

Lesson 21: Al-Qur'an, the Miracle of Islam

Prophets and Miracles

Divine Prophets have always been sent with clear signs, so that men might be convinced that they had come from God.

For this reason those who have souls like polished mirrors and like clear transparent springs, glistening and pure so that they can recognise these signs commit themselves and have faith; like the magicians of Pharaoh's time who, when they saw the amazing miracles of Musa (a.s.), how the staff became a poisonous serpent, understood that this was beyond the power of a human being, believed in him and ignored Pharaoh's intimidation.

The disciples of Isa (a.s.) also saw with their own eyes the effects of his breath when he breathed into the bodies of the dead, and, by the will of God, raised the dead and gave them life. They were attracted to him, and the souls and spirits of the dead were given everlasting life through faith in Isa (a.s.).

The Prophet of Islam (S), who was the last prophet and the best and greatest of them, and who brought an everlasting religion, the perfection of all religions, which last came at the time of his mission, with clear signs from God, so that he could be clearly a proof of the legitimacy of His true and perfect religion.

The Qur'an, the Everlasting Miracle

Thus it was that the Qur'an the everlasting document of Islam, appeared on the horizon of human thoughts and ideas. The torch which will always shine at the apex of the great religion of Muhammad (S) at the highest peak of human intellects, as long as the sun rises in the East. It is a brilliant divine sign whose lights, like the rays of the sun, are essential in every era and century and for always, for the continuance of life and the safeguarding of the happiness of all races and classes of humanity.

Within this framework and on this foundation, all that is necessary for man's guidance has come.

It elucidates the foundations of belief and also the relation of man and God and the ways of

strengthening that relation in words with the softness of the clear waters of murmuring brooks, and the firmness of the standing mountains, attractive, eloquent and strong. It describes the social responsibilities of man; it teaches the ways and the rules of social behaviour.

It puts an end to class differences—and unequal divisions. It wishes the highest in man and his brotherhood and equality and his elevation.

Unequaled Eloquence

Being conversant with vocabulary and having a good knowledge of words at one's fingertips is not such a great difficulty, but their combination and arrangement and harmonisation in a style which has regard for eloquence and fluency, and the construction of phrases with a variety of expression yet in the same way in which they arise in the mind, is the most important skill, and it is something which is not practicable without observing the narrow rules of literary exactness, 'and using craftsmanship and eloquence.

In the art of eloquence, it is said that for eloquence in any speaking or writing it is necessary to observe three principles:

- 1) Proficiency in words and their meanings
- 2) Power of thought and subtlety of eloquence
- 3) Power of expression or skill with the pen

But it must always be kept in mind that although all the rules and requirements of eloquence may be heeded, no one can claim that his speech or writing is always the best, and that no-one can parallel him.

However, Allah the Exalted, Whose range of power and knowledge is without limit, has so variously decorated His words in the Qur'an with arrangements and harmonisation's of words that no-one, be he the most eloquent man on earth, can bring it's like. And this is the secret of the eternity of the Qur'an the everlasting prophetic document of Hazrat Muhammad (S).

The Qur'an according to the testament of history, shone at that time when the Arabs were at the zenith of their literary development. The famous poets and great orators, Imra'ul-Qais Labid etc., who are still counted as outstanding geniuses in the field of literature, wrote poems and gave orisons which sometimes reached the limits of greatness and which were written on curtains and golden plaques and attached to the wall of the Ka'abah.

But, with the rising of the brilliant sun of the Qur'an all of these lost their light and were eclipsed like the stars. The eloquent Arabs were left bewildered by the eloquence of the Qur'an which was such that the

enemies who were full of hate for Islam and Muhammad (S) who even took to the sword to wipe him and his religion out, were unable, with all their efforts, to find even one short mistake in the language and expression of the Qur'an.

The Enemies' Judgement

It was the time of Hajj People were coming to Mecca from everywhere, and the Quraysh were uncomfortable from fear that the news of Muhammads Prophethood might have an effect on the new arrivals. So a group of the Quraysh with Walid at their head, gathered round them and related what unjust things they could about the Prophet and thus dissuaded the new arrivals from meeting him. Then when they were gathered, one of them said, "Let us say this man is soothsayer."

"They will not believe us," said Walid "for his speech is not like the sayings of soothsayers."

"Let us say he is mad," someone else volunteered.

"No one will accept that," Walid replied, "because his speech and Behaviour are not like a lunatic's."

"We shall say he is a poet," they said.

"This also will not work, because Arabs know all kinds of poetry, and his words are not like a poem."

"We shall say he is a sorcerer."

"Sorcerers have special methods, like tying knots and blowing on them, and Muhammad does nothing like this."

Then Walid himself declared, "I swear by God, the speech of that man has a special sweetness and pleasantness. His speech is like a tree, luxuriant, with steady deep roots and branches, which bend down laden with fruit. Thus we can say to people that his speech is bewitched, because it Causes separation between father and child, wife and sister and brother.^{[1](#)}"

To discover the Qur'an eloquence, and also to find out that it is at the summit of eloquence, non-Arab speakers can turn back to the sayings of those Arabs who were experts in the language of those days and which are recorded in history, and also to present day authors who write on this subject, and to the acknowledgements of those specialists in this branch.

Fortunately, from the time of the Prophet (S) till now, all specialists in the art of Arabic eloquence have confessed to the unparalleled eloquence of the Qur'an and have been overwhelmed in the face of it. For example, the famous contemporary Arab writer Abdulfatah Tabari writes: "Arab history tells us of many famous men, knowledgeable in the best poetry and prose, like Ibn-el-Muqaffa', Jahiz ibn 'Amid, Farazdaq Bashshar Abu Nuwas Abu Tammam and so forth, but all of them have shown humility when faced with the Qur'an and have of necessity confessed that the great Qur'an is not of the words of man,

but a Divine Revelation.[2](#)

Dr. Taha Husayn the powerful contemporary Egyptian writer, said: “The Qur’an transcends the limits of prose and poetry; because it has special qualities which cannot be found in any poem or prose. So the Qur’an cannot be called poetry or prose, rather it should be said: ‘It is the Qur’an that is all.’”[3](#)

Harmonisation of its Themes

The speech or writing of a person, however skilful or eloquent he may be, will not be uniform in all conditions and circumstances. In particular, the works which appear in the days of any author's first writings are very different from the works which come after many years and as the result of much experience and repeated practice; the later works are almost always better.

But the Qur’an in that it was sent down in the course of 23 years, and in that it was revealed in various circumstances and like a long flowing river passed over various stony places, rapids, narrows, valleys and plains, and witnessed many amazing events, it remained forever, like a spring, clear and fresh. The unity and harmony of the themes and the style and expression of the Qur’an are a source for wonder. We see this wonder reach its apex, and notice in the contents of the Qur’an that many different subjects are dealt with, but the style and unity of expression remain constant.

It is dear that if someone, when he reached a stage of mastery over a special subject, shows what he can do, he may display brilliance but if he undertakes something in another branch of which he is not a master, he will not produce any distinctive work. But the Qur’an shines to an amazing degree in every area.

Scientific Wonders in the Qur’an

Although the first and basic aim of the Qur’an according to what it says itself, is only to guide man to the great road of contentment and prosperity in the life of this world, the world of man, and on the way, in pursuing this aim, it expresses many truths from human knowledge in the natural sciences, in physiology and astronomy.

And this is itself another great sign of the wonder of the Qur’an For the Prophet, according to the definite testimony of history, had never studied, grew up in an environment completely devoid of human knowledge and science (except literature and was far from the centres of science of those days Greece, Rome, Iran.

Now let us see some indications of this wonder:

1. Meteorology is a very new science. The knowledge of former peoples about the phenomena of clouds, wind, rain and snow did not go beyond conjecture and what they could see, and, generally speaking, it had an air of imaginativeness and chance and was never established on a scientific basis.

Captains and farmers both had their signs and indications for forecasting wind and rain, but they did not really understand these phenomena. Thus things went on for thousands of years, till in the 17th century AD the thermometer, and in the 19th century the telegraph, and, gradually, other things necessary for meteorology were invented and discovered. In their turn, scientists settled down to research, till, in the first half of the 20th century, the Norwegian scientist, Byerkness succeeded in discovering the general laws of the formation and movements of clouds and the occurrence of storms and rains in all places.

After him, the extent of discoveries in this science, as in other areas, progressed: the rain-bearing properties of clouds, how rain is released from them, the formation and occurrence of hail, matters relating to thunderbolts and thunder and lightning and storms in tropical areas, air currents near the surface of the earth, and other matters, till knowledge reached extensive limits.

But fifteen centuries ago, when the Qur'an told about the winds and the rain and other phenomena, it was right when it told us about the latest, newest discoveries of meteorology. For example, it has now been proved that it is possible for a cloud to reach saturation point but to yield no rain, and for it to be just microscopic particles tiny enough to hang suspended in the air and not to fall and cause rain; however, by means of invisible particles of salt which are blown by the wind from the surface of the sea it will rain.

Or, something more important; the humidity in the air gathers round the crystallised snowflakes which lie at high altitudes and which are scattered by the wind. Eventually small drops and the first rain unite together, and, as a result of mixing and colliding together in the wind, they gradually become bigger and bigger, and because of their own relatively heavy weight fall from the massed clouds.[4](#)

This is what the Qur'an made clear 15 centuries ago:

And We send winds for making fruitful and then we send down water from the sky, thus We give it unto you to drink of it. (15: 22)

2. Until the invention of the aircraft and the possibility of highflying, man's knowledge and experience did not encompass needles of ice beyond the clouds. Till then no-one knew that mountains of ice-needles existed in the sky above man's heads.[5](#)

But the Qur'an is very clear when it says:

He sendeth down from the sky, from mountains therein, hail. (24: 43)

3. Living things in other worlds.

Man, with the help of his knowledge of space, has set foot on the moon, but the matter of the existence of living things on other worlds has not proceeded beyond theory, and we can say that, from many signs, only is it possible that there are living things such as animals or man on some other planets and stars. But the Qur'an declares unambiguously:

And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and of what He hath spread out in both of them of animate beings and for their gathering together when He willeth; He is All-Powerful. (42:29)

4. In Surah 36 (Ya-Sin), we have:

Glory be to He Who created all the pairs of what the earth produces, and of themselves, and of what they know not. (36: 36)

And in Surah 20 (Ta-Ha), we read:

And sent down water out of the sky, and therewith We have brought forth various pairs of plants. (20:53)

In times when man's knowledge did not permit the respected interpreters of the Qur'an to know that plants and growing things came in pairs and couples, they interpreted and observed pairing in classes, species or by form and matter or other philosophical terms which do not exist in the pages of the Qur'an. But today. On the basis of new research, it has been discovered that not only are men and animals created in pairs, but other living things also. One of the most amazing phenomena in the world is the pairing and fertilisations of plants, which is all explained in Natural science books.

The Qur'an Makes a Challenge

Not only from the point of view of eloquence, but also, as we have seen, in the fields of human ideas and society, and for all levels of understanding, the Qur'an is a miracle. For rhetoricians it has its eloquence, for philosophers its wisdom, and for scientists its different kinds knowledge. For all these reasons the Qur'an addresses all people and says: "If you say this book is the word of man, bring its like and its equal."

"Say: 'If man and jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur'an they would never produce its like, not though they back one another.'" (17: 88)

"Or do they say: 'He has forged it'? Say: 'Then bring you ten surahs the like of it, forged; and call upon who you are able, apart from Allah if you speak truly.' Then if they do not answer you, know that it has been sent down with Allah's knowledge, and that there is no god but He." (11: 13-14)

"And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down on Our servant, then bring a surah like it." (2: 23)

But we see from the testimony of history that from then till now no one has had the courage to do this and produce its like. Of course, during the time of Muhammad (S) and after his death, some Arabs, like Musailamah, Sajah and Ibn Abil-'Awja planned to challenge it but they were not able, and eventually

confessed to their incapacity.

In the time of the Prophet (S) the enemies of Islam, who used the most awful means in their work, torturing the Muslims, laying economic boycotts on them, plotting to kill Muhammad (S) and so forth, had no-one who could do a simple thing like 'bringing one surah like the Qur'an;

In the present day, too, the scholars who spend millions of dollars trying to destroy Islam would certainly attack it in this inexpensive and easy way (bringing a surah like the Qur'an if they could. If they had been able to do that up to now, it would have been a victory for them and the end of Islam and the news would have been blown on all the trumpets of the world's newsmen.

In the end it is necessary to remind ourselves that if we get to know the Qur'an or get to know it better and put its great, magnificent and precise project into action, greatness will be ours, and more.

The huge edifice of our, the Muslims, greatness collapsed when we stopped putting the commands of this heavenly book into practice. So we fell down, we were satisfied only with the name of Islam.

Our departed greatness will return when we leave this crooked way and, starting again, become new Muslims and put the Qur'an at the top of the sights of our hearts and our wisdom, and make it an example for life, as the Prophet said:

“When calamities encompass you like the darkness of the night, reach for the Qur'an.[6](#)

Questions

1. Why do prophets show miracles?
2. What kind of people can appreciate miracles?
3. What is an everlasting document, the torch that always shine, peak of human intellects, and brilliant divine sign, and why?
4. How does eloquence in speech come about?
5. Can one consider his eloquent speech unparalleled?
6. How eloquent were the people of the times of Imra'ul Qays?
7. What kinds of documents were being hung over the walls of the Kaba?
8. What made these documents lose their value?
9. Can you mention briefly the planning and proposals of Arabs against the Prophet?
10. What did Walid say and propose?

11. Can you name some of the great Arab orators and poets from the time of the Holy Prophet until this day?
12. Are all works of writer uniform through his life?
13. What is the case with the Holy Qur'an?
14. What is the basic agenda of the Holy Qur'an?
15. Did Prophet Muhammad live in a scientific community?
16. Who discovered general laws of cloud formations?
17. What does verse 22 ch. 5 say and does it agree with today's views of rain and cloud formations?
18. What does verse 43 ch. 24 say about ice?
19. What does verse 29 ch. 42 and verse 36 ch 36 say?
20. What does verse 53 ch. 20 say and what is the meaning of created in pairs?
21. What does verse 88 ch. 17 and verse 13–14 ch. 11 and verse 23 ch. 2 say and is such challenge still valid?
22. What has ignoring and practising the guidance of Qur'an has done to Muslims?

1. This saying of Walid refers to the fact that every new Muslim by his acceptance of Islam engages in—a new direction so that he is sometimes forced to wash his hands of his own people or to oppose their beliefs.

2. Ruh al-Din al-Islami, Beirut, p. 30–32.

3. Ibid.

4. Mehdi Barzagan, *asad wa Baran afar Qur'an* p. 19–25, 59–60.

5. Ibid, p. 140–143

6. Usul al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 599.

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/roots-religion/lesson-21-al-quran-miracle-islam#comment-0>