

IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD?

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

Introduction

Islam is not the name of some unique religion presented for the first time by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who should, on that account be called the founder of Islam.

The Qur'an states that Islam – the complete submission of man before his one and only Unique Creator – is the one and only faith and way of life consistently revealed by God to humankind from the very beginning. Noah, Solomon, David, Abraham, Moses, Isaac and Jesus – prophets who appeared at different times and places – all propagated the same faith and conveyed the same message of Tawheed (Oneness of God), Risaalat (Prophethood) and Aakhirah (the Hereafter). These prophets of God were not founders of different religions to be named after them. They were each reiterating the message and faith of their predecessors.

However, Muhammad (pbuh) was the last Prophet of God. God revived through him the same genuine faith which had been conveyed by all His Prophets. This original message was earlier corrupted and split into various religions by people of different ages, who indulged in interpolations and admixture. These alien elements were eliminated by God, and Islam – in its pure and original form – was transmitted to humankind through Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Since there was to be no messenger after Muhammad (pbuh), the Book revealed to him (i.e. the Qur'an) was preserved word for word so that it should be a source of guidance for all times.

The miracle of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), i.e. the Qur'an, is for all times

All the previous Prophets of God were sent only to their people and their nation and their complete message was meant for a particular time period. Therefore the miracles they performed such as parting of sea by Prophet Moses (pbuh), giving life to the dead by Prophet Jesus (pbuh), etc. convinced the people of that time but these miracles cannot be analyzed and verified by us today.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the last and final Messenger of God, sent for the whole of humankind and the message he delivered is for eternity. The Qur'an says:

“We sent you (Prophet Muhammad) not but as a mercy for all creatures.” (Al-Qur'an 21:107)

Therefore the miracle of the last and final Messenger should also be everlasting, examinable and verifiable by people of all ages, after its revelation. Though Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) performed several miracles as are mentioned in the Hadith (recorded traditions, sayings and actions of the

Prophet), he never emphasized them. Though we Muslims believe in these miracles we only boast of the ultimate miracle given to him by Almighty God, which is the Qur'an.

Al-Qur'an is the miracle of all times which proved itself to be a miracle 1400 years ago and which can be reconfirmed today and forever. In short, it is the Miracle of Miracles.

Many people have a misconception that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) is the founder of the religion of Islam. However, Islam is in existence since the first man (Prophet Adam) first set foot on earth. Since then, Almighty God sent several prophets and revelations, the last in this chain being Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the Qur'an.

Three options regarding authorship of the Qur'an

Probably, the only point of agreement amongst those who have the slightest knowledge of the Qur'an irrespective of whether they are Muslims or not, is that the Qur'an was recited for the first time by a man who was born in Makkah in Arabia in the 6th century (C.E.) by the name of Muhammad (pbuh).

Regarding the sources of the Qur'an there can be three basic assumptions for a non-Muslim:

- a) Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself was the author of the Qur'an; consciously, sub-consciously or unconsciously.
- b) Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) learnt it from other human sources or copied or adopted from previous scriptures or revelations.
- c) Qur'an has no human author but it is a word for word revelation from God.

Muhammad (pbuh) was not the author of the Qur'an

1. Muhammad (pbuh) never claimed the authorship of the Qur'an

It is highly abnormal to challenge the testimony of someone who disclaims responsibility for producing a great work, whether literary, scientific or other. Yet this is precisely what orientalist and others, who are suspicious about the origins of the Qur'an, do when they claim that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the author of the Glorious Qur'an.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) never ever claimed responsibility for originating it. He honestly said that it was Allah who revealed this Scripture to him. To think otherwise is illogical because it would mean that he was telling a lie.

From history we learn that between his youth and the prophetic mission that commenced at the age of 40, he had never been known to lie. He was so well known for his truthfulness, honesty and chastity that he was given the title "Al-Ameen" i.e. "The trust worthy" by friends and foes alike. Then why should he lie at the age of 40 while claiming to be a messenger of God?

It is interesting to note however, that although many of the Meccan Pagans rejected Islam and regarded the Prophet as a liar, they nevertheless trusted him and deposited their valuables with him for safe-keeping. This is apparent from the fact that when the Prophet decided to leave Makkah to foil an assassination attempt on him, he left the valuables with Hazrat Ali (R.A.) to distribute it to the rightful owners.

Once when Abu Sufiyan, one of the pagan chiefs of Makkah, went to Emperor Heraclius to ask for his support against the Prophet, on being questioned whether the Prophet had been accused of lying, prior his to claim to be a Prophet or whether he had betrayed his trust, Abu Sufiyan the arch enemy of the Prophet had to answer "No". Thus even his opponents acknowledged his sincerity, truthfulness and honesty.

What logical reason can a person think of, for Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to lie while stating that he was a Prophet and not the author of the Qur'an?

(To be continued)



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 2

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In the previous article, we analyzed and discussed the probability of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) being the author of the Qur'an based on whether he claimed to be its author. Let us now analyze some more probabilities given by skeptics of why Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) could have written such a Book without claiming its authorship.

2. Material gain as the motive

Some may argue that Muhammad (pbuh) falsely attributed the Qur'an to God and called himself a Prophet for material gain. I do agree that there are several people who falsely claim to be prophets, saints and preachers for material benefits and thus become rich and lead luxurious lives.

Muhammad's (pbuh) financial position was better off before than after the announcement of his Prophethood. At the age of 25, he married Khadija (ra), who was a very rich and wealthy businesswoman, 15 years before he claimed Prophethood. His financial position and life standard after claiming Prophethood was unenviable.

a. One of the wives of the Prophet (pbuh), Ayesha (R.A.) narrates that a month or two would go by without fire being lit in their house because there was nothing to cook. They survived on dates and water. Sometimes this diet was supplemented with goat's milk from the people of Madinah. (According to Riyad-As-Saliheen by An-Nawawi, Hadith no. 492)

b. This was not just a temporary sacrifice but a way of life. This was at a time when Muhammad (pbuh) could have lived like a king, if he so wanted. There was a sort of discontent and protest by those close to him as to why should they live in poor condition when they could avail of all the luxuries. The Prophet was disturbed with their discontent and a revelation came commending him to tell his wives:

'O Prophet! Say to your Consorts: "If it be that you desire the life of this world and its glitter then come, I will provide for your enjoyment and set you free in a handsome manner. But if you seek Allah and His Messenger and the Home of the Hereafter, verily Allah has prepared for the well-doers amongst you a great reward."

(Al-Qur'an 33:28-29)

This evidence is also recorded in Sahih Bukhari & Sahih Muslim.

c. Abu Zarr (ra) and Abu Hurairah (ra), the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) narrated that Muhammad (pbuh) never kept back any gifts and provisions secured for future use, but spent what he had on the poor and needy.

(According to Riyadh-As-Saleheen, Hadith No. 465 and 466)

d. In spite of the victories and achievements of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), at the time of his death, he was in debt, and his shield was in the hands of a Jewish citizen of Madinah as a co-lateral for his debt. (According to Riyadh-As-Saleheen, Hadith No. 504)

e. If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) would have actually been the author of the Qur'an and would have lied for material gains, that it is a book of God, he would have never mentioned in the same Qur'an:

“Then woe to those who write the Book with their own hands and then say: ‘This is from Allah’ to traffic with it for a miserable price! Woe to them for what their hands do write and for the gain they make thereby.” (Al-Qur'an 2:79)

This verse rebukes those persons who changed the previous Revealed scriptures, or authored books with their own minds and said, “this is from God” for their personal material benefit. If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had himself written the Qur'an, there were chances that at some point of time he would have been exposed, be considered the biggest hypocrite (God forbid), and would be cursing himself in his own book, which is illogical.

3. DESIRE FOR STATUS, POWER, GLORY AND LEADERSHIP:

Is it possible that Muhammad (pbuh) might have claimed Prophethood in order to attain Status, Power, Glory, and Leadership?

a. Muhammad (pbuh) has universally been acknowledged as one of the most successful leaders in human history. A Christian scholar Michael H. Hart has given a list of what he considers the hundred most influential men in history, from Adam to the present time, along with a list of reasons for his ranking, in his book ‘The 100 – a Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in History’. This unbiased Christian scholar placed Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on top of the list. He concluded the biography with the words, “It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad (pbuh) to be considered the most influential single figure in human history”.

b. A man with his qualities could claim leadership and assume power even without claiming Prophethood. Moreover, his character suggests that he was neither a power monger, nor a glory seeker. The desire to enjoy status and power is usually associated with good food, fancy clothing, magnificent places, monumental palaces, colourful guards and indisputable authority. Despite his social standing as a Prophet and heavy responsibility as a statesman, Muhammad (pbuh) used to milk his goat, mend his clothes, repair his shoes and help with the household work. His life was an amazing example of simplicity and humility. He sat on the floor. He went to the market to shop with no guards or provisions and accepted invitations to dine with the poor and ate graciously whatever was served.

c. He talked and listened patiently to anyone who approached him. So much so that the Qur'an says that his detractors complained saying:

“O! He listens to everyone.” (Al-Qur'an 9:61)

d. Once a representative of pagans named Utbah came to the Prophet (pbuh) and said that if he gave up preaching the message of the Qur'an, they would make him the wealthiest man in the community and

their leader with absolute power or even crown him as the king, if he wanted. The only concession they wanted from Muhammad (pbuh) in return was to give up the new claim that 'there is no god but one Universal God of all people'. If the Prophet (pbuh) was a seeker after power, glory and wealth, he would not have missed this golden opportunity. However he rejected the proposal using the verses that were revealed to him from Allah in Al-Qur'an 41:1-38.

e. Later another approach was made to the Prophet (pbuh) from delegation of the pagan nobles. The Prophet (pbuh) refused to compromise on the divinely inspired message which he had been sent with to deliver saying: "I did not bring this message on my own, nor in pursuit of your money or respect or leadership. God has sent me as a messenger to you and has given me a book, the Qur'an...."

f. On another occasion, they tried to persuade him through his beloved uncle Abu Talib to accept worldly power and prestige in return for giving up his Prophetic Mission. He said, "Oh! My uncle, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand, in order that I should give up this mission of mine, I will never do it until I die in defence of this truth, or God decides whatever He Pleases."

g. The death of Muhammad's (pbuh) most beloved son Ibrahim (ra) coincided with the eclipse of the sun and people regarded it as a miracle from God that the heaven and the earth were mourning at the death of Ibrahim. Muhammad (pbuh) was very angry with them and said:

"The sun and the moon do not eclipse because of the death or life of someone but they are two signs amongst the signs of Allah".

(Sahih Bukhari Vol. 2, Hadith No. 152)

h. Are these the characteristics of a power-hungry or a self-centered man? What could justify such a life of suffering and sacrifice, even after he was fully triumphant over his adversaries? What could explain the humbleness and nobility, which he demonstrated in his most glorious moments when he insisted that success is only due to God's help and not due to his own genius?



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 3

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UNITY AND LIBERATION OF THE ARABS:

The theory that Muhammad (pbuh) had authored the Qur'an in order to unite and liberate the Arabs is very difficult to defend for those who postulate and propound it....

a) There is not a single verse in the Qur'an calling for the unity or liberation specifically of the Arab nation. In fact the Qur'anic concept of Ummah i.e. nation is ideologically against any manifestations of nationalist tendencies. The Qur'an recommends unity of the whole human kind on the criteria of truth. According to the Glorious Qur'an in surah Hujuraat chapter 49 verse 13 :

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things).” (49:13)

The criteria for judgment in the sight of Allah for unity is not based on caste, colour, sex, wealth, nationality, political affiliation or blood ties but on “Taqwa” i.e. God – consciousness, piety and righteousness.

b) In practice this sometimes meant the separation of father & son, brother & brother, and husband and wife etc. According to surah Taubah chapter no. 9 verse 24

“Say: If it be that your fathers, yours sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline; or the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or the striving in his cause; then wait until Allah brings about His decision: and Allah guides not the rebellious.” (9:24)

c) The unity that prevailed in Arabia after the triumph of Islam was ideological, and meant for the whole world, and that unity is strongly encouraged by the Qur'an. For instance in Surah Al Imran chapter 3 verse 103 Allah commands:

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves;” (3:103)

- d) Had the unity of the Arabs been Muhammad's main consideration, he would have gladly accepted the offer to be the King of Arabia and use his power and influence to build a unified Arabia.
- e) There are several verses in the Qur'an which contradict the idea that Muhammad's (Pbuh) motive was to build Arab Nationalism. According to Surah Al Imran Chapter 3 verse 42 :

Behold ! the angels said : “O Mary ! Allah has chosen you and purified you; chosen you above the women of all nations. (3:42)

Why should Muhammad, an Arab, say that Mary, the mother of Jesus (Pbuh) who was a Jewish, be chosen as above the women of all nations? Such an honour is not to be found even in the Christian Bible. There is a complete chapter, Surah Mariam chapter 19 of the Qur'an, which is named after Mary, the mother of Jesus (Pbuh).

There is no book or Chapter named Mary in the whole Bible. Why should Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) provoke the Arabs by praising the Jews who were hostile to the Arabs by saying that a Jewish is chosen above the women of all nations? If he wanted to foster Arabs Nationalism, he would have preached the Superiority of the Arab nation and chose any other Arab woman i.e. his own mother, his wife or his own daughter as above the women of all nations. The answer is given in the following verses of Surah Al Imran chapter 3 verse 44 :

This is part of the tidings of the things unseen which We reveal unto you (O Apostle!) by inspiration;

The Prophet had no choice, whether to praise the Jewess or not, since it was an inspiration - a revelation from Almighty God.

- f) The Arab unity theory is also incapable of a satisfactory explanation due to the following type of verses which are repeated several times in the Qur'an. For e.g. Surah Baqarah Chapter 2 Verse 47 :

O Children of Israel ! call to mind the (special) favour which I bestowed upon you, and that I preferred you to all others (for My Message). (2:47)

MORAL REFORMATION

Some may put forward moral reformation as a probable motive for Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) to have allegedly compiled the Qur'an.

- a) Moral reformation is a noble objective which could be achieved without resorting to unmoral means like deceit and lies. The reason for his choice of unmoral means to build a moral society is not logical.

The Qur'an designates lying against God as the wicked deed in the sight of Allah (swt).

- b) One of the objectives of the Qur'an and of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) was indeed moral reformation but not only of Arabia but of the whole world.

If the Prophet would have falsely claimed that the Qur'an is from God, when he himself allegedly was its author, he would not have mentioned all these verses in the Qur'an. He would have instead written somewhat similar to what saint Paul had mentioned in the Bible in the New Testament in the Book of Romans chapter 3, verse 7 which says "If my lie glorifies the truth of God, then I am not a sinner."

This verse in the Bible implies that God requires falsehood to prove he is great. However as per Islam, God is truly Great, and therefore He does not require support of falsehood to prove that He is Great.

Unlike some other religions, in Islam, the means are not separated from the ends. If you want justice, you should get it by being just and through fair and just means. If you want truth, you get it by being truthful. Therefore the means (i.e. the path taken) has to fit with the end result.

Many people only consider the end result and not the explanation or the way or means to that result. Sometimes a person may have the truth but to prove that truth, he uses a false argument. For e.g., if a person says $2+2=4$, though he is speaking the truth, if asked for an explanation for his answer, he says because my teacher had taught it. The answer is correct but the means i.e. the explanation is wrong. Suppose, if the teacher would have taught $2+2=5$ then the person would have been wrong. The explanation should be true on its own merit, irrespective who has said it. For e.g. If you take 2 coins and add another 2 coins to them and if you count the total number of coins, the total number of coins is four. Therefore $2+2=4$.

If you use false argument for the truth, the other person may use the same false argument to prove his untruth. He may argue that because your teacher said $2+2=4$ and you believe in it, my teacher said that a person in order to lead a luxurious life is entitled to rob. Therefore I am justified if I rob.

Similarly it is illogical to say that I refuse to use the telephone as it was invented by Alexander Graham Bell who was a liar.

(To be continued)



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 4

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Moral Reformation :

The Qur'an says: Who can be more wicked than one who invents a lie against Allah or says "I have received inspiration" when he has received none or (again) who says "I can reveal the like of what Allah has revealed?" (Al-Qur'an 6:93) This verse prescribes the most humiliating punishment for such liars. If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the author of the Qur'an, was he deceitfully ascribing it to God and describing himself as the most wicked man? Had he been the author of the Qur'an, there was every possibility that his fabrication might one day be uncovered and get him into trouble.

a) A similar warning is given in the Qur'an in the following verse: "And if the messenger were to invent any sayings in Our name We should certainly seize him by his right hand And We should certainly then cut off the artery of his heart: Nor could any of you withhold him (from Our wrath)." (Al-Qur'an 69:44-47) There are several such verses in the Qur'an e.g. Al-Qur'an 42:24 & 16:105.

b) Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) did not deliver the whole Qur'an at one sitting. He recited it piecemeal over a period of about 23 years during which any question would be answered. The Qur'an says: "If you ask about things when the Qur'an is being revealed they will be made plain to you" (Al-Qur'an 5:101) People took this opportunity to ask a wide range of questions covering subjects like intoxicants, gambling, charity, new moon, menstruation, spoils of war, or even historical figures like Zulqarnain. Therefore the Qur'an mentions in several places "They ask thee concerning such and such matter. Say: it is so and so". In no way could Muhammad (pbuh) have known in advance the questions he would be asked, thus perfectly matching his reformation purposes for which he had set out to write the Qur'an. It would be foolish for a Prime Minister who wants to talk about the transportation facility in his country to call a press conference and invite the press to ask any question. They may choose to inquire about the food situation or even about political prisoners.

c) There is sufficient proof in the Qur'an against this moral reformation theory because Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself is corrected by the Qur'an in several places. Once while Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was deeply engrossed, trying to convince the teachings of Islam to pagan Quraish leaders of Makkah, a poor Muslim blind man, Abdullah Ibn Umm-Makhtum interrupted the discussion because he wanted to learn the Qur'an. The Prophet (pbuh) did not appreciate this interruption, which was evident by his frowning. Although the prophet (pbuh) did not say a word yet a revelation was consequently sent which is preserved forever in the Qur'an. "The (Prophet) frowned and turned away because there came to him the blind man (interrupting). But what could tell you but that perchance he might grow (in spiritual understanding)? Or that he might receive admonition and the teaching might profit him?" (Al-Qur'an 80:1-4) Anyone besides the Prophet (pbuh), whether saint

or sinner, would not have been questioned so. But he, whose gentle heart ever sympathized with the poor and affected, got new light from above, and without the least hesitation published this revelation in the Qur'an. Subsequently every time he met this blind man, he received him graciously and thanked him that on his account, God had remembered him. There are several similar verses in the Qur'an e.g. in response to Prophet's (pbuh) oath of not taking honey, Al-Qur'an 66:1 was revealed. In context of revenge of Hamzah (ra) death, Al-Qur'an 16:126 was revealed. In context of prisoners of war for ransom, Al-Qur'an 8:67 was revealed. When Prophet (pbuh) had prayed for a hypocrite, Al-Qur'an 9:84 was revealed.

Epileptic Theory :

Some of the people agree that the Prophet (pbuh) was sincere and truthful but allege that he was suffering from epilepsy and during his epileptic seizures he recited what later became the Qur'an. Some writers have compared description of the Prophet (pbuh) when he received revelations with that of epileptic seizures. In actual fact they were far from similar. From the hadith i.e. tradition we learn that the Prophet (pbuh) received the revelation in one of the following conditions:

I. In the Form of a ringing Bell.

II. Sometimes when the revelation came even though it was very cold his brow would be streaming with perspiration.

III. Sometimes he would look perturbed.

IV. Sometimes he would become very heavy while receiving revelations.

"These descriptions in no way bear resemblance to the medical symptoms of epilepsy. Epilepsy is a sudden and recurrent disturbance in the mental function or movement of the body, or both." Its symptoms include "complete or partial loss of consciousness, accompanied by muscular spasms or convulsions or by more complex behaviour. 70% of patients suffer their first attack before the age of 20 and in some types of epilepsy attacks diminish as the patient enters adulthood.

There are 4 main types of epilepsy.

a. Grand Mal Epilepsy or 'the big sickness'

b. Petit Mal Epilepsy or 'the little sickness'

c. Focal Seizures

d. Psycho-Motor Seizures The Prophet's description when he received the revelation clearly indicates that he did not suffer from the epilepsy of any form.

Grand Mal Epilepsy

This form of epilepsy shows the following symptoms:

1. Generalized convulsions preceded by a complete loss of consciousness, a loud scream and falling to the ground;
2. A stiffening of the body (including the respiratory system sometimes) and jerking movements in all four extremities of the body. In some cases the tongue can get bitten because of a tightening in the muscle of the face;
3. At the end of the attack the patient is totally disorientated, confused, sleepy, sick;
4. The patient will have no recollection of what happened during the seizure or immediately afterwards. The Prophet (Pbuh) did not suffer from any of these symptoms during his life, and most importantly, he remembered everything that had happened to him during the time when the revelation was given to him and recited what he had been commanded to memorize.

Petit Mal

Petit Mal occurs in children and dies out during early adulthood. An attack consists of a very brief episode of unresponsiveness lasting no more than 15 seconds usually. Since the Prophet (pbuh) first received revelation at the age of 40, and each period of revelation lasted a few minutes, it is impossible that the Prophet (pbuh) suffered from this malady.

Focal and Psycho-motor seizures

Focal seizures originate in a particular area of the brain and the seizure affects those parts of the body controlled by that part of the brain. An attack may show symptoms of jerking in particular extremities or as numbness and trembling in those extremities; the seizure can spread throughout the brain resulting in generalized convulsions.

Psycho-motor seizures are set off by an emotional, sensory or psychical aura - that is an unpleasant odour, taste or illusion about size and distance which causes intense fear. The patient becomes unresponsive and can do strange things such as suddenly walking off. The seizure lasts 1-3 minutes and after recovery, the patient will have no memory of the attack itself or the aura, which caused it in the first place. Again, these symptoms are totally dissimilar from what the Prophet (pbuh) experienced, and was seen to experience by his family and companions when receiving the Qur'an.

The causes of Epilepsy

Epilepsy is not a disease, it is a syndrome and therefore there is not usually one specific cause behind it. The actual syndrome is created through the malfunction of nerve cells in the brain where the neurons release or discharge excessive electrical energy causing thereby intense excitability in the cells - resulting in a loss of consciousness and convulsions. The reason for this abnormal behaviour in the nerve cells of an individual epileptic can be complex; there is no single cause normally. However in 50% of cases a primary or contributing factor for the syndrome can be identified. Such factors include injury at birth or later; congenital defects (e.g. Cerebral Palsy); infectious diseases such as Meningitis which attack the nerve tissue, parasitic infections, brain tumours, shock etc. An attack can also be brought on as a result of withdrawal from alcohol or

barbiturates; extreme emotional distress, or fatigue. The Prophet (pbuh) had none of these problems and therefore did not have epilepsy either. He was known to be in perfect physical and mental health. Although he went through extremely exhausting and stressful times, he displayed a great deal of fortitude. The Qur'an is such an amazing, unchallengeable and glorious book, that one Muslim psychiatrist has said that if it was indeed the work of an epileptic, "I'd like to see more of these epileptic people!"



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 5

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RELIGIOUS ILLUSION THEORY

Those who profound the religious illusion theory and the subconscious theory assume that the Qur'an had actually originated from Muhammad's (Pbuh) knowledge, imagination, experiences and environment, although he himself was not aware of this fact. Some of such non-believers even allege that he was crazy (God Forbid).

This theory is refuted easily. The Prophet preached a consistent message for about 23 years. It is unlikely that a crazy person or a visionary feeding of his own sub-conscious, would be able to be so consistent.

Secondly a visionary would not be able to falsely convince himself for 23 years that he was receiving a scripture from divine sources, when it was actually originated within himself.

The Qur'an contains so much information which could not have originated from a human being's mind, whether crazy, conscious or subconscious.

A. One such example is Surah Kahf chapter 18 of the Qur'an which was revealed in reply to the questions posed by the mushriks (polytheists) of Makkah, in consultation with the people of the Book, in order to test Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). These questions were :-

- i. Who were the sleepers of the cave ?
- ii. What is the real story of Khizar ?
- iii. What do you know about Zulqarnain ?

As these three questions concerned the history of the Jews and Christians and were unknown in Hijaz, a choice of these were made to test whether the Prophet (pbuh) possessed any source of knowledge of the hidden and unseen things. The Prophet (pbuh) replied, 'tomorrow I will tell you'. However, when they came for the answers, he had to put them off day by day until 15 nights had passed and still he had received no revelation of any kind. The people of Makkah taunted him, and he was distressed and sad that he received no Divine help, which he longed for. It was after fifteen days from the time that the questions were posed that Archangel Gabriel brought him a revelation that gave him the answers to these questions. The long wait he had to endure was explained in Al Qur'an 18:23-24)

**Nor say of anything,
I shall be sure to do**

So and so tomorrow”-

Without adding “If Allah wills”.

The delay of this revelation although painful to the Prophet (pbuh) was in reality on added strength. Those pagans of Quraish who were in two minds were convinced that had the Prophet (pbuh) invented the earlier revelations then there was no reason to delay this latest one, especially when so much was at stake. It is difficult to conceive how religious illusion could have helped him to state the correct replies which silenced his critics.

Besides these types of information there are several other sets of information in the Qur’an which no human mind could have produced at that time in human existence, whether consciously, sub-consciously or unconsciously.

FOR INSTANCE THE QUR’AN CONTAINS :

- a) Historical facts and events which were not known to the Prophet (pbuh) or his contemporaries e.g. about Zulkarnain, city of Ithra.
- b) Several prophecies about the future which have come true.
- c) Several scientific facts which were unknown and only discovered hundreds of years after the revelation of the Qur’an.

II. THE QUR’AN PLAGIARIZED FROM THE BIBLE:

Many critics state that while Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) himself was not the author of the Qur’an he learnt it from other human sources or plagiarized it, i.e. copied or adapted from previous scriptures or revelations.

1. MUHAMMAD (PBUH) LEARNT THE QUR’AN FROM A ROMAN BLACKSMITH WHO WAS A CHRISTIAN:

Some pagans accused the Prophet (pbuh) of learning the Qur’an from a Roman Blacksmith, who was a Christian and lived in the outskirts of Mecca. The Prophet very often used to go and watch him do his work. A revelation of the Qur’an was sufficient to dismiss this charge. The Qur’an says :

**“We know indeed that they say,
“It is a man that teaches him.”**

**The tongue of him they wickedly point to is notably foreign,
while this is Arabic, pure & clear.”
(Al Qur'an 16:103)**

How could a person whose mother tongue was foreign and could hardly speak little but of poor broken Arabic be the source of the Qur’an which is pure, eloquent, fine Arabic? To believe that the blacksmith taught the Prophet (pbuh), the Qur’an, is somewhat similar to a Chinese immigrant to England, who did not know proper English, taught Shakespeare.

2. MUHAMMAD (PBUH) LEARNT THE QUR'AN FROM WARAQAH - THE RELATIVE OF KHADIJAH (R.A.)

Prophet Muhammad's (pbuh) contact with the Jewish and Christian scholars was very limited. The most prominent Christian was an old blind man called Waraqa Ibn-Naufal who was a relative of the Prophet's first wife Khadijah (R.A.). He, although of Arab descent was a convert to Christianity and was very well versed with the New Testament. The Prophet (pbuh) met him only twice, first when Waraqa was worshipping at the Ka'aba, (before the prophetic Mission) and he kissed the Prophet's forehead affectionately. The second was when the Prophet (pbuh) went to meet Waraqa after receiving the first revelation. Waraqa died 3 years later and the revelation continued for about 23 years.

3. PROPHET'S RELIGIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE JEWS AND CHRISTIANS:-

It is true that the Prophet (pbuh) did have religious discussions with the Jews and Christians but these discussions took place in Madinah more than 13 years after the revelation of the Qur'an had started. The allegation that these Jews and Christians were the source is the reverse, since in these discussions Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) was the teacher inviting them to embrace Islam and pointing out that they deviated away from their true teaching of Monotheism. Several of them later embraced Islam.

4. PROPHET LEARNT THE QUR'AN FROM JEWS AND CHRISTIANS THAT HE MET OUTSIDE ARABIA:

All historical records available show that Muhammad (pbuh) had made only three trips outside Makkah before his Prophethood.

- i) At the age of 6 he accompanied his mother to Madinah.
- ii) Between the age of 9 & 12, he accompanied his uncle Abu – Talib on a business trip to Syria,
- iii) At the age of 25, he led Khadija's (R.A) caravan to Syria.

It is highly imaginary to assume that the Qur'an resulted from the occasional chats and meetings with the Christians or Jews from any of the above three trips.



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 6

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

5. LOGICAL GROUNDS TO PROVE THAT THE PROPHET DID NOT LEARN THE QUR'AN FROM JEWS OR CHRISTIANS:

The day-to-day life of the Prophet (Pbuh) was an open book for all to see. In fact a revelation came asking people to give the Prophet some privacy in his own home. If the Prophet (pbuh) had been meeting people who told him what to say as a revelation from God, this would not have been hidden for very long.

The extremely prominent Quraish nobles who followed the Prophet and accepted Islam were wise and intelligent men who would have easily noticed anything suspicious about the way in which the Prophet brought the revelation to them – more so since the Prophetic mission lasted 23 years.

The enemies of the Prophet kept a close watch on him in order to find proof for their claim that he was a liar – they could not point out even a single instance when the Prophet may have had a secret rendezvous with particulars Jews and Christians.

It is inconceivable that any human author of the Qur'an would have accepted a situation in which he received no credit whatsoever for originating the Qur'an.

Thus, historically and logically it cannot be established that there was a human source for the Qur'an.

6. MUHAMMAD (PBUH) WAS AN ILLITERATE

The theory that Muhammad (Pbuh) authored the Qur'an or copied from other sources can be disproved by the single historical fact that he was illiterate.

Allah testifies Himself in the Qur'an

And you were not (able) to recite a Book before this (Book came), nor were you (able) to transcribe it with your right hand: in that case, indeed, would the talkers of vanities have doubled.”

(Al Qur'an 29:48)

Allah (swt) knew that many would doubt the authenticity of the Qur'an and would ascribe it to Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). Therefore Allah in his Divine Wisdom chose the Last and Final Messenger to be an 'Ummi' i.e. unlettered, so that the talkers of vanity would not then have the slightest justification to doubt the Prophet. The accusation of his enemies that he had copied the Qur'an from other sources and rehashed it all in a beautiful language might have carried some weight, but even this flimsy pretence has been deprived to the unbeliever and the cynic.

Allah reconfirms:

“Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures) in the Law and the Gospel”

(Al Qur'an 7:157)

The prophecy of coming of the unlettered Prophet (Pbuh) is also mentioned in the Bible in the book of Isaiah:

“And the book is delivered to him that is not learned “

(Isaiah 29:12)

The Qur'an testifies in no less than four different places that the Prophet (Pbuh) was illiterate. It is also mentioned in Al-Qur'an 7:158 and 62:2.

7. ARABIC VERSION OF THE BIBLE WAS NOT PRESENT :

This Arabic version of the Bible was not present at the time of Prophet Muhammed (Pbuh). The earliest Arabic version of the old Testament is that of R. Saadiah Gaon 900 C.E. - more than 250 years after the death of our beloved Prophet. The oldest Arabic Version of the new testament was published by Erpenius in 1616 C.E. - about a thousand years after the demise of our Prophet.

8. SIMILARITIES IN THE QUR'AN AND THE BIBLE DUE TO COMMON SOURCE :

Similarities between the Qur'an and the Bible does not necessarily mean that the former has been copied from the latter. In fact it gives evidence that both of them are based on a common third source, all divine revelations came from the same source - the one Universal God. No matter what human changes were introduced into some of these Judeo-Christian and other older religious scriptures that had distorted their originality, there are some areas that have remained free from distortion and thus are common to many religions.

It is true that there are some similar parallels between the Qur'an and the Bible but this is not sufficient to accuse Muhammad (Pbuh) of compiling or copying from the Bible. The same logic would then also be applicable to teachings of Christianity and Judaism and thus one could wrongly claim that Jesus (Pbuh) was not a genuine Prophet (God forbid) and that he simply copied from the old testament.

The similarities between the two signify a common source that is one true God and the

continuation of the basic message of Monotheism and not that the later Prophets have plagiarized from the previous Prophets.

If some one copies during an examination, he will surely not write in the answer sheet, that he has copied from his neighbour or Mr. XYZ. Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) gave due respect and credit to all the previous Prophets (Pbut). The Qur'an also mentions the various revelations given by Almighty God to different Prophets.

9. MUSLIMS BELIEVE IN THE TAURAH, ZABOOR, INJEEL AND QUR'AN

Four revelations of Allah (swt) are mentioned by name in the Qur'an: the Taurah, the Zaboor, the Injeel and the Qur'an.

Taurah, the revelation i.e. the Wahi given to Moosa (a. s.) i.e. Moses (Pbuh).

Zaboor, the revelation i.e. the Wahi given to Dawood (a. s.) i.e. David (Pbuh).

Injeel, the revelation i.e. the Wahi given to Isa (a. s.) i.e. Jesus (Pbuh).

'Al-Qur'an', the last and final Wahi i.e. revelation given to the last and final Messenger Muhammed (Pbuh).

It is an article of faith for every Muslim to believe in all the Prophets of God and all revelations of God. However, the present day Bible has the first five books of the old Testament attributed to Moses and the Psalms attributed to David. Moreover the New testament or the four Gospels of the New testament are not the Taurah, the Zaboor or the Injeel, which the Qur'an refers to. These books of the present day Bible may partly contain the word of God but these books are certainly not the exact, accurate and complete revelations given to the Prophets.

The Qur'an presents all the different Prophets of Allah as belonging to one single brotherhood; all had a similar prophetic mission and the same basic message. Because of this, the fundamental teachings of the major faiths cannot be contradictory, even if there has been a considerable passage of time between the different prophetic missions, because the source of these missions was one: Almighty God, Allah. This is why the Qur'an says that the differences which exist between various religions are not the responsibility of the Prophets, but of the followers of these Prophets who forgot part of what they had been taught, and furthermore, misinterpreted and changed the scriptures. The Qur'an cannot therefore be seen as a scripture which competes with the teachings of Moses, Jesus, and the other Prophets (Pbut). On the contrary, it confirms, completes, and perfects the messages that they brought to their people.

Another name for Qur'an is the 'The Furqan' which means the criteria to judge the right from the wrong, and it is on the basis of this Qur'an that we can decipher which part of the precious scriptures can be considered to be the word of God.

IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 7

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

SCIENTIFIC COMPARISON BETWEEN QUR'AN AND BIBLE:

CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE IN SIX DAYS:

According to the first book of Bible Genesis chapter no. 1, the universe was created in six days, and each day is defined as a twenty-four hours' period.

However, the Qur'an mentions that the universe was created in six 'Ayyaam'. 'Ayyaam' is the plural of 'Yaum' which has two meanings: firstly, a standard twenty-four hours' period i.e. a 'day' and secondly this Arabic word also means a stage, a period or an epoch consisting of a very long period of time. Here the Qur'an refers to the creation of the heavens and the earth in six long periods or epochs, which the scientists have no objection to. According to science the creation of the universe has taken billions of years, which contradicts with the concept of creation given in the Bible, which states it took six earth days of twenty-four hours.

9. SUN CREATED AFTER THE DAY:

The Bible says in Genesis chapter 1 verses 3 to 5 that the phenomenon of day and night was created on the first day of creation.

The light circulating in the universe is the result of a complex reaction in the stars, which according to the Bible Genesis chapter 1 verses 14 to 19, was created on the fourth day. It is illogical to mention the result that is the light (the phenomenon of day and night) was created on the first day of Creation when the cause or source of the light was created three days later, as has been mentioned in the Bible. Moreover the existence of evening and morning as elements of a single day is only conceivable after the creation of the earth and its rotation around the sun.

However, the Qur'an does not give this unscientific sequence. To say that Muhammad (pbuh) copied the creation of the universe from the Bible and missed out copying this unscientific sequence is absurd.

10. CREATION OF THE EARTH, THE SUN AND THE MOON:

We are aware that the earth and the moon emanated from their original star, the sun. However, according to the Bible, in the book of Genesis chapter 1 verses 9 to 13, the earth was created on

the third day of creation, and according to verses 14 to 19 the sun and the moon were created on the fourth day of creation. This biblical sequence of creation of the earth before the creation of the sun is contrary to the established idea about the formation of the solar system.

11. VEGETATION CREATED ON THE THIRD DAY AND SUN ON THE FOURTH:

According to the book of Genesis, Chapter 1 Verses 11 to 13, vegetation was created on the third day along with seed bearing grasses, plants and trees, and sun was created on the fourth day (verses 14-19). How is it scientifically possible for vegetation to have appeared on earth without the presence of the sun?

If Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was indeed the author of the Qur'an and he merely copied from the Bible, how did he manage to avoid the factual and scientific errors that the Bible contains?

The Qur'an does not contain any statements, which are incompatible with the scientific facts.

SUN AND THE MOON BOTH EMIT LIGHT?

According to the Bible, both the sun and the moon emit their own light. Genesis Chapter 1 verse 16 says "And God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night."

Today, science tells us that the moon does not have its own light. This confirms the Qur'anic concept that the light of the moon is a reflected light. To say that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) 1400 years ago corrected these scientific errors in the bible and then copied the "corrected passages" onto the Qur'an is to state the impossible.

12. ADAM (PBUH), THE FIRST MAN ON EARTH, LIVED 5800 YEARS AGO:

If one studies the genealogy of the first man on earth i.e. Adam (pbuh), through to Abraham and Jesus (peace be upon them), as stated in the Bible, one would come to the conclusion that Adam (pbuh) appeared on the earth approximately 5800 years ago. Check it out for yourself:

- i) 1948 years between Adam and Abraham (pbut)
- ii) Approximately 1800 years between Abraham and Jesus (pbut)
- iii) About 2000 years from Jesus (pbuh) till today.

These figures are further confirmed by the fact that the Jewish calendar is currently on or about 5800 years old.

There is sufficient evidence from archaeological and anthropological sources to suggest that the first human being on earth was present tens of thousands of years ago, and not merely 5,800 years ago as is suggested by the Bible.

While the Qur'an too speaks about Adam (pbuh) being the first man on earth, it does not suggest any date or time-frame for his appearance on earth, unlike passages from the Bible which are not

compatible with science.

13. NOAH (PBUH) AND THE FLOOD:

The Biblical description of the flood in the book of Genesis chapters 6, 7 and 8 indicates that the deluge was universal and it destroyed every living being on earth, except those present with Noah (pbuh) in the ark. This description suggests that the event took place 1656 years after the creation of Adam (pbuh) or 292 years before the birth of Abraham (pbuh), when Noah (pbuh) was 600 years old. Thus the flood may have occurred in the 21st or 22nd century B.C.

This story of the flood conflicts with scientific evidence from archaeological sources. The eleventh dynasty in Egypt and the third dynasty in Babylonia were in existence without any break in civilization, and were unaffected by any major calamity which took place in the 21st century B.C. This is contrary to the biblical story that the whole world had been immersed in flood water.

The Qur'anic presentation of the story of the Noah (pbuh) and the flood does not conflict with scientific evidence or archaeological data because, firstly the Qur'an does not give any specific time frame to this event and secondly the Qur'an does not state that this flood was a universal phenomenon nor does it state that the flood destroyed all life on earth. The Qur'an specifically mentions that the flood was a localized event only involving the people of Noah (pbuh).

It is illogical to assume that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had borrowed this story of Noah (pbuh) and the flood from the Bible and corrected the mistakes before mentioning it in the Qur'an.

14. MOSES (PBUH) AND PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS:

The story of Moses (pbuh) and the Pharaoh of the exodus is very much similar in the Qur'an and the Bible. Both scriptures agree that the Pharaoh drowned when he tried to pursue Moses (pbuh) while leading the Israelites across a stretch of water that they crossed. What is important to note here is that the Qur'an gives an additional piece of information in Surah Yunus chapter 10 verse 92.

“So today We will save you in body that you may be to those who succeed you a sign. And indeed many among the people, of Our signs, are heedless.” [Al-Qur'an 10:92]

Such a statement is not present in the Bible.

Dr. Maurice Bucaille, after a thorough research proved that although Ramses II was known to have persecuted the Israelites in the Bible, he died whilst Moses (pbuh) was taking refuge in Midian.

Ramses II's son Merneptah succeeded him as Pharaoh. It was Merneptah who drowned during the exodus. In 1898 the mummified body of Merneptah was found in the valley of Kings, in Egypt.

In 1975, Dr. Maurice Bucaille with other doctors received permission to examine the mummy of Merneptah, the findings of which proved that Merneptah probably died from drowning or a violent shock which immediately preceded the moment of drowning.

Thus the Qur'anic verse, that "we shall save his body as a sign", has been fulfilled by the pharaoh's body being kept at the Royal Mummies' room in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

This verse of the Qur'an compelled Dr. Maurice Bucaille, who was a Christian to study the Qur'an. He later wrote a book "The Bible, The Qur'an & Science" and confessed that the author of the Qur'an can be no one else besides God, the Creator and Originator of all Creation, and thus embraced Islam.

15. All this evidence is sufficient to conclude that the Qur'an was not copied from the Bible. On the contrary the Qur'an is the '*Furqaan*' i.e. the Criterion to judge right from wrong and truth from error and falsehood. It is the Qur'an that should be used to determine which passage of the Bible may be considered to be the word of God.

"And We have revealed to you, (O Muhammad), the book (i.e., the Qur'an) in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth." [Al-Qur'an 5:48]

(To be continued)



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 8

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

THE QUR'AN IS NOT LIKE A STORY BOOK:

Unlike other religious scriptures, the Qur'an is unique and distinct from the human pattern of narration. Every religious book (with the sole exception of the Glorious Qur'an) follows a narration style and pattern that is similar to story books. The pattern and style of story books is somewhat like, 'Once upon a time or 'the fox and the grapes ... the wolf and the lamb', etc.

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and earth".

"In the beginning, was the word".

"Now it came to pass"

These are similar to typical story book style: 'so it happened once upon a time'.

All religious scriptures have a beginning and an end and a human narration style sequence through out the scripture. The narration presents historical facts and events in a chronological order. This is how humans speak and write.

The Qur'an is a unique book. The first few verses of the Qur'an that were revealed are the Divine Command "Read. Read in the Name of Thy Lord Who Created Humankind". The Qur'an does not start its narration in a story book form. These verses that were first revealed constitute the 96th chapter of the Qur'an.

The first chapter of the Qur'an states:

"In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful. (All) praise is (due) to Allah, Lord of the Worlds. Most Gracious Most Merciful. Sovereign of the Day of Recompense. It is You we worship and You we ask for help. Guide us to the straight path – The way of those upon whom You have bestowed favor, not of those whose have evoked (Your) anger or those who are astray." [Surah Fatihah 1:1-7]

The second chapter of the Qur'an states:

"Alif Laam Meem. This is the Book; about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those who fear Allah. Who believe in the Unseen, establish prayer and spend out of what We have provided for them. And who believe in what has been revealed to you, (O Muhammad), and what was revealed before you, and of the hereafter they are certain (in faith). Those are upon (right) guidance from their Lord and it is those who are successful. Indeed, those who

disbelieve – it is all the same for them whether you warn them or do not warn them - they will not believe. Allah has set a seal upon their hearts and upon their hearing and over their vision is a veil; And for them is a great punishment.” [Surah Al-Baqarah 2:1-7]

No other religious book on the earth follows this Divine Pattern and style that is so distinct.

Even the previous revelations from Almighty God are not present with us in their original pristine form in which they were revealed.

The Qur’an is a record of the exact words revealed by God through the Arch Angel Gabriel to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It was memorized by Muhammad (pbuh) and then dictated to his Companions, and written down by scribes, who cross-checked it during his lifetime. Not one word of its 114 chapters, Surahs, has been changed over the centuries, so that the Qur'an is in every detail the unique and miraculous text that was revealed to Muhammad (pbuh) fourteen centuries ago.

The Qur’an is the last revealed Word of God. It deals with all the subjects that concern us as human beings: wisdom, doctrine, worship, and law, but its basic theme is the relationship between God and His creatures. At the same time it provides guidelines for a just society, proper human conduct and an equitable economic system.

The Qur’an provides guidance for all humankind. It appeals to your mind as well as to your heart. The Qur’an is addressed to the whole of humankind. The invitation of the Qur’an is not addressed to the people of any particular area, race, tribe, colour or language. The Qur’an always calls upon the "progeny of Adam" or "humankind" to accept Islam. The specific instructions and injunctions are meant for those who have come to believe in Islam, and they are always addressed as "those who believe".

The purpose of the Qur’an is to guide and not to tell stories, tales or history. It encourages its readers to ponder, to think. It covers and includes percepts of belief and conduct, moral directives, legal prescriptions, exhortation, persuasion, advice, commandments and admonition, glad tidings and words of encouragement for those who accept the Truth and undergo sacrifices to uphold it in their lives and who preach it. It provides arguments and evidence to support its message and the beliefs and teachings propounded by it. It also has condemnation of evil-doers, warnings to those who reject the truth, references to past events and civilizations and to signs of God in the Universe as visible to humans.

MUHAMMAD (PBHU) CANNOT BE A LIAR AND A CRAZY PERSON AT THE SAME TIME:

A large group of people after doing a lot of research say that, “One thing we know for sure, that man, Muhammad (pbuh) he thought he was a Prophet, he was crazy!” They are convinced that he was somehow deceived. And in the end of the same group will tell you “Because of this evidence, one thing we know for sure, that man, Muhammad (pbuh), was a liar!” (God forbid). They start by telling you the man was crazy or deranged and conclude by saying he was a liar.

They never seem to realize a person can never be both, you can either be one of them, crazy or a liar or none of them, never be both crazy and liar at the same time.

If a person is crazy he is of unsound mind and he actually believes that he is a prophet, therefore he need not lie and all his actions and words are unintentional. If a person is a liar, he is usually of sound mind and lies intentionally for certain benefits. Even if a crazy person says something incorrect, you cannot call him a liar because he himself is unaware of the fact. Thus a person cannot be both.

MUHAMMAD (PBUH) CAN NOT BE DELUDED AND A FORGER AT THE SAME TIME:

Similarly another group of people say that the Prophet was deluded and whenever somebody asked him a question, he thought that an angel put words in his ears. Later the same group of people would gather enough evidence to explain that he was a forger. These people fail to realize that a person can either be deluded or a forger or none of the two but he can surely never be both at the same time.

A person who is deluded and thinks he is a prophet, will never hunt for the answer or enquire with other people, when he is asked a question. He will think that an angel will put words in his ears and thus reply immediately irrespective of whether the answer is right or wrong. A forger on the other hand will search for the best possible answer or even copy from other sources to prove that he is not a fake prophet. These critics of the Prophet and of Islam fail to realize that they are going in circles.

If you ask them what the origin of the Qur'an is, they will tell you it came from the imagination of the Prophet's mind. If you further ask that how can a man get the sort of information, which no one knew before, they will say that some foreigner may have given him the information and he lied that he was the Prophet. On further enquiry that how can a liar have so much confidence, when he mentions things which were unknown with so much accuracy, then again they reply that he was crazy. Thus, they go in circles.

In response to all such criticism and allegations, the creator states and reminds the critics and skeptics thus in the Glorious Qur'an in Surah Al-Aaraf Chapter 7 Verse 184:

“Then do they not give thought?

There is in their companion (i.e. Muhammad) no madness.

He is not, but a clear warner”.

In surah Al-Qalam chapter 68 verse 2:

“You are not, (O Muhammad), by the favour of your Lord, a madman”.

In surah Al-Taqweer chapter 81 verse 22:

“And your companion (i.e. Muhammad) is not (at all) mad.”

MUHAMMAD (PBUH) SUFFERED FROM MYTHOMANIA:

Another people of group come up with a theory that Muhammad (pbuh) was suffering from mythomania. This is a psychological disorder in which a person tells lies and then believes in them. The Qur'an talks facts – things that you can go and look and see that they are true, things you can verify. The mythomaniac cannot do this. Facts are a problem for him. Therefore psychologists treat a man suffering from mythomania by confronting him with facts. If a man is mentally ill and says "I am the King of England", the psychologist does not say to him 'you are crazy'. The psychologist confronts him with facts:

"You say you are the King of England, please tell me where is your queen?" The mythomaniac tries to make excuses. "The queen has gone to her mother's house."

"Where is your Prime Minister?"

"He died."

"Where are your guards?"

The mythomaniac, due to his inability to deal with facts, is eventually cured if you keep putting enough facts in front of him. Finally he faces the reality and says "I guess I am not the King of England".

Similarly, the Qur'an approaches its readers by confronting them with facts and thus heals them of their delusions. The Qur'an poses questions: "O human being – you say so and so, but then what about such and such? Do you say this when you know that . . .?" Thus the Qur'an forces you to face reality and thus heals your delusions.

UNKNOWN INFORMATION IN THE QUR'AN:

The Qur'an has a unique way of informing its reader that "you did know this before". There is no other scripture which I know of that has this unique style. There are ancient writings and scriptures that give a lot of information but they tell you where the information came from. The Qur'an on the other hand says "Here is the information which you did not have before. Check on it, you will see that it is true". For example see Surah Hud chapter 11 verse 49:

"That is from the news of the unseen which We reveal to you, (O Muhammad). You knew it not, neither you nor your people, before this. So be patient; indeed the (best) outcome is for the righteous."

Similarly Qur'an says in Surah Yusuf chapter 12 verse 3:

"We relate to you, (O Muhammad), the best of stories in what We have revealed to you of this Qur'an, although you were, before it, among the unaware."

It is interesting that no one ever stood up and said "you are grossly mistaken, O Muhammad (pbuh). I am an Arab like you and I knew about these stories and these facts even before this revelation".

If Muhammad was ignorant and others were aware of facts and events, it would be a suicidal risk to quote them in such a manner so boldly, challenging the enemies that they were ignorant

about it. Yet no one challenged Muhammad (pbuh) about these verses.

THE QUR'AN IS A DECEPTION:

Those who cannot disprove that Qur'an is a revelation, came up with a bright idea that it is a deception. If it is a deception, what is its origin? What does it deceive us about? Wherein lays the deception? But none can point out a single deception. *Because there is no deception!*

WE MAKE FALSE DECISIONS AND FOOL OURSELVES BY STICKING TO IT:

Some people make a decision without thinking or reasoning. For example 'I believe this man is my enemy, but I have no reason or proof for my belief. The moment I meet him, I treat him like my enemy. When he finds the way I treat him, he reacts and behaves like my enemy, then I tell myself, that I was right! See he acts like my enemy". This is a sort of self-fulfilling reinforcement. It reinforces my belief. Here because of my initial wrong belief, I influenced certain things to take place which should not have them placed normally. Based on the things which took place, I falsely convinced myself that I was initially correct. In short we make false decisions and fool ourselves by sticking to them.

REVELATION IS COMPLEMENTED BY REASON:

According to the Qur'an, revelation is complemented by reason. The Qur'an says this is a revelation, as sure as the fact that you can discuss with one another i.e. talk and exchange views between the people. If revelation is superior to reason and logic, then how are we to decide which book that claims to be a revelation is true and which is false? Imam Ghazali rightly said "Faith and Reason should not come in conflict for both are given by Allah."

THE QUR'AN ENCOURAGES DISCUSSION:

Many Muslims believe that the Qur'an does not encourage any discussion and thus refrain from any talk or conversations concerning Islam or the Qur'an. However the Qur'an encourages discussion and reasoning.

Surah Al-Nahl chapter 16 verse 125 states:

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction; and argue with them in a way that is best."

For most of the questions of doubt that humans can think of in relation to the claims and teachings of the Qur'an, the answers are given in the Qur'an. The Arabic word 'Qaalu' which means 'they say' is mentioned in the Qur'an 332 times and the Arabic word 'Qul' which means 'say' is also mentioned 332 times in the Qur'an.

EXHAUSTING THE ALTERNATIVES:

There is an approach that is known as 'Exhausting the Alternatives'. The Qur'an says that it is

a revelation from the Creator of all that exists. If for some reason you do not believe in it, then what is it?

You have to give some explanation. It is paper and ink, where did it come from? It says that it is a revelation. If not then what is its source of origin? Where did it come from? Whatever answers people have given since the time the Qur'an was revealed have all been disproved. Some may say Muhammad (pbuh) was the author, whether for material gains, power, glory, unity of the Arabs or for moral reformation. All these answers fail to prove their points. Some may say he copied the Qur'an from some other source, while other may say that he was a liar and a crazy person. All of these are ideas without a logical explanation. *The alternatives have been exhausted.*

The Qur'an earns your respect because you cannot disqualify it. The Qur'an gives the answer that it is a revelation from God Almighty. In Surah Al – Jathiyah, chapter 45 verse 1 and 2:

“Ha Meem. The revelation of the book is from Allah, the exalted in Might, the Wise.”

The Glorious Qur'an reconfirms that it is a revelation from Almighty God in several verses:

In Surah Al-Anam chapter 6 verse 19

In Surah Al-Anam chapter 6 verse 72

In Surah Yusuf chapter 12 verse 1 & 2

In Surah Taha chapter 20 verse 113

In Surah Naml chapter 27 verse 6

In Surah Al-Sajdah chapter 32 verse 1-3

In Surah Yasin chapter 36 verse 1-3

In Surah Al-Zumar chapter 39 verse 1

In Surah Ghafir chapter 40 verse 2

In Surah Jathiyah chapter 45 verse 2

In Surah Al-Rahman chapter 55 verse 1-2

In Surah Al-Waqiah chapter 56 verse 77-80

In Surah Al-Insan chapter 76 verse 23

IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 9

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

FALSIFICATION TEST :

The scientific community adopts the following approach. Many people come up with new theories but the scientific community does not even bother to listen to them. Scientists have a reason for doing so - they say, "if you have a theory, do not bother me with it unless you bring with that theory a way to prove that you and the theory are wrong". This is called as a Falsification test.

This is the same reason why they paid attention to Albert Einstein towards the beginning of the century. He came up with the new theory and said, 'I think the universe works like this and these are three ways to prove me wrong'. Scientists subjected his theory to tests and within 6 years it passed the tests, which he offered. This does not prove that he is great but it proves that he deserves to be paid attention to, because of the falsification tests, which accompanied his theory.

The Qur'an too offers its readers several falsification tests. Some of these were only meant for the past, yet others for all times. The Qur'an says that if it is not what it claims then all you have to do is this or that, to prove that it is false.

I have not come across this unique falsification test presented in any other religious scriptures. The next time you discuss with anyone regarding religion, ask them, 'Is there any thing in your religion which throws up a challenge and says that if I could do this or that I prove that your religion and the scripture wrong ? I doubt if anyone else would have anything such as a falsification test to offer. A person should not only present his belief but should also offer the other person a chance to prove the belief wrong. The Qur'an gives several such opportunities to prove it wrong. Some such falsifications tests offered by the Qur'an are :

A. THE STORY OF ABU LAHAB :

The Prophet (Pbuh) had an uncle who was known by the nick name 'Abu Lahab' which means 'Father of the flame' because of his fiery temper. This uncle was one of the Staunchest enemies of the prophet and of Islam.

He used to follow the Prophet and whenever saw him speaking to a stranger, he would wait till they parted and then ask the Stranger, 'What did Muhammad (Pbuh) tell you ? Did he say black? Its white! Did he say morning? Its night!' He used to state the exact opposite of what the Prophet said.

There is a chapter in the Qur'an called Surah Al-Lahab i.e. chapter 111 named after Abu Lahab. This

chapter prophesied that Abu Lahab and his wife will perish in the hell fire - implying he will never become a Muslim and therefore will enter the hell fire.

This Surah was revealed 10 years before Abu Lahab died as an unbeliever in the battle of Badr. Many of Abu Lahab's friends and other disbelievers accepted Islam in the span of 10 years since this Surah was revealed. Abu Lahab was very intelligent and one of the staunchest enemy of Islam who was always eager to try and prove that the Qur'an was false and was of human invention. All that Abu Lahab had to do to prove the Qur'an and Surah Abu Lahab wrong was state 'I am a Muslim' - the Qur'an would have been proved wrong. He did not have to behave like a Muslim. Even if he falsely, for name sake say that he was a Muslim, the Qur'an would have been proved wrong in the eyes of men. It is as though the Prophet was telling Abu Lahab you hate me, you want to finish me, here say these words, 'I am a Muslim' and I am finished ! Come on say them! Imagine Abu Lahab had 10 years to think over it but yet he never uttered this statement. No logical person will ever put such a claim in his book. The Qur'an is a revelation and not the handiwork of the Prophet.

B. THE JEWS WILL NOT SEEK DEATH :

In Surah Baqarah chapter 2 verse 94 & 95

**"Say (O Muhammad), "If the home of the Hereafter with Allah is for you alone and not the (other) people, then wish for death, if you should be truthful."
" But never will they wish for it, ever, because of what their hands have put forth. And Allah is knowing of the wrongdoers."**

When the Jews came to the Muslims to have a confrontation, they said the last home with Allah, i.e. paradise, is especially meant for the Jews only and not for anyone else.

The Qur'an ask the Jews to seek death, if they were sincere and spoke the truth. The Qur'an continues and says that they (the Jews) will never seek death, because of the sins that they have committed. The only thing that Jews had to do at the time of Prophet (Pbuh) in order to win the argument and to prove the Qur'an wrong was to call for their own death. Even if any one of the Jews would have opted to say, "I beseech the Lord for my death" just for namesake, not that he actually had to die, the Qur'an would have been proved false. It was so easy to prove the Qur'an wrong.

The Qur'an continues in Surah Al-Baqrah chapter 2 verse 96

" And you will surely find them the most greedy of people for life - (even) more than those who associates others with Allah. One of them wishes that he could be granted life a thousand years, but it would not remove him in the least from the (coming) punishment that he should be granted life. And Allah is seeing of what they do."

C. CHRISTIANS WILL BE CLOSER TO MUSLIMS THAN THE JEWS :

There are certain falsification tests in the Qur'an, which are even applicable today and for all times. The Quran says in Surah Al-Maidah, Chapter 5 verse 82

“You will surely find the most intense of the people in animosity towards the believers (to be) the Jews and those who associate others with Allah, and you will find the nearest of them in affection to the believers those who say "We are Christians. That is because among them are priests and monks and because they are not arrogant.”

The Qur’an says that between the two groups of people - the Christians and the Jews - the Christians as a whole will treat Muslims better than the Jews as a whole will treat Muslims. There are several Jews who have accepted Islam while some others are good to Muslims, but as a whole community, the Jews will never be better than the Christians in their treatment of Muslims.

Today the Jews have a good opportunity to prove the Qur’an wrong. They have to organize themselves and decide as a whole that for a couple of years they will treat the Muslims kindly and better than what the Christian do. They can then ask the Muslims: "Who are your best friend in the world ? The Jews or the Christians ?" The Jews have not done so as yet, but the offer still stands open to them and they can still prove the Qur’an false by doing so - but they never will.

D. PRODUCE A SURAH LIKE IT :

Muslims and non Muslims alike acclaim that best Arabic literature available on the face of the earth is the Glorious Qur’an. Its language is rich, noble and eloquent.

When the pagans alleged that Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) had committed forgery and thus produced the Qur’an, the Qur’an immediately challenged them and offered them a falsification test.

(i) In Surah Al-Isra chapter 17 verse 88

“Say : “If mankind and the Jinns gathered in order to produce the like of this Qur’an, they could not produce the like of it, even if they were to each other assistants.”

The Qur’an repeats the challenge to produce a work like the Qur’an in Surah Tur Chapter 52 verse 34

(ii) Later the falsification test was made easier in Surah Hud chapter 11 verse 13

“Or do they say, "He invented it?" Say, "Then bring ten Surahs like it that have been invented and call upon (for assistance) whoever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful.”

(iii) The Qur’an repeats the challenge and further simplifies the falsification test in Surah Yunus chapter 10 verse 38.

CRITERIA FOR PRODUCING A SURAH LIKE IT :

The criteria for producing a surah like the Qur’an are as follows: since the Qur’an is in Arabic, the Surah so produced should also be in Arabic, which should be equivalent in standards to that of the Qur’an.

- (i) The Qur'an maintain throughout the highest possible standard of in its speech.
- (ii) The Language of the Qur'an is most clear, meaningful, intelligible, unsurpassable and miraculous.
- (iii) It does not deviate from the truth and still maintains its eloquence, rhythm and style unlike human poetry and literature.
- (iv) The Qur'an repeat several information in difference styles and by passages and narrations of varying sizes, all being of a very high standard that one cannot be preferred to another
- (v) The Qur'an encompasses a vast range of meaning in a surprisingly small number of words without losing its charm and majesty.
- (vi) The Ability of the Qur'an to address a multitude of people. The same verse of the Qur'an is appreciated by an intelligent person as well as a common man.

“Or do they say, “He invented it ? ” Say: “Then bring forth a Surah like it, and call upon (for assistance) whoever you can besides Allah, if you should be truthful.”

Even this easy challenge was unmet and thus the pagans had no ground to say that Prophet Muhammad had presented the Qur'an through forgery.

Finally the Qur'an put forward a falsification test, which is the easiest of all. In Surah Al-Baqarah chapter 2 verse 23 and 24.

“And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) upon our servant, then produce a Surah like thereof and call upon your witnesses (i.e. supporters) other than Allah, if you should be truthful.

But if you do not - and you will never be able to - then fear the Fire, whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.”

(2:23-24)

The Qur'an says 'Mim Mislihi ' i.e. somewhat similar, it does not say 'Mislihi' i.e. exactly similar, like in the previous challenge.

Certain Surahs of the Qur'an hardly contain three verses which consist of only a few words. Not that people did not take up the challenge, the best poets of Arabia at that time tried their level best but they miserably failed. Some of what they produced has been preserved in historical books to show that they were the laughing stock. They did not have a rhythm similar to verses of the Qur'an. The context of this verses were trivial, they contained no wisdom and were hilarious.

This is yet a standing challenge and a falsification test which is unanswered for the past 1400 years and will not be answered till eternity.

The Qur'an does not contain a single contradiction.

The Qur'an also gives a falsification test in Surah Nisa chapter 4 verse 82 which any one in the world

can try.

“Do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from (any) other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.”

Today if any one wants to prove that the Qur'an is not the word of God, he just has to point out a single contradiction in the Qur'an.

There are many unbelievers who tried to point out several alleged contradiction in the Qur'an but all of their attempts were either out of context, mistranslations or misquotations. A maulana who may be an expert in the historical knowledge of Qur'an and Islam but who is not very well versed in the field of science, and is asked regarding an alleged scientific mistake in the Qur'an, he may not be in a position to clarify it. This does not indicate that the Qur'an contains a scientific discrepancy and is thus not the word of God.

The Qur'an says in Surah Furqan chapter 25:59, 'Ask the person who is well – acquainted' meaning ask the person who has knowledge about that field. Similarly, if you want to enquire about the scientific knowledge mentioned in the Qur'an, you should ask a scientist. Similarly if you ask me a question regarding Arabic recitation of the Qur'an or if you point out a grammatical mistake in the Qur'an, I may not be able to answer your question because I am just a student in the field of Arabic.

Because I am unable to clarify the alleged Arabic mistake in the Qur'an that does not prove that Qur'an contains mistakes and is not the word of God.

The Qur'an says 'Ask the person who is well acquainted with'. Thus you should enquire with a Qari who is an expert in recitation of the Qur'an or a person who is an expert in Arabic grammar.

If you pose medical and scientific questions related to the Qur'an, I may be in a better position to clarify, not that I claim to be an expert in the field, but because I have studied medicine for over five years before obtaining the MBBS degree.

(To be continued)



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 10

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

In the nine articles that have appeared in this series, we have disproved and confuted all the allegations of disbelievers and critics regarding the origin of the Qur'an. The Qur'an earns your respect because you cannot disqualify it. The Qur'an is of Divine Origin. It is a revelation from the Creator of the humankind.

QURANIC CONCEPT OF GOD:

EVERY THEIST SHOULD AGREE THAT QUR'AN IS THE WORD OF GOD :

No logical person who believes in the existence of God can deny that Qur'an is God's word after being presented all these proofs (please refer all nine articles in this series). To the atheist who does not believe in the existence of god, the question, "is the Qur'an the God's word?" is baseless. He does not believe in God, therefore such a question does not arise in his mind.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ATHEISTS:

The first thing I would like to do, on meeting an atheist is say 'congratulations'. Most of those who believe in some concept of god have blind faith or belief. Many a person is a Christian, because his father is a Christian; many others are Hindus because their parents are Hindus. Many Muslims are Muslims simply because their parents are Muslims. A vast majority of the people in the world blindly follow the religion of their parents. An atheist, on the other hand, even though he may be belong to a religious family, uses his intellect while denying the existence of God because he / she disagrees with the qualities of God that he has learnt in his religion or from his parents.

Muslims may question me: "Zakir, why do you congratulate an atheist?" The reason that I congratulate an atheist is because he agrees with the first part of the Shahaadah i.e. Islamic creed which reads 'Laa ilahaa' i.e. 'there is no God'. Half the job is already done. Now the only part left for such a person today is 'illallah' i.e. 'except Allah'. Whereas with others, one has to first remove the wrong concepts of god they have in their minds, and then put the concept of the one true God.

LOGICAL CONCEPT OF GOD:

My first question to the atheist is “what is the definition of God?” For a person to say there is no God, he should know what the meaning of God is. Suppose I hold a book and say ‘this is a pen’. The opposite person should know the definition of a pen for him to refute and say that it is not a pen. Even if he does not know what I am holding in my hand, for him to say that this is not a pen, he should at least know what does a pen mean. In a similar manner, for an atheist to say ‘there is no god’, he should at least know the concept of God. His concept of God is derived from the surroundings in which he lives or has been brought up. The deity that people worship has human qualities and hence he does not believe in such a god. Similarly, a Muslim too does believe in such false gods.

If a non-Muslim believes that Islam is a merciless religion that preaches terrorism, a religion that does not give rights to women, a religion that contradicts science, in this limited sense that non-Muslim is correct to reject his notion of Islam. The problem is that he has a wrong picture of Islam. Even I reject such a false picture of Islam, but at the same time, it is my duty as a Muslim to present the correct picture of Islam to that Non-Muslim. It is up to us to remove misconceptions and explain that Islam is a merciful religion, that it gives equal rights to women, it does not conflict with logic, reason and science – and once we do so, that non-Muslim may InshaAllah accept Islam.

Similarly, an atheist rejects the false models, notions and concepts of god. It is the duty of every Muslim to present the correct concept of God.

CONCEPT OF GOD ACCORDING TO SURAH IKHLAAS:

The best definition, of Almighty God, that you can find in the Qur’an is in *Surah Ikhlāas*, Chapter 112 verse 1-4

“Say he is Allah, the one and only.
the eternal, the absolute.
He begets not, nor is He begotten
And there is none like Him”.
(112:1-4)

The word ‘*assamad*’ is difficult to translate. It means that absolute existence can be attributed only to Allah, all other existence being temporal or conditional. It also means Allah is not dependant on any person or thing but all persons and things are dependent on Him.

This is a four-line definition of Almighty God according to Qur’an. If any candidate claims to be God and satisfies this definition, we Muslims have no objection in accepting such a candidate as god. This *Surah Ikhlāas* is the acid test – it is the ‘*Furqan*’ or the criteria to judge between the One True God and the false claimants to divinity. Whichever deity that any human being on the face of this earth worships – if that deity fulfils these four criteria then such a deity is none else than the one true God.

For example, if some one says that Bhagwaan Rajneesh or ‘Osho’ is Almighty God, lets put Rajneesh to test. The first criteria is ‘*Qul hu Allahu Ahad*’ i.e. “say he is Allah, one and only”.

a. It is the touch stone of Theology

Surah Ikhlaas i.e. Chapter 112 of the Glorious Qur'an is the touchstone of Theology. 'Theo' in Greek means God and 'logy' means study. Thus 'Theology' means 'study of God' and *Surah Ikhlaas* is the touchstone of the study of God.

If you want to purchase or sell your gold jewellery, you would first evaluate it. Such an evaluation of gold jewellery is done by a goldsmith with the help of a touchstone. He rubs the gold jewellery on the touch stone and compares its colour with rubbing samples of gold. If it matches with 24 Karat gold he will tell that your jewellery is 24 Karat pure gold. If it is not high quality pure Gold, he will tell you its value whether 22 Karats, 18 Karats or it may not be gold at all. It may be fake because all that glitters is not gold.

Similarly *Surah Ikhlaas* (Chapter 112 of the Qur'an) is the touchstone of theology, which can verify whether the deity that you worship is a true God or a false God. Thus, *Surah Ikhlaas* is a four-line definition of Almighty God according to the Qur'an. If any one claims to be, or is believed to be Almighty God, and satisfies this four-line definition, we Muslims will readily accept that deity as God. This Chapter of the Glorious Qur'an, *Surah Ikhlaas*, is the acid test. It is the '*Furqan*' or the criterion to judge between the one True God and false claimants to divinity. Hence, whichever deity any human on earth worships, if such a deity fulfills the criteria specified in this Chapter of the Qur'an, then this deity is worthy of worship and is the One True God.

b. Is Bhagwan Rajneesh God?

Some people say that Bhagwan Rajneesh or Osho Rajneesh is Almighty God. Please note my words; I have stated that some people say that Bhagwan Rajneesh is Almighty God. Once during a question-answer session there was a Hindu gentleman who misunderstood my statement. He said that Hindus do not worship Rajneesh as God. I am aware that Hinduism does not consider Rajneesh to be God. Rajneesh has followers, who are converts to his philosophy / ideology, but who were originally followers of various different religions.

Let us put this candidate Bhagwan Rajneesh to the test of Divinity as prescribed by *Surah Ikhlaas*, the touchstone of Divinity.

(i) The First Criterion is '*Qul hu Allah hu ahad*' – 'say, He is Allah one and only'. Is Rajneesh one and only? We know several such fake god-men and claimants of divinity amongst humans. Several are found in our country, India. Rajneesh is surely not one and only. Not as a human and not even as a human claimant to godhood. However, some disciples of Rajneesh may still state that Rajneesh is unique and that he is one and only.

(ii) Let us analyze the second criterion '*Allah hus samad*' – 'Allah the Absolute and Eternal'. Is Rajneesh absolute and eternal? We know from his biography that he suffered from diabetes, asthma, and chronic backache. He alleged that the U.S.A. government gave him slow poison while he was in their jail. Imagine! Almighty God being poisoned! Moreover, all are aware that Rajneesh

died and was cremated / buried. So Rajneesh was neither eternal, nor absolute

(iii) The third Criteria is '*Lam ya lid wa lam yu lad*' – 'He begets not, nor is begotten'. However, Rajneesh was begotten. He was born in Jabalpur in India. Like all humans, he too had a mother and a father. Later on they chose to become his disciples.

Rajneesh was a very intelligent person. In May 1981 he went to U.S.A. He established a town in Oregon and named it 'Rajneeshpuram'. It seems that he took America for a ride for the U.S. government arrested him and later deported him out of America in 1985. So Rajneesh returned to India and started a 'Rajneesh Neosanyas commune in Pune in India which was later renamed the 'Osho commune'.

If you visit this 'Osho commune' in Pune you will find it written on his tombstone, "Osho - never born, never died, only visited the planet earth between 11th Dec. 1931 to 19th Jan 1990". They conveniently forget to mention on this tombstone that Rajneesh was not given a visa for 21 different countries of the world. Imagine Almighty God visiting the earth and requiring a visa! The Arch Bishop of Greece had said that if Rajneesh was not deported they would burn his house and those of his disciples.

(iv) The fourth test is so stringent that none besides the One True God, Allah (swt), can pass it. '*Wa lam ya kullahu kufwan ahad*' which means, 'there is none like Him'. The moment you can imagine or compare the candidate or claimant to godhood to anything, this candidate is not god. Neither can you have a mental picture of God.

We know that Rajneesh was a human being. He had one head, two hands, two feet, and a white flowing beard. The moment you can think or imagine what the claimant to godhood is, he or she is not god.

Suppose someone says, "God is a thousand times as strong as Arnold Schwarzenegger". Arnold Schwarzenegger is one of the strongest men on earth. He was given the title 'Mr. Universe'. The moment you can compare Almighty God to anything, whether it is a 1000 times stronger or a million times stronger, whether it be Darasingh or Kingkong, the moment you can compare the claimant to godhood to anything, he is not God. '*Wa lam ya kul lahu kufwan ahad*' 'there is none like Him.'

(To be continued)



IS THE QUR'AN GOD'S WORD? – Part 11

By

Dr. Zakir Naik

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

TO ALLAH BELONG THE MOST BEAUTIFUL NAMES:

(i) The Qur'an mentions in Surah Isra Chapter 17 Verse 110:

**Say: "Call upon Allah, or
Call upon Rahman;
By whatever name ye call
Upon Him, (it is well):
For to Him belong
The Most Beautiful Names
(Al Qur'an 17:110)**

You can call Allah by any name but that name should be beautiful and should not conjure up a mental picture. The Qur'an gives no less than 99 different attributes to Almighty God. Some of these are *Ar-Rahman, Ar-Raheem, Al-Hakeem*; Most Gracious, Most Merciful and All Wise. Ninety nine different names / attributes and the crowning one, the hundredth one is Allah. To Allah belongs the most beautiful names – the Qur'an repeats this message in:

- (i) Surah Al Aaraf Chapter 7 Verse 180
- (ii) In Surah Taha Chapter 20 Verse 8
- (iii) In Surah Al Hashr Chapter 59 Verse 23 and 24

NAME ALLAH PREFERED TO THE WORD 'GOD'

The Muslims prefer calling Allah (swt) with His Name Allah, instead of the English word 'God'. The Arabic word Allah is pure and unique, unlike the English word God which can be played around with.

If you add 's' to God, it becomes 'gods' that is plural of God. Allah is one and singular, there is no plural of Allah. If you add 'dess' to God, it becomes "goddess" that is a female God. There is nothing like male Allah or female Allah. Allah has no gender. If you add father to God, it becomes 'godfather'. "He is my Godfather" means that "he is my guardian". There is nothing like 'Allah *Abba*' or 'Allah father' in Islam. If you add mother to God it becomes 'godmother', there is nothing like 'Allah *Ammi*' or 'Allah Mother' in Islam. If you put tin before God, it becomes tin-god i.e. a fake God, there is nothing like 'tin Allah' or 'fake Allah' in Islam. Allah is a unique word, which does not conjure up any mental picture nor can it be played around with. Hence, the Muslims prefer the name Allah when referring to the Almighty Creator. But sometimes while speaking to non-Muslims we may have to use

the inappropriate word God for Allah.

QURAN AND MODERN SCIENCE

These methods of proving the existence of God to an atheist may satisfy some but not all. Many atheists demand a scientific proof for the existence of God. I do agree that today is the age of science and technology. Let us use the scientific knowledge that we have to prove the existence of God and simultaneously also prove that Qur'an is a revelation of God.

If a new object or a machine, which no one in the world has ever seen or heard of before is shown to an atheist or any other person and then asked a question, who is the first person who will be able to tell the mechanism of this unknown object? After little bit of thinking, he will reply 'the Creator of that object'. Some may say 'the Producer' while other may say 'the manufacturer'. Whatever answer the person gives, keep it in your mind, the answer will always be either 'the Creator', 'the Producer', 'the manufacturer' or somewhat of the same meaning i.e. the person who has made it or created it. Do not grapple with words, for whatever answer he gives the meaning will be the same; therefore accept it.

SCIENTIFIC FACTS MENTIONED IN THE QUR'AN:

THEORY OF PROBABILITY:

In Mathematics, there is a theory known as 'Theory of Probability'. If you have two options, out of which one is right, and one is wrong, the chances that you will choose the right one is half i.e. one out of the two will be correct. You have 50% chances of being correct, similarly if you toss a coin the chances that your guess will be correct is 50% (1 out of 2) i.e. $\frac{1}{2}$. If you toss a coin the second time, the chances that you will be correct in the second toss is again 50% i.e. $\frac{1}{2}$. But the chances that you will be correct in both the tosses is half x half ($\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$) which is equal to $\frac{1}{4}$. i.e. 50% of 50% i.e. equal to 25%. If you toss a coin the third time, chances that you will be correct all three times is ($\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$) that is $\frac{1}{8}$ or 50% of 50% of 50% that is 12.5%.

A dice has got six sides. If you throw a dice and guess any number between 1 and 6, the chances that your guess will be correct are $\frac{1}{6}$. If you throw the dice the second time, the chances that your guess will be correct in both the throws is ($\frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{6}$) which is equal to $\frac{1}{36}$. If you throw the dice the third time, the chances that all your three guesses are correct is ($\frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{6} \times \frac{1}{6}$) is equal to $\frac{1}{216}$ that is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ a percent.

Let us apply this theory of probability to the Qur'an, and assume that a person has guessed all the information that is mentioned in the Qur'an, which was unknown at that time. Let us discuss the probability of all the guesses being correct.

At the time when the Qur'an was revealed, people thought the world was flat. There are several other options for the shape of the earth. It could be triangular; it could be quadrangular, pentagonal, hexagonal, heptagonal, octagonal, spherical, etc. Let's assume there are about 30 different options for the shape of the earth. The Qur'an rightly says it is spherical, if it was a guess the chances of the guess being correct is $\frac{1}{30}$.

The light of the moon can be its own light or a reflected light. The Qur'an rightly says it is a reflected light. If it was a guess, the chances that it will be correct is $\frac{1}{2}$ and the probability that both the guesses i.e. the earth is spherical and the light of the moon is reflected light is $\frac{1}{30} \times \frac{1}{2} = \frac{1}{60}$.

Further the Qur'an also mentions every living thing made up of water. The options are say about 10,000. Every living thing can be made up of either wood, stone, copper, aluminium, steel, silver, gold, oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, oil, water, cement, concrete etc. The Qur'an rightly says that every living thing is made up of water. Therefore if it's a guess, the chances that it will be correct is 1/10,000 and the probability of all the three guesses i.e. earth is spherical, light of moon is reflected, every living thing is created from water being correct is $1/30 \times \frac{1}{2} \times 1/10,000 = 1/600,000$ which is equal to about .00017%.

The Qur'an speaks about hundreds of things that were not known at that time. Only in three options the result is .00017%. I leave it up to you the intellectual audience to work out the probability if all the hundreds of the unknown facts were guesses, the chances of all the guesses being correct and not a single wrong. It is beyond human capacity to have all the guesses correct without a single mistake, which in itself is sufficient to prove to a logical person that the origin of the Qur'an is divine.

QUR'AN IS A BOOK OF SIGNS AND NOT SCIENCE:

Let me remind you that Qur'an is not a book of Science, 'S.C.I.E.N.C.E.' but a book of 'signs' – S.I.G. N.S. i.e. a book of ayaats. The Qur'an contains more than 6000 ayaats that is 'signs' out of which more than a thousand speak about science. For Muslims, the Qur'an is the '*Furqaan*' i.e. the criteria to judge right from wrong and it is the ultimate yard stick which is more superior to scientific knowledge. But for an educated man who is an atheist, scientific knowledge is the ultimate test, which he believes in. Using the ultimate yardstick of the atheist, I try to prove to him that the Qur'an is the word of God and while it was revealed 1400 ago, it contains the scientific knowledge that was discovered recently. Therefore at the end of the discussion, we both come to the same conclusion that God, though superior to science, does not conflict with it.

CREATOR IS THE AUTHOR OF THE QURAN:

The only logical answer to the question, who could have mentioned all these scientific facts 1400 years ago before they were discovered, is exactly the same answer as was initially given by the atheist or any person, to the question who is the first person who will be able to tell the mechanism of the unknown object. It is the 'CREATOR,' the Producer, the Manufacturer. Another name in the English Language for this Creator, Producer, Manufacturer of the whole universe and its contents, is 'God' or more appropriately in the Arabic Language is 'Allah'.

SCIENCE IS ELIMINATING MODELS OF GOD BUT NOT GOD:

Francis Bacon, the famous philosopher, has rightly said that a little knowledge of science makes you an atheist, but an in-depth study of science makes you a believer in God. Scientists today are eliminating models of God, but they are not eliminating God.

If you translate this act – of rejecting false models and wrong notions of God – into Arabic, it is '*La ilaaha illal lah*' which means "there is no god, but God".

"There is no god (god with a small 'g' that is fake deities), but God (with a capital 'G')

Surah Fussilat chapter 41 verse 53:

"Soon will we show them our signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifest to them that this is truth. Is it not enough that thy lord doth witness all things?" (41: 53)

And Our Final Call is – All praises are for the One and Only God and Creator Allah, who alone is worthy of devotion, complete submission and worship. I declare that there is no other deity or god besides Allah. I also declare that Prophet Muhammad is the Last and Final Messenger of Allah.

