

The Qur'an and Modern Science

Extracts from the video "The Truth"

RELIGION and SCIENCE have always been considered to be twin sisters by Islam and today at a time when science has taken great strides, they still continue to be associated. Furthermore, certain scientific data are used for a better understanding of the Qur'anic text. In a century where, for many, scientific truth has dealt a deathblow to religious belief, it is precisely the discoveries of science that, in an objective examination of the Islamic Revelation, have highlighted the supernatural character of various aspects of the Revelation.

After a study which lasted ten years, the famous French physician Maurice Bucaille addressed the French Academy of Medicine in 1976 and expressed the complete agreement of the Qur'an and established findings of modern science. He presented his study on the existence in the Qur'an of certain statements concerning physiology and reproduction. His reason for doing that was that "our knowledge of these disciplines is such, that it is impossible to explain how a text produced at the time of the Qur'an could have contained ideas that have only been discovered in modern times".

Decades later a noted embryologist Keith L. Moore and expert in his field, upon being presented with the statements made in the Qur'an regarding the stages of the formation of the embryo from the mixing of the male and female gametes up to the embryo's full development remarked "It has been a pleasure for me to help clarify statements in the Qur'an about Human Development. It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad from God or Allaah because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later." Professor Moore presented his findings to scientists at several conferences. Several Canadian periodicals published many of Moore's statements and in addition he presented three television programmes in which he highlighted the compatibility of modern science with what has been revealed in the Qur'an 1400 years ago. Consequently, he was asked: "Does this mean that you believe that the Qur'an is the word of God?" to which he replied "I find no difficulty in accepting this."

In fact Professor Moore was so amazed at the accuracy of the descriptions and the terminology used for the various stages of the development of the embryo that he modified his own textbook on the subject. He incorporated all the relevant Qur'anic passages and authentic statements of the Prophet Muhammad into his book, *The Developing Human: Clinically oriented embryology with Islamic additions*, which was published by WB Saunders in 1987 and was a standard university textbook in the United States. The book now contains passages of the Qur'an and the Hadeeth (verified statements of the Prophet Muhammad) for every stage of development and Professor Moore has also adopted the classification used in the above two sources.

Consider also the statement of Tejatet Tejasen (Professor at the Dept. of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, Chiang Mei University, Thailand) after his study on the Qur'an passages dealing with embryology: "From my studies and what I have learnt at this conference I believe that everything that has been recorded in the Qur'an 1400 years ago must be true. That can be proved the scientific way". Also the statement of E. Marshal Johnson (Professor and Chairman, Dept. of Anatomy, Daniel Bough Institute, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, USA) when he became aware of such statements in the Qur'an and investigated them: "The Qur'an describes not only the development of external form but emphasizes also the internal

stages - the stages inside the embryo of its creation and development, emphasizing major events recognized by contemporary science... If I was to transpose myself into that era, knowing what I do today and describing things, I could not describe the things that were described... I see no evidence to refute the concept that this individual Muhammad had to be developing this information from some place... so I see nothing in conflict with the concept that divine intervention was involved..."

Upon being presented with hadeeths (verified statements of the Prophet Muhammad) concerning dominant and recessive characteristics Joe Leigh Simpson (Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Northwestern University Medical School, Chicago, Illinois, USA) said: "... these Hadeeths could not have been obtained on the basis of the scientific knowledge that was available at the time of the 'writer'... It follows that not only is there no conflict between genetics and religion (Islam) but in fact religion (Islam) may guide science by adding revelation to some of the traditional scientific approaches... There exist statements in the Qur'an shown centuries later to be valid which support knowledge in the Qur'an having been derived from God".

Consider also the statement of T.V.N. Persaud (Professor and Head, Dept. of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, University of Manitoba, Canada): "Muhammad was a very ordinary man, he couldn't read, didn't know how to write, in fact he was an illiterate... were talking about 1400 years ago, you have some illiterate person making profound statements that are amazingly accurate, of a scientific nature... I personally can't see how this could be mere chance, there are too many accuracies and like Dr. Moore I have no difficulty in my mind reconciling that this is a divine inspiration or revelation which lead him to these statements".

These are just a number of quotes from the "Scientific Community" regarding the nature and the origins of the Qur'an. In fact the Qur'an and Hadeeth do not just talk about embryology but hundreds of other phenomenon including the earth and sun being round, spinning around their own axis and following their own orbits, the origin and formation of the universe, the two types of seas between which is a barrier, the role of mountains in stabilising the earth's crust, the formation of milk in cows, the cause of sexual diseases, the location of pain receptors within the body, the expansion of the universe, the precise nature of the water cycle, the change in atmospheric pressure at high altitudes, the gender of the bee which is responsible for producing honey (female), the stars consuming themselves via the combustion of their gases and this being the source of their light and many more.

Explaining all these statements by chance alone is something which has been resorted to, surprisingly by those deemed to be possessors of intellect and erudition. However this is not tenable as the following demonstration will show. When you make a guess regarding the true nature of something (in an accurate and precise manner that is) there are only two possibilities. Either you are right or wrong. If you make another guess then you only have one chance in four of being correct both times. If you make a third guess then you have one chance in eight of being correct all three times and so on. The chances of correctly describing, let's say, ten phenomena are 1 in 1024. Another point to bear in mind is that the greater the number of things you describe, the chance of being wrong is greater and thus the risk you are taking of being discredited gets bigger and bigger. The Qur'an and the Sunnah (Authentic sayings of the Prophet (sas)) make statements on literally hundreds of phenomena and at the same time openly calls the scientific community to verify them. If one from the scientific community was to make hundreds of new claims regarding his particular field and was then to call all his fellow specialists to prove him wrong he would know without doubt that he is standing on an undermined sand cliff which is ready to crumble with him. How then for the one who makes statements about the specialities of others?

One will be surprised to learn that such a scientific approach has been commanded in the Qur'an with the objective of ascertaining its truthfulness.

Do they not carefully consider (investigate) the Qur'an or are there locks upon their hearts. [Surah 47:24]

Do they not carefully analyse the Quran. If it had been from other than Allaah then surely they would have

found many discrepancies therein [Surah 4:82]

So religious (that is Islamic) beliefs are not based upon blind acceptance as many have generalised to all religions and thus falsely attributed to the Qur'an and Islam. This has been the experience of Europe in the past 3-400 years in which scientific advancement and its findings were seen as heretical, its proponents ridiculed and often exiled and tortured. Islam has never had that experience.

It is true that peoples academic capabilities differ and thus some will be unable to ascertain the truth of it and therefore may accept it blindly. But again they have the opportunity to ask the people of knowledge, those who are in a position to make such a judgement, like those quoted above. It is from the principles of wisdom and justice that when you don't know you don't make a judgement yourself but rather consult one who is in a position to do so. In fact this is something Allaah has also commanded:

So ask the People of Knowledge if you do not know [Surah 21:7]

and He has also said

And those who have been given Knowledge know that that which has been revealed to you from your Lord is the Truth [Surah 34:6]

This is a clear proof of the lack of the dependance upon dogma, superstition and personal experience and an indication of the obligation to research, ascertain and to verify in a scientific manner the credibility of religious (Islamic) belief. Fortunately there are those who have done exactly that like Keith Moore and his scientific colleagues but there are others who have invented lies and slanders in order to discredit the Qur'an and the Prophet. However when these lies and slanders are put to the test scientifically they fail miserably and their irrationality and bias becomes evident. Some of the common claims are that Muhammad was possessed or was an eloquent poet or was a magician or was one who was brainwashed or was a soothsayer. In fact all of these have been denied and rebutted in the Qur'an itself in numerous places and numerous times. It is even more strange that these were the very same claims made by the people who belied the Prophet during his lifetime, and they are the only ones that are resorted to today. What a great advancement!

Nay! We hurl the Truth against falsehood and it does smash it's brains and thus it perishes. And woe be to you for what you describe (with your tongues) [Surah 21:18]

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Note : All quotes have been taken from a video in which after having been presented with the statements in the Qur'an and Hadeeth and given the chance to investigate, the various scientists were questioned as to their opinion regarding the Qur'an. There response was recorded live. The video is called "The Truth" and is available from the Islamic Society upon request. If you would like to know more or have any queries about this topic then please feel free to contact the Islamic Society on Ext. 2019 or if you prefer you are more than welcome to the Society in the Chaplaincy Centre or drop us a line via the Students Union Pigeon Holes

Acknowledgment: The source of the text is <http://www.maxinet.com/yusuf/yusuf.htm>

Regards: Muhammad Bilal Amjad