

The Quran

الرَّكَّتَبُ أَنْزَلْنَاهُ إِلَيْكَ لِتُخْرِجَ النَّاسَ مِنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ
إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ

"Alif Laam Raa. A book which we have revealed to you (Muhammad) so that you may lead the people from out of the darkness into the light by their Lord's leave to the path of the All-Mighty, the Praiseworthy." Quran 14:1

The Qur'an is a Message from Allah to humanity. It was transmitted to us in a chain starting from the Almighty Himself (Swt) to the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). This message was given to the Prophet (Pbuh) in pieces over a period spanning approximately 23 years (610 CE to 622 CE). The Prophet (Pbuh) was 40 years old when the Qur'an began to be revealed to him, and he was 63 when the revelation was completed. The language of the original message was Arabic, but it has been translated into many other languages.

The Qur'an is one leg of two, which form the basis of Islam. The second leg is the Sunnah of the Prophet (Pbuh). What makes the Qur'an different from the Sunnah is primarily its form. Unlike the Sunnah, the Qur'an is quite literally the Word of Allah, whereas Allah inspired the Sunnah but the wording and actions are the Prophet's. The Qur'an has not been expressed using any human's words. Its wording is letter for letter fixed by no one but Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) was the final Messenger of Allah to humanity, and therefore the Quran is the last Message, which Allah has sent to us. Its predecessors such as the Torah, Psalms, and Gospels have all been superseded. It is an obligation - and blessing - for all who hear of the Qur'an and Islam to investigate it and evaluate it for themselves. Allah has guaranteed that He will protect the Qur'an from human tampering, and today's readers can find exact copies of it all over the world. The Qur'an of today is the same as the Qur'an revealed to Muhammad (Pbuh).

What is the Quran?

As you come to the Quran, you come to a new world. No other venture in your life can be so momentous and crucial, so blissful and rewarding, as your journey to and through the Quran. It is a journey that will take you through the endless joys and riches of the words that your Creator and Lord has sent to you and all mankind.

In the Quran you will find a world of untold treasures of knowledge and wisdom to guide you on the pathways of life, to mould your thoughts and actions. In it you will find deep insights to enrich you and steer you along the right course. From it you will receive a radiant light to illumine the deeper reaches of your soul. Here you will encounter profound emotions, a warmth to melt your heart and bring tears running down your cheeks. It is crucial for you because, as you travel through the Quran, at every step you will summon to choose, and to commit to Allah.

To read the Quran is nothing less than to live the Quran willingly, sincerely, devotedly, and totally. The outcome of your entire life depends on how you heed the call given by Allah. The journey is therefore decisive for your existence, for mankind, for the future of human civilization. A hundred new worlds lie in its verses. Whole centuries are involved in its moments. Know, then, that it is the Quran, and only the Quran, which can lead you on and on to success and glory in this world and in the world to come.

The Quran is Allah's greatest blessing or you. It is the fulfillment of His promise to Adam and his descendants: **“there shall come to you guidance from Me, and whatsoever follows My Guidance no fear shall be on them, neither shall they sorrow”** Quran 2:38.

It is the only weapon your frail existence as you struggle against the forces of evil and temptation in this world. It is the only means to overpower your fear and anxiety. It is the only light, as you grope in the darkness, with which to find your way to success and salvation. It is the only healing for your inner sickness, as well as the social ills that may surround you. It is the constant reminder of your true nature and destiny, of your station, your duties, and your reward. It tells you of Him, of His attributes, of how He you worship Him, and how you should relate to Him, and how to deal with other fellow men and creatures. The rewards that await you here are surely many, increasing manifold and the hereafter, but what awaits you at the end of the road promises Allah in the Hadith Qudsi, the eye has seen not, nor the ear heard, nor the heart of man ever conceived and, adds Abu Hurayra 'no human being can imagine what joys are being kept hidden for them in d or all that they did”

Quran As Living Constitution

Can the Quran again, be living, relevant force, as powerful for us now 1400 years away, as it was then? This is the most crucial question that we must answer if we wish to shape our destiny afresh under the guidance of the Quran.

Some one might say that we have traveled a long way, made gigantic leaps in technological know-how, and seen considerable social changes take place in human society. Moreover, most of the followers of the Quran today do not know Arabic, and many who do have little idea of the 'living' language of the Quran. Yet its guidance has an eternal relevance for all people, at all time, being the word of the Eternal God, it is possible for us to receive, experience, and understand the Quran as it's first recipients did and receive God's guidance in its fullness and with all its riches and joys. In other words despite historical incidence of the revelation in a particular language at that particular time and place, we are capable of receiving the Quran now (because its message is eternal), capable of making its message as much a real part of our lives as it was for the first believers and with the same urgent and profound relevance for all our present concerns and experiences

“This is the Book, whereof there is no doubt, a guidance to those who are the pious and righteous persons who fear Allah and love Him, Who believe in the Unseen, perform prayers and spend out of what We have provided for them (Zakat), And who believe in which has been sent down (revealed) to you Muhammad (Pbuh)) and in that which were sent down before you and they believe with certainty in the Hereafter. They are on (true) guidance from their Lord, and they are the successful.” Quran 2:2-5

The Quran address enormous range of topics. It tells us about God, His attributes, man's position in the universe, his aim in life and how to attain that aim, how we stand in relation to God and to our fellow-beings. It gives details of what one should believe and how it should be put into practice. The next life is described in it in full. Histories of previous nations and their prophets, as well as many events from the life of the Holy Prophet himself, are also given in the Quran. It gives arguments to disprove false beliefs of all kinds, and answers all sorts of questions and objections raised about its teachings and about the Holy Prophet. Guidance, laws and regulations on everyday subjects such as family life, business dealings, the law, war and peace, women's rights, hygiene, government and democracy, etc., is also to be found in the Holy Book. When dealing with any topic, the Holy Quran gives reasons, arguments and evidence to support its teachings, and it challenges those who disagree with it to produce proof of their views. That what make the Quran living Holy Book.

Miracles of Quran

The Quran, this extraordinary book is a source of inspiration and true knowledge. The book of Islam-no matter what subject it refers to-is being proved as Allah's Word as each new piece of historical, scientific or archaeological information comes to light. Facts about scientific subjects and the news delivered to us about the past and future, facts that no one could have known at the time of the Quran's revelation, are announced in its verses. Perhaps one of the most remarkable qualities of the Qur'an for those living nowadays is the complete consistency between the Qur'an and most of the discoveries of modern sciences.

One of the first Western scientists to make a serious study of this subject was Maurice Bucaille, who wrote a book called "The Bible, the Qur'an and Science". In this book, he compared the statements concerning natural and scientific data in the Bible and the Qur'an. He concluded: "The Qur'an follows on from the two Revelations that preceded it and is not only free from contradictions in its narrations, the sign of the various human manipulations to be found in the gospels, but provides a quality all of its own for those who examine it objectively and in the light of science, i.e. its complete agreement with modern scientific data.

"What is more, statements are to be found in it (as has been shown) that are connected with science, and yet it is unthinkable that a man of Muhammad's time could have been the author of them. Modern scientific knowledge therefore allows us to understand certain verses of the Qur'an, which, until now, it has been impossible to interpret.

"The comparison of several Biblical and Qur'anic narrations of the same subject shows the existence of fundamental differences between the statements in the former, which are scientifically unacceptable, and declarations in the latter which are in perfect agreement with modern data: this was the case of the Creation and the Flood, for example.

"An extremely important complement to the Bible was found in the text of the Qur'an on the subject of the history of the Exodus, where the two texts were very much in agreement with archaeological findings, in the dating of the time of Moses.

Besides, there are major differences between the Qur'an and the Bible on other subjects: they serve to disprove all that has been maintained-without a scrap of evidence-concerning the allegation that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is supposed to have copied the Bible to produce the text of the Qur'an.

"In view of the level of knowledge in Muhammad's day, it is inconceivable that many of the statements in the Qur'an which are connected with science could have been the work of a man. It is, moreover, perfectly legitimate, not only to regard the Qur'an as the expression of a Revelation, but also to award it a very special place, on the account of the guarantee of authenticity it provides and the presence in it of scientific statements which, when studied today, appear as a challenge to explanation in human terms."

Some statements involving data confirmed by modern science are:

A) The Accurate Description of Embryonic and Fetal Development:

At the time of Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) prevalent theories included those of Aristotle who thought that a child was formed by the congealing of menstrual blood catalyzed by the male blood, as rennet does to cheese. In the Eighteenth Century, Hartsoeker claimed to have seen within the sperm a pre-formed human being through the primitive microscopes.

The Qur'an reflected none of these, describing the development of the embryonic human with detailed accuracy: "**We created man from a quintessence of clay, We then placed him as a drop (Nutfa) in a place of rest firmly fixed, then we made the drop into an Alaqah (leech-like) and then we changed the leech-like structure into a Mudghah, (chewed-like) and then**

We made out of that chewed-like substance bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused him to grow and come into being and attain the definitive form. Blessed be Allah, The Perfect Creator. After that, at length you will die. Again, on the Day of Judgment, you will be raised up." Qur'an, 23:12-16

The Prophet (Pbuh) further explained the meaning of Nutfa as meaning both the male sperm and female ovum. The word "alaqah" has three meanings in Arabic:

- A thing that clings;
- A blood clot; and
- A leech-like thing

All three accurately describe the first stage of the developing embryo. After the fertilization of the egg, a blast cyst develops, which has on its exterior velocities, which literally "cling" to the wall of the uterus. It then goes on to resemble a leech both in appearance and behaviour. It also goes on to resemble a blood clot.

The next stage, when it becomes "chewed-like", is also accurate. It is also true that the bones precede the development of muscle and flesh. The Prophetic traditions state: "When forty-two nights have passed over the concepts, Allah sends an Angel to it, who shapes it, makes its ears, eyes, skin, flesh and bones. Then he says 'O Lord! Is it male or female?' And your Lord decides what He wishes and then the angel records it." This accurate information gives the correct time for the recognizable growth of the features described, and the sex of the fetus cannot be definitely determined until just after forty-two days.

This was not known until the invention of powerful microscopes only decades ago. I have mentioned this subject only briefly, and quoted a few of the verses and Hadiths (Prophet Muhammad's sayings) concerning this topic. Keith Moore, Professor and Chairman, Department of Anatomy, University of Toronto, Canada, and author of *The Developing Human*, who is considered one of the leading embryologists, said concerning these statements in the Qur'an and authenticated hadeeth: "Until the 19th Century, nothing was known about classifying the stages of human development. A system of staging human embryos was developed around the end of the 19th Century based on alphabetical symbols.

During the 20th century, numerals were used to describe 23 stages of embryonic development. This system of numbering the stages is not easy to follow and a better system would be based on the morphological changes. In recent years, the study of the Qur'an has revealed another basis for the classification of the stages of the developing embryo which are based on easily understood actions and changes in shape. It utilizes terms, which were sent from God to Muhammad (Pbuh) by the Angel Gabriel and recorded on the Qur'an... It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad (Pbuh) from God because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad (Pbuh) must have been a Messenger of God."

B) Cosmology:

"Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one united piece, then We parted them. And We have made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe?" Quran 21:30. This verse clearly mentions the common origin of the universe, a fact that was not discovered until forty years ago with the advent of nuclear physics. The separation seems to refer to what the scientists call the "Big Bang." Also, all living things are composed of protoplasm, which consists of 80-85 percent water. **"Then, He rose over towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: 'Come willingly or unwillingly.' They both said: 'We come willingly.'"** Qur'an, 41:11

The word smoke describes accurately the primeval state of the universe, which was composed of

a hot gaseous mass, with particles moving vigorously, just as in smoke. From this the stars, planets and the earth were formed. **"With power did We construct the heaven. Verily, We are Able to extend the vastness of space thereof."** Qur'an, 51:47

It is an accepted fact that we are living in an expanding universe. **"It is not for the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They all float, each in an orbit"** Qur'an 36:40

The Arabic word referring to a movement with self-propelled motion is the verb yasbahuna (in the text). It implies a motion that comes from the body in question. If it takes place in water, it is to swim; it is to move by the action of one's own legs if it takes place on land. For movement that occurs in space it would mean, "to rotate."

The sun is actually in orbit, not around the earth but around the centre of the galaxy, so there is no contradiction, since the Qur'an does not specify the Sun's orbit. **"He coils the night upon the day and He coils the day upon the night."** Qur'an, 39:5 To coil or to wind is the translation of the Arabic verb kawwarra. The original meaning of the verb is to coil a turban around the head.

The process of perpetual coiling, including the interpenetration of one sector by another is expressed in the Qur'an just as if the concept of the Earth's roundness had already been conceived at the time, which is clearly not the case. **"It is He who made the Sun a shining thing and the moon as a light, and measured out their stages..."** Qur'an, 10:5. The Qur'an describes the Sun as a "siraj" which means a torch, generating its own heat and light whereas the Moon is described "an-nur" which is light originating from another source.

C) Geology:

"Have We not made the earth as a bed; and the mountains as pegs?" Qur'an, 78:6-7 **"And Allah has cast into the Ground Mountains standing firm so that it does not shake with you."** Qur'an, 31:10

It has recently been discovered that mountains have roots that go into the earth's crust which is composed of seven tectonic plates. Their movement is the cause of earthquakes. It is thought that the roots and weight of the mountains play a vital role in stabilizing the earth's crust.

D) The Water Cycle:

The Qur'an correctly describes the water cycle, and the origin of underground springs as being from rainwater. Obvious you may think, but the Greek philosophers did not get it right, suggesting that underground springs were produced by sea spray collecting in caves, which fed a great underground sea through the 'abyss'! In fact the water cycle was not accurately propounded until the 18th century. The Qur'an, however, states: **"Hast though not seen that Allah sent water down from the sky and led it through sources into the ground?"** Qur'an, 39:21

For the sake of brevity, I have only mentioned a few of many statements and provided limited explanation of the statements contained in the Qur'an and traditions dealing with scientific subjects. The Qur'an is consistent with external realities, and it is also consistent internally. It is the nature of the works of men, be they scientists, philosophers, sages or mystics to contain inconsistencies and contradictions. This cannot be so with the Divine Revelation as the Qur'an states: **"Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely, have found therein many a contradiction."** Qur'an, 4:82

E) Seas and Rivers:

"He has let loose the two seas, converging together, with a barrier between them they do not break through". Quran 55:19-20

Modern Science has discovered that in the places where two different seas meet, there is a barrier between them. This barrier divides the two seas so that each sea has its own temperature, salinity, and density. For example, Mediterranean Sea water is warm, saline, and less dense, compared to Atlantic Ocean water. When Mediterranean Sea water enters the Atlantic over the

Gibraltar sill, it moves several hundred kilometres into the Atlantic at a depth of about 1000 meters with its own warm, saline, and less dense characteristics. The Mediterranean water stabilizes at this depth

F) Numbers in the Quran

And amazingly enough have a look how many times the following words appear:

- 1.. Prayer (Salah) 5,
 - 2.. Month 12,
 - 3.. Day 365,
 - 4.. Sea 32, Land 13
- Sea + land = 32+13= 45
Sea = $32/45*100=71.11111111\%$
Land = $13/45*100 = 28.88888889\%$
Sea + land =100.00%

Note: Modern science has only recently proven that the water covers 71.111% of the earth, while the land covers 28.889%.

The Quran has an astonishing balance in the number of times things are mentioned in it

- 5 Life on earth (Duniya) 115.. Hereafter (Aakhirah) 115
- 6 Life 145.... Death 145
- 7 Man 24... Woman 24
- 8 Desire 8...Fear 8
- 9 Angels (Malaika) 88... Devils (Shayteen) 88
- 10 Zakat (Taxes Muslims pay to the poor) 32... Barakah (Increasing or blessings of wealth) 32
- 11 Mind 49 Light (Noor) 49
- 12 Hardship 114.... Patience 114
- 13 Spending for the sake of Allah (Sadaqa) 73 ... Satisfaction 73
- 14 Eblees (devils) 11... Seek refuge from Eblees 11

Preservation and Authenticity of the Holy Quran

In brief, the Qur'an was committed to writing the moment it was revealed unto Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh), The Holy Prophet used to instruct the scribe about the sequence in which a revealed message was to be placed in a particular Surah (chapter). In this manner, the Holy Prophet continued to arrange the text of the Quran in systematic order till the end of the chain of revelations. These original writings were on separate pages made of skin and other materials used at these early days.

The first collection of the Qur'an took place shortly after Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) has passed away. It was the first Caliph Abu Bakr who ordered this first collection.

The third Caliph, Othman, was the one who ordered the second collection of the Qur'an. The collection that time came in one volume and in a form of what we know today as the Musshaf. Othman made seven original copies of the Musshaf and distributed them in the major provinces and regions of the vast Islamic state at his time. He kept the original copy in Madinah, the Capital city, as a main reference for all other times and locations. Two of these copies exist in the world today, one in Istanbul and the other in Tashkent. Whosoever is so inclined may compare any printed text of the Holy Qur'an with those two copies, he shall find no variation.

As mentioned above, the Holy Quran has not undergone any loss or alteration since it first came into the world so many centuries ago, and all the followers of Islam have the same Quran. The Holy Quran is still available to us today in the original language in which it was revealed. The history of the revelation and the collection of the Holy Quran is known fully and clearly, not being shrouded in mystery or uncertainty.

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Quran) to Our slave (Muhammad (Pbuh)) then produce a Surah (Chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses besides Allah, if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.”
Quran 2:23-24.

“Or do they say: "He (Muhammad (Pbuh)) has forged it?" Say: "Bring then a Surah (chapter) like unto it, and call upon whomsoever you can besides Allah, if you are truthful!" Quran 10:38

"If the mankind and the jinn were together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they could not produce the like thereof, even if they helped one another." Quran 17:88

“Do they not then consider the Qur'an carefully? Had it been from other than Allah, they would surely have found therein many a contradiction” Quran 4:82

Nothing more powerful to end this chapter than this quote from the Quran: **“Had We sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, you would surely have seen it humbling itself and rent asunder by the fear of Allah. Such are the parables which We put forward to mankind that they may reflect.”** Quran 59:21

References

- Dr. Arafat El Ashi “Why the Quran”
- Marurice Bucaille “The Bible, the Qur'an, and Science: The Holy Scriptures Examined in the Light of Modern Knowledge”
- I.A. Ibrahim “A Brief Illustration Guide to Understanding Islam”