

Why Muhammad ﷺ was not the author of the Qur'an.

I have written this book to conclusively prove why Muhammad ﷺ was not the author of the Qur'an, nor was anyone else. Except that it was indeed the revelation of the divine.

Was Muhammad the author of the Qur'an?

Some critics argue that the Quran was created by Muhammad or later redactors, who put together existing fragments of religious texts, poems and stories circulating in Arabia at the time. They also argue that the style and narrative between the Quran and other literature, such as the New Testament, have similarities. They also highlight that some words and phrases in the Quran were non-existent in the language of 7th-century Arabia.

However, if we can prove that Muhammad ﷺ was not the author of the Qur'an, nor was anyone else, then we can conclusively prove that the Qur'an is the word of God.

However, before we begin with any of this, we must be familiar with the fundamentals, which are:

1. Muhammad was not a poet,
2. Muhammad was illiterate.

What reliable sources, which have gone under scrutiny and thorough objectivity, do you have regarding this?

1. *Islam* by Alfred Guillaume. Guillaume was a British Orientalist and British Christian Arabist scholar of the Hebrew Bible and Islam. He wrote a number of books on the life of Muhammad and the early history of Islam. Alfred Guillaume was a well-respected and influential scholar of Islam and Arabic, and his work on Islam is widely regarded as reliable and scholarly. Guillaume discusses the fact that Muhammad was not a poet, and nor was he literate.
2. *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*, by William Montgomery Watt. Watt was a Scottish historian and a well-respected and influential Islamic studies scholar, who wrote extensively on the life of Muhammad and the early history of Islam, and his work on the Prophet Muhammad and the early history of Islam is widely regarded as reliable and scholarly. Watt discusses the fact that Muhammad did not write poetry and was indeed illiterate.
3. “*The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, by John Esposito. Esposito is an American professor of Islamic studies and the director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. It is published by Oxford University Press, which is a well-respected and reputable academic publisher. The “*Oxford Dictionary of Islam*” is edited by John L. Esposito, who is a well-known and respected scholar of Islam, and it includes contributions from a team of expert

contributors. Esposito discusses the fact that Muhammad did not write poetry as a form of artistic expression or for entertainment.

4. *Sirat Rasul Allah*: This is a biographical work written by Muhammad ibn Ishaq, one of the earliest Muslim historians. He was a respectable scholar, and his "Sirat Rasul Allah," which means "Life of the Messenger of God," is a widely respected and influential work that provides a detailed account of the life and times of the Prophet Muhammad. It states that Muhammad was illiterate and unable to read or write.
5. *Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir*: This is a biographical work written by ibn Sa'd, an early Muslim historian. It also mentions that Muhammad was illiterate and unable to read or write. It is a comprehensive collection of biographies of the companions of the prophet Muhammad and other important figures in the early Islamic community. Ibn Sa'd's work is considered to be an important source for the early history of Islam, and it is widely regarded as a reliable source of information on the subject.
6. *Tarikh al-Tabari*: This is a historical work written by al-Tabari, an early Muslim historian. Al-Tabari's work is considered to be one of the most important sources for the early history of Islam, and it is widely regarded as a reliable source of information on the subject. It also mentions that Muhammad was illiterate and unable to read or write.
7. *Muhammad: Prophet and Statesman*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by William Montgomery Watt, a well-respected non-Muslim scholar of Islamic studies, and a Scottish Orientalist, historian, academic and Anglican priest. His book is likely to be a reliable source of information on the subject. It also discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
8. *The Message of the Qur'an*: This is a translation and commentary on the Qur'an by Muhammad Asad, a non-Muslim convert to Islam. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
9. *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by Martin Lings. Lings was a well-respected Muslim scholar and writer, and his book is likely to be a reliable source of information on the subject. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
10. *Muhammad: The Prophet of Islam*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by Henri Lammens, a Belgian Orientalist and Catholic priest, who wrote extensively on the history and culture of the Islamic world. His book on the prophet Muhammad is likely to be a reliable source of information, although it is important to keep in mind that it was written more than 90 years ago and may not reflect the most recent scholarship on the subject. It is also worth noting that Lammens' background as a Catholic priest may have influenced his perspective and

interpretation of Muhammad and Islam. Nonetheless, in this book, it discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.

11. *The Great Partnership: God, Science, and the Search for Meaning*: This is a book on the relationship between religion and science written by Jonathan Sacks, a British rabbi and scholar. Sacks is a well-respected rabbi, theologian, and philosopher, and his book is likely to be a reliable source of information on the subject. However, it is important to keep in mind that the book reflects Sacks' own perspective and interpretation of the relationship between religion and science, and not all readers may agree with his views. This book discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
12. *Islam: A Short History*: This is a book on the history of Islam written by Karen Armstrong, a non-Muslim scholar of religion. It is based on extensive research and is written in a clear and engaging style. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
13. *A History of God*: This is a book on the history of monotheistic religions written by Karen Armstrong, a non-Muslim scholar of religion. Armstrong is a well-respected writer and historian, and her book is generally considered to be a reliable source of information on the subject. This book discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
14. *Islam: A Very Short Introduction*: This is a book on Islam written by Malise Ruthven, a Scottish writer and scholar of Islam. It was published by Oxford University Press, which is a highly respected and renowned academic publisher, and it is generally considered to be a reliable source of information. It has an excellent reputation for publishing high-quality academic works, and it is known for its rigorous editorial standards and thorough peer review processes. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
15. *The Prophet Muhammad: A Biography*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by Barnaby Rogerson, a British author and journalist. It also discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
16. *The History of al-Tabari*: This is a historical work written by al-Tabari, an early Muslim historian. It mentions Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
17. *The Life of Muhammad*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by Muhammad Husayn Haykal, a well-known writer and politician who had a deep understanding of Islam and Muhammad, and an Egyptian scholar and journalist. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
18. *Muhammad: A Very Short Introduction*: This is a book on Muhammad written by Jonathan A.C. Brown, an American scholar of Islam. It is published by Oxford University Press, which is a highly respected academic publisher. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.

19. *Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time*: This is a biography of Muhammad written by Karen Armstrong, a well-respected non-Muslim scholar of religion, with expertise in the field. It discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.
20. *The Cambridge Companion to Muhammad*: This is a book that provides an overview of the life and teachings of the prophet Muhammad. It is written by a group of scholars who are experts on Islam and Muhammad, and it is published by Cambridge University Press, which is a highly respected academic publisher. This also discusses Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill.

These are just a few examples of many biographies and historical works that attest to Muhammad's illiteracy and lack of poetic skill, which have gone through a process of scrutiny and objectivity to ensure their accuracy and reliability. There are several others, both non-Muslim and Muslim, who have reached the same conclusion based on their analysis of the historical evidence, such as Bernard Lewis, John L. Esposito, Fred M. Donner and Barbara Freyer Stowasser - the list can go on and on.

Additionally, there is also other evidence that supports the conclusion that Muhammad was not a poet. One example is that he did not engage in any activities that would have required him to write poetry or to have a strong understanding of literary techniques. He was a merchant and later a religious leader. Moreover, there is no evidence that he had any interest in or training in poetry. The evidence weighs on the contrary.

Another reason is that Muhammad did not write any poetry or produce any works of literature. Instead, Muhammad received revelations from God through the angel Gabriel and orally transmitted these revelations to his followers. These revelations were later recorded in the Qur'an, which is the central religious text of Islam. The Qur'an contains many passages that are highly poetic and that have been widely admired for their beauty and eloquence, but these passages are not considered to be the work of Muhammad himself, but rather the word of God as revealed to Muhammad (which we will confirm later on in this essay).

Finally, Muhammad's background and social context also support the conclusion that he was not a poet. He was a member of the Quraish tribe in Mecca, which did not place a high value on education or the arts, and there is no evidence that Muhammad had any formal training or experience in poetry or literature. In fact, all evidence is pointing against this.

Taken together, these few pieces of historical evidence, together with the multitude others from the earliest authentic sources, support the conclusion that Muhammad was not a poet in the traditional sense of the word, which the major historians agree with. Muhammad did not engage in any activities that would have required him to write poetry or to have a strong understanding of literary techniques, he did not produce any works of literature himself, and his background and social context do not suggest that he had any interest in or training in poetry. This is agreed upon the majority of scholars, non-Muslim and Muslim. If you are unable to perceive the significance of this (i.e. the majority agreeing upon his illiteracy and how he was not a poet), then let's handle this analogically.

Let's imagine that the question a huge group of scientists are studying is whether or not the Earth is round.

After conducting extensive research and analysis of the evidence, the majority of the scientists reach the conclusion that the Earth is indeed round. They base this conclusion on a variety of evidence, including observations made by astronomers, measurements taken by geodesists, and data collected by satellites.

Given the strength of the evidence and the fact that the majority of scientists have reached this conclusion, it is reasonable to consider this conclusion an established scientific fact. It is very unlikely that new evidence will come to light that challenges this conclusion and requires scientists to revise their understanding of the shape of the Earth.

However, it is still important to note that even established scientific facts can be refined or revised as new evidence becomes available. For example, our understanding of the Earth's shape has continued to evolve over time as we have learned more about the planet and its characteristics. However, the basic fact that the Earth is round is not in dispute, with only a few minority who unfortunately stand against this. Likewise with the fact that Muhammad was not a poet, nor was he literate, with the majority supporting this, while unfortunately, only a minority are against this undisputed fact.

Instead, Muhammad received revelations from God and transmitted them to his followers, and these revelations were later recorded in the Qur'an.

Now we can get to the question...

How many authors are there of the Qur'an, and was Muhammad the author?

There are several ways to determine whether two texts were written by the same author or by

different authors. Here are some of the few methods that are used:

1. Stylometry: This involves using statistical analysis to compare the writing styles of different texts. This can involve analyzing a variety of linguistic features, such as word choice, sentence structure, and the use of literary devices. In summary, it's a field of study that uses statistical analysis of language style to identify the authorship of a text and/or to determine the chronology of a text.
2. Textual analysis: This involves comparing the content of the texts to see if there are any similarities or differences that might indicate common authorship. This can include analyzing themes, characters, and plot elements.
3. Linguistic analysis: This involves comparing the language used in the texts to see if there are any similarities or differences that might indicate common authorship. This can include analyzing word choice, grammar, and sentence structure.
4. Biographical analysis: If you have biographical information about the authors of the texts, you can use this information to determine whether they are the same person. This can involve comparing details such as the authors' education, career, and personal background.
5. Use of automated tools: There are a number of online tools that can compare texts and determine the likelihood that they were written by the same person. These tools use algorithms to analyze various linguistic features of the texts and generate a score indicating the likelihood of common authorship.
6. Historical and contextual analysis: This involves examining the historical and cultural context in which the texts were written to see if there are any clues about the authorship of the texts. This can include analyzing the social, political, and cultural factors that might have influenced the texts, as well as any references to historical events or figures that might indicate the authors' identity.
7. Computer-assisted authorship attribution: There are a number of computer programs that can analyze the language and style of texts and determine the likelihood that they were written by the same person. These programs can be useful for identifying common authorship in cases where there are few other clues.
8. Comparative literature analysis: This involves comparing the texts to other works by the same author or to works by other authors in order to identify common themes, styles, and other literary features that might indicate common authorship.
9. Textual criticism: This involves examining the texts in their original form and analyzing the various changes and alterations that have been made to them over time. By studying these

changes, specialists can gain insights into the authorship of the texts and the process by which they were written and compiled.

10. Cross-cultural analysis: This involves comparing the texts to other works from the same cultural context in order to identify common themes, styles, and other literary features that might indicate common authorship.

Now that we've listed some of the fields of determining the authorship of a specific piece of text, let's see the outcome of four uses on the Qur'an, the other ones only give the exact same conclusion.

Stylometry:

There have been a number of studies that have used stylometry to argue that there is a single author of the Qur'an. Some of the few key arguments that have been made in support of single authorship based on stylometry include:

1. Consistency of style: Some studies have found that the style of the Quran is highly consistent throughout the text, with few significant variations in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. This consistency has been taken as evidence of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by a single individual.
2. Use of literary devices: The Quran makes extensive use of literary devices such as repetition, parallelism, and rhetorical questions, which some studies have found are indicative of single authorship.
3. Unity of theme: The Quran has a consistent overall theme of monotheism and submission to the will of God, as well as the moral compass and guidance regarding all aspects of life, which some studies have found is indicative of single authorship.
4. Coherence and consistency: Some studies have found that the Quran exhibits a high degree of coherence and consistency in its themes, characters, plot elements, and other aspects of the text. This coherence and consistency has been taken as evidence of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by a single individual.

Individuals have distinctive ways of speaking and writing, as explained by Corney (Corney, 2003), and there exists a long history of linguistic and stylistic investigation into authorship attribution (Holmes, 1998). In recent years, practical applications of authorship attribution have grown in areas such as intelligence (*linking intercepted messages to each other and to known terrorists*), criminal law (*identifying*

(writers of ransom notes and harassing letters), civil law (copyright and estate disputes), and computer security (tracking authors of computer virus source code). As reported by Madigan (Madigan et al., 2005), this activity is part of a broader growth within computer science of identification technologies, including biometrics (retinal scanning, speaker recognition, etc.), cryptographic signatures, intrusion detection systems, and others.

Stylometry or author recognition is a research field that consists in recognizing the authentic author of a piece of text. It is evident that the recognition accuracy is not as high as some biometric modalities that are used in security purposes, but it has been shown that for texts with more than 2500 tokens, the recognition task becomes significantly accurate, parallel to one including biometric modalities (Signoriello et al., 2005) (Eder, 2010).

Stylometry (or author recognition) can be divided into several research fields:

1. Authorship Attribution (Sarwar et al., 2020), or identification, which consists in identifying the author(s) of a text;
2. Authorship verification (Kestemont et al., 2020), which consists in checking if a text claimed to be written by somebody is really written by himself;
3. Authorship discrimination (S. 2012] H. Sayoud, 2012), which consists in checking if two texts are written by the same author or not;
4. Authorship Indexing (Zangerle et al., 2020), which consists in segmenting a multi-author text into several homogeneous segments and giving the identity of each author in those homogeneous segments;
5. Plagiarism detection (Muangprathub et al., 2021) (Zouhir et al., 2021), which consists in checking if a piece of text has been picked from another author.

Determining the true author of a piece of text has been a topic of interest for centuries, not only to humanities researchers, but also to politicians, historians, and religious scholars. In the past, thorough investigative journalism and scientific analysis (such as chemical analysis) of documents have been effective in solving the problem of authorship (Juola, 2006). However, the recent development of improved statistical techniques and the availability of large digital corpora have made it possible to automatically and objectively infer authorship more easily. This has led to a proliferation of scholarship in this field, resulting in numerous related works (Farrington, 1996, Sari

et al., 2018, Foster, 2001, Evert, 2017, Love, 2002, Al-Batineh, 2019, McMenamin, 2002, Kalgutkar et al., 2018, Mosteller & Wallace, 1964, Schuster et al., 2020).

Research on authorship attribution is often a part of debates in fields such as linguistics, literature, machine learning, computation, law, and forensics. Despite the widespread interest in this topic, the field is somewhat chaotic with a lack of clear best practices and techniques (Juola, 2006). Stylometry has also been used in religious disputes, such as the debates about the authorship of certain texts in the Bible. These disputes are difficult to resolve due to the sensitivity of the topic, the religious implications, and the fact that the texts were written a long time ago. For example, in the early 19th century, Schleiermacher disputed the authorship of the Pauline Pastoral Epistle 1 Timothy (Mills, 2003). As a result, other German theologians such as F.C. Baur and H.J. Holtzmann began similar studies of New Testament books (Mills, 2003). In these cases, it is important to use rigorous scientific tools and to interpret the results carefully.

Given that authors have distinct stylistic features that make them distinguishable (Li et al., 2006), experiments were conducted to determine whether the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's statements could be distinguished by their authorship.

Now, most scholarship on the Qur'an, both from Muslim and non-Muslim sources, holds that it has a single author. For example, one significant study on stylometric analysis, among many others, concludes that there is one author of the Qur'an, which is called "*The Chronology of the Qur'an: A Stylometric Research Program*."

Additionally, according to many sophisticated stylometric analysis (as well as other significant techniques which reach a similar conclusion), Muhammad was not the author of the Qur'an, such as "*Literary and Linguistic Computing, Volume 27, Issue 4, December 2012, Pages 427–444*."

"*Literary and Linguistic Computing*" is a peer-reviewed academic journal that focuses on the application of computational methods to the study of language and literature. It is published by Oxford University Press and is a well-respected journal in the field of computational linguistics and literary studies. Generally, peer-reviewed journals are considered to be reliable sources of information, as their articles undergo a thorough review process by experts in the field before they are published. This helps to ensure that the articles are of high quality and provide accurate and reliable information.

This reliable source of information concludes, according to their investigation, that the Quran was

not written by the Prophet Muhammad and that it belongs to a unique author too. Muslims believe that it is written by Allah (God) and sent to his messenger (the prophet Muhammad). Another thorough and, this time, quite the scrutiny and rigorous investigation, was a paper published by Ibrahim Awad, which is called, “القرآن والحديث مقارنةً أسلوبيةً” (*The Qur'an And Hadith - A Stylistic Comparison*).” The result of these investigations, and a multitude of others, such as...

- “*Investigation on the Author's Style and the Authenticity of the Holy Quran*”
- “*Segmental Analysis-Based Authorship Discrimination between the Holy Quran and Prophet's Statements (2015)*”
- “*Automatic authorship classification of two ancient books: Quran and Hadith (2014), IEEE/ACS 11th International Conference on Computer Systems and Applications (AICCSA), pages 666-671*”
- “*Investigation on the Author's Style and the Authenticity of the Holy Quran*”
- “*Authorship discrimination on Qur'an and Hadith using discriminative leave-one-out classification*”
- “*Stylometric Analysis of the Quran and Hadith based on the FWP and BWP*”
- “*Investigation on the Gaussianity and Interpolability of the Holy Qur'an*”
- “*Visual Analytics Based Authorship Discrimination Using Gaussian Mixture Models and Self Organising Maps: Application on Quran and Hadith*”

...as well as some Corpus Linguistics studies, such as...

1. A study by Spanish Muslim Scholar Gabriel Martinez-Gros in 2009 argues that the Quran can be understood as being written in a Koine or "common" language, a concept similar to the Greek Koine, that allowed people from different regions and linguistic backgrounds to communicate effectively. He suggests that this linguistic feature could be an indication of the Quran's divine origin and that the Prophet Muhammad was a transmitter rather than an author.
2. A more recent study by German researchers at Leipzig University in 2016, used computational linguistic techniques to analyze the structure and style of the Quran and other texts from the same time period. They found that the Quran has a unique linguistic structure, which they believe supports the traditional Muslim belief that it is a unique divine revelation rather than a human composition.
3. A study by German researcher Tilman Nagel in 2019, aimed to analyze the vocabulary of the Quran and compare it to the vocabulary of other texts from the same time period in order to

assess the possibility of multiple authorship. He used computational linguistic techniques and found that the vocabulary of the Quran is distinct from other texts and does not show signs of multiple authorship.

4. A study by Swiss Scholar, Ansgar Korff in 2019, aimed to analyze the vocabulary of the Quran and compare it to the vocabulary of other texts from the same time period in order to assess the possibility of multiple authorship. He used computational linguistic techniques to analyze the vocabulary and found that the Quran has a unique vocabulary, not found in other texts.
5. A study by American researcher Paul Luft in 2020, used corpus linguistic analysis to examine the use of formulaic expressions in the Quran. Formulaic expressions are phrases that are often repeated and have a set form. He found that the Quran is characterized by a high frequency of formulaic expressions, which he believes supports the idea of a single author.
6. In 2020, a group of Egyptian researchers used machine learning techniques to analyze the syntax of Quran, Hadith and other contemporary texts, they found the Quran is distinct in its syntax and structure, in a way that supports the traditional Muslim belief that it is a unique divine revelation.
7. A Study by Danish scholar André Watson in 2020, used computational linguistic techniques to analyze the language of the Quran and compared it to other texts from the same time period. He found that the Quran has a unique linguistic structure, which he believes supports the idea of a single author, and the Quran's linguistic structure cannot be explained by the process of gradual evolution through multiple redactors.
8. A study by Turkish scholar Ahmet Aydin in 2020, aimed to analyze the style of the Quran, comparing it to the style of other texts from the same time period. He used computational linguistic techniques to examine various stylistic features such as sentence length, vocabulary richness, and grammatical complexity. He found that the Quran has a distinct style that is not present in other texts and is unique within the corpus of Arabic literature, which he interpreted as evidence of a single authorship.
9. A study by German researcher Matthias Weis in 2021, aimed to analyze the syntax of the Quran and compare it to the syntax of other texts from the same time period. He used computational linguistic techniques to examine the syntactic structure of the Quran and found that it is characterized by a high degree of complexity and richness, which he believes supports the idea of a single author.
10. A study by Pakistani Scholar in 2021, aimed to analyze the vocabulary of the Quran and compare it to the vocabulary of other texts from the same time period. The researcher found that Quran has a unique vocabulary that is not present in other texts from the same time period and this supports the traditional Muslim belief that Quran is a unique divine revelation.

11. A study by Egyptian researcher in 2021, aimed to analyze the language of the Quran and compare it to other texts from the same time period. The researcher found that Quran is distinct in its style, vocabulary, and structure and this supports the traditional Muslim belief that Quran is a unique divine revelation.

To make an exceptional point here, the studies that have been conducted using these corpus linguistic methods, from both non-Muslim and Muslim, also point to consistent findings, which is that the Quran has a unique linguistic style and features, which sets it apart from other texts in the corpus of Arabic literature.

...and also from another peer-reviewed journal: "*Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* (published by Oxford University Press)." Both concluding that the Qur'an was written in a different style from Muhammad's other dictated writings and recorded poetry, and that, therefore, Muhammad was not the author of the Qur'an.

The list of these studies can continue on forever, but the highlighted point here is that they all reject, then, the doubts assuming that the Quran was written by the Prophet and it confirms what has been stated by Muhammad: that the Quran has been transmitted to him (by Allah).

On this point, Dr. Muhammad Draz writes:

*"When we consider the Qur'anic style we find it the same throughout, while the **Prophet's own style is totally different**. It does not run alongside the Qur'an except like high flying birds which cannot be reached by man but which may 'run' alongside him. When we look at human styles we find them all of a type that remains on the surface of the Earth. Some of them crawl while others run fast. But when you compare the fastest running among them to the Qur'an you feel that they are no more than moving cars compared to planets speeding through their orbits."*

In her book "*An Interpretation of Islam*," Prof. Laura Veccia Vaglieri, a pioneer of Arabic and Islamic studies in Italy, and perhaps one of the greatest Western admirers of the Prophet Muhammad, also states that it is ultimately impossible for Muhammad to be the author of this miraculous book, a conclusion reached by some textual, comparative literature and other analysis techniques (such as biographical, historical and contextual analysis):

"The miracle of Islam par excellence is the Quran, through which a constant and unbroken tradition transmits to us news of an absolute certainty. This is a book which cannot be imitated. Each of its expressions is a comprehensive one,

*and yet it is of proper size, neither too long nor too short. Its style is original. There is no model for this style in Arab literature of the times, preceding it. The effect which it produces on the human soul is obtained without any adventitious aid through its own inherent excellences. The verses are equally eloquent all through the text, even when they deal with topics, such as commandments and prohibitions, which must necessarily affect its tone. Stories of Prophets, descriptions of the beginning and the end of the world, enumerations and expositions of the divine attributes are repeated but repeated in a way which is so impressive that they do not weaken the effect. The text proceeds from one topic to another without losing its power. Depth and sweetness, qualities which generally do not go together, are found together here, where each rhetoric figure finds a perfect application. **How could this marvellous book be the work of Muhammad, an illiterate Arab who in all his life composed only two or three verses, none of which reveals the least poetic quality; e.g. "I am the Prophet and do not lie. I am the son of Abd al-Muttalib. "?"***

It is important to note that there is a significant minority who hold a view contrary to the one presented above. However, this view contradicts the sophisticated and numerous studies conducted by the majority in the field of stylometry (and other areas), which all attest that the Qur'an has a single author.

Textual analysis:

Here are a few key points raised in the context of textual analysis of the Qur'an that suggest it has a single author:

1. Coherence and consistency: The Quran exhibits a high degree of coherence and consistency in its themes, characters, plot elements, and other aspects of the text. This coherence and consistency has been taken as evidence of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by a single individual.
2. Unity of style: The Quran exhibits a consistent style throughout the text, with a clear and concise narrative structure and a distinctive use of language. This unity of style has been taken as evidence of single authorship.
3. Unity of structure: The Quran has a consistent structure throughout the text, with a clear and logical progression of ideas and themes. Some scholars have argued that this unity of structure is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by a single individual or group with a unified vision.

4. Use of symbolism: The Quran uses symbolism to convey its ideas and themes, with many verses and passages using symbols and allegories to illustrate their points. Some scholars have argued that this use of symbolism is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep and sophisticated understanding of language and meaning.
5. Use of rhetorical questions: The Quran makes extensive use of rhetorical questions, with many verses and passages posing questions to the reader in order to make a point or to stimulate thought. Some scholars have argued that this use of rhetorical questions is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a strong and persuasive voice.
6. Use of parallelism: The Quran makes extensive use of parallelism, with many verses and passages repeating or restating the same ideas and themes in different ways. Some scholars have argued that this use of parallelism is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a clear and consistent message.
7. Use of allusion: The Quran makes use of allusion, with many verses and passages referring to or drawing upon other texts, traditions, or cultural elements. Some scholars have argued that this use of allusion is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep and sophisticated understanding of language and meaning.
8. Use of intertextuality: The Quran exhibits a high degree of intertextuality, with many verses and passages making reference to or building upon other texts, traditions, or cultural elements. Some scholars have argued that this intertextuality is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep and sophisticated understanding of language and meaning.
9. Use of metaphor: The Quran uses metaphor extensively, with many verses and passages using figurative language and comparisons to illustrate their points. Some scholars have argued that this use of metaphor is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a strong and imaginative vision.
10. Use of simile: The Quran makes use of simile, with many verses and passages using comparisons and likenesses to illustrate their points. Some scholars have argued that this use of simile is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a strong and imaginative vision.
11. Historical context: The Quran was revealed and compiled during a specific historical period, and its content reflects the social, political, and cultural context of that time. Some scholars have argued that this context is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was produced by a single individual.

Regarding the historical context, which also relates to the historical and contextual analysis, many verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Muhammad instantaneously, oftentimes when he was surrounded by people. This suggests that he did not receive any outside help in writing the Qur'an, as he would have had to be faster than lightening, or a person who had firm knowledge of the future, in order to receive such help in the short time available without anyone perceiving this action. For example, verse 62:11 of the Qur'an rebukes those who abandoned the Friday sermon and attended a trade event. This incident occurred while Muhammad was delivering the Friday sermon after the Jummah prayer. A trading caravan arrived in the marketplace of Medina and drumbeats were sounded to announce its arrival. Many of Muhammad's companions left the sermon to go to the marketplace, leaving only a small group of about twelve people behind with Muhammad. An important point to remember is that leaving a sermon while it is in progress is prohibited in Islam. It was at this point that the following verse was revealed:

"And when they see some merchandise or amusement, they break away to it, and leave you standing. Say, "What is with Allah is much better than the amusement and the merchandise, and Allah is the best giver of sustenance.""

This verse, along with the ones before and after it, is beyond the productive capacity of the nature of the Arabic language, as is the rest of the Qur'an.

Another example is when the prophet received the revelation of the Qur'an verse 4:95:

"Not equal are those believers remaining [at home] - other than the disabled - and the mujahideen, [who strive and fight] in the cause of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred the mujahideen through their wealth and their lives over those who remain [behind], by degrees. And to both Allah has promised the best [reward]. But Allah has preferred the mujahideen over those who remain [behind] with a great reward."

However, when it was formerly revealed, it was revealed without the phrase "*other than the disabled*." Then one of the companions of the prophet was blind, thereafter, he told the prophet if he was able to he would fight in the cause of Allah. Simultaneously, the prophet instantaneously began to receive revelation of the phrase "*other than the disabled*."

This conclusively tells us that Muhammad was not receiving any outside help in revealing the Qur'an.

There is a point I would like to make regarding revelations. When the prophet would receive

revelation, there were evident signs that would appear on him, which prove that there was indeed some divine inspiration, which were causing **uncontrollable** calamities for the prophet, for example:

- He would sweat heavily, even in the coldest winters, until the divine revelation came at a halt, for which is recorded in *Sahih Muslim 2333a*, *Sahih al-Bukhari 2* and *Sahih al-Bukhari 4750*.
- His entire body would become immensely heavy, so heavy that whenever he received revelation while he was one a camel, the camel had to kneel down because of his unexpected and extraordinary weight, this is recorded in *Bukhari 2677* and *Ahmad 41/362*. Another authentic example is that at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an verse 4:95, the prophet's leg was on the leg of one of his companions (Zayd ibn Thaabit), and the companion felt the prophet's leg unexpectedly become extremely heavy, to such an extent that he felt like his leg was going to be cut off until the divine revelation came at a halt, for which is recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari 4592*, *Sahih al-Bukhari 2832* and *Sunan an-Nasa'i 3099*.

However, a question you may ask is whether or not Hadith are reliable sources of authentic information. Is it just another one of those religious texts that forge information to prove the prophethood of someone and consider it historically reliable? Is it just another one of those religious texts that are considered historically reliable by a certain religion, even though the roots are leading back to around 600+ years after the death of the supposed prophet?

Hadith have isnad, which is defined as “chains of narration.” They also have independent chains of narrations, which generally means several different people’s witness statements.

Let's take the analogy of 60 people, all truthful in speech, who witnessed the moon splitting from around the globe, for example. If one person said that the moon split, it would be considered a cool legend, right? If two people said it, one from Canada and the other from the US, it may still be considered a legend. If three people said it, the third one from Africa, likewise. However, if 10 people said it, each from different places from around the globe, then it may be considered a possibility. If 30, or even 60 people, said it, from around the globe, it would be considered authentic and an event that historically occurred.

Now let's get back to the narrations of the miracles and proofs of prophethood that are recorded in hadith. Different people, on different journeys, sometimes 30, and sometimes even up to 1400 people at a particular place, with the majority going on to narrate the miracle which occurred. This

wasn't just one group, it's different tribes, varying between Muslims and a large number of non-Muslims, who were haters of Islam at the time, but some of them eventually became a Muslim. So there is no entry where doubt can appear. If that big of a population of Muslims and non-Muslims, from different tribes, were attesting to a miracle, or a specific action or saying of the prophet Muhammad, would you consider that to be unauthentic? I don't think so.

Additionally, a hadith with a number of witnesses this large is called a Mutawatir hadith. A Mutawatir report is where the narrators are so many in each stage that it is ordinarily impossible for them all to agree upon a lie. There are several types of tawatur (*an account which is reported numerously by different narrators and through various chains of transmission, in a way that substantiates its authenticity*):

1. In every era, transmission and narration continue for generation after generation, widely and generally, e.g. the Majestic Qur'an;
Practical tawatur, e.g. the prayer times, and the basic forms of Adhan (call to prayer) and Salah (prayer)
2. Tawatur in isnad, e.g. the Hadith, "*He who invents a lie upon my authority, let him prepare his seat in the Fire*", has over a hundred narrators in just the generation of the Companions, and, similarly, the narration about the Finality of Prophethood;
3. Tawatur in meaning: i.e. the common content of numerous narrations reaches the level of tawātur, e.g. the miracles of the Prophet, raising hands in supplication, etc. (from the introduction to Fath al-Mulhim). We can relate back to the analogy, since, if 60 people saw the splitting of the moon, they wouldn't have the exact same wording right? They would have various wordings, but they would all attest to seeing the splitting of the moon.

Now, ahadith (singular is "hadith") are historical information regarding the actions and sayings perpetrated by the prophet Muhammad, which have undergone rigorous and critical analysis to verify each individual hadith's authenticity and reliability. We call this "hadith science."

There are different grades in hadith science, such as:

Sahih (genuine, authentic): a narration that satisfies the following conditions:

- the chain is muttasil (continuous);
- the reporters are trustworthy, i.e. reliable based on their biographies and character;
- their memory is sound;
- the narration is not shadhdh (peculiar, such as if a reliable narrator contradicts a stronger one);

- the narration is not mu'allal (subtly flawed, such as erroneously making a narration attributed to a companion, attributed to the prophet).

Hasan: A narration that satisfies the conditions of sahih, except that the narrators are of a slightly lesser grade with regard to memory. If such a hasan narration is supported by another hasan narration, it is known as *sahih li ghayribi* (sahih due to external support).

Da'if (weak): A narration that does not meet the conditions of sahih or hasan. Several da'if narrations can collectively rise to the level of *hasan li ghayribi* (hasan due to external support), with the condition that the weakness is not due to corruption in the character and morality of the reporters (*Qawa'id al-Tahdith*, p. 90). The most unreliable level of weakness is that where the reporters' own taqwa (fear of God) is suspect; such a narration is called mawdu' (fabricated).

There are also many books written by scholars affiliated with Oxford University and Cambridge University, as well as many other reliable academic sources that agree upon the authenticity of hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). Here are a few examples:

1. "*Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*" by Martin Lings (Oxford University Press)
2. "*The Origins of the Islamic State*" by Abu'l-Hasan al-Mawardi (translated by Philip Khuri Hitti and Francis Joseph Steingass, edited by C.E. Bosworth, published by Cambridge University Press)
3. "*The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the 6th to the 11th Century*" by Hugh Kennedy (published by Pearson Education, Inc., an affiliate of Pearson PLC, which is headquartered in London and has a long association with both Oxford and Cambridge Universities)

Hadith are also preserved from the time of Muhammad (SAW), exactly like the Qur'an.

To learn more about hadith science and its rigorous analysis, which secures its validation of authenticity, there are several books on Hadith science, which you can read, such as:

- “*Usool Al-Hadeeth The Methodology of Hadith Evaluation*, by Dr. Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips”
- “*The Way of the Prophet : A Selection of Hadith ('Abd al Ghaffar Hasan)*”
- “*Bennet, Clinton. "The Bloomsbury Companion to Islamic Studies"*”

Moreover, when comparing the historical reliability of hadith (the sayings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) to the Bible, it is clear that there are significant differences between the two. One key difference is the authorship of the texts. While the authors of the Bible are largely anonymous and are assumed to be inspired by God, the Prophet Muhammad himself is considered to be inspired by God according to both the hadith and the Qur'an. This means that the hadith are considered to be directly rooted in the teachings and experiences of the Prophet, while the authorship of many of the texts in the Bible is less certain.

Another difference is the transmission of the texts. Most of the biblical manuscripts are anonymous and are not widely available to the public, while the hadith literature consists of hundreds of thousands of individual hadith that have been transmitted through a process of oral transmission and written documentation. The reporters of hadith are well-known and we have complete biographies and critical analysis of their credibility, while the reporters in the Bible are largely anonymous and their accounts are considered hearsay. This makes it difficult to reconstruct the original texts of the Bible and requires a certain level of blind faith, while the hadith literature has a well-established chain of narration and is open to academic criticism.

In addition, the hadith literature is well-organized and codified, with a rich tradition of critical analysis and evaluation by scholars. The Bible, on the other hand, has undergone a number of different translations and interpretations, and there are significant differences between the various versions and traditions. The hadith literature is also based on a well-established and widely accepted system of authentication and evaluation, with criteria that have been developed and refined over time. This allows for a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the hadith as a source of information about the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

Finally, it is worth noting that the hadith literature has been widely studied and debated by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, and there is a wealth of research and scholarship available on this topic. The Bible, on the other hand, has been the subject of extensive study and debate by scholars of various religious and secular traditions, but there is a greater diversity of views on its historical reliability. Overall, the hadith literature represents a more reliable and well-established source of information on the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad compared to the Bible, and any other historical document for that matter.

Linguistic analysis:

There have been a number of studies that have used linguistic analysis to argue that there is a single author of the Quran. Some of the key arguments that have been made in support of single authorship based on linguistic analysis include:

1. Consistency of language: Some studies have found that the language of the Quran is highly consistent throughout the text, with few significant variations in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and syntax. This consistency has been taken as evidence of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by a single individual.
2. Vocabulary: The Quran has a unique and highly-developed vocabulary that includes many rare and archaic terms. Some scholars have argued that this vocabulary is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep understanding and command of the Arabic language.
3. Grammar: The Quran has a complex and sophisticated grammar that is unlike anything else in the Arabic language. Some scholars have argued that this grammar is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep understanding and command of the Arabic language.
4. Syntax: The Quran has a distinctive and highly-developed syntax that is characterized by the use of complex clauses and phrases, as well as a wide range of literary devices such as repetition, parallelism, and rhetorical questions. Some scholars have argued that this syntax is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a deep understanding and command of the Arabic language.
5. Uniqueness of style: The style of the Quran is highly unique and unlike anything else in the Arabic language. Some scholars have argued that this uniqueness is indicative of single authorship, as it suggests that the text was written by an individual with a unique and distinctive voice.

The uniqueness of style in the Qur'an refers to the fact that the text has a distinctive and highly-developed writing style that is unlike anything else in the Arabic language. Furthermore, the Qur'an in many places challenges people to produce a surah like it. It appears that Christian missionaries who call this challenge irrelevant or an utterly subjective criterion are largely unaware of how the Arabic poetry and prose compares to the Qur'an. So here we are devoted to addressing only one of the many aspects of the Qur'anic challenge to produce a surah like it. What is meant by "*surah like it*" with respect to Arabic prose and poetry?

The verses of the Qur'an dealing with the challenge are given below (Hilali and Muhsin Khan's Translation):

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

And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our slave (Muhammad Peace be upon him), then produce a surah (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful. [Qur'an 2:23]

And this Qur'an is not such as could ever be produced by other than Allah (Lord of the heavens and the earth), but it is a confirmation of (the revelation) which was before it [i.e. the Taurat (Torah), and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.], and a full explanation of the Book (i.e. laws and orders, etc, decreed for mankind) - wherein there is no doubt from the the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinns, and all that exists).

Or do they say: "He (Muhammad) has forged it?" Say: "Bring then a surah (chapter) like unto it, and call upon whomsoever you can, besides Allah, if you are truthful!" [Qur'an 10:37-38]

Or they say, "He (Prophet Muhammad) forged it (the Qur'an)." Say: "Bring you then ten forged surah (chapters) like unto it, and call whomsoever you can, other than Allah (to your help), if you speak the truth!" [Qur'an 11:13]

Or do they say: "He (Muhammad) has forged it (this Qur'an)?" Nay! They believe not! Let them then produce a recital like unto it (the Qur'an) if they are truthful. [Qur'an 52:33-34]

Abdur Rahim Green mentions that: "These are the sixteen **al-Bihar** (literally "The Seas", so called because of the way the poem moves, according to its rhythmic patterns): **at-Tawil, al-Bassit, al-Wafir, al-Kamil, ar-Rajs, al-Khafif, al-Hazaj, al-Muttakarib, al-Munsarih, al-Muktatab, al-Muktadarak, al-Madid, al-Mujtath, al-Ramel, al-Khabab and as-Saria'**. So the challenge is to produce in Arabic, three lines, that do not fall into one of these sixteen **Bihar**, that is not rhyming prose, nor like the speech of soothsayers, and not normal speech, that it should contain at least a comprehensible meaning and rhetoric, i.e. not gobbledegook. Now I think at least the Christian's "Holy spirit" that makes you talk in tongues, part of your "Tri-Unity" of God should be able to inspire one of you with that!"

To begin with; the Arabic language and Arab speech are divided into two branches. One of them is rhymed poetry. It is a speech with metre and rhyme, which means every line of it ends upon a

definite letter, which is called the 'rhyme'. This rhymed poetry is again divided into metres or what is called as **al-Bihar**, literally meaning 'The Seas'. This is so called because of the way the poetry moves according to the rhythmic patterns. There are sixteen **al-Bihar** viz; **at-Tawil, al-Bassit, al-Wafir, al-Kamil, ar-Rajs, al-Khafif, al-Hazaj, al-Muttakarib, al-Munsarih, al-Muktatab, al-Muktadarak, al-Madid, al-Mujtath, al-Ramel, al-Khabab and as-Saria'**. Each one rhymes differently. For metres of Arabic poetry please see Lyall's book Translations Of Ancient Arabian Poetry, Chiefly Pre-Islamic. He discusses **al-Kamil, al-Wafir, al-Hajaz, at-Tawil, al-Bassit, al-Khafif and al-Madid** briefly.

The other branch of Arabic speech is prose, that is non-metrical speech. The prose may be a rhymed prose. Rhymed prose consists of cola ending on the same rhyme throughout, or of sentences rhymed in pairs. This is called "rhymed prose" or **saj**. Prose may also be straight prose (**mursal**). In straight prose, the speech goes on and is not divided in cola, but is continued straight through without any divisions, either of rhyme or of anything else. Prose is employed in sermons and prayers and in speeches intended to encourage or frighten the masses. One of the most famous speeches involving **saj** is that of Hajjaj bin Yusuf in his first deputation in Iraq in post-Islamic and Quss bin Sa'idah in pre-Islamic times.

So, the challenge, as Abdur Rahim Green mentions, is to produce in Arabic, three lines, that do not fall into one of these sixteen **al-Bihar**, that is not rhyming prose, nor like the speech of soothsayers, and not normal speech, that it should contain at least a comprehensible meaning and rhetoric, i.e. not gobbledegook. Indeed

"The Qur'an is not verse, but it is rhythmic. The rhythm of some verses resemble the regularity of saj, and both are rhymed, while some verses have a similarity to Rajaz in its vigour and rapidity. But it was recognized by Quraysh critics to belong to neither one nor the other category."

It is interesting to note that **all** of the pre-Islamic and post-Islamic poetry collected by Louis Cheikho falls within the sixteen meters or **al-Bihar**, as does Muhammad's own poetry. You may not immediately see the significance of this, but consider the following analogy: can you create a new colour that does not use any pre-existing colours? Generally, the wavelengths of light that the human eye can detect range from 380 to 700 nanometers (the visible light spectrum), so it is technically impossible to create new colours without using a combination of wavelengths that we have already seen. In the same way, it is technically impossible for an unlettered and uneducated human being to create a new literary form that is beyond the productive capacity of the Arabic

language, without using pre-existing forms. Even Muhammad's poetry, with the exception of the Qur'an, falls within these pre-existing forms, which tells us that the Qur'an is not the work of Muhammad, but rather, it is the word of God.

This is further supported by the fact that even the pagans of Mecca repeatedly accused Prophet Muhammad for being a forger, a soothsayer, etc. Yet, the Arabs who were at the pinnacle of their poetry and prose during the time of revelation of the Qur'an could not even produce the smallest surah of its like, which is 3 verses! The Qur'an's form did not fit into any of the above mentioned categories. It was this that made the Qur'an inimitable, and left the pagan Arabs at a loss as to how they might combat it as Alqama bin Abd al-Manaf confirmed when he addressed their leaders, the Quraysh:

“Oh Quraish, a new calamity has befallen you. Mohammed was a young man the most liked among you, most truthful in speech, and most trustworthy; until, when you saw gray hairs on his temple, and he brought you his message, you said that he was a sorcerer, but he is not, for we seen such people and their spitting and their knots; you said, a diviner, but we have seen such people and their behavior, and we have heard their rhymes; you said a soothsayer; but he is not a soothsayer, for we have heard their rhymes; and you said a poet, but he is not a poet, for we have heard all kinds of poetry; you said he was possessed, but he is not for we have seen the possessed, and he shows no signs of their gasping and whispering and delirium. Oh men of Quraish, look to your affairs, for by Allah a serious thing has befallen you.”

It is a well known fact that the Qur'an was revealed in seven ahruf (or seven forms) to facilitate greater understanding of it among the Arabs who had different dialects. This was also to challenge them on their own grounds to produce a surah like that of the Qur'an. The challenge became more obvious when none of the seven major tribes could imitate it even in their own dialects as no one could claim that it was difficult to imitate due to it not being in their own dialect.

Now what do orientalists say about the uniqueness and inimitability of the Qur'an?

The words in the Qur'an that are in the Arabic language are in such precision, such eloquence, such order, placed in the most perfect context it could possibly be in. So much so that if you were able to come up with the 28 letters of the Arabic language, all the words in the Arabic language, all the grammatical rules in the Arabic language, and we were to exhaust all combinations whatsoever, we wouldn't even be able to produce something similar to it, leaving us absolutely unsurprised when intellectuals like Arthur John Arberry say something like:

“Briefly, the rhetoric and rhythm of the Arabic of the Koran are so characteristic, so powerful, so highly emotive, that any version whatsoever is bound in the nature of things to be but a poor copy of the glittering splendour of the original.”

As well as E H Palmer, who as early as 1880, recognized the unique style of the Qur'an. But he seem to have been wavering between two thoughts. He writes in the Introduction to his translation of the Qur'an:

*“That the best of Arab writers has never succeeded in producing anything equal in merit to the Qur'an itself is not surprising. In the first place, they have agreed before-hand that it is unapproachable, and they have adopted its style as the perfect standard; any deviation from it therefore must of necessity be a defect. Again, with them this style is not spontaneous as with Muhammad and his contemporaries, but is as artificial as though Englishmen should still continue to follow Chaucer as their model, in spite of the changes which their language has undergone. **With the Prophet, the style was natural, and the words were those in every-day ordinary life, while with the later Arabic authors the style is imitative and the ancient words are introduced as a literary embellishment. The natural consequence is that their attempts look laboured and unreal by the side of his impromptu and forcible eloquence.”***

Christoph Luxenberg, a modern German scholar who has studied the Qur'an, he has also recognized the unique style and content of the Qur'an, stating:

*“The Qur'an is a **highly original work**, with a **literary style and a content that set it apart from other texts in the Arabic language.**”*

John Wansbrough, a 20th-century British scholar who specialized in the study of the Qur'an and Islamic history. In his book “*Qur'anic Studies*,” he wrote:

*“The Qur'an is unique among the sacred texts of the major religions in the simplicity, concision, and rhetorical power of its language... **The Qur'an is without parallel in the history of human discourse.**”*

He also stated:

*“The Qur'an is a work of **extraordinary power** and beauty, and its impact on the minds of those who first heard it must have been immense... **It is a work that is truly miraculous in its content and style.**”*

William Muir, a 19th-century British Orientalist and historian who studied the Qur'an extensively. In his book "*The Life of Muhammad*," he wrote:

"In the whole world there is no work comparable to it. Every word of it is in its place, and every letter has its due weight... There is not a single passage which has not a meaning, or which is not full of beauty."

In that same book, he also wrote:

"The Qur'an is not simply a record of the words of the prophet, but the very word of God... There is not a single passage which has not a meaning, or which is not full of beauty... every word of the Qur'an is a miracle in itself."

Arthur Jeffery, a 20th-century American Orientalist, who specialized in the study of the Qur'an. In his book "*The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an*," he wrote:

"The Qur'an is a book of such extraordinary power and beauty that one can only marvel at its effect on the minds of those who first heard it. It is a miracle in the original sense of the word, a 'sign' which reveals the presence and power of God."

The famous Arabist from University of Oxford, Hamilton Gibb was open upon about the style of the Qur'an. In his words:

"...the Meccans still demanded of him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and self confidence Mohammad appealed as a supreme confirmation of his mission to the Koran itself. Like all Arabs they were the connoisseurs of language and rhetoric. Well, then if the Koran were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evident miracle."

And in some other place, talking about the Prophet and the Qur'an, he states:

"Though, to be sure, the question of the literary merit is one not to be judged on a priori grounds but in relation to the genius of Arabic language; and no man in fifteen hundred years has ever played on that deep-

toned instrument with such power, such boldness, and such range of emotional effect as Mohammad did.

As a literary monument the Koran thus stands by itself, a production unique to the Arabic literature, having neither forerunners nor successors in its own idiom.

Muslims of all ages are united in proclaiming the inimitability not only of its contents but also of its style... and in forcing the High Arabic idiom into the expression of new ranges of thought the Koran develops a bold and strikingly effective rhetorical prose in which all the resources of syntactical modulation are exploited with great freedom and originality.”

On the influence of the Qur'an on Arabic literature Gibb says:

“The influence of the Koran on the development of Arabic Literature has been incalculable, and exerted in many directions. Its ideas, its language, its rhymes pervade all subsequent literary works in greater or lesser measure. Its specific linguistic features were not emulated, either in the chancery prose of the next century or in the later prose writings, but it was at least partly due to the flexibility imparted by the Koran to the High Arabic idiom that the former could be so rapidly developed and adjusted to the new needs of the imperial government and an expanding society.”

As the Qur'an itself says:

And if ye are in doubt as to what We have revealed from time to time to Our servant, then produce a Sura like thereunto; and call your witnesses or helpers (If there are any) besides Allah, if your (doubts) are true. **But if ye cannot- and of a surety ye cannot- then fear the Fire whose fuel is men and stones,- which is prepared for those who reject Faith. (Qur'an 2:23-24)**

Lastly, the beautiful style of the Qur'an is admired even by the Arab Christians:

“The Quran is one of the world's classics which cannot be translated without grave loss. It has a rhythm of peculiar beauty and a cadence that charms the ear. Many Christian Arabs speak of its style with warm admiration, and most Arabists acknowledge its excellence. When it is read aloud or recited it has an almost hypnotic effect that makes the listener indifferent to its sometimes strange syntax and its sometimes, to us, repellent content. It is this quality it possesses of silencing criticism by the sweet music of its language that has

given birth to the dogma of its inimitability; indeed it may be affirmed that within the literature of the Arabs, wide and fecund as it is both in poetry and in elevated prose, there is nothing to compare with it.”

Along with the multitude of others, such as Theodor Nöldeke, who was a German orientalist and linguist who was among the first to study the Quran in a scientific manner, and in his book, "Die Geschichte des Qorans (*The History of the Quran*)," he recognized the Quran's unique style and linguistic excellence and argued that it had a distinct style and language that set it apart from other texts. He specifically noted the Quran's use of rhyme and rhythm, narrative style and its use of parallelism and repetition that contributes to its coherence, cohesiveness, and inimitability.

Summing up: within the Arabic literature, either poetry or prose, there is *nothing* comparable to the Qur'an. Otherwise why do you think experts on the Qur'an are astonished on its excellence, uniqueness and inimitability, while comparing it to every other text in the Arabic language? Why do you think no one, for 1400 years, has been able to produce something like the shortest 3 verse chapter in the Qur'an? Muslims throughout the centuries are united upon the its inimitability.

Now let's look at I'jaz al-Qur'an (Or Inimitability Of The Qur'an) and it's Exposition.

I'jaz literally means "the rendering incapable, powerless". It is the concept relating to the miraculous nature of the Qur'an. What constitutes this miracle is a subject that has engaged Muslims scholars for centuries. By the early part of the third century AH (ninth century CE), the word i'jaz had come to mean that quality of the Qur'an that rendered people incapable of imitating the book or any part; in content and form. By the latter part of that century, the word had become the technical term, and the numerous definitions applied to it after the tenth century have shown little divergence from the key concepts of the inimitability of the Qur'an and the inability of human beings to match it even challenged (**tahiddi**).

Thus, the Islamic doctrine of i'jaz al-Qur'an consists in the belief that the Qur'an is a miracle (mu'jizah) bestowed on Muhammad. Both terms, i'jaz and mu'jizah come from the same verbal root. While mu'jizah is the active principle of a'jaza, i'jaz is its verbal noun.

The early theological discussions on i'jaz introduced the hypothesis of *sarfah* ("turning away") and argued that the miracle consisted of God's turning the competent away from taking up the

challenge of imitating the Qur'an. The implication of **sarfah** is that the Qur'an otherwise could be imitated. However, Abd al-Jabbar (d. 1025 CE), the Mu'tazilite theologian rejected sarfah because of its obvious weaknesses.

Abd al-Jabbar rejects the doctrine of *sarfah* for two main reasons. Firstly, because it contradicts the verse of the Qur'an stating that neither *jinn* nor human can rival the Qur'an, and secondly because it makes a miracle of something other than the Qur'an, i.e., the *sarfah*, the prohibition from production, and not the Qur'an itself. In addition to this, according to 'Abd al-Jabbar, the doctrine of *sarfah* displays four major weaknesses:

1. It ignores the well-known fact that the Arabs of Muhammad's time had acknowledged the superior quality of speech of the Qur'an;
2. It is in direct conflict with the meaning of the verses of the Challenge;
3. It implies that the Qur'an is not a miracle; and
4. It asserts that the Arabs were out of their minds (*khuruj 'an al-'aql*).

This doctrine, in fact, implies that they could have produced a rival to the Qur'an, but simply decided against doing so. It effectively calls into question either their motives or their sanity.

Therefore, according to Abd al-Jabbar the correct interpretation of *sarfah* is that the motives to rival the Qur'an disappeared (*insarafah*) because of the recognition of the impossibility of doing so.

Abd al-Jabbar insisted on the unmatchable quality of the Qur'an's extra-ordinary eloquence and unique stylist perfection. In his work *al-Mughni* (The Sufficient Book), he argued that eloquence (*fasahah*) resulted from the excellence of both meaning and wording, and he explained that there were degrees of excellence depending on the manner in which words were chosen and arranged in any literary text, the Qur'an being the highest type.

al-Baqillani (d. 1013 CE), in his systematic and comprehensive study entitled *I'jaz al-Qur'an* upheld the rhetorically unsurpassable style of the Qur'an, but he did not consider this to be a necessary argument in the favour of the Qur'an's uniqueness and emphasized instead the content of revelation.

The choice and arrangement of words, referred to as *nazm* was the focus of discussion by al-Jahiz, al-Sijistani (d. 928 CE), al-Bakhi (d. 933 CE) and Ibn al-Ikhshid (d. 937 CE). al-Rummani and his

contemporary al-Khattabi (d. 998 CE) discussed the psychological effect of **nazm** of the Qur'an in their al-Nukat fi I'jaz al-Qur'an and Bayan I'jaz al-Qur'an, respectively.

The author who best elaborated and systematized the theory of **nazm** in his analysis of the i'jaz is Abd al-Qahir al-Jurjani (d. 1078 CE) in his Dala'il al-I'jaz. His material was further organized by Fakhr ad-Din al-Razi (d. 1209) in his Nihayat al-I'jaz fi Dirayat al-I'jaz and put to practical purposes by al-Zamakhshari (d. 1144 CE) in his exegesis of the Qur'an entitled al-Kashasaf, rich in rhetorical analysis of the Qur'anic style.

Now let's look at the very unique composition in the Qur'an.

The Qur'an is a very unique book in terms of its composition. Its 114 chapters (or 'Surahs' in Arabic) are not arranged chronologically or thematically. Even within the individual chapters, numerous topics can be covered with sudden switches from one topic to another and then back again.

This unique structure at face value may appear to be disjointed. However, modern research has discovered a sophisticated structural coherence in the Qur'an known as ring composition.

Theory of ring composition.

Ring composition has been explained by Mary Douglas in her book "*Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition*". In ring compositions there must be a correspondence between the beginning and the end. It is structured as a sort of circle, or mirror image. The central meaning of the text is placed at its centre. The second half mirrors the first half, in reverse order — e.g., A, B, C, D, C', B', A'.

The correspondence usually involves the repetition of a striking or evident word or phrase, and there must be a clear thematic connection between the two sections. The correspondence serves to complete the circle and provide closure. Also, the internal sections - within the ring - must correspond to each other.

To put it in simple terms; ring composition is the equivalent of putting a mirror in the middle - what is mentioned in the first half will be reflected in the second half.

The circumstances of the Qur'an's revelation.

Before getting into the ring composition of the Qur'an, it's worth discussing the background and circumstances of the Qur'an's revelation:

Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, could not read or write. The Qur'an itself confirms this:

"Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel..." [Chapter 7, verse 157]

Throughout his life, prior to Prophethood, Muhammad did not have a reputation for poetry. In fact we know from history that at a personal level he disliked it and wasn't a skilled poet. There are instances where he attempted to relate some poetry and would jumble the words up [*Tafsir at-Tabari*, also see *Tafsir Abdul Razzaq* 3/86 Narration No. 2496 under Qur'an 36:69.]:

Qatadah narrated, Aisha was asked: Did the Prophet, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, use to relate anything from poetry?" She said: It was most detestable thing to him except that (at times) he used to relate a verse from the person of Banu Qays and he jumbled it up...

The Qur'an was originally delivered to its first audience in the form of speech through recitation. Remarkably the Qur'an did not have the opportunity for an editorial process, as many verses were revealed on the spot as a response to unexpected questions and challenges that were brought forward to Prophet Muhammad from both believers and non-believers.

The 6,236 verses that make up the Qur'an were revealed gradually over a period of 23 years. It did not go through multiple revisions as it was revealed:

And those who disbelieve say, "Why was the Qur'an not revealed to him all at once?" Thus [it is] that We may strengthen thereby your heart. And We have spaced it distinctly. [Chapter 25, verse 32]

One of the most interesting things about the Qur'an is that it was not revealed in a strict sequential order. While many people assume that the Qur'an was revealed all at once, or in a predetermined order, the reality is that it was revealed over a period of approximately 23 years and in response to the specific needs and circumstances of the early Muslim and non-Muslim community. This means

that the surahs of the Qur'an were revealed as they were needed, rather than being revealed in a predetermined order.

In fact, there is conclusive evidence which tells us that some verses of the Qur'an were revealed in an interspersed manner, with the revelation of verses from one surah being interspersed with the revelation of verses from other surahs. Have a think about the typical way in which books are written. Most follow a pattern of a beginning, middle and end, and most would be written in that order too. Most people would assume that the Quran was revealed chronologically, with the same sequence in revelation, starting with its first chapter and ending with its final chapter. However, the Qur'an isn't like most books. You may be surprised to learn that the 6,236 verses that make up the Qur'an were not revealed sequentially in order. Chapter 1 was not followed by chapters 2, 3, 4 (and so on) as one would write a conventional book. Rather, chapter 96 was followed by chapter 68, which was followed by chapter 73 (and so on). Moreover, a few of the chapters of the Quran are quite large in size, with hundreds of verses. They were not revealed all at once, some chapters were revealed over a span of many years, with the revelation of their verses being interspersed with the revelation of verses from other chapters.

This is a consensus among the majority of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars, including William Montgomery Watt, Michael Sells, Andrew Rippin, John Burton, James Bellamy, Richard Bell, Robert Hoyland, Gerhard Bowering, and Angelika Neuwirth, who recognize that the Qur'an was not revealed all at once and/or sequentially, but rather some surahs were revealed over a span of many years, with the revelation of their verses being interspersed with the revelation of verses from other chapters.

So next time someone tells you that the Qur'an was revealed sequentially, just remember that it was not revealed in a predetermined order and that some verses were revealed in an interspersed manner with verses from other chapters. The Qur'an is a unique and complex text, and understanding its historical context and the way it was revealed can help us better appreciate its beauty and depth.

Although, in light of these circumstances, wouldn't you expect the structure of the Qur'an to be jumbled? Especially while considering that Muhammad struggled to compile the shortest verses and poetry, and even while doing so, jumbled it up! It would be difficult to plan an ordered structure in advance, when verses are being revealed in such an apparently random fashion. What we find against all odds however, is that the Qur'an contains the sophisticated structure of ring composition.

The ring composition in the Qur'an.

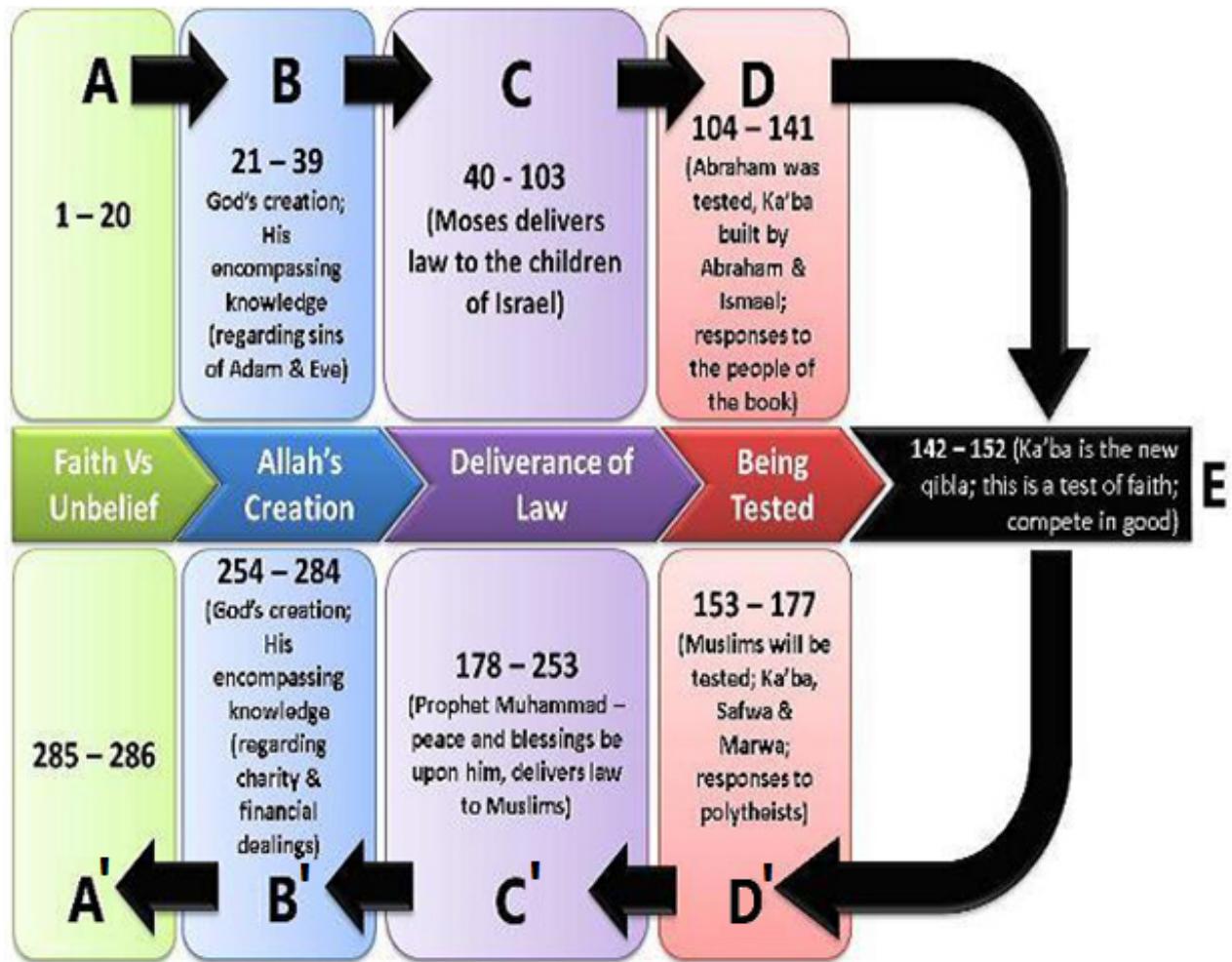
Surah al-Baqarah, which we are going to use as a case study in this article, happens to be the longest chapter of the Qur'an and was revealed over a span of over nine years. Surah Al-Baqarah consists of 286 verses and can be divided into nine main sections based on theme/topic (verse numbers in parenthesis):

1. Faith vs. unbelief (1 – 20).
2. Allah's creation and knowledge (21 – 39).
3. Deliverance of Law to Children of Israel (40 – 103).
4. Abraham was tested (104 – 141).
5. Ka'ba is the new qibla (142 – 152).
6. Muslims will be tested (153 – 177).
7. Deliverance of Law to Muslims (178 – 253).
8. Allah's creation and knowledge (254 – 284).
9. Faith vs. unbelief (285 – 286).

Re-arranging this list to fit into a ring composition:

- A Faith vs. unbelief (1 – 20).
- B Allah's creation and knowledge (21 – 39).
- C Deliverance of Law to Children of Israel (40 – 103).
- D Abraham was tested (104 – 141).
- E Ka'ba is the new qibla (142 – 152).
- D' Muslims will be tested (153 – 177).
- C' Deliverance of Law to Muslims (178 – 253).
- B' Allah's creation and knowledge (254 – 284).
- A' Faith vs. unbelief (285 – 286).

The coherence in the form of a ring composition is best illustrated in the diagram below (please click on picture to enlarge) [Original diagram taken from article at Islam21c, "The Coherence of al-Baqarah".]:



If we examine the 9 sections we find that they contain sub-ring compositions. So what we have is rings within rings [Surat al-Baqarah – A Structural Analysis, Raymond Farrin, 2010.]:

A (1–20)

The section consists of two small rings. The first ring is structured as follows:

1–2 Qur'an is guidance

3–4 ... to those who believe

5 They are following the Lord's guidance, and they are the ones who will prosper

The second ring is structured as follows:

6–7 Unbelievers are firm in rejection; God has sealed their ears; their eyes are covered

8–14 Some people profess belief, but are hypocrites

15–20 They are as the deaf and the blind; God could take away their hearing and sight

B (21–39)

- 21–24 Exhortation to people: worship the Lord who created you; if you doubt the revelation, produce a comparable sura; beware of the Fire
- 25–26 Gardens prepared for those who believe and do good; such as them will have pure spouses and abide therein
- 26–29 Question to unbelievers: how can you reject faith, seeing that God created you and the heavens and earth?
- 30–38 Adam and his wife expelled from the Garden; God accepts Adam's repentance; those who follow guidance shall not grieve
- 39 Those who disbelieve and disavow God's signs will abide in the Fire

C (40–103)

The section consists of two small rings. The first ring is structured as follows:

40–46 Exhortation to Children of Israel: believe in God's message

47–66 Calf

67–82 Cow

83–96 Calf

97–103 Most Children of Israel do not believe

The second ring is structured as follows:

97 Revelation sent to the Prophet, confirming previous scriptures

98 God is an enemy to those who reject faith

99 Only the perverse refuse to believe

100 Most Children of Israel reject faith

101 When Solomon came, confirming previous scriptures, a party discarded the Book

D (104–141)

The first ring of the section is structured as follows:

- 104–10 Exhortation to believers: don't address the Prophet ambiguously; don't question him as Moses was questioned; don't give up faith
- 111–13 Jews and Christians say only a Jew or a Christian shall enter Heaven
- 114–15 Pagans prevent worship at the Ka'ba
- 116–17 Christians say God has a son
- 118–19 Pagans ask for a miraculous sign; they will dwell in the Fire
- 120 Jews and Christians won't be satisfied unless you follow their ways
- 121 Those to whom God has sent the Scripture, who recite it properly, are the ones who believe in it

Here is the middle ring:

- 122–23 Exhortation to Children of Israel: remember how God favored you with His Message; beware of Judgment Day
- 124 God says to Abraham, I will make you an imam to men
- 125 God made the Ka'ba a sanctuary and commanded Abraham and Ishmael to purify it
- 126 Abraham asks God to make Mecca a city of peace and reward those of its people who believe
- 127 Abraham and Ishmael raised the foundations of the Ka'ba
- 128–29 Abraham asks God to send an apostle who will recite revelation and teach wisdom
- 130–33 Rhetorical question: who but a fool would abandon the religion of Abraham? Jacob (Israel) says to his sons, God has chosen your religion for you

The section ends with a third small ring:

- 134 Summary and warning: Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes will get what they deserve, as will you
- 135 People of the Book say become Jews or Christians
- 136–38 Creed: We believe in God, and in what was revealed to us, and what was revealed to all the prophets; we make no distinction among them, and we bow to Him
- 139–40 Question to Jews and Christians: How can you argue with us, when God is our Lord and your Lord and we are all responsible for our actions?
- 141 Summary and warning: Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes will get what they deserve, as will you

E (142–52)

- 142–43 Regarding *qibla* change: God guides whom He will; Message to Muslim community; Prophet is a witness over you; change in *qibla* is a test of faith
- 144–46 Command to Prophet: turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque.
- 147–48 Adjuration: the truth (regarding the *qibla*) is from your Lord, so do not doubt; each community has its own direction, so race to do good and God will bring you together
- 149–50 Command to Prophet: turn your face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque; Command to Muslims: turn your faces in the direction of the Sacred Mosque
- 151–52 Message to Muslim community: We have sent an apostle of your own among you, instructing you in the Scripture and wisdom; do not reject faith

D' (153–77)

- 153–58 Exhortation to believers: seek help through patience and prayer; God will test you with adversity
- 159–60 Those Jews and Christians who conceal guidance are cursed
- 161–73 Those who disbelieve, who worship others besides God, will not leave the Fire
- 174–76 Those... Jews... and... Christians... who... conceal... the... Scripture... will experience torment
- 177 Good are those who keep up the prayer, who are patient in adversity

C' (178–253)

- 178–82 Equality in retribution; bequests
- 183–89 Fasting, superstitions
- 190–94 Fighting/jihad
- 195–207 Spending; performing Hajj, offering sacrifice
- 208–14 Exhortation to believers: enter Islam wholeheartedly; do not backslide; Reminder and assurance: God guides whom He will to the Straight Path; believers will be tested; God's help is near
- 215 Spending in charity
- 216–18 Fighting/jihad
- 219 Drinking wine, gambling
- 220–42 Orphans, marriage and divorce, widows

B' (254–84)

- 254 Exhortation to believers: give of the bounties God has provided you, before the Day comes when there is no bargaining
- 255–60 God is all powerful and all knowing; God is an ally of those who believe; God gives life and death, resurrects
- 261–84 Parables about charity; charity and its rewards; usury and its punishments; debts

A' (285–86)

- 285 Believers
- 285 Forgiveness
- 286 God does not place on a soul a greater burden than it can bear; each soul gets what it deserves
- 286 Forgiveness
- 286 Unbelievers

Here is a table showing parallels between the corresponding sections (the correspondences here are indicated horizontally):

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------------|---|
| A | 1–5 | Believers | A' | 285 | Believers |
| | 6–20 | Unbelievers | | 286.9 | Unbelievers |
| B | 28 | Evidence of God: God gives life and death, brings dead back to life | B' | 258–60 | Evidence of God: God gives life and death, brings dead back to life |
| | 29–30, 32–33 | | | 255–56, 261, 268, 270–71, 273, | |
| | | God knows all | | 282–84 | God knows all |
| C | 43, 87 | God gave Moses Al-Kitāb | C' | 178, 180, 183, 216 | <i>kutiba 'alaykum</i> |
| | 102 | Solomon (son of David) | | 251 | David (Solomon's father) |
| | 102–03 | latch (to third internal ring) | | 243–53 | latch (to whole section) |
| D | 124 | Abraham tried by his Lord | D' | 155 | God shall try Muslims |
| | 127 | Abraham and Ishmael raised God's House | | 158 | Pilgrimage to Sacred House; circulating between Safa and Mina |
| | 140 | concealing testimony | | 159, 174 | concealing clear signs, God's revelations |
| | 111, 113, 116, 118, 135 | | | 167, 170 | |
| | | People of the Book say . . . (and Muslim responses) | | | Polytheists say . . . (and Muslim responses) |

A noteworthy point is that the middle of Surah Al-Baqarah, the 143rd verse, mentions an important turning point for the Muslims:

Thus We have appointed you a middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you. And We appointed the qiblah which ye formerly observed only that We might know him who followeth the messenger, from him who turneth on his heels. In truth it was a hard (test) save for those whom Allah guided. But it was not Allah's purpose that your faith should be in vain, for Allah is Full of Pity, Merciful toward mankind. [Chapter 2, verse 143]

This turning point was the change in qiblah, the direction of the daily prayers, from Jerusalem to Makkah. This represented a big test for the believers. We find the mention of this important turning point in exactly the middle of the chapter. Moreover this verse even contains the word 'middle'!

Finally, it's worth paying special attention to a particular verse of Surah al-Baqarah, the 255th verse known as 'Ayat al-Kursi'. This verse is considered the most excellent verse of the Qur'an, according to Prophet Muhammad. Its memorisation is highly encouraged, and it just so happens that it too exhibits a ring composition:

AYATUL KURSI

Allah - there is none worthy of worship except HE; THE EVER-LIVING, THE EVER-WATCHFUL ①

Neither drowsiness nor sleep OVERTAKES HIM ②

To Him belongs whatever is in the HEAVENS and the EARTH ③

Who is there that can intercede with Him EXCEPT by HIS PERMISSION? ④

He knows what is BEFORE them and what will be AFTER them ⑤

and they encompass not a thing of His knowledge EXCEPT for what HE WILLS ⑥

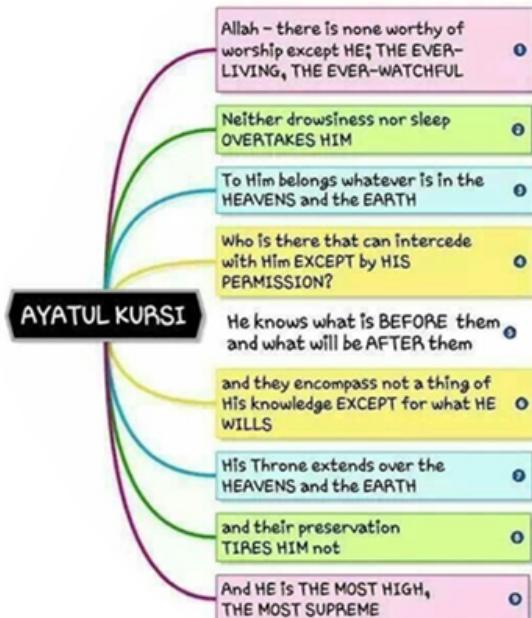
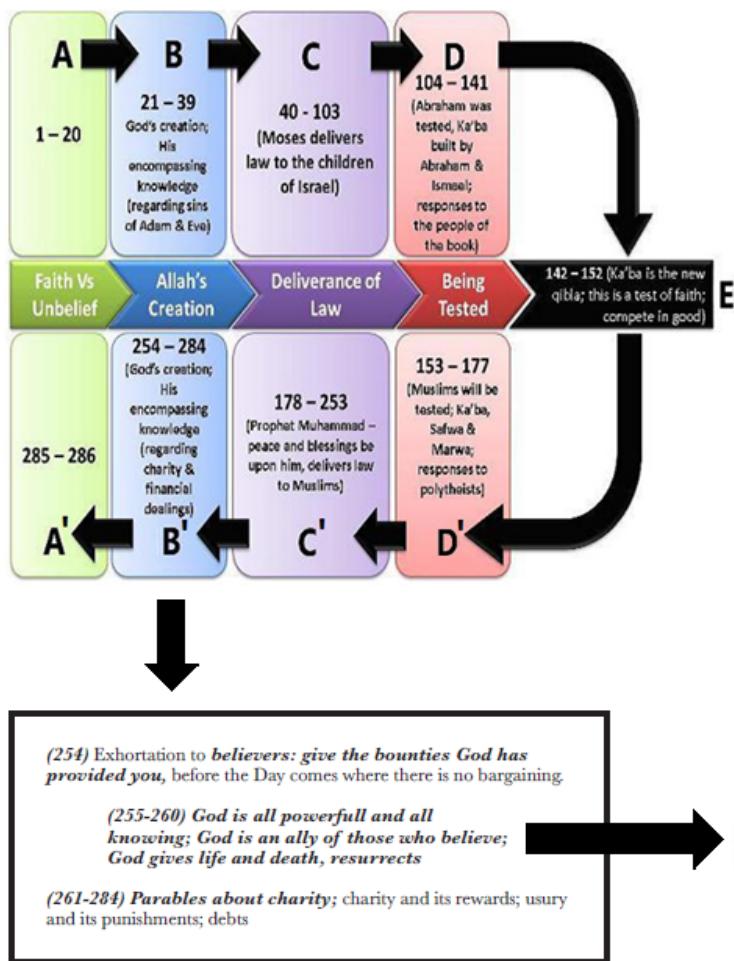
His Throne extends over the HEAVENS and the EARTH ⑦

and their preservation TIRES HIM not ⑧

And HE is THE MOST HIGH, THE MOST SUPREME ⑨

Notice that the middle of Ayat al-Kursi mentions 'before' and 'after' which could be yet another allusion to the mirroring of ring composition.

It's worth highlighting that not only does Ayat al-Kursi contain its own ring composition, but it is also positioned as a sub ring within two larger rings - a concentric ring composition:



Raymond K Farrin, author of “Surat al-Baqarah - A Structural Analysis”, concludes on Surah al-Baqarah’s ring composition:

“Indeed this sura exhibits marvellous justness of design. It is precisely and tightly arranged, as we have seen, according to the principles of ring composition; even the section lengths fit perfectly in the overall scheme. Moreover, the precise structure serves as a guide, pointing to key themes in the sura. These occur, according to the logic of the pattern, at the centers of individual rings and, particularly, at the center of the whole sura. At the center of the sura, again, one finds instructions to face Mecca — this being a test of faith; identification of the Muslims as a new, middle community; and the message that all people, regardless of their qibla or spiritual orientation, should race to do good and God will bring them together.”

This precision in the arrangement of the verses is in fact astonishing when we consider the timing of the revelation of the verses of the Qur'an. As Dr Abdullah Draz, Professor of Islamic Studies, eloquently puts it:

"When we consider carefully the timing of the revelation of the Qur'anic passages and surahs [chapters] and their arrangement, we are profoundly astonished. We almost belie what we see and hear. We then begin to ask ourselves for an explanation of this highly improbable phenomenon: is it not true that this new passage of revelation has just been heard as new, addressing a particular event which is its only concern? Yet it sounds as though it is neither new nor separate from the rest. It seems as if it has been, along with the rest of the Qur'an, perfectly impressed on this man's mind long before he has recited it to us... When we consider such detailed instructions on the arrangement of passages and surahs we are bound to conclude that there is a complete and detailed plan assigning the position of each passage before they are all revealed. Indeed the arrangement is made before the reasons leading to the revelation of any passage occur, and even before the start of the preliminary causes of such events... Such are the plain facts about the arrangement of the Qur'an as it was revealed in separate verses, passages and surahs over a period of 23 years. What does that tell us about its source?" [Dr Abdullah Draz, *The Qur'an An Eternal Challenge*, p. 126 – 127.]

To better understand Dr Draz's point, let's consider the example of constructing a building. Imagine two people being supplied with materials and being tasked with building a house. The first person is experienced; they know that in order to design a well-constructed house, they need to go about the task in an organised fashion. They first wait until all of the materials, such as the bricks, cement, wood and nails, have been supplied. Then they would review the materials at their disposal, assessing their quantities, sizes and shapes so that they can determine how they will best fit together. Now that they have a complete picture of the constituent parts of the house, only then do they draw up a design plan. Making a design plan cannot precede the supply and assessment of the materials because the plan depends upon the materials available. Such an approach stands a good chance of resulting in a well-constructed house.

The second person is inexperienced and they go about building the house in a disorganised fashion. Rather than waiting until they receive all of the materials and then drawing up a design plan, they instead decide to build a house without complete knowledge of its constituent parts, constructing it piecemeal, adding to it bit by bit, as and when they receive the individual materials. What are the

chances that this approach will result in a well-constructed house like that of the organised person? Unlike the organised approach where each part is placed in its best possible position, instead you have a situation where it seems each part is placed arbitrarily, depending on the order in which they were received. In such circumstances you would most likely end up with a very poorly designed house, liable to collapse at any time. It is highly unlikely, perhaps even impossible, that this disorganised approach would end up with the same stunningly designed house that the organised person constructed.

Yet this is exactly what we find with the structure of the Qur'an. The builder in our example is Muhammad. The house that he began to build since its first bricks were given to him is the Qur'an. Ever since he received its early verses, he started to arrange its parts. The rooms and bricks in our construction example are the chapters and verses of the Qur'an. He could never have a design plan in place for the Qur'an because the revelation of many of its verses depended on events that were out of his control, such as the social developments and religious and worldly challenges that he faced throughout his 23 years of Prophethood. For example, believers would come up to him and question him on a particular matter, or his enemies would challenge him. Immediately the responses in the form of revelation would descend on him, addressing the specific situation that he was facing.

Benefits of ring composition.

Ring composition has great exegetical application. For a ring structure not only holds the text together, but also gives focus to the important words and themes. By means of concentric patterning, ring composition calls attention to the centre - we are drawn to look here for the essential message. As Mary Douglas notes concisely, "The meaning is in the middle." [Mary Douglas, *Thinking in Circles* 16, p. 35.]

It also serves as an aid in memorisation, especially useful given the length of Surah al-Baqarah. In his study of ancient poetry, Cedric Whitman found that ring composition simultaneously performed both aesthetic and mnemonic functions. It aids memorisation by permitting the oral poet to easily recall the basic formulae of the composition during performances [Mary Douglas, *Thinking in Circles* 16, p. 35.].

Ring composition in other literature.

Some critics may point out that texts prior to the Qur'an had this literary style and therefore we cannot use this as evidence of the Qur'an's divine origin. They put forward examples from Mary

Douglas' book "Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition" which states that ring compositions are found throughout ancient Eastern Mediterranean literature (like Homer's Iliad) as well as the Bible.

Comparing the Qur'an's structure to that of other texts is like comparing night and day for the following reasons:

1. Prophet Muhammad could not read or write, so it's a lot more difficult to plan such a structure when all you have to go on is memory (the Qur'an was revealed orally of course).
2. Prophet Muhammad was not a poet nor did he have any literary reputation, and yet the Qur'an has this remarkable structure. How can a person with little to no experience or skill in poetry/literature achieve such sophistication?
3. The verses of the Qur'an were not revealed in sequential order like with conventional texts. Surah al-Baqarah, the example covered in this article, was revealed over a period of many years with its verses interspersed with the revelation of verses from other chapters. Unlike conventional texts this makes implementing such a structure much more difficult.
4. Many verses of the Qur'an are linked to questions and events that occurred unexpectedly, so unless a person can predict the future, how could a human being plan the verses ahead of time when they were not in his control? Other texts such as the Bible were written by multiple authors long after Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them) which would make planning such a structure much easier.
5. The Qur'an did not undergo any editorial process, Prophet Muhammad would fix the positions of the new verses as soon as they were revealed to him. With each new verse, again which were tied to external questions and events that were outside of his control, he would not go off and review what had been previously revealed and see where he can fit them in order to maintain this ring structure. So spontaneous revelation was immediately followed by the placement of the verse into the Qur'an, and once placed it was fixed with no opportunity for later editing. Other texts such as the Bible show evidence of multiple authors and several stages of editing, again making it much easier to achieve such a structure.

In summary, it is the unique circumstances of the revelation of the Qur'an that make its ring structure a strong argument for its divine origin.

Conclusion.

How is it possible that the Qur'an exhibits such a remarkably harmonious structure when its verses were not revealed sequentially, but in random pieces over a span of 23 years, especially given that many of the 6,236 verses of the Qur'an are tied to particular historical events? Were a human being to compose a book in such a manner then its structure would undoubtedly be in disorder.

Not only that, but we also unexpectedly seem to find a whole mathematical code in the Qur'an, such as...

1. “Iblees” (Satan) is mentioned 11 times, and seeking refuge with Allah is also mentioned 11 times. [*“Iblees” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:34, 7:11, 15:31, 15:32, 17:61, 18:50, 20:116, 26:95, 34:20, 38:74, and 38:75. Total = 11 mentions.* *“Seeking refuge with Allah” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:67, 7:200, 11:47, 16:98, 19:18, 23:97, 23:98, 40:56, 41:36, 113:1, and 114:1. Total = 11 mentions.*]
2. “Angels” are mentioned 88 times in the Quran, while “devils” are also mentioned 88 times. We also see that “angels” without its derivative forms appears 68 times, and with its other forms (singular, plural, and possessive), 88. If we look into this more deeply, we find that “Al-Shaytan” (the devil) also appears 68 times, and with its derivatives (singular, plural, and possessive), also 88. This is stunning, and simply impossible for a human being to plan out intentionally.
3. The phrase “Allah likes (loves)” and its opposite, Allah dislikes (does not love) both appear exactly 16 times each! The first person I found to have noticed this was Abduldaem Al-Kaheel. [*“Allah likes (loves)” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:195, 2:222, 3:76, 3:134, 3:146, 3:148, 3:159, 5:13, 5:42, 5:93, 9:4, 9:7, 9:108, 49:9, 60:8, and 61:4. Total = 16 mentions.* *“Allah dislikes (does not love)” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:190, 2:205, 2:276, 3:32, 3:57, 3:140, 4:36, 4:107, 5:64, 5:87, 8:58, 22:38, 28:76, 28:77, 31:18, and 57:23. Total = 16 mentions.*]
4. The word “belief” is mentioned 25 times, and the word “disbelief” is likewise also mentioned 25 times.
5. The word “coolness” (cold) is mentioned a total of 4 times, while the word “heat” (hot) is mentioned 4 times. [*“Coolness” (Cold) in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 21:69, 38:42, 56:44, and 78:24. Total = 4 mentions.* Note that a word spelled with the same letters (but different vowels) means “hail” (frozen rain), which, of course, does not count as an instance of “coolness” (cold). *“Heat” (Hot) in the Quran*

(Chapter : Verse): 9:81 (2 times), 16:81, and 35:21. Total = 4 mentions. Note that a word spelled with the same letters (but different vowels) means “free person,” which, as above, does not count as an instance of “heat” (hot).]

6. Winter is mentioned one time, while the word “summer,” too, is mentioned only once (see Quran 106:2).
7. The words “East” and “West” in their various forms are both mentioned exactly 16 times each.
[“East” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:115, 2:142, 2:177, 2:258, 7:137, 15:73, 19:16, 24:35, 26:28, 26:60, 37:5, 38:18, 43:38, 55:17, 70:40, and 73:9. Total = 16 mentions. “West” in the Quran (Chapter : Verse): 2:115, 2:142, 2:177, 2:258, 7:137, 18:17, 18:86 (2 times), 20:130, 24:35, 26:28, 28:44, 50:39, 55:17, 70:40, and 73:9. Total = 16 mentions.]
8. The phrase “Seven Heavens” is mentioned exactly seven times!
9. Throughout the Quran, we see Allah commanding the Prophet (PBUH) with the word “say,” such as when He commands: “*Say, ‘He is Allah, the Only One.’*” (Quran 112:1) In contrast, when people (usually the non-believers) say something, this is shown through the Arabic word for “*they say.*” When we count the number of times the word “say” appears, it is 332, and when we count the number of times “*they say*” appears, it, too, is amazingly 332!
10. As for the plural form of the word “Paradise” (“Jannat” in Arabic), it is repeated 77 times, just as Hell (“Jahannam”) is also repeated 77 times in the Quran.
11. The Arabic word for “this world” (“Al-Dunya”) appears in the Quran 115 times, while the word for “the afterlife” (“Al- Akhirah”) also appears 115 times.
12. The word “belief” is mentioned 25 times, and the word “disbelief” is likewise also mentioned 25 times.
13. “*Verily, the likeness of Jesus before Allah is the likeness of Adam. He created him from dust, then He said to him: “Be!” - and he was.*”(Al-Imran: 59). The interesting point is that both Jesus and Adam are both mentioned 25 times in the entire Quran and are both mentioned 7 times up till this verse.

...and as stunning as this harmony may be, this approach to Quran mathematics barely touches the surface, and is just a starting point! Note, also, that these observations are not just about number

relationships within the Quran, they are also relevant to natural phenomena occurring outside the Quran as well. To see more about this sophisticated mathematical phenomenon, I urge you to read “*Quran Mathematical Miracles, An Undeniable Miraculous Code, by Bindmad Al-Ateeqi.*”

Moreover when each new verse was revealed it was immediately put into its position within its respective chapter. This position was fixed. There was no opportunity for modification or re-arrangement. How could Muhammad have devised such an intricate plan when he could not predict the events that would dictate the revelation of the verses? Such an arrangement and mathematical code would have to be planned in advance, but this was not possible due to these events being out of his control. We must conclude that the author of the Qur'an knew the future, which is a quality of the divine. This represents compelling evidence that his inspiration for the Qur'an was God Almighty, as the Qur'an itself states:

“Your Companion is neither astray nor being misled. Nor does he say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him. He was taught by one mighty in Power.” [Chapter 53, verses 2-5]

Biographical analysis:

Was prophet Muhammad (PBUH) a liar?

Human beings lie due to their motives. If there is no motive why should a person lie? He was known as truthful and trustworthy before claiming prophethood. Even before his prophethood he was called Al Amine (the one who is trustworthy), as well as by his enemies [Lings, M. (1983).

Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources, p. 34.]. People used to keep their bailment with prophet Muhammad (PBUH) because they knew that this person would never cheat. When two tribes went in conflict, they used to call Muhammad (PBUH) for making a decision. What was the emergency to lie after spending 40 years of his life never telling a single lie? Let us analyze all the possible motives:

Money: We know that prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was married to the richest women in Mecca, Khadijha (may Allah be pleased with her). However, after claiming prophethood, he became the poorest in the city. His wife Aisha (RA) narrates that for 40 days there would be no food to eat except dates.

Additionally, if he was indeed wealthy, why would he be sleeping in the worst possible circumstances?

"I visited Allah's Messenger (SAW), and he was lying on a mat. I sat down and he drew up his lower garment over him and he had nothing (else) over him, and that the mat had left its marks on his sides. I looked with my eyes in the store room of Allah's Messenger (SAW) I found only a handful of barley equal to one sa' and an equal quantity of the leaves of Mimosa Flava placed in the nook of the cell, and a semi-tanned leather bag hanging (in one side), and I was moved to tears (on seeing this extremely austere living of the Holy Prophet), and he said: Ibn Khattab, what wakes you weep? I said: Apostle of Allah, why should I not shed tears? This mat has left its marks on your sides and I do not see in your store room (except these few things) that I have seen; Caesar and Closroes are leading their lives in plenty whereas you are Allah's Messenger. His chosen one, and that is your store! He said: Ibn Khattab, aren't you satisfied that for us (there should be the prosperity) of the Hereafter, and for them (there should be the prosperity of) this world? I said: Yes." [Sahih Muslim 1479a]

So here we observe that the Prophet (peace be upon him) definitely did not live in a palace nor slept on luxurious beds.

Others argue that Allah made the Prophet (peace be upon him) wealthy through conquests and they put forth the following narration:

Narrated Abu Huraira: Whenever a dead man in debt was brought to Allah's Apostle he would ask, "Has he left anything to repay his debt?" If he was informed that he had left something to repay his debts, he would offer his funeral prayer, otherwise he would tell the Muslims to offer their friend's funeral prayer. **When Allah made the Prophet wealthy through conquests**, he said, "I am more rightful than other believers to be the guardian of the believers, so if a Muslim dies while in debt, I am responsible for the repayment of his debt, and whoever leaves wealth (after his death) it will belong to his heirs." [Bukhari, Number 495]

They would also state that the Qur'an says that the Prophet would receive a fifth of the war booty and cite verses from the Qur'an such as Surah 8, Verses 1 and 41.

However, as we can see the Prophet (peace be upon him) did not take this money in order to live luxuriously. He used to take that money and give it away in charity instead of keeping it for himself.

(See Saheeh Bukhari, Volume 4, Book of One-fifth of Booty to the Cause of Allah, Hadith number 326, where Umar ibn Al Khattab says "So this property was

especially given to Allah's Apostle, but, by Allah, neither did he take possession of it and leave your; nor did he favour himself with it to your exclusion, but he gave it to all of you and distributed it amongst you till this property remained out of it. Allah's Apostle used to spend the yearly expenses of his family out of this property and used to keep the rest of its revenue to be spent on Allah's Cause. Allah's Apostle kept on doing this during all his lifetime."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) would use whatever wealth was necessary in order to take care of his family. Now one may argue that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used this (i.e. fabricating Islam) as a means to take care of himself and family.

However, this doesn't seem to be very convincing. Couldn't the Prophet (peace be upon him) find an easier way to earn a living? Why did he go through years of persecution in Mecca and endure humiliation and ruin his reputation amongst his friends and relatives for this purpose?

The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to actually be wealthy before his Prophethood (while he was trading with his wife Khadija). Thus, why the need to fabricate a religion?

Also, it's not like the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his wives were living luxuriously:

Narrated Abu Hazim: I asked Sahl bin Sad, "Did Allah's Apostle ever eat white flour?" Sahl said, "Allah's Apostle never saw white flour since Allah sent him as an Apostle till He took him unto Him." I asked, "Did the people have (use) sieves during the lifetime of Allah's Apostle?" Sahl said, "Allah's Apostle never saw (used) a sieve since Allah sent him as an Apostle until He took him unto Him," I said, "How could you eat barley unsifted?" he said, "We used to grind it and then blow off its husk, and after the husk flew away, we used to prepare the dough (bake) and eat it." [Saheeh Muslim, Volume 7, Number 324]

A'isha reported that the pillow on which Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) reclined was of leather stuffed with palm fibre. [Saheeh Muslim, Book 024, Number 5185] (See also Saheeh Bukhari, Volume 8, Book Pertaining to Making the Heart Tender, Hadith number 463)

Despite his responsibilities as a prophet, a teacher, a statesman, and a judge, Muhammad (peace be upon him) used to milk his goat, mend his clothes, repair his shoes, help with the household work, (**Musnad Ahmad, Hadith number 23606 and declared authentic by Shaykh Albani in Saheeh AlJaami', Hadith number 4937**)

Opponents would cite the following verse from the Qur'an:

Did He not find you (O Muhammad (Peace be upon him)) an orphan and gave you a refuge? And He found you unaware (of the Qur'an, its legal laws, and Prophethood, etc.) and guided you? And He found you poor, and made you rich? [Surah 93:6-8]

They would then argue that this refers shows that Allah made the Prophet (peace be upon him) wealthy.

However, we have to put into consideration that this Surah was revealed early in Mecca and that is why Ibn Abbass was of the opinion:

"And he also said: (Did He not find thee) O Muhammad (destitute) poor (and enrich (thee)) with the wealth of Khadijah; and it is also said this means: and made you content with that which He gave you? The Prophet (pbuh) said: "Yes, O Gabriel!"" [Tanwîr al-Miqbâs min Tafsîr Ibn Abbâs, Commentary on Surah 93:8, Source]

The Prophet (peace be upon him) married Khadija who was wealthy. However, the Prophet married Khadija way before he became a Prophet. So it's not like the Prophet (peace be upon him) used Islam to gain wealth.

Or it could simply mean that Allah made him rich in a spiritual sense: And Ibn Attaa' said: *And He found you poor in spirit, so He enriched your heart.* [Abu 'Abdullah Al-Qurtubi, Tasfir al Jami' li-ahkam al-Qur'an, Commentary on Surah 93:8, Source]

Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) could have easily stolen the goods of the Meccan Kuffar (disbelievers) that he had in his possession (since one of his jobs was being a caretaker of people's goods) while migrating to Medinah. Rather, he ensured that their property was fully returned to them despite their ill treatment of him. (This also goes to show how the Kuffar (disbelievers) still trusted him with their property even though they accused him of fabricating Islam):

"On the night of the Hijrah, Muhammad confided his plan to 'Ali ibn Abu Talib and asked him to cover himself with the Prophet's green mantle from Hadramawt (Hadhrumaut) and to sleep in the Prophet's bed. He further asked him to

tarry in Makkah until he had returned all things left with Muhammad to their rightful owners.” [Muhammad Husayn Haykal, The Life of Muhammad, Chapter: Al Hijrah or the Prophet's Emigration, Source]

This event is also recorded by Al-Bayhaqî in As-Sunan Al-Kubrâ Volume 6, page 289 and Sheikh Al-Albânî declared it to authentic (hasan) in Erwaa Al Ghaleel, Hadith no.1546.

In conclusion, the argument that money could have been a motive for the Prophet (peace be upon him) to fabricate Islam does not really hold any water. If he was really in it for the money then we would expect to have seen him living a lavish life, yet this is far from reality. Just because the Prophet (peace be upon him) had much wealth in his possession, that doesn't mean that he spent it on himself. Rather, he used it for the benefit of society (e.g. helping orphans).

Fame: Fame without money and luxury is useless. After claiming to be a prophet (PBUH), he and his companions had to face oppression and severe torture in Mecca. Due to which they had to migrate to Madina. Even there they were attack by the mushriks (idolaters) of Mecca several times. What kind of motive is that and why would a person spend his whole life to gain such fame?

Another objection to the argument is that its logical form is unsound. For example, it could be that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was not lying from the perspective of being immoral. Rather, he was falsely attributing to himself prophethood for a greater good. As a social reformer, he believed that he had to make such a radical claim to transform the immoral and decadent society he was living in. This would not make him deluded, as he knew that he was not speaking the truth, and it would not make him a liar from the perspective of being immoral. He would be a moral reformer, and like most reformers he had to choose the lesser of the two evils for a greater good.

This interesting objection is misplaced for a few reasons. Firstly, it is irrational to assert that a claim to prophethood would be required to make the necessary moral changes. In actual fact, the Prophet's ﷺ claim to receiving Divine revelation was the very thing that initially prevented him from gaining any ground in changing society. He was mocked, ridiculed and abused. A reformer would not make up such a claim, especially if that claim created more obstacles to reaching his objectives. Secondly, the Prophet ﷺ went through immense hardship, yet he did not compromise or sacrifice his message. He was offered conditional political power, which has been recorded in a multitude of biographies of Muhammad, such as, “*Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources,*” which meant he could change the moral fabric of society, yet he rejected power because his

acceptance would mean that he would have to abandon his noble call that there is no deity worthy of worship except God. If he had been a moral reformer he would have amended his strategy. However, he did not.

Women: Prophet got married first at the age of 25 with a widow who was 15 years older than him. All the marriages that he did were non-virgins except for one (Aisha). He also commanded women to cover their body for modesty after maturity. Will a man with lust do that? He also prohibited illegal sex. People believed he was a prophet and he could have easily allowed that. Creating a new religion for women is the last thing a person would do.

Power: He did not gain any power or any type of government position through Islam, he actually rejected the offer of power; as has been recorded in a multitude of biographies of Muhammad, such as, "*Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*." On the contrary, he was boycotted, tortured and even had to migrate from his hometown Mecca. He was a prophet for only 23 years and died as a poor man. He never even used his prophethood for his own benefit. He never even took revenge when he had the chance after the conquest of Mecca. He forgave all of his enemies.

Now that we've got out of the way with, let me share a hadith with you...

Narrated Al-Mughira bin Shu`ba: On the day of Ibrahim's death, the sun eclipsed and the people said that the eclipse was due to the death of Ibrahim (the son of the Prophet). Allah's Messenger (SAW) said, "The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allah. They do not eclipse because of the death or life (i.e. birth of someone). So when you see them, make haste for the prayer." [Sahih Bukhari, Vol 2, Book 18, No. 163]

If Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) lied about his prophethood, he wouldn't miss such a golden opportunity to confirm the claim of the people that the sun eclipsed because of the death of his son, but he said the opposite and freed himself from that claim.

Was prophet Muhammad (PBUH) deceived and misguided by Satan?

The only people who make this claim are Christians. The first question you should ask yourself is why Satan would need to come and misguide people who were pagans and worshipping 360 idols. What motivation would Satan have to bring them to worship one true God, Allah? The Christians claim that Satan wanted people not to believe in Jesus's divinity and sacrifice. However, the pagan

Arabs did not believe in Jesus's divinity and sacrifice before, so worshipping one God would not be a downfall for Satan. Additionally, before we read the Qur'an or start any prayer, or even if we have bad or deceiving thoughts, we read, "I take refuge in Allah from the accursed Satan." Would Satan want us to take refuge in Allah, "the only and only God," or "the Lord" in Arabic, from himself? No, he wouldn't. Satan wants people to curse Jesus (AS) and be blasphemous against God.

Furthermore, why would Satan want to completely change a community that used to bury their daughters alive, beat and torture slaves, and commit adultery? Why would Satan teach them to be the best community the world has ever seen? It doesn't make sense. For example:

- Restrain your anger (Q3:134)
- Don't spread gossip (Q24:15)
- Think good of others (Q24:12)
- Be good to guests (Q51:24-27)
- Don't harm believers (Q33:58)
- Don't be rude to parents (Q17:23)
- Turn away from ill speech (Q23:3)
- Don't make fun of others (Q49:11)
- Don't lie (Q22:30)
- Don't spy (Q49:12)
- Don't insult (Q49:11)
- Don't waste (Q17:26)
- Feed the poor (Q22:36)
- Don't backbite (Q49:12)

- Keep your oaths (Q5:89)
- Don't take bribes (Q27:36)
- Honour your treaties (Q9:4)

Additionally, from the Sunnah (sayings and actions of Muhammad ﷺ), there are more great forms of guidance, beneficial to perfect your character.

This also reminds me of a hadith.

Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "***I have been sent to perfect good character.***" [al-Muwatta' 1614]

Conclusion: If a person is a liar, he will lie for his own benefit. If we see the life of the prophet (PBUH), he never gained anything materially. He did not gain wealth, fame or any type of power. He was boycotted and tortured and even had to migrate from his hometown. He died as a poor man. On the other hand, he spent his whole life spreading the message of Islam and spent all his wealth in the way of Allah. He forgave all of his enemies when he had the chance to take revenge. After analyzing all the possible motives, we can conclude that he was not a liar. He was a true messenger of God.

Let's see what a prominent former hater and critic of Islam has to say.

A lot of people are unaware of this, but Heraclius, the former powerful Roman emperor, was very close to accepting Islam after hearing a pagan Qurayshi's description of the Prophet ﷺ. In this post, I will try to summarize a very long Hadith that speaks of this incident while including as much important details as possible. I recommend going through the entire Hadith, Bukhari 7, as it's very eye opening and fascinating, it has also been preserved since 619CE.

Abu Sufyan, one of the Quraysh leaders at the time, was in the Levant in a caravan as a merchant doing trade. This was during the time there was a truce between the Muslims and the Pagans. Heraclius sent a messenger to Abu Sufyan asking him to meet him. Heraclius called him and his companions to a court and had all the senior Roman dignitaries in attendance. With the help of a

translator, Heraclius asked who amongst that group was the closest to "that man who claims to be a Prophet". Abu Sufyan stepped up. Heraclius told his translator to tell the companions of Abu Sufyan that he will ask Abu Sufyan questions about that prophet. And if he lies, they will contradict him. Abu Sufyan swore that he wouldn't have said the truth about the Prophet ﷺ had his companions not been there to correct him. The following message captures the exact conversation that went down as narrated by Abu Sufyan himself:

Heraclius: "*What is his family status amongst you?*"

Sufyan: "*He belongs to a good (noble) family amongst us.*"

Heraclius: "*Has anybody amongst you ever claimed the same (i.e. to be a Prophet) before him?*"

Sufyan: "*No.*"

Heraclius: "*Was anybody amongst his ancestors a king?*"

Sufyan: "*No.*"

Heraclius: "*Do the nobles or the poor follow him?*"

Sufyan: "*It is the poor who follow him.*"

Heraclius: "*Are his followers increasing or decreasing (day by day)?*"

Sufyan: "*They are increasing*"

Heraclius: "*Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased and renounce the religion afterwards?*"

Sufyan: "*No.*"

Heraclius: "*Have you ever accused him of telling lies before his claim (to be a Prophet)?*"

Sufyan: "*No.*"

Heraclius: "*Does he break his promises?*"

Sufyan: "No. We are at truce with him but we do not know what he will do in it."

(Abu Sufyan narrates that he could not find the opportunity to say anything against him except that.)

Heraclius: "Have you ever had a war with him?"

Sufyan: "Yes."

Heraclius: "What was the outcome of the battles?"

Sufyan: "Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we."

Heraclius: "What does he order you to do?"

Sufyan: "He tells us to worship Allah and Allah alone and not to worship anything along with Him, and to renounce all that our ancestors had said. He orders us to pray, to speak the truth, to be chaste and to keep good relations with our Kith and kin."

This is how the Prophet's biggest enemies spoke of him. On the other hand, today you have these people shamelessly and lying about his character for views and money.

Heraclius then asked the translator to tell him:

"I asked you about his family and your reply was that he belonged to a very noble family. Likewise all Prophets come from noble families amongst their people.

I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you claimed such a thing, your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following the previous man's statement.

Then I asked you whether anyone of his ancestors was a king. Your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom.

And I asked whether he was ever accused of lying before he said what he said, and your reply was in the negative. So I wondered how a person who does not tell a lie about others could ever tell a lie about Allah.

I, then asked you whether the rich people followed him or the poor. You replied that it was the poor who followed him, and they are, in fact, the followers of Prophets.

Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing, and in fact this is the way of true faith until it is complete.

I further asked you whether there was anybody, who, after embracing his religion, became displeased and discarded his religion. Your reply was in the negative, and in fact this is true faith when its delight enters the hearts and mixes with them.

I asked you whether he had ever betrayed. You replied in the negative and likewise the Prophets never betray.

Then I asked you what he ordered you to do. You replied that he ordered you to worship Allah and Allah alone and not to worship any thing along with Him and forbade you to worship idols and ordered you to pray, to speak the truth and to be chaste.”

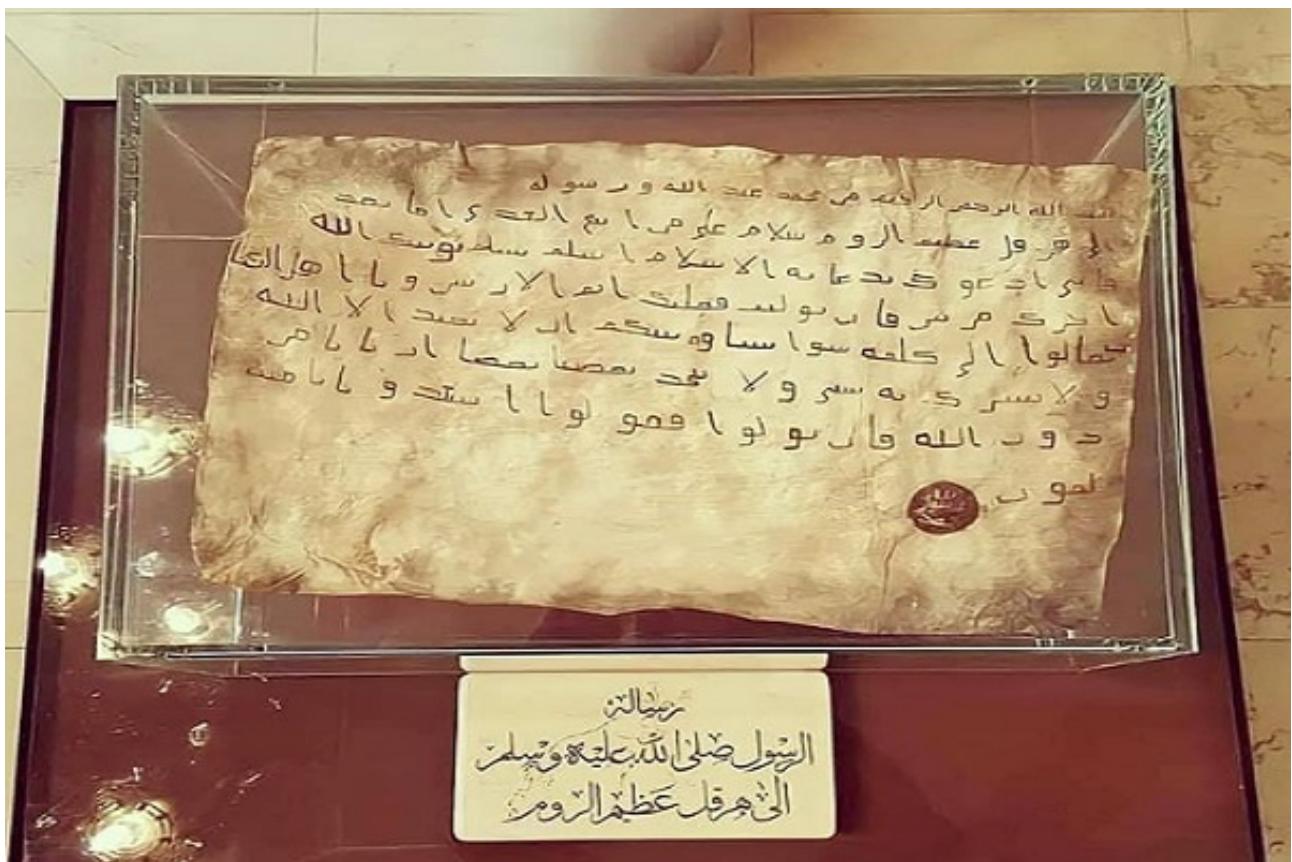
He then said:

“If what you have said is true, he will very soon occupy this place underneath my feet and I knew it (from the scriptures) that he was going to appear but I did not know that he would be from you, and if I could reach him definitely, I would go immediately to meet him and if I were with him, I would certainly wash his feet.”

Again, this is how people reacted to news of the Prophet. Unlike those critics and haters today, who have the audacity to fabricate all sorts of lies about him.

Abu Sufyan further narrates how the Prophet's influence and power being so inevitable, how even the King of the Byzantines was afraid of him, made him (Abu Sufyan) later accept Islam. He also narrates that the governor of Jerusalem at the time narrated that Heraclius once foresaw that the leader of those who practice circumcision has appeared and became the conqueror. His people told him that only the Jews practiced circumcision, and that he can kill all Jews to be safe. It was soon after that a message from the Prophet ﷺ was sent to Heraclius to invite him to Islam. Upon finding out that this messenger was circumcised, Heraclius realized that the Arabs also practiced circumcision, and that the one who foresaw wasn't a Jew, but it was the Muslim Prophet.

The letter the Prophet ﷺ sent to Heraclius of the Roman Empire is preserved at the museum in the King Husain Mosque Amman Jordan. (Dictated Letter)



The letter reads:

"This letter is from Muhammad the slave of God and His Messenger. To Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantines.

I am writing this invitation to call you to Islam. If you become a Muslim you will be safe - and God will double your reward, but if you reject this invitation of Islam you will bear the sin of having misguided your subjects."

It then became clear to Heraclius that the Prophet ﷺ was a true one, and he sent for his friend who was as equal to him in knowledge who also agreed with this. He then invited the heads of the Byzantines to his palace and he called them all to embrace Islam, saying:

"O Byzantines! If success is your desire and if you seek right guidance and want your empire to remain then give a pledge of allegiance to this Prophet"

However, the people panicked and started running towards the gate of the palace. Heraclius realized their hatred towards Islam and lost hope, so he decided to tell them that he was testing the strength of their conviction, and that was the end of his story with Islam. Only Allah knows if he ever ended up accepting Islam privately.

Now let's see what an orientalist has to say...

Laura Veccia Vaglieri (1893 - 1989) was an Italian orientalist. A pioneer of Arabic and Islamic studies in Italy. Veccia Vaglieri served as professor at the Naples Eastern University and was the author of books on the historical and institutional analysis of the Arab and Muslim world.

Prof. Laura Veccia Vaglieri, is perhaps the greatest among all the Western admirers of Prophet Muhammad. In her book '*An Interpretation of Islam*', translated from Italian by Dr. A Caselli, she has tried to dispel the various accusations and charges levelled against the Holy Prophet by some dishonest and biased writers of the Western world. Referring to the achievements of Prophet Muhammad as a Prophet she says:

"The spirit was liberated from prejudice, man's will was set free from the ties which had kept it bound to the will of other men or other so-called hidden powers.

Priests, false guardians of mysteries, workers of salvation, all those who pretended to be mediators between God and man and consequently believed they had authority over other people's will fell from their pedestals.

Man became the servant of God alone and towards the other men he had only the obligation of one free man towards other free men. While previously men had obligations of one free man towards other free men.

While previously man had suffered from the injustices of social differences, **Islam proclaimed equality among human being.**

Each Muslim was distinguished from other Muslim not by reason of birth or any other factor not connected with his personality, but only by fear of God, his good deeds, his moral and intellectual qualities."

Replying to the charges hurled by some Western writers, Prof. Vaglieri says:

"Blinded by hate, the most powerful enemies of Islam have sought to smear the Prophet of God with calumnious charges.

They forget that Muhammad before he began his mission was highly esteemed by his own countrymen for integrity of conscience and purity of life.

Nor do these people stop to ask themselves how could it be that Muhammad could have threatened liars and hypocrites with the eternal fire in the words of the Quran if he had himself been a liar.

How could he have dared to preach, in spite of the insults of his countrymen, if he, a man of simple nature, had not been continuously urged on by inner force?

How could he have carried it on for over ten years at Mecca with little success and countless sorrow, if he had not very deep conviction of the truth of his mission?

How could so many noble and intelligent Muslims have believed in him and thrown in their lot with him, joined the new faith and consequently associated with a society made up for the most part of slaves, freed men and indigent people, if they had not felt in his word sincerity of the truth?"

Concluding she emphasizes the most human aspect of the Prophet Muhammad's character - his kindness and unprecedented benevolence. She says:

"Muhammad as a preacher of the religion of God was gentle and merciful even towards his personal enemies.

In him were blended justice and mercy, two of the noblest qualities which the human mind can conceive. It is not difficult to support this with many examples that are to be found in his biographies.

One of his biographers says, that he was accustomed to give his order to his soldiers;

Spare the aged, the women and the children; refrain from demolishing the homes of those who do not resist you; do not destroy their means of sustenance; do not destroy fruit trees and do not touch palm trees."

Muhammed's (PBUH) commands in Wars

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Don't cut a tree |  | Don't kill a woman |  |
| Don't kill a child |  | Don't kill a sick person |  |
| Don't kill old people |  | Don't kill a monk or a priest |  |
| Don't destroy a temple or a church |  | Don't disfigure the dead |  |
| Don't destroy a building |  | Don't kill an animal except for eating |  |
| Don't kill those who surrendered |  | Be good to the prisoners and feed them |  |
| Don't kill who ran away |  | Don't enforce Islam |  |

There is also the following in the Qur'an:

*“Fight in the cause of Allah [only] against those **who wage war against you**, but **do not exceed the limits**. Allah does not like transgressors.”*

“Do not exceed the limits” refers to Islamic warfare guidelines set by the Prophet, as seen in the above image. In an authentic saying collected by Abu Dawud, he (رضي الله عنه) is reported to have instructed the Muslim army, “Depart in the Name of Allah and with His help—following the way of the Messenger of Allah. Do not kill an old man, a child, or a woman. Do not mutilate dead bodies of the enemy. **Be gracious and courteous, for Allah loves those who act with grace.**” The Prophet (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) also says, “**Do not wish to meet your enemy in battle but always pray for well-being. [However,] If fighting is a must** (i.e. in self-defence), **then be steadfast.**”

This also completely exposes contemporary radical Muslim groups perpetrating horrible and malicious acts of violence, who us Muslims know are considered apostates, as the prophet Muhammed (صلوات الله عليه وسلم) has declared over 1400 years ago. Here are a few examples of his sayings regarding this:

1. "*O people, beware of exaggeration (i.e. extremism) in religion, for those who came before you were ruined by exaggeration (i.e. extremism) in religion.*" [Sunan Ibn Mājah 3029]. As well as another similar saying at another time and place, "...beware of going to extremes in religious matters, for those who came before you were destroyed because of going to extremes in religious matters." [Sunan an-Nasa'i 3057].
2. "*Religion is easy, and no one overburdens himself in his religion but he will be unable to continue in that way (i.e. religion is forbidden to be approached in an extreme manner, and whoever does that will be defeated). So do not be extremists, but try to be near perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded. Gain strength by worshipping in the mornings and afternoons and during the last hours of the night.*" [Sahih al-Bukhari 39].
3. "*There will come a people... who recite the Quran but it will not go beyond their throats (i.e. they will not act upon it). They will pass through the religion just as an arrow pierces its target (i.e. they will become apostates) and they will not return to it just as the arrow does not return to the bow.*" [Sahih Bukhari 7123]. This saying of the prophet also relates to the Qur'an 47:24, which says, "*Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Or are there locks upon their hearts?*"

Now that we have got that out the way with, I now want to share a small story with you:

She was an old woman. Carrying a heavy load on her head, heat licking at her sunburned face. She was gliding on her effort to reach home before sun set. A young man comes on her way, she could see in his eyes, kind of gentle concern. Asking her if he could help with her load. She readily obliged. She was a talkative women. The whole way she was bad talking of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) but she didn't know that it was him! Not letting this young man reply, she kept telling him more than an afternoon sun can bear. The whole way she's saying, "*Be careful of the man named Muhammad! He is a magician, he's a soothsayer, he's an evil person, he's spreading lies, he's a poet... He speaks very eloquently, he's tricking people... Be careful of him.*" And was the Prophet saying, "*No he's not, what are you talking about, you don't know what you're talking about, you're crazy, you're an old lady...?*" **No!** He was remaining completely silent. He was lenient, merciful and tolerant.

They reached her destination, the man helped the woman put away her belongings. The old woman, with a wide smile of gratitude at this stranger's kindness, stopped and asked his name before he parted. "*What is your name,*" she asked. And he replied: "*Ana Muhammad (I am Muhammad).*" That was the man that she was talking about the whole way. She says, "*Is that you?*" Then on the spot, she accepted Islam: "*Ashadu an la ilaha illa illah, wa ashadu anna muhammadan rasul ullah.*"

Who was Prophet Muhammad (SAW)?

A man, as long as you read his cherry-picked critics, will remain in your mind as a liar, magician, war wager and killer. A man, reading his complete life story, makes you fall in love with him.

I also want to address the question, what did Prophet Muhammad do that made some people hate him in this century? I will give you a list of why people hate him. Here's the list:

1. He used to embrace orphans, and to softly put his hands on their hairs that perhaps they feel no loneliness and feel him like a father.
2. He used to join his own and his wife's slaves in work, and also used to feed and give them from his own food and cloth, respectively—and regularly emancipated them.
3. He used to pay the debts of the poor, that it's even said that there were once no people in debt.
4. Starting by himself, he used to emphasize and to tell his followers to do certain things: feed the needy, visit the sick and emancipate the captives.
5. When he entered Makkah, to the people who attempted to kill him multiple times, forced him and his followers to flee from their homelands, leaving behind everything, and killed a bunch of his beloved, he said, "*Go. You're the free.*"
6. When his wife Um El-Mumineen Aisha (R.A.) told his other wives that she's his favorite, they all felt jealous and asked him which is his favorite, and you know what he did? He secretly gave each of them a date, and then he gathered them all, answering, "*The one whom I gave the date is my favorite.*" This followed by a smile on each's face, a smile which each tried to hide.
7. When a woman, who used to regularly throw trash in front of his own house, was ill, you know how he acted? He paid her a visit.

Let me tell you another story.

"Hint, she was the wife of one of the enemies of the Prophet (PBUH), Abu Safyan. In a way, he gave money to kill Hamza (R.A), the favourite uncle of the prophet (PBUH). That was what happened on the battlefield: Hamza (R.A) got killed brutally; they even paraded with his ears and cut off his nose, and horrible stuff. The prophet (PBUH) was deeply upset, of course, because of what happened. Years and years later, he became powerful and gained power in Makkah. Then there was Hint. What did the prophet (PBUH) do? The prophet (PBUH) said that he cannot look at her right now, but everybody is forgiven, and if you want to stay here and live among the muslims, it's possible - if you don't want that, you can go - but bloodshedding is over now. If the prophet (PBUH) can forgive someone who kills a close relative brutally, especially his favourite uncle, even if they start parading with parts of his body to show other people that she humiliates you and whatever you stand for, that means you have such a great character. It's very special. And that's what the prophet (PBUH) did. [Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources - Book by Martin Lings]"

Now also consider that the story I've just told were the words of one of the biggest critics of Islam, a Dutch politician, Joram Van Klaveren, who while writing an Anti-Islam book, became a Muslim. He was interviewed on “*Towards Eternity*” on YouTube. Consider, a critic who was aware of all the criticism of Islam, much more than the average and ignorant critics of today, attesting that Islam is the truth of God. Why would he embrace the truth?

There are thousands upon thousands of other scenarios where the same thing happened, which is that after devoting their life to criticise Islam, they eventually became a Muslim after the truth became apparent to them. Another example is Richard McKinney, who planned to blow up an Islamic Center, but in a heated moment witnessed by his young daughter, the former U.S. Marine started questioning his hate, and in an unlikely twist of fate, became a Muslim, the same people who he detested. McKinney was interviewed by “*AJ+*” on YouTube.

The statement that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was known for his kindness, compassion, and mercy towards all people, regardless of their actions or behavior towards him is a fact, it is a well-documented aspect of his character and teachings.

Now I want to introduce you to a famous authentic hadith, attributed to the prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

“*The merciful will be shown mercy by the Most Merciful. Be merciful to those on the earth and the One in the heavens will have mercy upon you.*” [Sunan al-Tirmidhī 1924]

What other ways can conclusively prove that the Qur'an is really the word of God?

One other major way is the fact that there is knowledge of the unseen in the Qur'an. Knowledge of the unseen is not a quality of a human being, but rather the divine. Therefore, the only way this knowledge of the unseen is in the Qur'an is because it is indeed a revelation from the All-Knowing, All-Seeing, Himself. Some examples include:

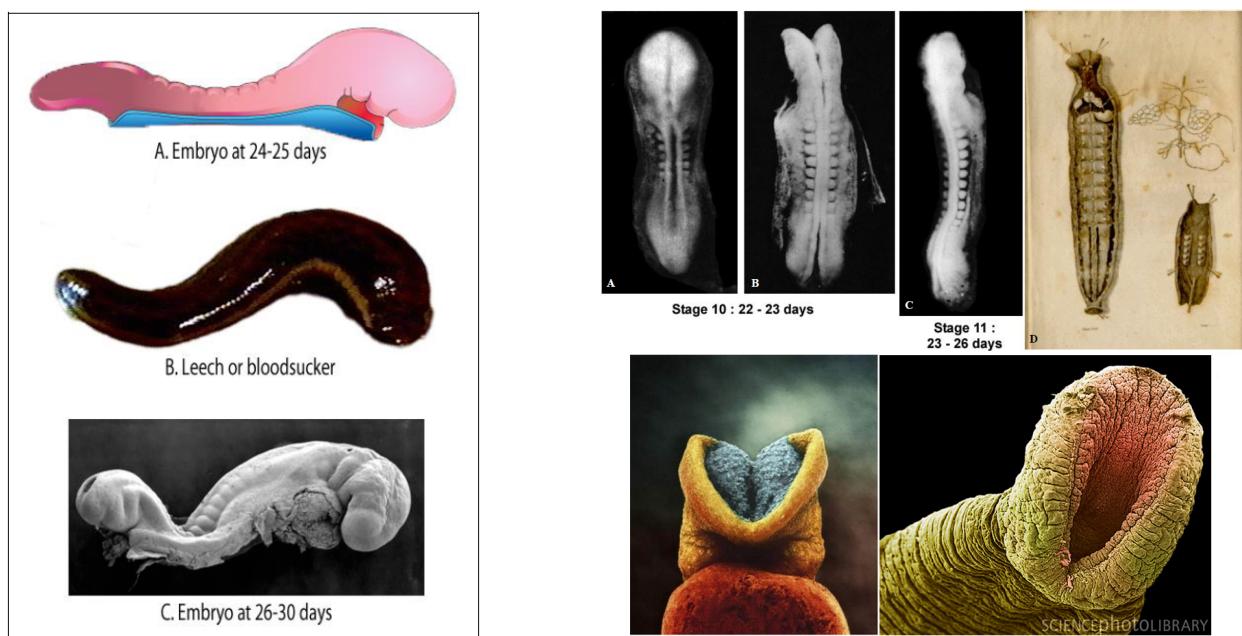
1. The Qur'an states that a worker Bee (bees that generate the honey) as females. Previously people thought that the worker bees are male bees and reports to a king. The words used all are for a

female subject. Otherwise, God would have used words referring to a male subject. All of this was not known until very recently. Only this one fact is enough for any person to believe in the divine origin of the Qur'an.

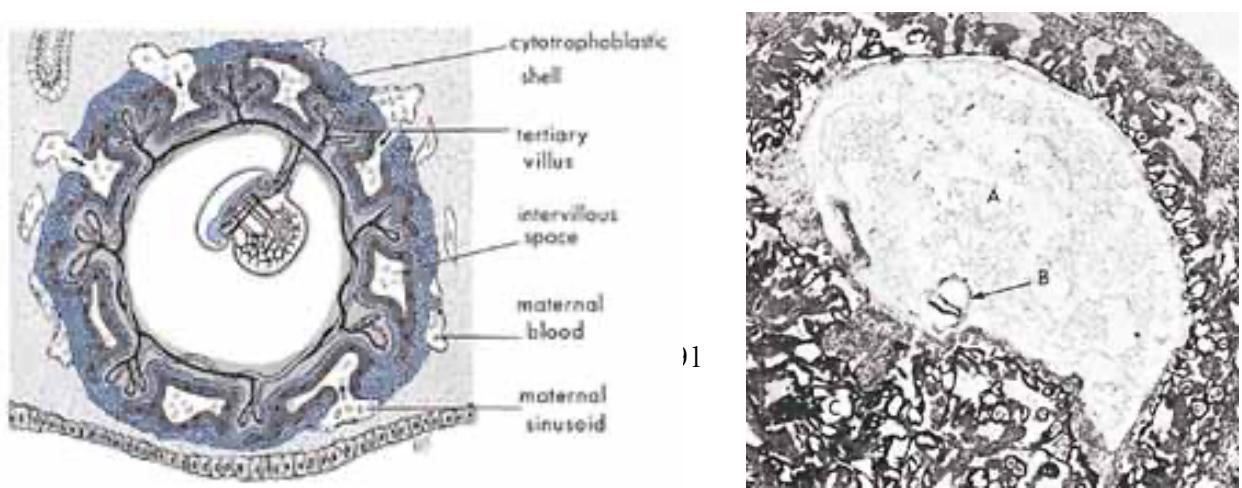
2. The Qur'an states, perfectly, embryology in the Qur'an in very precise detail, in verses 23:12-14:

And We (God) created man from a quintessence (gentle extraction) of clay. We then placed him as a nutfah (mixed fluid) in a place of settlement, firmly fixed. Then We made the drop into an 'alaqah (suspended thing, a thing which resembles a leech, and a blood clot), and then We changed the clinging form into a mudghah (chewed-like form), then We made out of that chewed-like form, izam (skeleton, bones), then We clothed the bones with lahm (muscles, flesh), then We (ansha' nahu), caused him to grow and come into being and attain the definitive (human) form. Blessed be God, the Perfect creator.

The Qur'an says that the embryo is a hanging thing, which resembles a leech, and is a blood clot. If we look at modern science today, we know that this is true. Leech:

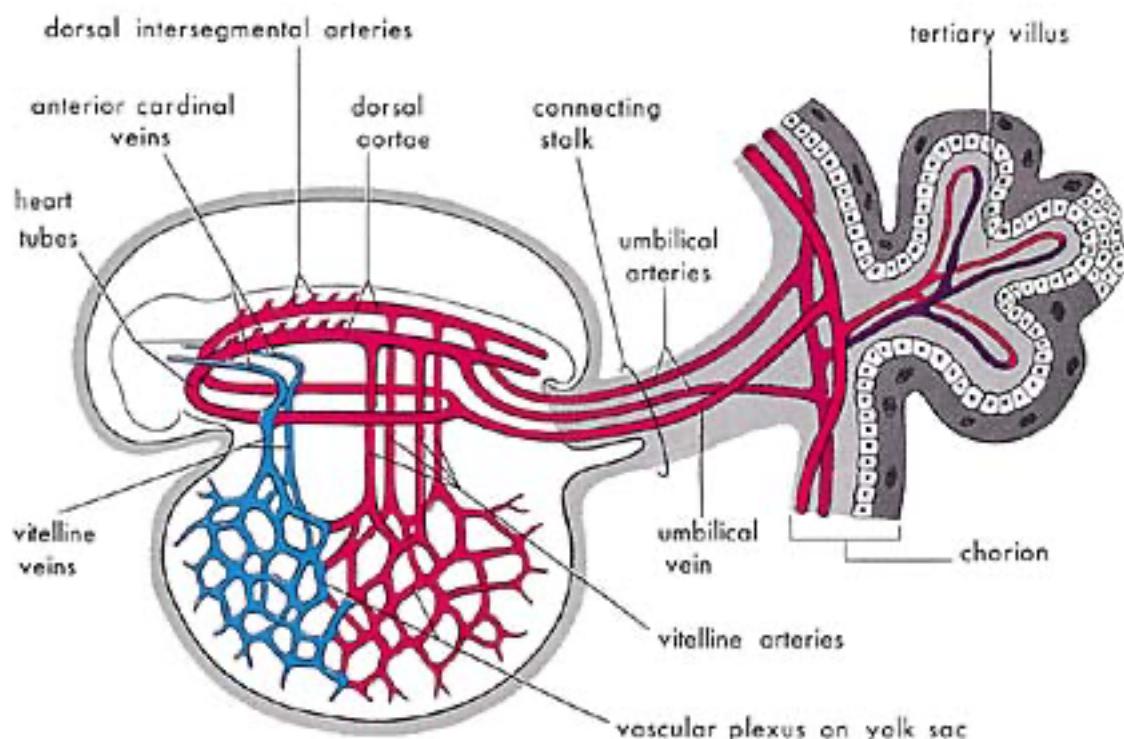


Clinging thing:



We can see in the first diagram that the suspension of an embryo during the *alaqah* stage in the womb (uterus) of the mother. (*The Developing Human*, Moore and Persaud, 5th ed., p. 66). In this photomicrograph (second diagram), we can see the suspension of an embryo (marked B) during the *alaqah* stage (about 15 days old) in the womb of the mother. The actual size of the embryo is about 0.6 mm. (*The Developing Human*, Moore, 3rd ed., p. 66, from *Histology*, Leeson and Leeson). It is essentially the connecting stalk of the embryo.

Blood clot:



We find that the external appearance of the embryo and its sacs during the *alaqah* stage is similar to that of a blood clot. This is due to the presence of relatively large amounts of blood present in the embryo during this stage. Also during this stage, the blood in the embryo does not circulate until the end of the third week. Thus, the embryo at this stage is like a clot of blood. (*The Developing Human*, Moore, 5th ed., p. 65).

Moreover, Moore, a non-Muslim, regarded as one of the best embryologists of his time, embarked on a three year project examining the verses in the Qur'an and quite a few hadith related to the development of the human embryo, while also consulting a myriad of specialists in

linguistics, exegesis, embryology and the history of medicine, a few include: E. Marshall Johnson, Sir Robert Geoffrey Edwards and T.V.N Persaud. In the end, he and the other embryologists and the specialists he consulted, all confirmed that there was indeed an accurate description of the development of the human embryo, which was told 1400 years ago, by the prophet Muhammad (SAW) and in the Qur'an.

More says:

"It is remarkable how much the embryo of 23-24 days resembles a leech. As there were no microscopes or lenses available in the 7th century, doctors would not have known that the human embryo had this leech-like appearance. In the early part of the fourth week, the embryo is just visible to the unaided eye because it is smaller than a kernel of wheat."

The other embryologists and specialists who were consulted also said the exact same thing, the only difference being the analogy.

3. The fluid called semen, which contains the sperms, does not consist of sperms alone. On the contrary, it is made up of a mixture of different fluids. These fluids have different functions, such as containing the sugar necessary for providing energy for the sperms, neutralising the acids at the entrance of the uterus, and creating a slippery environment for the easy movement of the sperms.

Interestingly enough, when semen is mentioned in the Qur'an, this fact, which was discovered by modern science, is also referred to, and semen is defined as a mixed fluid:

"We created man from a mingled fluid to test him, and We made him hearing and seeing." (Qur'an 76:2).

In another verse, semen is again referred to as a mixture, and it is stressed that man is created from the "extract" of this mixture:

"He who has created all things in the best possible way. He commenced the creation of man from clay; then He made his progeny from an extract of discarded fluid." (Qur'an 32:7-8)

The Arabic word "sulala", translated as "extract", means the essential or best part of something. By either implication, it means "part of a whole". This shows that the Qur'an is the word of a

Will that knows the creation of man down to its slightest detail. This Will is God, the Creator of man.

4. In the Qur'an, the expansion of the universe is described in the verse:

"We built the universe with (great) might, and We are certainly expanding (it)" (Qur'an 51:47).

This concept of an expanding universe was not widely accepted in scientific circles until the 20th century, when advancements in technology allowed for more accurate observations and measurements.

It was not until the early 20th century that the idea of an expanding universe was first proposed by Belgian priest and astronomer Georges Lemaître, and later, confirmed through the observations of American astronomer Edwin Hubble. In 1929, Hubble discovered that distant galaxies were moving away from each other at a faster rate than closer ones, a phenomenon known as redshift. This was interpreted as evidence that the universe is expanding.

The discovery of the cosmic microwave background radiation in 1964 by astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson provided further evidence for the Big Bang theory, which states that the universe began as a singularity and has been expanding ever since.

It is notable that the concept of an expanding universe described in the Qur'an is consistent with the scientific understanding of the universe today.

An important thing to keep in mind here was that before, the concept of expansion and contraction was completely non-existent, and the only ones that were accepted and proposed before was that the universe is static, which until 1931, the physicist Albert Einstein also believed in, or infinite.

5. Allah the Almighty says in the Qur'an:

"The Byzantines have been defeated in the nearest and lowest land. But they, after their defeat, will triumph within three to nine years. The whole matter rests with Allah before and after victory. And on that day the believers will rejoice in the victory of Allah. He gives victory to whom He wills, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Merciful." (Surah Ar-Rum, verses 2-5)

The Persian Sassanids were at their peak in strength and morale.

There were two world superpowers at the time, the “Roman” Byzantines, and the Persian Sassanids. The two had begun a massive war with one another, with the Sassanids clearly coming out on top. The Sassanids had taken Byzantine Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, Libya, Anatolia, and even the Byzantine True Cross artifact. Thus, the Byzantine empire was headed for ruin. They lost everything to the Persian Sassanids in a major war, and hope was low.

During this time of absolute loss for the Byzantines, the Qur'an made a bold claim. It stated that the Byzantines would make a huge comeback against the Sassanids within 3 to 9 years.

Imagine the consequences of this.

The risk is very high with this claim. If 9 years pass and this prophecy does not come true, the Prophet ﷺ will be proven to be a false prophet. Or if the prophecy comes true before 3 years the Prophet ﷺ will also be proven to be a false prophet. Does it make sense for a liar to do something so risky?

Here is what Edward Gibbon had to say in “The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire” about this prophecy:

*“At the time when this prediction is said to have been delivered, **no prophecy could be more distant from its accomplishment**, since the first twelve years of [the Byzantine King] Heraclius announced the approaching dissolution of the [Byzantine] empire.”*

So not only is the prophecy an incredibly risky one, but it also makes no sense to say such a thing if you did not know the future. The only thing that you can see is the Sassanids demolishing the Byzantines and the incoming dissolution of the Byzantine empire.

Of course, the prophecy did come true despite this. After about 7 years from the Byzantines defeat, they made a huge comeback and started to take back all of the lands they lost.

This is how much land the Sassanids lost control of by the end of the Byzantine comeback.



About a third of their landmass was gone.

The Byzantines made a huge comeback within the 3 to 9 year time period and shocked the world. Every observer thought that the Byzantine empire was done for and that there was no coming back, yet the Muslims knew otherwise.

At the end, "the victory of the Romans," proclaimed by God in the Qur'an, miraculously came true.

Another miracle revealed in these verses is the announcement of a geographical fact that could not have been known by anyone at that time.

In the third verse of Sura Rum, we are informed that the Romans had been defeated in the lowest region of the Earth. This expression, "*Adna al Ard*" in Arabic, is also defined as "*a nearby land*". The word "*Adna*" in Arabic is derived from the word "*den*", which means "low" and "*ard*", which means "world". Therefore the expression "*Adna al Ard*" means "*the lowest place on the Earth*".

Most interestingly, the crucial stages of the war fought between the Byzantine Empire and the Persians, when the Byzantines were defeated and lost Jerusalem, had really taken place at the lowest point on earth. This specified region is the Dead Sea basin, which is situated at the intersection point of the lands belonging to Syria, Palestine, and Jordan. The "*Dead Sea*," lying 395 meters below sea level, really is the lowest region on Earth.

This means that the Byzantines were defeated at the lowest part of the world, just as stated in the verse.

The most interesting point lies in the fact that the altitude of the Dead Sea could only be measured with modern measurement techniques. Before that, it was impossible for anyone to know that it was the lowest region on the surface of the Earth. Yet, this region was stated to be the lowest point on the Earth in the Qur'an. Hence, this provides further evidence that the Qur'an is divine revelation.

Once again, another specific and unintuitive prophecy that came true in every detail.

6. Pharaoh was a tyrant in Egypt, enslaving and persecuting the children of Israel. The Qur'an states about the death of Pharaoh and his supporters:

"Neither heaven nor earth wept over them, nor was their fate delayed." [44:29]

The exact statement of "heaven and earth weeping" can be found in the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus:

*"Countries and regions weep for thee, the zones weep for thee as if thou wert Sesheta, **heaven and earth weep for thee**, inasmuch as thou art greater than the gods, may there be no cessation of the glorifying of thy Ka"* (Songs of Isis and Nephthys, Column XIV)

Here the text from Bremner-Rhind Papyrus, as well as Utterance 553, which says...

"The sky weeps for thee, the earth trembles for thee, when you ascend as a star"

...praises Pharaoh, claiming that upon his death he will ascend through the sky, and claim supremacy of the heavens by becoming a star. We can see that the Qur'an quotes the text directly in its rebuttal of Egyptian adulations of Pharaoh. What this further shows is that the idea of the heavens, earth and other created entities weeping was a common motif in Egyptian texts which the Qur'an uses in beautiful rhetoric against the dead pharaoh and his followers.

What's amazing is that knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language of hieroglyphics was lost to mankind at the time the Qur'an was revealed. In fact, it had been lost for over a thousand years, until the Rosetta Stone was discovered in 1799. It was not until the early 19th century that the hieroglyphics were deciphered by Jean-Francois Champollion using the Greek text on the

Rosetta Stone as a key.

7. Ancient Egyptian history is divided into different periods. The word “*Pharaoh* (*Egyptian, ‘Per-aa’*)” had different meanings depending on the period of Egyptian history. Historically, the word “*Pharaoh*” only started being used as a title for the supreme ruler much later in Egyptian history, during the new kingdom. Before this, the word meant “*great house,*” and was used to refer to the royal palace. The encyclopaedia “*Britannica*” states:

"Pharaoh, originally the royal palace in ancient Egypt. The word came to be used for the Egyptian king under the new kingdom..."

Like the bible, the Qur'an discusses the prophets Joseph and Moses, who both spent time in Egypt. Joseph is dated by scholars to either the middle kingdom, or second intermediate period, well before “*Pharaoh*” meant “*ruler.*” In the story of Joseph, the Qur'an repeatedly used the word “*king*” to refer to the ruler of Egypt, he is never once called Pharaoh. Moses is dated by scholars to the new kingdom period. In the story of Moses, the Qur'an repeatedly calls the ruler “*Pharaoh,*” he is never once called a king. We can see that the Qur'an is accurate in it's use of language when it comes to describing the leader of Egypt at different periods in its history. How could the author of the Qur'an have known this? The only source of ancient Egypt that would've been readily available are the bible-based stories. To claim that the Qur'an copied from the bible is problematic, because the bible uses the word “*Pharaoh*” to refer to the Egyptian ruler in the story of Joseph, which is historically inaccurate. The Qur'an cannot have copied from the bible, because the Qur'an corrects the bible in this instance, and in many more.

8. Jewish, Christian and Islamic sources all place Abraham's birthplace in ancient Babylonia, the region where we find modern-day Iraq. This region worshipped a multitude of gods and goddesses. Of particular prominence in the pantheon were celestial bodies such as the stars and planets. Since the end of the 3rd millennium, Mesopotamians observed the sky, thinking that what happens in the sky was reflected on the earth. Between the numerous heavenly bodies that cross the sky, the Moon, the Sun and Venus were the first and the most important ones that were identified as gods. The Moon god Nanna, symbolised by the crescent, was worshipped at cities such as Ur and Haran. Here is the Ziggurat of Ur, a giant complex built in around 2100 BCE dedicated to the worship of Nanna, the principle deity of the city:



The prominence of Nanna is also reflected in literature discovered at Ur. Sir Leonard Woolley discovered clay tablets in a hoard in a house at Ur. The texts deal with the construction of some object for Nanna by the King Iddin-Dagan (1975-1954 BCE) which invoke Nanna as the “foremost one of the gods” to “put in order the ground plan of Ur”:

"The god Nanna, foremost one of the Anuna gods, trusted one of the Ekur, whose mes [decrees of the gods] embrace heaven and earth (and) are those which no storm can disperse, the lord who alone is a god, who shines forth, first-born son of the god Enlil in order to restore the ancient mes (and) to put in order the ground plan of Ur, the princely son (Nanna) brought forth the best mes from the Enkur. (Poem of Iddin-Dagan 1-12)"

According to historians, the Moon god Nanna has been symbolically represented as a crescent since the end of the 3rd millennium BCE. Here is the cylinder seal of Hashamer, dated to around 2100 BCE. This relic depicts Ur-Nammu, the King of Ur, and the Moon god Nanna in



the form of a crescent:

Archaeological excavations have found that the people of this region also worshipped additional gods and goddesses alongside the Moon, including the Sun. Shamash, god of the Sun, represented by the solar disc, was worshipped at Larsa and Sippar. According to historians, Shamash has been symbolically represented as the Sun since at least the late 3rd millennium BCE. Here is the famous Stele of Ur-Nammu, dated to 2112 – 2095 BCE. This relic is one the treasures of Mesopotamian art because it provides rare pictorial representations of the King of Ur's relations to the divine world. Very few pieces of sculpture have survived from this period or

from any early period of Mesopotamian history as most were smashed by invading enemies. It depicts the King of Ur and his priests engaged in sacrificial rituals to the Moon and Sun. You can see Nanna and the Sun god, Shamash, joined together at the top in the form of a crescent and star (notice the rays emerging from the star):



Together with the Moon and Sun, the people of Ur also worshipped the planet Venus. This bronze figure represents Ur-Nammu, the ruler of Ur. It's from Uruk, southern Iraq, Third Dynasty of Ur, 2100 – 2000 BCE. The inscription around and over the king's body states that Ur-Nammu dedicated the figure to the goddess Ishtar:



According to historians, Ishtar is personified as the planet Venus throughout Mesopotamian literature, at least since the beginning of the second millennium BCE, and perhaps even as far back as the third millennium BCE. We can see this in the writings of Enheduanna (2285 – 2250 BCE), a high priestess of the Moon god Nanna in the city of Ur. She became the most important religious figure of her day, and her evocative prayers, stories, and incantations, which were devoted to the

goddess Ishtar, were highly influential. Although she was the priestess of Nanna, Enheduanna's most famous work is her Nin-me-sharra, or "*Exaltation of Inanna*". She refers to Ishtar as "great lady of the horizon and zenith of the heavens", an allusion to her astral aspect as the planet Venus:

"Most precious lady, beloved by An, your holy heart is great; may it be assuaged on my behalf! Beloved spouse of Ušumgal-ana, you are the great lady of the horizon and zenith of the heavens. The Anuna have submitted to you. From birth you were the junior queen: how supreme you are now over the Anuna, the great gods! The Anuna kiss the ground with their lips before you. But my own trial is not yet concluded, although a hostile verdict encloses me as if it were my own verdict. I did not reach out my hands to [the] flowered bed. I did not reveal the pronouncements of Ningal to anybody. My lady beloved of An, may your heart be calmed towards me, the brilliant en priestess of Nanna! (Nin-me-sharra 109-121)"

In fact some Sumerian hymns are much more explicit about Ishtar's connection with Venus. For example in a poem of praise to the King Iddin-Dagan (1975-1954 BCE) and Inanna, which is the Sumerian equivalent of the name Ishtar, she is invoked as the planet Venus:

"To the great [lady] of heaven, Inanna, I would say: 'Hail!' To the holy torch who fills the heaven, to the light, to her who shines like daylight... Of the holy torch who fills the heaven, of her stance in heaven, like the moon and the sun... In heaven she surely stands, the good wild cow of An... With An she takes her seat upon the great throne... Upon them [the people, described as 'black heads'] my lady looks in a friendly way from the midst of heaven... At evening, the radiant star, the great light which fills the heaven... She comes forth like the moon at night. She comes forth like bright daylight in the heat of noon... The lady, the amazement of the land, the solitary star, the Venus-star..."

Here, as so often in Mesopotamian literature, Ishtar/Inanna is referred to as Venus and is said to stand alongside the celestial gods of the Moon and the Sun.

Now, according to Mesopotamian mythology, these three celestial bodies – the Sun, the Moon, and Venus – were believed to be genealogically related to each other and formed an astral triad. The goddess of Venus, Ishtar/Inanna, and the Sun god Shamash, were said to be siblings and both the offspring of the Moon god Nanna. This relationship between the Moon, Sun and Venus is reflected throughout Sumerian literature. For example, "*Inanna and Ebih*" is another famous composition by the high priestess of Ur, Enheduanna, depicting Ishtar/Inanna as the daughter of Sin/Suen:

"For destroying Ebih, great child of Suen, maiden Inana, be praised. (Inanna and Ebih 182-183)"

According to historians, Sin/Suen is the Akkadian equivalent of the Sumerian name Nanna. The earliest writings of both names are roughly contemporary, and occur interchangeably.

Here Enheduanna calls on Nanna/Sin/Suen and Ishtar/Inanna for help because she has been dislodged from her position by a rebelling Sumerian king, Lugal-Ane, who, she complains, did not show proper respect for the gods and has desecrated a temple at Uruk:

“Sin, tell An about Lugal-ane and my fate!... En-hedu-ana will recite a prayer to you. To you, holy Inanna I shall give free vent to my tears like sweet beer!... Lugal-ane has altered everything and has stripped An of the E-ana (temple). He has not stood in awe of the greatest deity. He has turned that temple, whose attractions were inexhaustible, whose beauty was endless, into a desolation. (Nin-me-sharra 74-90)”

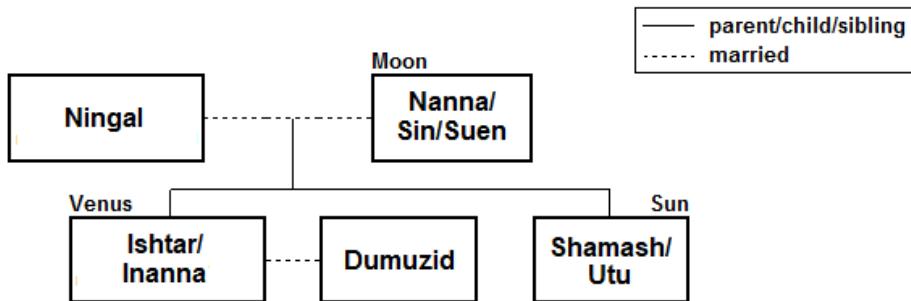
Nanna, Ningal (Nanna's wife), the Sun god Utu (the Sumerian equivalent of the name Shamash) and Ishtar/Inanna are mentioned together in a clay tablet discovered by Sir Leonard Woolley at Ur. The text invokes these gods and goddesses as part of a curse:

“Whether he be a king, an en priest, or an ordinary human being, may that man not get a name or beget any descendants. May the god Nanna, my lord, (and) the goddess Ningal, my lady, curse him, (and) may the god Utu and the goddess Inanna forever be its (the curse's) evil spirit who cannot be countermanded. (Poem of Iddin-Dagan 32-41)”

The composition “Inanna's descent into underworld” was excavated at Nippur. It is dated to the first half of the second millennium (2000 – 1500 BCE). It mentions Ishtar/Inanna's relation to her brother, the Sun god Shamash/Utu, through her husband, Dumuzid, who is Shamash/Utu's brother in law:

“Dumuzid let out a wail and turned very pale. The lad raised his hands to heaven, to Utu: “Utu, you are my brother-in-law. I am your relation by marriage. I brought butter to your mother's house. I brought milk to Ningal's house. Turn my hands into snake's hands and turn my feet into snake's feet, so I can escape my demons, let them not keep hold of me. (Inanna's descent into underworld 368-375)”

Based on these Sumerian writings, it's possible to depict the relationship between the Sun, Moon, and Venus in a diagram:



Ancient relics depict Nanna/Sin/Suen as a

crescent, Shamash/Utu as a solar disk and Ishtar/Inanna as an eight-pointed star as follows:



Recent archaeological discoveries depict the special relationship between these deities. The “*Kudurru of King Melishipak I*”, discovered at Susa, shows the astral triad in full:



The “*Kudurru of Nebuchadnezzar I*”, discovered at Sippar, also shows the astral triad in full. Note the numerous Mesopotamian gods in segmented registers on the stone. We can see that the astral triad of the Sun, Moon, and Venus take their place at the top of the pantheon of gods, signifying their prominence:



The “*Stele of Nabonidus*”, discovered at Haran, also shows the astral triad in full:



The wide geographic distribution of these artefacts indicates that this astral triad of the Sun, Moon, and Venus was a prominent cult throughout the region.

Now, what's the Quran's account of the story of Abraham? The Qur'an informs us about some very specific details with regards to the idols that Abraham's people worshipped:

“*And thus did We show Abraham the realm of the heavens and the earth that he would be among the certain [in faith]*
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So when the night covered him [with darkness], he saw a star. He said, “This is my lord.” But when it set, he said, “I like not those that disappear.”

And when he saw the moon rising, he said, “This is my lord.” But when it set, he said, “Unless my Lord guides me, I will surely be among the people gone astray.”

And when he saw the sun rising, he said, “This is my lord; this is greater.” But when it set, he said, “O my people, indeed I am free from what you associate with Allah.

Indeed, I have turned my face toward He who created the heavens and the earth, inclining toward truth, and I am not of those who associate others with Allah.”” [Chapter 6, verses 75-79]

We can see from this story how Abraham debated with his people, explaining to them the error of their way in worshipping false gods. We can see the Qur'an draws our attention to their worship of the Sun, Moon and a third idol. Note the details provided about the third idol:

“When the night grew dark over him he saw a star and said, ‘This is my Lord,’ but when it set, he said, ‘I do not like things that disappear...’”

The word used in Quran 6:76 is “*Kawkab*” which means Planet. This word was used by Arabs of the past to mean Planet and/or Star. While the Arabic word for Star specifically is “*Najm*” which is also the title of Surah 53, An Najm — The Star. Moreover, Venus is called “The Evening Star” (which we'll investigate further subsequently) and the brightest celestial object after the moon in the sky is Venus (Kawkab, a planet), even brighter than Sirius (the brightest star in the night sky). So the Qur'an is right in using the word choice of “Kawkab” rather than using “Najm.”

Now, notice the words of the verse, “**I like not those that disappear**”. The Qur'an tells us that at the onset of nightfall this celestial object appeared for only a brief amount of time. This description of the third idol matches the characteristics of the goddess Ishtar/Inanna. One of her names was “the Evening Star” because she personified Venus, a planet that is visible for only a short amount of time in the evening just after sunset.

We find support for this interpretation of Venus in the works of several classical scholars who wrote books explaining the meaning of the Qur'an. For example, the 14th century scholar Ismail ibn Kathir in his work *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*: “***Abraham, may God's peace and blessings be on him, first proved that Venus is not worthy of being worshipped...***” Also the 15th century scholar Jalal ad-Din al-Mahalli in his work *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*: “***When night descended, [when] it darkened, upon him he saw a star — said to have been Venus...***”.

In summary, we can see that the Qur'an's claims about the idolatry of Abraham's people is accurate in light of what we know historically about the cult of the astral triad.

What's the source of this information in the Qur'an? Historians typically date Abraham to 2100 BCE – 1550 BCE. His chronology is tied directly to the date of the Exodus of Moses. The two major proposals for the date of the Exodus are the 15th and 13th centuries BCE, hence the variation of the chronology of Abraham. Knowledge of ancient Babylonian religion had been lost for thousands of years until their re-discovery and excavation starting in the 20th century. It was recorded at temple sites such as the famous “*Ziggurat of Ur*” in the city of Ur which was founded around 4000 BCE and was the capital of the Sumerian civilisation and once a great harbour city on the banks of the Euphrates River. The city started to decline from around 550 BC and was no longer inhabited after about 500 BC. Eventually the city fell into ruin and the area was buried beneath the desert sands. The British archaeologist Sir Leonard Woolley conducted an excavation of the city of Ur in the early 20th century for the British Museum. He was forced to dig a vast hole over 40 feet deep to uncover the lowest levels of the city. His findings enabled scholars to trace the history of the city from its final days during the 4th century BCE back to its prehistoric beginnings. Before the 20th century, written history had told the world very little about Ur. Thanks to Woolley's findings we now know much about everyday life, art, architecture, literature, government, and religion in what has come to be called “*the cradle of civilization*.” Even the Sumerian language that these ancient artefacts were written in, was unknown. This language was spoken at the time of Abraham and continued to be used as a sacred, ceremonial, literary and scientific language in Mesopotamia until the first century CE. Then it was forgotten until the mid-19th century, when Assyriologists such as George Smith (1840-1876 CE) and Henry Rawlinson (1810-1895 CE) began deciphering the excavated inscriptions and tablets and translated them into English.

In light of these facts, how could Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, have accessed such knowledge, given that he lived in the seventh century? We've seen that the historical claims that have been mentioned in the Qur'an about the deities worshipped by Abraham's people – the triad of the

Sun, Moon, and Venus – is remarkably accurate. The only sources about Abraham that would be readily available to Muhammad in the 7th century would have been the Bible-based stories and Jewish legends in circulation. If we examine the Bible, we find that it is silent on such details:

*“Long ago your ancestors, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates River and worshiped **other gods**” [Joshua 24:2]*

We can see that the story of Abraham in the Bible is silent on the details of the religious beliefs of his people. There is no mention of specific idols that were worshipped, they are simply referred to as “other gods”. Regarding the Jewish legends that pre-date the Qur'an, the Rabbi Louis Ginzberg identified six different versions of stories about Abraham that are similar to the Qur'anic narrative. Although these bear some resemblance, they are in fact much more general in nature and they do not contain the same level of detail that is present in the Qur'an. For example one of the stories found in Jewish legend is that Abraham observed the sky in order to find a sign that would foretell the rains for the year. While doing so he had a spiritual experience:

“And he was sitting alone making observations and a voice came into his heart saying, ‘All the signs of the stars and the signs of the sun and the moon are all under the Lord’s control. Why am I seeking [them out]?’ If He wishes, He will make it rain morning and evening, and if He desires He will not make it fall, for everything under His control.”

Notice that the Jewish legend only provides a general description of “stars”; it lacks the level of detail that is found in the Qur'an which, as we've seen, pinpoints the specific planet Venus. In another Jewish legend, Abraham mentions the elements of fire, water and earth alongside the Sun, Moon and stars as gods that are worshipped by his people:

“Behold, the fire is more worthy of honour than all things formed because even that which is not subjected is subjected unto it, and things easily perishable are mocked by its flames. But even more worthy of honour is the water; because it conquereth the fire and satisfieth the earth. But even it I do not call God, because it is subjected to the earth under which the water inclineth. But I call the earth much more worthy of honour; because it overpowereith the nature (and the fulness) of the water. Even it [the earth], however, I do not call God, [because] it, too, is dried up by the sun, [and] is apportioned to man to be tilled. [I call the sun more worthy of honour than the earth,] because it with its rays illumineth the whole world and the different atmospheres. [But] even it I do not call God, because at night and by clouds its course is obscured. Nor, again, do I call the moon or the stars God, because they also in their season obscure [their] light at night.”

Nowhere does the Qur'an mention that Abraham's people worshipped the elements fire, water and earth. Now if the Qur'an were copying from Jewish legend, then it would have included the mention of these elements. We can see from these examples that Jewish legends were also not used as sources by Muhammad. Now, it's important to point out that some of the deities did spread outside the region of Babylonia. For example, the goddess of Venus, Ishtar, was also worshipped in Arabia. However, she took on very different characteristics. She became the male deity Athtar, representing the god of thunderstorms, symbolised as an antelope. In Egypt she was Astarte, the goddess of war, symbolised by a horse and chariot. These incarnations are radically different to their Babylonian counterpart, Ishtar the evening star. We can see that Ishtar had a chameleon-like quality, her identity was constantly evolving with her attributes, symbolism and even gender differing from region to region. This would have made it highly impossible for Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, to accurately pinpoint her identity in the context of Abraham.

Before we finish, I'd like to share an exceptionally accurate prophecy, which is relevant to the topic of the knowledge of the unseen, as it also tells us about the history of Arabia.

Muhammad made a bold prediction about the state of the land of the Arabs: "*The Hour will not begin until the land of the Arabs once again becomes meadows and rivers*". [Muslim 157c].

This narration anticipated the greening of Arabia's extensive dry desert environment. As recently as 1986, there was little to no agricultural activity in the region. However, over the last few decades these deserts have been transformed to grow grains, fruits, and vegetables thanks to techniques such as centre pivot irrigation. This is a process that pumps water to the surface from deep underground reserves, some of which date back to the last ice age 20,000 years ago. This fossil water is distributed via large feeds and results in circles of green irrigated vegetation. The diameters of these irrigated crop circles range from a few hundred metres to as wide as 3 kilometres (1.9 miles).

Even without human intervention, the Arabian desert is forecast to become green in the future. Science writer Jason Daley explains:

"In fact, the cyclical nature of Green Arabia means that sometime in the future the area will once again be lush and full of vegetation, though researchers aren't sure exactly when that might happen, and whether climate change in general will put a damper on the greening."

Now put yourself in the position of a person living in seventh century Saudi Arabia. This region hosts some of the most extensive sand and gravel deserts in the world with rainfall that averages just ten to twenty centimetres per year. To put this into context, some parts of the United Kingdom average over four hundred centimetres per year. Could anyone inhabiting such a harsh environment ever rationally conceive of the possibility that one day there would be a plentiful supply of water and abundant crops? Muhammad stood to gain nothing by making such an outrageous prediction, moreover it was no light matter, as it gave his enemies a reason to mock and undermine him as a Prophet. But this was important information that had to be conveyed, for it is a sign of the closeness of the End Times and therefore of immense benefit to the generations who would follow after him. Muhammad did not fear the mockery of men, for he was not speaking from his whims; he had no doubt that the prophecy would transpire as this was inspiration from the heavens. Today this prophecy is unfolding before our very eyes, and is only possible thanks to ancient reserves of water buried deep beneath the desert sands, as well as modern advancements in irrigation technology to mine that water. This is technology that could not have been imagined by Muhammad over 1,400 years ago.

This prophecy also makes a claim about the ancient past. Note the words of Muhammad:

“...the land of the Arabs once again becomes meadows and rivers”

By saying “once again” he is implying that at one stage in their history, the deserts were lush with vegetation and life and that they will be returning to this former state. Geologists now know that the Arabian Peninsula was indeed once filled with meadows and rivers in ancient times. Modern archaeological discoveries have uncovered a number of fossils which confirm this. Michael Petraglia is Professor of Human Evolution and Prehistory, Senior Research Fellow and the Co-Director of the Centre for Asian Archaeology, Art & Culture, School of Archaeology, University of Oxford. He was asked: *“What has the team unearthed about the ancient environment of Saudi Arabia?”* He replied:

“One of the first things that we did was remote sensing. We looked at satellite images for example, and found that there are literally thousands of ancient rivers that crisscrossed Saudi Arabia. We also now count 10,000 ancient lakes. The most amazing thing, to me, are the fossil finds. They say something about the kinds of animals that could migrate into Arabia. We have fossils of elephants; these were gigantic creatures, much larger than the African elephant. Amazingly, we also have hippos. These finds tell you something of how wet it really was. Because hippos cannot survive in very arid and dry situations, so the environment had to be green for them to survive. So, there were surely lots of lakes and rivers all across Arabia, and there was plenty of grass with vegetation for these animals to consume.”

So not only did this prophecy correctly predict the greening of Arabia in the future, it also conforms to modern archaeological discoveries and conclusions about Arabia's ancient, pre-Islamic past. There are so many ways that Muhammad could have been wrong, for example he could have claimed that "*God will bless Arabia with greenery and rivers for the first time.*" Or, he could have made an easier claim that would have seemed more logical to people at the time such as "*Arabia will always remain dry and barren.*" His ancient prediction about the past and the future cannot be explained naturalistically as he did not have access to modern technology that helped discover the history and future of Arabia's geology.

I urge you to read "*The Forbidden Prophecies, by Abu Zakariya*," for a multitude of other absolutely astonishing prophecies that were made by Muhammad ﷺ, and that conclusively prove his prophethood.

Now have a think.

The Qur'an is filled with stories about past nations. It wants us to reflect on history which facilitates humility and discourages arrogance of one's own civilisation. Power comes and goes, and we must be humble as we will not last forever. Another benefit of focusing on history is that we learn from the mistakes of others. We have seen how in discussing the story of Abraham, the Qur'an demonstrates an accurate insight into lost history. The Qur'an proclaims that it reveals knowledge of the unseen:

"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" [11:49]

The author of the Qur'an consistently demonstrates knowledge of the unseen, of different times and places in history. This is not a quality of human beings but rather God Almighty.

So do you think that the most truthful in speech, the most generous and the most kind, Muhammad, an unlettered man living in 7th century Arabia among the 95% of illiterates, wrote the Qur'an - a miraculous, uncontested, and inimitable book?

For a second, I would like you to use your logic and rationality, and think.

From all of this, I think we can confidently conclude that Muhammad ﷺ was indeed a messenger of God, because it is clear to us that he was not the author of the Qur'an, and neither was anyone else.

**May Allah grant you
understanding and give
you courage to help you
embrace the truth,
Ameen.**

In Islam there is the message that God wants to make Himself known to us; He wants a relationship, and that's why He has sent messengers and revelation to mankind throughout history. The question we need to ask ourselves is: "*Are we willing to take the time and effort to seek out God's truth?*" This is the key to fulfilling the purpose of our creation which will give us inner peace in this life and success in the eternal Hereafter.

We need to examine our beliefs with a critical eye and that of others with an open mind. No-one wants to dedicate their entire lives to a particular religion only to find out when we die that we were wrong. We only have one life to make the right choice, so the stakes are very high, and the only way that we may find the truth about God is to approach it objectively. God endowed every one of us with the ability to reason, so we must make use of our intellect in order to weigh up the evidence and reason about religion systematically and logically. Our ability to reason is what distinguishes us from animals, which act purely on instinct. And only after determining what the objective truth is, should we commit ourselves to it emotionally, and should we devout our entire life to it.

The pursuit of truth is a noble endeavour; however, it's an objective.

If we were living in the 7th century Arabia, then it would be straightforward. We could simply walk up to Muhammad and ask him about his message. Since we obviously don't have that opportunity today, we have to make use of the tools that are available to us, such as scripture, history and reason.

Last, but by no means least, is our sincerity. In order to have any chance of arriving at the truth, we are going to have to challenge our own beliefs and suspend any preconceived notions we might have about that of others. It may not be a comfortable journey, but then anything in life that is valuable is worth struggling for. Isn't Paradise worth at least this much?

My prayer to Allah:

"It is truly terrifying to realize that once death comes, or judgment day arrives, there will be no turning back. The things we thought were just temporary delays or minor mistakes will become permanent records, evidence against us, and no amount of regret or pleading will change it, except with Allah's permission and mercy. But what about the sins we forgot to ask for forgiveness for? What about the missed fasting and prayers that went unfulfilled? Now, repentance is over. What about all the things we never took the time to thank Allah for? What if we are held accountable for them? Now, gratitude is not recorded in the books.

Allah, please forgive me for the sins I cannot count, remember, or face you with. Please forgive me for the sake of your own honor and majesty. I am too small to harm you. All my sins are upon me, and subtract nothing from your glorious kingdom. Forgiving them all will not reduce your mercy by as much as the tip of a needle reduces the ocean, but even one of them is too much for me to bear. Have you forgiven me, my Lord and Protector?

If you stop my next breath, nothing can help me against your will. Thank you for every breath you have given me. Thank you for every good scent you have ever blessed me with. Thank you for every color you have ever shown me. Thank you for every drop of oil my mother put in my hair, and for all the good things she did for me. Thank you for all the money my father spent on me, my education, my clothes, my whims and fancies, no matter how poorly I may have used them. Please forgive them and bless them, for the sake of your mercy, your dominion, your majesty, your knowledge, your power, and your endless love. Thank you for the warm water that has flowed over my body when I bathe. Thank you for every sip of water, tea, and coffee I have ever taken. You have nourished me, both when I worshiped you and when I sinned against you. I have only worshiped you occasionally. Thank you for your mercy and compassion. If my sins were to be exposed, I couldn't walk on your earth, look your servants in the eye, or endure the shame. You have protected me from myself and from the entire world, a world full of agencies ready to dig up every little thing from everyone's past and use it against them. If you hadn't protected me, they would have devoured me whole. Thank you for your protection.

Have I thanked you enough? No! I swear by your honor, by your glorious face, by your mercy and compassion, not even remotely close! If I were to count all your blessings for the next 100 years, and thank you one by one for each, I would not even have begun! How can I thank you for every second of time you have given me? And how many things I don't even know? I could never thank you enough. I can only make feeble attempts and hope that your mercy will suffice.

Please always keep Muhammad (Peace be upon him) and all the noble prophets (Peace be upon them) in your mercy, your friendship, your protection, and your companionship. Bestow upon Muhammad the intercession and excellence.

Raise him to the most honored station, as you have promised him, your promises are true and you are the keeper of promises.

Save the oppressed Muslims from their enemies, especially those in Palestine, Burma, Syria, Yemen, Kashmir, India, USA, UK, Europe, China, wherever they may be persecuted or in difficulty. Forgive my parents and all the Muslims who have gone ahead of us and save them from the evil consequences of their actions. Accept their prayers and worship. Allow them to enter into your grace and paradise.

Grant health to the sick, and make better Muslims out of all who need to be better Muslims. Bestow faith on those who are deprived of it, as it is the worst kind of deprivation and poverty. Thank you for your forgiveness.”