-Talk of the Prophet Mohammad*, London 1882, Introduction, pp. 46,47
(Current page)⁷⁵ Related by al-Bukhari, v. 1, p. 360

“He frowned and turned away, that the blind man had come to him, yet what could tell you that he might have (by your attending to him) increased in purity? Or that he might have received admonition, and the teaching may have profited him? ... Nay (let it not be so) for it is a Message of instruction: let whoso will (learn it and) remember it...”⁷⁶

It is related that whenever the Prophet would see the blind companion after that, he would greet him with the words, “Welcome, welcome, to the one my Lord has reprimanded me for!”⁷⁷

Anyone who studies his life truthfully has to accept that it was not the life of a con-artist, or a calculating liar, but the life of an utterly sincere man who believed intensely in his call, a man of virtue and faith.

“His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad.”⁷⁸

“A mass of detail in the early sources shows that he was an honest and upright man who had gained the respect and loyalty of others who were like-wise honest and upright men.”⁷⁹

“I wanted to know the best of one who holds today undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind...I became more than convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regard for his pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his

⁷⁶ Qur'an 80:1-12

⁷⁷ Related by al-Firdaus, v. 4, p. 164

⁷⁸ W. M. Watt, *Mohammad at Mecca*, Oxford, 1953, p. 52.

⁷⁹ *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, v. 12

fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle.”⁸⁰

“It goes greatly against the impostor theory, the fact that he lived in this entirely unexceptionable, entirely quiet and common place way, till the heat of his years was done. He was forty before he talked of any mission from heaven... All his ‘ambition,’ seemingly, had been, hitherto, to live an honest life; his ‘fame,’ the mere good opinion of neighbours that knew him...”⁸¹

Then they called him a madman. Since it was too clear that this man believed firmly in what he called others towards and was prepared to sacrifice everything for it, it was too obvious that he wasn’t a liar. So those that would not accept his call said he must have been sincere but deluded, insane. Yet the clarity of his call, the simple straightforwardness and plain commonsense that he preached, as well as the unparalleled success of his mission, all belie the work of a madman. In fact, this is how a leading US Jewish psychoanalyst evaluated him:

“Leaders must fulfil three functions – provide for the well-being of the led, provide a social organization in which people feel relatively secure, and provide them with one set of beliefs. People like Pasteur and Salk are leaders in the first sense. People like Gandhi and Confucius, on one hand, and Alexander, Caesar and Hitler on the other, are leaders in the second and perhaps the third sense. Jesus and Buddha belong in the third category alone. Perhaps the greatest leader of all times was Mohammed, who combined all three functions. To a lesser degree Moses did the same.”⁸²

And he wasn’t the only one to think that:

⁸⁰ Mahatma Gandhi speaking on the character of Muhammad in *Young India*.

⁸¹ Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, 8th May, 1840, p. 70

⁸² Professor Jules Masserman, quoted in *TIME* magazine, July 15, 1974.

“Mohammed was the most successful of all religious personalities.”⁸³

“My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level.”⁸⁴

“By a fortune absolutely unique in history, Mohammed is a threefold founder of a nation, of an empire, and of a religion.”⁸⁵

“If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, *who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhammad?* The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples, and dynasties, but millions of men in one-third of the then inhabited world; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and souls...his forbearance in victory, his ambition, which was entirely devoted to one idea and in no manner striving for an empire; his endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death; all these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was two-fold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not; the one overthrowing false gods with the sword, the other starting an idea with the words.

“Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images, the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. *As regards all the standards by which Human Greatness*

⁸³ Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition

⁸⁴ Michael H. Hart, *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History*, p. 33

⁸⁵ Reverend Bosworth-Smith, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*, 1874

may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?"⁸⁶

"Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born in Mecca, in Arabia, the man who, of all men, has exercised *the greatest influence upon the human race...* Mohammed."⁸⁷

This, then, was the man who brought the Message. It was a clear call to the human conscience brought by one who was both undeniably sincere and undeniably sane. What that means therefore is that he had to be undeniably true in what he brought. He was the Messenger of God sent to humanity with the same call that all messengers before him had brought.

People who close themselves to the truth, and decide even before viewing the evidence that they aren't going to accept it often end up having to run in circles to try to avoid facing the truth. Dealing with Muhammad for those not prepared to accept that he was the Messenger of God is a good example of this:

"On one hand, there exists a large group of people who have researched the Qur'an for hundreds of years and who claim, 'One thing we know for sure - that man, Muhammad thought he was a prophet. He was crazy!' They are convinced that Muhammad was fooled somehow. Then on the other hand, there is a group which alleges, 'Because of this evidence, one thing we know for sure is that that man, Muhammad was a liar!' ...

"In fact, many references to Islam usually claim both theories. They start out by stating that Muhammad was crazy and then end by saying he was a liar. They never seem to realize that he could not have been both! For example, if one is deluded and really thinks that he is a prophet, then he does not sit up late at night planning, 'How will I fool the people tomorrow so that they think I am a prophet?' He truly

⁸⁶ Lamartine, *Historie de la Turquie*, Paris, 1854, Vol. i, pp. 276-277. Italics mine.

⁸⁷ John W. Draper, *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe*, London 1875. Italics mine.

believes that he is a prophet, and he trusts that the answer will be given to him by revelation.

“As a matter of fact, a great deal of the Qur'an came in answer to questions. Someone would ask Muhammad a question, and the revelation would come with the answer to it. Certainly, if one is crazy and believes that an angel put words in his ear, then when someone asks him a question, he thinks that the angel will give him the answer. Because he is crazy, he really thinks that. He does not tell someone to wait a short while and then run to his friends and ask them, ‘Does anyone know the answer?’ This type of behavior is characteristic of one who does not believe that he is a prophet. What the non-Muslims refuse to accept is that you cannot have it both ways. One can be deluded, or he can be a liar. He can be either one or neither one, but he certainly cannot be both! The emphasis is on the fact that they are unquestionably mutually exclusive personality traits...”⁸⁸

To try to escape this dilemma, some will go as far as saying that he must have been possessed by a devil, hence the obvious sincerity plus the otherwise unattainable information, without having to be true! Except for one oversight: the very Book that he brought commands us to invoke God's protection from the accursed Devil before reading it!⁸⁹ (Not to mention that it enjoins every form of goodness and prohibits every type of indecency...)

As with all great messengers before him, people whose hearts have become hardened with following their desires in this world went to great lengths to denounce the Messenger so that they would not have to accept the Message, for to accept the Message would mean giving up the temporary but seductive pleasures of a Godless life. And as looking at his life without bias forces one to accept he was indeed the Messenger of God, people went to great lengths to fabricate lies against his name. Honest historians of the West have had to admit:

⁸⁸ Gary Miller, *The Amazing Qur'an*, p. 6

⁸⁹ Qur'an 16:98

“The lies, which well-meaning zeal has heaped round this man, are disgraceful to ourselves only.”⁹⁰

“Of all the world’s greatest men none has been so much maligned as Muhammad.”⁹¹

“Biographies of Mohammed by Christians describe the Prophet’s sex life in a manner that reveals far more about their own sexual problems than about the facts of the Prophet’s life.”⁹²

“[The] West formed a more or less invariable canon of beliefs about Islam; it decided for itself what Islam was, and formed a view materially different from anything Muslims would recognise... The important thing was it suited the West. It corresponded to need... it gave Christendom self-respect in dealing with a civilisation in many ways its superior.”⁹³

“For centuries Christianity treated Islam as its worst enemy. And although Europeans today look at Islam and its founder in a somewhat more objective light, many ancient prejudices still remain.”⁹⁴

“...and it was then [during the Crusades] that the name of the Prophet Muhammad – the same Muhammad who had insisted that his own followers respect the prophets of other religions – was contemptuously transformed by Europeans into ‘Mahound’.”⁹⁵

However, God had already decided that the Truth was to triumph over Falsehood, and no amount of lies could stop those who sincerely sought the truth from finding it. As He proclaimed in the Qur’an:

⁹⁰ Thomas Carlyle, *Heroes and Hero-Worship*, 8th May, 1840

⁹¹ W. Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Medina*, 1956

⁹² Karen Armstrong, *Holy War: The Crusades and their Impact on Today's World*, 1992

⁹³ Norman A. Daniel, *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, p. 270

⁹⁴ Roger DuPasquier, *Unveiling Islam*, p. 47

⁹⁵ Leopold Weiss, *The Road to Mecca*, p. 7

“They wish to put out the Light of God with their mouths, while God refuses but to complete His Light, even though the disbelievers may detest (it); it is He who has sent His Messenger with Guidance and the Religion of Truth to proclaim it over all religion, even though the idolaters may detest (it).”⁹⁶

He was the Messenger of God sent to humanity with the same call that all messengers before him had brought, living a life which the Qur’an attested to in the words:

“And truly you are upon a magnificent standard of character.”⁹⁷

To the people of faith God said:

“There is indeed for you in the Messenger of Allah a most beautiful example, for him who would place hope in God and the Last Day and remembers God much.”⁹⁸

This is what every person who looks at the example of Muhammad with a sincere and honest heart must conclude, for as God is beautiful, it is with beauty that He guides His servants, men and women.

“Muhammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him.”⁹⁹

“It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Qur’an 9: 32

⁹⁷ Qur’an 68:4

⁹⁸ Qur’an 33:21

⁹⁹ Diwan Chand Sharma, *The Prophets of the East*, Calcutta 1935, p. 122

¹⁰⁰ Annie Besant, *The Life and Teachings of Muhammad*, Madras, 1932, p. 4

“I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him - the wonderful man and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.”¹⁰¹

“The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes! There is Muhammad, the Prophet. There is Muhammad, the Warrior; Muhammad, the Businessman; Muhammad, the Statesman; Muhammad, the Orator; Muhammad, the Reformer; Muhammad, the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad, the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad, the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad, the Judge; Muhammad, the Saint. All in all these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is alike a hero.”¹⁰²

This, friends, is how the honest world has spoken of Muhammad, whose very name means ‘the much-praised,’ a prophesy in itself of how he was to be remembered. Indeed, God promised that Muhammad would enjoy an exalted position when He said to him:

“And We have raised high for you your mention.”¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ G.B. Shaw, *The Genuine Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 81936

¹⁰² K. S. Ramakrishna Rao, Professor of Philosophy, *Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam*.

¹⁰³ Qur’an 94:4

7) The revelation must be free of mistakes and contradictions.

Most religions hold that faith is to believe in the unbelievable, and so the idea of questioning a religion to ascertain its truthfulness is completely out of the question. Religion in many parts of the world was and still is considered an ‘incomprehensible mystery’ – meaning that it doesn’t make any rational sense, and so using the intellect to question any part of it is considered sacrilegious. Indeed, for many centuries people of science were tortured and put to death in England and other parts of Europe for being so sacrilegious as to discover that the natural world isn’t literally how the Bible describes it!

The Qur’an, however, actually encouraged using the intellect to religion right from the start, well-confident in the knowledge that the intelligence of the whole of creation together is not even a speck compared to the wisdom and knowledge of the Creator and so poses no threat whatsoever to His Word. And since He is the Creator and Controller of everything, how can it be possible that God could make mistakes about anything? “Does He not know, He who created (all things)? He is the most finely Aware (of all things)!”¹⁰⁴ Doesn’t it seem absurd that God would punish anyone for refusing to believe things which are unacceptable and incomprehensible to the very faculties of reason and common sense that He has given us? Actually, the Qur’an *demands* we think, reason and reflect, saying again and again that in it are “signs for those who think,”¹⁰⁵ and that only those who do utilise these God-given faculties can achieve true faith: “No soul can believe except by the permission of God, and He places a smear on those who do not think,”¹⁰⁶ and declaring that “the worst of beasts in the sight of God are the deaf, dumb ones who do not think!”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Qur’an 67:14

¹⁰⁶ Qur’an 10:100

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Qur’an 13:4 & 16:12 and footnotes 18-21

¹⁰⁷ Qur’an 8:22

So the Qur'an goes so far as to invite us to check for any inconsistencies, contradictions or mistakes in it saying, "Do they not consider the Qur'an with thoroughness? Had it been from other than God, they would surely have found in it much discrepancy!"¹⁰⁸

This is such a bold statement to make for a book which has so many enemies already scrutinising it very critically, just waiting for something to pounce on! In the words of Gary Miller, a former Christian missionary,

"The seriousness and difficulty of the challenge aside, the actual presentation of such a challenge in the first place is not even in human nature... One doesn't take an exam... [and] write a note to the instructor at the end saying, "This exam is perfect. There are no mistakes in it. Find one if you can!" One just doesn't do that. The teacher would not sleep until he found a mistake!"¹⁰⁹

And so did the Makkan idol-worshippers try their utmost to find a mistake too. The Qur'an itself mentions one pathetic attempt of theirs:

"And when the son of Mary is held up as an example, behold! Your people raise a clamour!"¹¹⁰

What had happened is God revealed a verse saying to the worshippers of idols, "Truly you and those you worship other than God are (to be) the fuel of Hell; to it have you to come!"¹¹¹ At this the idolaters thought they could prove an inconsistency in the Qur'an: if all false gods are to go to Hell along with their worshippers, surely that had to include Jesus son of Mary too, someone the Qur'an had mentioned as an honourable messenger! Their argument, however, missed one slight detail: God had already made His decree about the righteous: "Truly those for whom goodness had already been decided by Us, they will

¹⁰⁸ Qur'an 4:82

¹¹⁰ Qur'an 43:57

¹⁰⁹ Gary Miller, *The Amazing Qur'an*, p. 3

¹¹¹ Qur'an 21:98

be removed far from Hell.”¹¹² So much for their attempt, then:

“They hold (Jesus) up (as an example) only by way of disputation: they are indeed an argumentative people!”¹¹³

Fourteen hundred years of such attempts haven’t been any better either. One recent example: some people try to show the Qur’an is not consistent in the number of Days God is supposed to have created the heavens and the earth in. While there is repeated mention of doing it all in six Days¹¹³ like in the Old Testament, chapter 41 says:

“Say: Do you really deny the One who created the earth in two days?... And He set on the (earth) mountains standing firm High above it... in four Days... Moreover, He turned towards the sky while it was (yet) smoke... and completed them as seven heavens in two days...”¹¹⁵

The contention is if you add up all the different numbers of Days (2+4+2), you get eight, not six. Looking a little closer, though, reveals not only how short-sighted this argument is, but that these verses actually agree beautifully with what we now know of the formation of the earth: that the mountains did not land on it after the rest of it had been fully formed, but their development ran parallel to the formation of the earth. As an added detail, the mountains continued developing after the rest of the world was fully formed because of the further movement of the earth’s plates. So, the mountains took “four Days” to develop including the initial “two Days” of the earth’s formation as a planet, not excluding them. Another really fascinating thing highlighted by this verse is the existence of “smoke” at an early stage of the Universe, meaning the predominantly gaseous state of the material that composes it, which corresponds perfectly to the concept of the primary nebula put forward by modern science.

¹¹² Qur’an 21:101

¹¹³ Qur’an 43:58

¹¹⁴ Cf. 7:54. The Days are not taken literally as in the Bible (Cf. Genesis i. and i. 1-7), as the Qur’an tells us of the Relativity of Time long before Einstein: in 22:47 and in 70:4 one day with God is said to be 1,000 or 50,000 of our years. Therefore commentators have insisted that what is referred to is six periods of time.

¹¹⁵ Qur’an 41:9-12

Not only is the Qur'an free of contradictions within itself, it has also declared that it will never be found to be in disagreement with any discovered knowledge, though it may have been unknown to man at the time of the Qur'an's revelation. God says of His final revelation:

“No falsehood can approach it from before it or after it: it is sent down by One full of wisdom, Worthy of all praise.”¹¹⁶

We will look in the following chapter at the exactness with which the Qur'an has discussed certain scientific areas which have only been discovered by modern science extremely recently. Here, we will look at some final examples of how pure the Qur'an is of contradictions.

Haman

The Qur'an speaks of a man called Haman along with the Pharaoh of the time of Moses in six different places. From the descriptions of him and his relationship with the Pharaoh in the Qur'an, we get the impression he was a very close advisor or minister of the Pharaoh. However, there is no mention of a Haman in the Bible in relationship to Pharaoh, though there is mention in the book of Esther of the Old Testament of a Haman who was the prime minister of a Persian king around 1100 years after the time of Moses.¹¹⁷

For a long time the Qur'an's mention of Haman alongside Pharaoh was therefore attacked by critics of Islam as an example of Muhammad's borrowing from the Bible and muddling names up – Haman was said to be a Babylonian name, not Egyptian. In 1906, however, an amazing discovery was made. By decoding hieroglyph inscriptions in an Egyptian monument in the Hof Museum in Vienna, the name Haman was found for the first time in Egyptian writings. Not only that, but the

¹¹⁶ Qur'an 41:42

¹¹⁷ See Book of Esther, chapter 3

inscription also indicated a very close relationship between Haman and Pharaoh.¹¹⁸ In the dictionary of *People in the New Kingdom* that was prepared based on the entire collection of inscriptions, Haman was said to be “the head of stone quarry workers”.¹¹⁹ Compare that to what the Qur’an had said of him:

“And Pharaoh said, ‘O Council, no god do I know for you apart from myself, so light for me, O Haman, a fire over clay (to bake bricks) and build me a lofty tower so that I may perhaps be able to climb up to the god of Moses – and truly I consider him a liar!’”¹²⁰

The Pharaoh of the Exodus

While the Bible and the Qur’an both mention the delivery of Moses and the Israelites from Pharaoh, there are some crucial differences between the two. The Bible does not mention specifically that the Pharaoh was drowned, as the following commentary shows:

“The Koran refers to this (Pharaoh's death) (sura 10, verses 90-92)... that the Pharaoh who was drowned with his army... is not mentioned in the Holy Text.”¹²¹

The Qur’an, however, not only mentions it but goes on to make a very significant point. God said to Pharaoh as he was drowning:

“This day will We preserve you in your body that you become a sign for those after you.”¹²²

At the time of the revelation of this verse, nothing was known of the whereabouts of the bodies of the Pharaohs. It was not until the end of the Nineteenth century that they were discovered in the tombs of the

¹¹⁸ W. Wreszinski, *Aegyptische Inschriften aus dem K.K. Hof Museum*, 1906

¹¹⁹ H. Ranke, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen, Verzeichnis der Namen*, 1952

¹²⁰ Qur’an 28:38

¹²¹ L'Exode (Exodus), 1968, p. 73,

¹²² Qur’an 10:92

Necropolis of Thebes, on the opposite side of the Nile from Luxor. The mummified body of Merneptah, son of Ramesses II and Pharaoh of the Exodus was discovered by Loret in 1898 at Thebes in the Kings' Valley from where it was transported to Cairo. As the Qur'an states, the body of the Pharaoh of the Exodus was in fact rescued. The French scientist, Dr. Maurice Bucaille, was allowed to examine the bodies in 1975 by the Egyptian authorities. This is what he concluded:

“Those who seek among modern data for proof of the veracity of the Holy Scriptures will find a magnificent illustration of the verses of the Qur'an dealing with the Pharaoh's body by visiting the Royal Mummies Room of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo!”¹²³

Iram

The 89th chapter of the Qur'an, Surah al-Fajr, mentions a certain city:

“Have you not seen how your Lord dealt with 'Aad, of (the city of) Iram, with lofty pillars...?”¹²⁴

Iram was not known at all in ancient history – in fact it was non-existent as far as historians were concerned. However, the December 1978 edition of *National Geographic* introduced interesting information which mentioned that in 1973, the city of Elba was excavated in Syria. The city was discovered to be 43 centuries old, but that is not the most amazing part. Researchers found in the library of Elba a record of all of the cities with which Elba had done business. And there on the list was the name of the city of Iram. The people of Elba had done business with this Iram which, up until then, was thought of as a myth of the Qur'an!

¹²³ Dr. Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'an, and Science*, p. 265

¹²⁴ Qur'an 89:6-7

Noah's Ark

Both the Bible and the Qur'an mention the flood at the time of Noah and Noah's Ark, which was once again put down superficially by critics of Islam as being copied from Christian sources. The Bible mentions that the ark came to rest on the "mountains of Ararat,"¹²⁵ a mountain range which runs along the Far East of Turkey, and includes a particular mountain known also as Ararat. Most Biblical authorities concluded that the ark had rested on this mountain. The Qur'an, on the other hand, mentioned a specific mountain by name:

"And the word went forth: 'O earth! Swallow up your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain)!' And the water abated and the matter was ended and the Ark rested on Judi; and the word went forth: 'Away with those who do wrong!'"¹²⁶

No where in the Bible is there any mention of Mt. Judi. In 1994, a team of archaeologists that had been investigating a remote site containing a buried, ship-like object for over six years released a report. At 170 metres long and 45 metres wide, and resting at an altitude of 2,300 metres was what they believed was Noah's Ark. It had been found on the Turkish-Iranian border, 32 kilometres from Mt. Ararat, *directly below the mountain of al-Judi.*¹²⁷

God concludes the narrative with the words:

"Such are some of the stories of the Unseen which We have revealed unto you: before this neither you nor your people knew them. So persevere patiently: for the end is for those who are righteous."¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Genesis 8:4

¹²⁶ Qur'an 11:44

¹²⁷ Martin Wroe, The Observer (London), January 16, 1994.

¹²⁸ Qur'an 11:49

8) The revelation should contain some sign or proof that it is from God.

The Qur'an is unique among all the books in the world that claim to be from God in that it doesn't expect you to believe it is from God just because it says so, but actually tells you what to do if you want to prove it *isn't* from Him:

“And if you are in doubt in of what We have revealed unto Our slave then bring forward a chapter like it, and call (for your help) your witnesses apart from God if your (doubts) are true. But if you cannot – and of a surety you cannot – then save yourself from the Fire whose fuel is men and stones; it has been prepared for the rejecters of faith.”¹²⁹

What God is saying here is that the Qur'an is beyond the humanly possible – that is, it is miraculous by its very nature. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once said, “There was none amongst the Messengers but had been given a sign upon which people would believe. That which I have been given is Revelation that God has revealed unto me.”¹³⁰ So, what is it about the Qur'an that makes it so amazing and unique that it can't be imitated?

Literary Masterpiece

The Arabs at the time of Muhammad (PBUH) had no great civilization to speak of – no magnificent roads or architecture, no scientific or medical institutions. What they did excel in, though, was their language. The Arabs were a nation of such eloquence that they called the non-Arab world *`Ajamiyy*, meaning dumb. Linguistic grace and

¹²⁹ Qur'an 2:23-24

¹³⁰ Related by al-Bukhari v. 4 p. 1905

splendour flowed through their veins. They were so artistic in speech that they would often argue with each other in poetry. Their rhetoric was powerful and stirring, their expressions were emotive and intense. This was their art.

It has always been God's way to send to a people signs that they could relate to: Moses was sent with his staff before a people who were fascinated by magic; Jesus had the gift of curing lepers and the incurably sick at a time when physicians and their medicine demanded great respect. The Qur'an revealed to Muhammad was of such grandeur and majesty that, momentarily, even the Arabs were speechless. And not only that, but in the verse quoted above and others like it, it told them so. It said to these people who were so proud of their power over language: 'This is better than anything you have ever heard – all of you together cannot match this. You're challenged to prove otherwise.' And not one of them, with all their hostility to the message of this Book and their wish to be able to shut it up once and for all, could meet that challenge. And the challenge still stands today, over fourteen hundred years later, still unanswered.

The Arabs knew poetry and they knew prose, but what they heard in the Qur'an was neither poetry nor prose. How could they meet a challenge to imitate something which, being in their own mother tongue, was virtually foreign to them? They were at a loss as to how to even go about combatting such speech. And to complete their dilemma, the bringer of this unrivalled eloquence was an unlettered, unlearned man, one who had lived for forty years in their midst and never been known to say a single verse of poetry.

"There can be no doubt that the highest and most resplendent degree of eloquence is that which expresses itself with the greatest clarity, making the intention of the speaker evident and facilitating the hearer's understanding. But when it rises beyond this level of

eloquence and transcends what man is capable of, so that none of the servants of God is able to match it, it becomes a proof and a sign for the Messengers of the One, the All-powerful. It is then the counterpart of raising the dead and curing of lepers and the blind, themselves proofs and signs for the Messengers because they transcend the realm of the highest attainment of man's medicine and therapy...

It is obvious that there is no discourse more eloquent, no wisdom more profound, no speech more sublime and no form of expression more noble than this clear discourse and speech with which a single man challenged a people at a time when they were acknowledged masters of the art of oratory and rhetoric, poetry and prose, rhymed prose and soothsaying. He reduced their fancy to folly and demonstrated the inadequacy of their logic. He dissociated himself from their religion and summoned all of them to follow him, accept his mission, testify to its truth, and affirm that he was the Messenger sent to them by their Lord. He let them know that the demonstration of the truth of what he said, the proof of the genuineness of his apostleship, was the clear discourse, the wisdom and the criterion between truth and falsehood which he conveyed to them in a language like their language, in a speech whose meanings conformed to the meanings of their speech. Then he told them that they were incapable of bringing anything comparable to even a part of what he brought, and that they lacked the power to do this. They all confessed their inability, voluntarily acknowledging the truth of what he had brought, and bore witness to their own insufficiency..."¹³¹

History is witness to the impact this message had on the hearts of those who knew its language. The man who was to become one of the Prophet's closest allies, `Umar ibn al-Khattab, had originally set out to kill him in cold blood. It was while he was on his way that he happened to come across the first verses of the twentieth chapter,

¹³¹ Anthony Greene, quoting the Qur'anic Commentary, at-Tabari, Material on the Authenticity of the Qur'an, p. 6

Surah Ta Ha, and it stopped him in his tracks. He then continued to the Messenger, now to become his disciple, not murderer.¹³²

“However often we turn to it [the Qur'an] at first disgusting us each time afresh, it soon attracts, astounds, and in the end enforces our reverence... Its style, in accordance with its contents and aim is stern, grand, terrible – ever and anon truly sublime – Thus this book will go on exercising through all ages a most potent influence.”¹³³

“A work, then, which calls forth so powerful and seemingly incompatible emotions even in the distant reader - distant as to time, and still more so as a mental development- a work which not only conquers the repugnance [with] which he may begin its perusal, but changes this adverse feeling into astonishment and admiration, such a work must be a wonderful production of the human mind indeed and a problem of the highest interest to every thoughtful observer of the destinies of mankind.”¹³⁴

“The Koran admittedly occupies an important position among the great religious books of the world. Though the youngest of the epoch making works belonging to this class of literature, it yields to hardly any in the wonderful effect which it has produced on large masses of men. It has created an all but new phase of human thought and a fresh type of character. It first transformed a number of heterogeneous desert tribes of the Arabian peninsula into a nation of heroes, and then proceeded to create the vast politico-religious organizations of Mohammedan world which are one of the great forces with which Europe and the East have to reckon today.”¹³⁵

¹³² Muhammad b. `Abdul Wahid al-Maqdisi, *Al-Ahadeeth al-Mukhtarah*, v. 7, p. 440

¹³³ Goethe, quoted in T.P. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, p. 526

¹³⁴ Dr. Stienagass, quoted in T.P. Hughes' *Dictionary of Islam*, pp. 526-527

¹³⁵ G. Margoliouth, *Introduction to J.M. Rodwell's The Koran*, 1977, p. vi

Miraculous Preservation

God says in the Qur'an that Muhammad is the Seal (that is, the Last) of the Messengers,¹³⁶ and so the Qur'an is obviously the Last of Divine Messages. This is made all the more clear when we read the verse:

“This day have I perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you My favour, and I am pleased with Islam as your religion.”¹³⁷

And so God undertakes for this, His final revelation, something which He did not take for any earlier revelation: to protect it.

“Verily, it is We Who have sent down this Reminder, and verily, We who will preserve it.”¹³⁸

The precision with which the Qur'an has been preserved and the means for its preservation are both absolutely unique among all Books claiming to be from God. From the very first generation of Islam, the whole Qur'an was memorised by numerous believers in the lifetime of the Prophet (PBUH). This was maintained in the next generation, and the next, and the next... until even today there are literally millions of Muslims who know the whole Qur'an, word for word, in the original Arabic by heart. There are thousands of such people in the West. This is living, walking, talking proof of the promise God made to preserve the Qur'an: you can stop two people who have memorised the Qur'an from two completely different parts of the world and ask them to read from a certain place and both will read completely identically, down to the last letter. Most people who memorise the Qur'an start at a very young age – God has preserved the Qur'an through the medium of young children! No other religious scripture can claim such a thing.

And just to demonstrate the completeness of God's promise, anyone

¹³⁶ Qur'an 33:40

¹³⁷ Qur'an 5:3

¹³⁸ Qur'an 15:9

wishing to go to Tashkent in the former Soviet Union (Uzbekistan) today will find a complete copy of the Qur'an there written by one of the Prophet's own scribes, Zaid ibn Thabit. One can take any copy of the Qur'an from any mosque in the world and compare it with this copy, and find it exactly the same – word for word. Indeed, the fact that the Qur'an was never in the domain of only a few select priests, but from the very beginning has been accessible to, and memorised by, even young children has meant that it has been impossible for the original to become lost or corrupted – it was just too wide-spread and among too many.

Consistency of Message

The Qur'an was revealed over a period of twenty-three years piece by piece to Muhammad (PBUH). Over such a long stretch of time everybody undergoes changes: changes in thought and ideas, in mindset and way of thinking, in attitude and personality. Everyday as we learn new things and gain new and different experiences, our world view is altered in unnoticeably subtle ways. Somebody who knows you now could well meet you in ten years time and find they hardly recognise you, and you them. If that's true for you and me, what about a man whose life went through such tremendous upheaval and unimaginable change as Muhammad (PBUH)? From quiet, respectable family-man to a vocal and ardent preacher, from one held by all in high regard to one persecuted by his own people and cast out from his own hometown, from one who belonged to a strong and noble family to one who is suddenly alone, sought after by his own blood, from one who had many children to one who had to bury everyone of his sons and daughters but one, and then to one who finds himself a Head of State, a man who rallies armies, who signs treaties with tribes and kings, and has diplomatic relationships with Christians

and Jews, who takes on the whole of Arabia, and who re-enters his hometown victorious over those who had made him and his followers suffer for so many years, but enters with humility and peace, the essence of the very call he had given them all those years ago, – could a human being undergo so much and have not changed?

And yet pick up the Book that he was receiving throughout all this time and look at the consistency of its message, the balance always of its arguments and its teachings and laws, the fairness of its statements, and the voice of reason that calls out throughout its many pages and verses and chapters. Is it possible that a man could have been responsible for that?

“Sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read in the Qur'an I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world.”¹³⁹

Prophecies

Everybody is able to predict the future sometimes, some even get it right a lot of the time, but only one who has complete knowledge – or is getting his information from one who has complete knowledge – can get it right every time. And that, of course, is either God or a messenger of God. One of the greatest signs of the apostleship of Muhammad is the abundance of prophecies that he made, many of which came to pass in his own lifetime. The Qur'an is not a book of prophecies but a book of guidance, which is the primary purpose of all Divine revelation. However, being from the All-Knowing whose knowledge is perfect, we find many statements in the Qur'an which were made

¹³⁹ Sarojini Naidu, *Lectures on The Ideals of Islam*, see *Speeches and Writings of Sarojini Naidu*, Madras, 1918, p. 167

regarding future events in extremely clear terms while in the most unlikely circumstances. The confidence and clarity with which these things have been announced and the way they have then come about, often against the heaviest odds, are signs for those who will accept.

Abu Lahab

The Prophet had an uncle by the name of Abu Lahab. This man hated Islam to such an extent that he would follow the Prophet around in order to discredit him. Anyone he saw the Prophet speaking to he would go to and ask him what he had said, and then go about contradicting him. He faithfully said the exact opposite of anything Muhammad would say just to spite him. He was clearly someone who would not leave any stone unturned or let any chance go by to try to prove Muhammad was not who he said he was. From the moment the Prophet summoned all of his clansmen for the first time to deliver the warning he had received from God, Abu Lahab had angrily opposed him saying, "May you have destruction for the rest of your day!" The Qur'an then revealed a small chapter, addressing Abu Lahab. It said:

"Destroyed be the hands of Abu Lahab and destroyed he is! Neither his wealth will avail him nor his earnings! He will soon enter a Fire of great flames and his wife, the carrier of firewood. Around her neck will be a rope of palm fibre!"¹⁴⁰

This chapter said very clearly that Abu Lahab was condemned to go to Hell. In other words, it was saying he would never change and would die a disbeliever. Abu Lahab went on to live for a full ten years after the revelation of this chapter. All he had to do now to prove the Qur'an was wrong was to say, 'The Qur'an says I'm never going to believe, that I'm going to Hell and so will die a non-Muslim. Well, I believe in

¹⁴⁰ Qur'an 111:1-5

Muhammad's message now – I have changed!" and yet he never did do that – although this is exactly what you would have expected from him since he had always sought to contradict the Qur'an. Now the Qur'an gave him a very direct challenge saying, 'All you have to do to split this whole thing apart at the seams is to say the words, "There is only One God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God!"' How could Muhammad possibly have known for sure that Abu Lahab wouldn't do that just to spite him? How could he possibly have been so confident as to give somebody ten years to discredit his prophethood any time he wanted? The only answer is that these were not his words but God's; only God could have put forward such a risky challenge.

The Fall of Byzantium

During the years 613-614, the Persians severely defeated Christian Byzantium, the Romans. Following their defeat of the Byzantines at Antioch in 613, the Persians seized control of Damascus, Cilicia, Tarsus, Armenia, and Jerusalem. The loss of Jerusalem in 614 was particularly traumatic for the Byzantines, for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was destroyed and the Persians seized the "True Cross," the symbol of Christianity. In addition, the Avars, Slavs, and Lombards also were posing serious threats to the Byzantine Empire. The Avars had reached as far as the walls of Constantinople. Emperor Heraclius ordered the gold and silver in churches to be melted and turned into money in order to meet the army's expenses. When this proved insufficient, bronze statues were melted down in order to mint more money. Many governors had revolted against Heraclius, and Byzantium was on the point of collapse.¹⁴¹ Mesopotamia, Cilicia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Armenia, which had earlier belonged to Byzantium, were invaded by the idolatrous Persians.

¹⁴¹ Warren Treadgold, *A History of the Byzantine State and Society* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press: 1997), pp. 287-99

In short, everyone was expecting the Byzantine Empire to be destroyed. But right at that moment, and against these crushing odds, the Qur'an announced a few years later in 620:

“The Roman Empire has been defeated in the lowest land; but they, (even) after (this) defeat of theirs, will soon be victorious within a few years. With God is the Decision, in the Past and in the Future: on that Day shall the Believers rejoice with the help of God; He helps whom He will, and He is the Exalted in Might, most Merciful.”¹⁴²

In the precise language of the Arabs, the word for ‘few’ in the verse, *bid`*, means a number from 3 to 9. It seemed absolutely impossible in 620 that the Christian Byzantium could ever be victorious again, let alone in so short a time. One of the leaders of the Quraysh, Ubayy ibn Khalaf, was so sure this could never happen that he bet the Prophet's closest companion, Abu Bakr, a hundred camels that the Qur'an's prophesy would be proved wrong. Islam prohibits gambling and putting money on matters of chance, but the Prophet allowed Abu Bakr to go ahead with this because since the Qur'an had said it, there was no possibility of him losing.¹⁴³

In 622, Heraclius gained a number of victories over the Persians and conquered Armenia. In December 627, the two empires fought a decisive battle at Nineveh, some 50 kilometres east of the River Tigris, near Baghdad. This time too, the Byzantine army defeated the Persians. A few months later, the Persians had to ask for peace with Byzantium, which obliged them to return the territories they had taken from it.

The Byzantine victory was completed when Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persian ruler Khosrow II in 630, recaptured Jerusalem, and regained the “True Cross” for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Qur'an 30:2-5

¹⁴³ Tafseer at-Tabari (Commentary of the Qur'an), v. 21, p. 18

¹⁴⁴ Warren Treadgold, A History of the Byzantine State and Society, pp. 287-99

In the end, “the victory of the Romans” proclaimed by God in the Qur’an miraculously came true before ten years of the revelation of the verses above – that is, within the 3-9 years time frame. The Quraysh leader, Ubayy, had since been killed and so his relatives paid Abu Bakr the debt of one hundred camels for winning the bet.

These verses also make a very significant geographical statement that could not have been known by anyone at that time: “The Roman Empire has been defeated in the *lowest* land...”¹⁴⁵ The Byzantines and the Persians actually fought at the Dead Sea basin. At 399 metres below sea level, the Dead Sea is the “lowest” place on the earth’s surface, something we know now but certainly didn’t fourteen hundred years ago.

The Manifest Victory

In the sixth year after the Prophet and believers had settled in Madinah, the Prophet had a dream one night that they were at Makkah performing pilgrimage, which is the site of the Ka’bah built by Abraham and Ishmael for the worship of God and which, at that time, was the chief stronghold of Islam’s most bitter enemies, the Pagan Arabs. The dreams of messengers are not just imagination but inspiration from God, and so this delighted the believers, particularly those who had emigrated from Makkah like the Prophet. In March of 628, the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, set out to perform pilgrimage at Makkah with a party of about fifteen hundred men, unarmed and in pilgrim dress. Informed of the coming of God’s Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, the Quraysh armed themselves and the neighbouring tribes. They were determined not to allow the Muslims to enter Makkah. When the Muslims reached

¹⁴⁵ Qur’an 30:2-3. The Arabic word, *adna*, can mean both closest and lowest. While most translators have chosen the former meaning, the latter would now seem more appropriate in view of the now known facts regarding the region of the battles.

Hudaybiyah, a place on the road from Jeddah about twelve miles from Makkah, the Prophet gave the order to stop.

In the face of the Makkans' refusal to allow the Muslims to enter Makkah, word was sent to the Quraysh to inform them that they had come with the intention of pilgrimage and therefore bore no arms. The Quraysh responded by sending 'Urwah ibn Mas'ud al-Thaqafi, a clever diplomat, to the Prophet to make negotiations. Finally, the Prophet and the Quraysh agreed on a treaty. This was to be known as the Treaty of Hudaybiyah.

The terms of this treaty, however, seemed very one-sided towards the Quraysh: the Prophet and believers were to return back to Madinah now and would be allowed to make the pilgrimage in the following year when they would be allowed into Makkah for three days without arms. Also stipulated was a truce for ten years in which time any tribe or person would be free to join either party (the Muslims or the Quraysh) or make an alliance with it, *except those who were subjects or dependents of the Quraysh and who defected from paganism to Islam*. They would have to be returned back to the Quraysh by the Muslims.

The apparent unfairness of the situation was very heavy on the Muslims. Having to return without performing the pilgrimage was bad enough, but to accept such terms seemed a bitter blow. It was objected to in the Muslim camp. It shocked some among them such as 'Umar, who went so far as to question God's Messenger about it. the Prophet began the return journey with a dazed and bewildered group of believers.

It is while spirits were at this all-time low that God revealed this perplexing verse:

“We have indeed given you a manifest victory!”¹⁴⁶

This is the opening of Surah al-Fath, the Chapter of Victory, and it went on to declare:

“Truly did God fulfil the vision for His Apostle: you shall enter the Sacred Mosque, if God wills, in security, heads shaved, hair cut short, and without fear. And He knew what ye knew not, and so granted (you), besides this, a victory near at hand.”¹⁴⁷

The Treaty must have seemed a far cry from anyone’s idea of a victory when these verses were revealed! And yet what came out of it is now a matter of History: this treaty drawn up between the Messenger of God and the disbelievers of Makkah literally paved the way to something unimaginable at the time, the Conquest of Makkah, and with it the fall of the whole of Arabia to Islam, in just two years time. How could it have been foreseen that such would result from a treaty of humiliating terms and an unhappy return home? The believers were indeed able to make the pilgrimage soon “in security” as Makkah was to become theirs, and the Treaty did indeed turn out to be “a manifest victory.”

These are some of the predictions laid out in Qur’an. They were put forward in very clear terms, not like the vague prophecies of Nostradamus and other fortune tellers. And, as we have seen, they came to pass just as foretold by the Qur’an.

¹⁴⁶ Qur’an 48:1

¹⁴⁷ Qur’an 48:27

Scientific Miracles

Just as the Qur'an speaks with unerring accuracy of the past and things which, at the time of its revelation, were still in the future, one of its most remarkable qualities for this, the modern age, is the complete consistency between the Qur'an and great discoveries of modern science, some so recent they were only discovered in our lifetimes. Once again, this is conclusive proof that the author of the Qur'an was not Muhammad but the Creator of life Himself.

The Creation of Man

“And truly We created man from a quintessence of clay; then We placed him as a droplet of sperm (*nutfah*) in a firmly fixed lodging; then We made the drop into an *`alaqah*; then We made the *`alaqah* into a *mudghah*; then we made out of the *mudghah* bones; and then clothed the bones with flesh. So blessed be Allah, the Best of Creators...”¹⁴⁸

When the human body is examined, it is found that most elements present on the earth are also to be found in the body. Living tissues contain 95% carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus and sulphur, with a total of 26 different elements.¹⁴⁹ The term “*quintessence of clay*” reflects this, that we are made with the same basic elements found in the earth.

The Arabic word *nutfah* (droplet) is described elsewhere in the Qur'an as “a mingled, or mixed, droplet”¹⁵⁰. Dr. Maurice Bucaille points out how significant this is in view of what we know now about sperm. Secretions from four different glands come together to form spermatoc liquid.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Qur'an, 23:12-14

¹⁴⁹ Kevin Griffin, *The Elemental Composition of Life*

¹⁵⁰ Qur'an 76:2

¹⁵¹ Dr. Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'an, and Science*, p. 222

The Arabic word *`alaqah* has three meanings: (1) a thing that clings, (2), a leech and (3) a blood clot. All three accurately describe the first stage of the developing embryo:

1. Womb

(1) The suspension of an embryo during the *`alaqah* stage in the womb (uterus) of the mother.

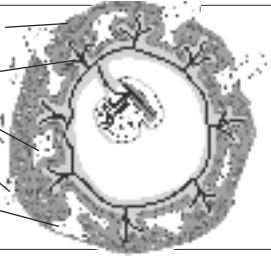
Cytotrophoblastic shell

Tertiary villus

Intervillous space

Maternal blood

Maternal sinusoid



(2) Similarities in appearance between a Leech and a human embryo (3) at the *`alaqah* stage.

2. Leech

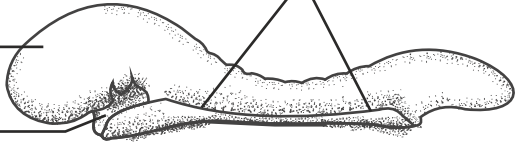


3. Human Embryo

Forebrain

Heart

Cut edge of amnion

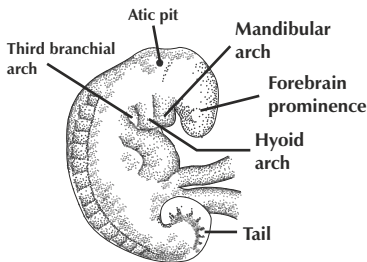


After the fertilisation of the egg, villusities (root-like elongations) develop with which it literally *clings* to the wall of the uterus. It then goes on to resemble a leech both in appearance and behaviour (it lives off nourishment from the blood of the mother as a leech sucks blood from its host).

The external appearance of the embryo and its sacs during the *`alaqah* stage is similar to that of a blood clot because of the presence of relatively large amounts of blood present in the embryo. The blood in the embryo does not circulate until the end of the third week. The embryo at this stage is therefore like a clot of blood. So the three meanings of the word *`alaqah* correspond accurately to the descriptions of the embryo at the *`alaqah* stage.

The next stage mentioned in the verse is the *mudghah* stage. The Arabic word *mudghah* means “something chewed.” The beginnings of the bones and skeletal structure take shape in the form of ‘somites’ on the back of the embryo which remarkably “resemble teeth-marks in a chewed substance.”¹⁵² All of these are discoveries of modern times.

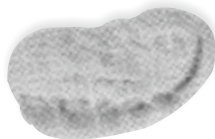
Embryo



Actual size 

26 ± 1day

Gum



Embryo at the mudghah stage. We can see here the somites at the back of the embryo that look like teeth marks like a chewed piece of gum.

Hamm and Leeuwenhoek were the first scientists to observe human sperm cells (spermatozoa) using an improved microscope in 1677 (more than 1000 years after Muhammad). They mistakenly thought that the sperm cell contained a miniature human being that grew when it was deposited in the female genital tract.

¹⁵² Moore and Persaud, *The Developing Human*, 5th ed., p. 8

“It was, in fact, only during the Nineteenth century that people had a slightly clearer view of this question... More than a thousand years before our time, at a period when whimsical doctrines still prevailed, men had a knowledge of the Qur’an. The statements it contains express in simple terms truths of primordial importance which man has taken centuries to discover.”¹⁵³

Professor Emeritus Keith L. Moore is one of the world’s most prominent scientists in anatomy and embryology and the author of the internationally acclaimed book *The Developing Human*. In 1984, he received the most distinguished award presented in the field of anatomy in Canada, the J.C.B. Grant Award from the Canadian Association of Anatomists. In 1981, during the Seventh Medical Conference in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, Professor Moore said:

“It has been a great pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur’an about human development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God, because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad must have been a Messenger of God.”

Consequently, Professor Moore was asked the following question: “Does this mean that you believe that the Qur’an is the word of God?”

He replied: “I find no difficulty in accepting this.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Dr. Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur’an, and Science*, p. 227

¹⁵⁴ Available to view on video entitled *This is the Truth*, from www.islam-guide.com/truth.htm - The videos can also be found on Youtube by searching the professor’s name

The Origin of the Universe

“Have not the unbelievers known that the heavens and the earth were joined together (as one unit of creation) and We tore them apart? And We made from water every living thing. Will they then not believe?”¹⁵⁵

This verse speaks very clearly of something unknown of before the advent of nuclear physics in the 20th century – the common origin of the universe. While modern science claims to have developed the Big Bang theory, the Qur’an tells us more than fourteen centuries ago that the heavens and the earth – that is, all mass – was previously together, and then split apart.

Incidentally, the above verse also contains another miraculous statement: that all living matter is made from water. This is hard to imagine when you look at yourself in the mirror; sure, you contain water, but to be *made* from it? It must have been all the more inconceivable to the desert Arabs who didn’t generally see a great deal of it. But modern science tells us “water is the main component of organic matter. 50-90% of the weight of living things consists of water”, as you can find in any regular encyclopaedia. Furthermore, 80% of the cytoplasm (basic cell material) of a standard animal cell is described as water in biology textbooks.

Getting back to the universe, until the dawn of the 20th century, the only view held in the world of science was that the universe had a constant nature and it had existed since infinite time. However, modern research, observations, and calculations carried out by means of modern technology have revealed that the universe in fact had a beginning and that it constantly expands.

¹⁵⁵ Qur’an 21:30

This was confirmed by the use of observational data in 1929. While observing the sky with a telescope, Edwin Hubble, the American astronomer, discovered that the stars and galaxies were constantly moving away from each other. This discovery is regarded as one of the greatest in the history of astronomy. Now listen to the Qur'an:

“And it is We Who have constructed the heaven with might, and verily, it is We Who are steadily expanding it.”¹⁵⁶

The science of modern cosmology clearly indicates that, at one point in time, the whole universe was nothing but a cloud of an opaque, highly dense and hot gaseous composition, i.e. smoke. This is one of the undisputed principles of standard modern cosmology.¹⁵⁷ Scientists now can observe new stars forming out of the remnants of that ‘smoke’. Once again, the Qur'an said it first:

“Then He turned to the heaven when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth, ‘Come willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said, ‘We come in obedience.’”¹⁵⁸

Dr. Alfred Kroner is one of the world's renowned geologists. He said:

“Thinking where Muhammad came from... I think it is almost impossible that he could have known about things like the common origin of the universe, because scientists have only found out within the last few years, with very complicated and advanced technological methods, that this is the case... Somebody who did not know something about nuclear physics fourteen hundred years ago could not, I think, be in a position to find out from his own mind, for instance, that the earth and the heavens had the same origin.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Qur'an 51:47

¹⁵⁷ Weinberg, *The First Three Minutes, a Modern View of the Origin of the Universe*, pp. 94-105

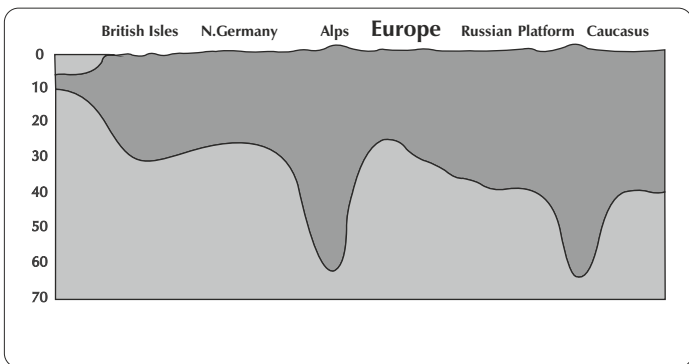
¹⁵⁸ Qur'an 41:11

¹⁵⁹ Available to view on video entitled *This is the Truth*, from www.islam-guide.com/truth.htm

Mountains as Pegs

“And have We not made the Earth as a bed, and the mountains pegs?”¹⁶⁰

Professor Emeritus Frank Press, co-author of the book *Earth*, a basic reference textbook on Geology in many universities around the world, says in his book that mountains have underlying roots. These roots are deeply embedded in the ground, thus, mountains have a shape like a peg.¹⁶¹



Modern earth sciences have proven that mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground and that these roots reach as much as 10-15 times their elevations above the surface of the ground. Mt. Everest, for example, has a peak of 9 km but extends underground more than 125 km. So the most suitable word to describe mountains on the basis of this information is the word ‘peg,’ since most of a properly set peg is hidden under the surface of the ground. The fact of

¹⁶⁰ Qur’an 78: 6-7

¹⁶¹ Press and Siever, *Earth*, p. 435. Also see *Earth Science*, Tarbuck and Lutgens, p. 157

mountains having deep roots was introduced only in the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁶²

Modern theory of plate tectonics holds that mountains work as stabilizers for the earth. This information has just begun to be understood in the framework of plate tectonics since the late 1960's.¹⁶³ God has said in the Qur'an:

"And He has set firm mountains in the earth so that it would not shake with you..."¹⁶⁴

There are many more similar examples of the perfect harmony between the Qur'anic verses of over fourteen hundred years old and extremely recently discovered scientific facts. These include areas such as the water cycle, the orbiting of planets, cloud formation, lightning, underwater waves and currents and many others. All of them demonstrate the same thing: that the Qur'an spoke clearly about many things that mankind had no knowledge of with great accuracy. Which can only mean one thing:

"The above observation makes the hypothesis advanced by those who see Muhammad as the author of the Qur'an untenable. How could a man, from being illiterate, become the most important author, in terms of literary merits, in the whole of Arabic literature? How could he then pronounce truths of a scientific nature that no other human being could possibly have developed at that time, and all this without once making the slightest error in his pronouncement on the subject?"¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² M. J. Selby, *Earth's Changing Surface* (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1985), p. 32

¹⁶³ El-Naggar, *The Geological Concept of Mountains in the Quran*, p. 5

¹⁶⁴ Qur'an 16:15

¹⁶⁵ Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science*, 1978, p. 125

Conclusion

And so you have seen some of what makes the idea that the Qur'an is a human creation an impossibility and why the challenge of the Qur'an for those in doubt to "bring forth a chapter like it" has not and cannot be met: the Book is from God, beyond the reach of man. And you have now also seen how Islam perfectly meets the test of true religion: its message is clear and sound, its Messenger truthful and sincere, its revelation sublime and pure of human error. As the Qur'an challenges you to try and prove it isn't from God, it also tells you what you have to do if you fail:

"...and if you cannot – and of a surety you cannot – then save yourself from the Fire whose fuel is men and stone; it has been prepared for the rejecters of truth."¹⁶⁶

Don't reject the truth that you have been surrounded by all your life because in the end, it's where you go back to. Islam is the same truth that God, your Maker, had revealed from the dawn of man's life. Many have lived before you, many will come after you. Each one has to finally return to the One, from Whom it all began. He has surrounded you with Signs to see Him, Signs around you and within you. Open up your heart to the truth you have recognised and submit to it. Be true to yourself and true to your Maker, for then you will be at peace with yourself and at peace with your Maker. Bear witness that there is no god except Allah, the One and Only, and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

Bear witness to this truth and step into the love of the One who made you and to this day has looked over you, the One who cares for you while you sleep and by whose grace you breathe even now. Life is

¹⁶⁶ Qur'an 2:24

precious because here you have a choice. Once this life and its empty promises end you have no more choices. Choose to bow before God now and you will live in peace for eternity. Choose not to and your eternity will be without Him, an eternity of the ultimate loss. Nothing is worth losing out forever. Everything you have will turn back to the dust it was made from, will you not return to the One who made you?

“And fear a Day wherein you shall be returned back to Allah. Then shall every soul be recompensed for what it earned and they shall not be wronged.”¹⁶⁷

God promises to answer those who call out to Him sincerely. Ask Him for strength, guidance and help. Don't think He won't answer you – isn't He keeping your heart beating even now? He is Generous, Loving and Merciful, all you need to be is sincere and humble.

May God bless you and guide you to peace.

¹⁶⁷ Qur'an 2:281. This verse was the last to be revealed to Muhammad (PBUH) and marks the conclusion of the final revelation sent to mankind with a reminder of man's own final, conclusive Day.

Further Reading

The Noble Qur'an, a New Rendering of its Meaning in English by
Abdalhaqq & Aisha Bewley

The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an by Abdullah Yusuf Ali

An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith translated by Ezzedin Ibrahim & Denys
Johnson-Davies

Forty Hadith Qudsi selected and translated by Ezzedin Ibrahim &
Denys Johnson-Davies

Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet by Karen Armstrong

Muhammad his Life Based on the Earliest Sources by Martin Lings

The Sealed Nectar, Memoirs of the Noble Prophet by Saifur
Rahman al-Mubarakpuri

What is Islam by Mohammad Manzoor Nomani

Towards Understanding Islam by Abu'l A'la Mawdudi

Islam the Natural Way by AbdulWahid Hamid

The Men of Madina by Muhammad ibn Sa'd & Aisha Bewley

The Women of Madina by Muhammad ibn Sa'd & Aisha Bewley

The Four Pillars of Islam by Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

The Road To Mecca by Leopold Weiss (Muhammad Asad)