

Quran: Speech of Allah or not?

In the last issue of Al Fajr (no. 7) we tackled the question of the existence of Allah (swt). We have seen clearly and doubtlessly that He does indeed exist. Given this one simple but sublime fact, we must now look for His Guidance. For surely He did not leave us without a way to express this belief, wandering aimlessly through life and giving no meaning to His creation. In this article we intend to look at the Quran and, with the grace of Allah (swt) to establish firmly in the minds of the reader that this Quran is truly from Allah (swt) and it is therefore a criterion by which we must live our lives.

“... THIS (QURAN) IS INSIGHT FROM YOUR LORD, AND A GUIDANCE AND A MERCY FOR A PEOPLE THAT BELIEVE. AND WHEN THE QURAN IS RECITED, GIVE EAR TO IT AND PAY HEED, THAT YE MAY OBTAIN MERCY”. (AL-A'RAF/203-4)

REVEALED IN ARABIC

The Quran was revealed in Arabic. This is well known. This is its miracle. The Quran itself draws the readers attention to the fact that it was revealed in Arabic in many verses. Here are a few:

"ALIF, LAM, RA. THESE ARE THE SYMBOLS OF THE PERSPICUOUS BOOK. WE HAVE SENT IT DOWN AS AN ARABIC QURAN, IN ORDER THAT YE MAY LEARN WISDOM". (YUSUF/1-2)

"THUS HAVE WE REVEALED IT, A DECISIVE UTTERANCE IN ARABIC....."

(AR RA'D/37)

"AND THUS WE HAVE INSPIRED IN THEE A SECTION IN ARABIC, THAT THOU MAYEST WARN THE MOTHER-TOWN AND THOSE AROUND IT". (SHURA/7)

Allah (swt) promised that He would preserve the Quran and its existence today in its original form testifies to the truthfulness of this promise:

"FALSEHOOD CANNOT COME AT IT (I.E. ALQURAN) FROM BEFORE IT OR FROM BEHIND IT. (IT IS) A REVELATION FROM THE WISE, THE OWNER OF PRAISE".

(HA-MIM/42)

AND:-

"WE VERILY ARE ITS GUARDIAN". (HIJR/9)

From its preservation comes the preservation and dynamism of the Arabic language; for the Arabic it uses is of the highest level. Indeed you will find, even today, Christians in the Arab world studying the Quran in order to learn the Arabic language.

CONVEYED BY MOHAMMED (SAW)

It is also known that the Quran was conveyed by Mohammed (saw). The charges against the Prophet Mohammed (saw) have been numerous. When he began conveying the words of the Quran, he was slandered; the Quraish [suggested] called him (saw) a poet, a sorcerer, a magician [but rejected these claims]. The non-Muslims have continued their attack on his person in numerous ways and one such way has been an attack on the Quran. They have attempted to cast doubt on its divinity, its authenticity and its authorship. Some say it was copied off Christians and Jews; others that Mohammed (saw) brought the Quran to assume leadership over the Arabs. We shall tackle these questions one by one. But at least so far we have established, and it is generally agreed, that it is a scripture purely of Arabic and it is a scripture conveyed by Mohammed (saw).

NON-ARABS OR ARABS?

Because of the high standard of the Arabic used by the Quran, indeed its very excellence and mastery of the language, it is not from a non-Arab. It is inconceivable to think so. Only a fool would suggest a non-Arab could even capture a fraction of its depth of language, its artistry and sublimity.

However, among the various attempts of the idolaters to divide the Quran was the charge that a Christian slave among the earliest converts taught it to the Prophet. Ibn Ishaq reports:

"According to my information the Prophet (saw) used often to sit at al-Marwa at the booth of a young Christian called Jabr, a slave B.al-Madrami, and they used to say, "The one who teaches Mohammed most of what he brings is Jabr the Christian slave of the B.al-Madrami ". (P. 180 of English translation).

Allah replied to these allegations clearly:

"AND WE KNOW WELL THAT THEY SAY: ONLY A MAN TEACHETH HIM. THE SPEECH OF HIM AT WHOM THEY FALSELY HINT IS NOTABLY FOREIGN, WHILE THIS IS ARABIC, PURE AND CLEAR". (AL-NAHL/103)

The emphasis in this Ayat once again drawing the readers' attention to the language and its eloquence.

Some would then turn to the Arabs for the authorship of the Quran; having dismissed the theory that a non-Arab could have written it as being ridiculous. Here the Quran challenges the Arabs:

"... THEY MAY SAY, "HE FORGED IT". SAY, "BRING YE THEN TEN SURAHS FORGED, LIKE UNTO IT, AND CALL (TO YOUR AID) WHOMSOEVER YE CAN OTHER THAN ALLAH! IF YE SPEAK THE TRUTH". (HUD/13)

Not satisfied with the challenge to produce as many as ten Surahs Allah then reduces the challenge, twice!

"AND IF YE ARE IN DOUBT AS TO WHAT WE HAVE REVEALED FROM TIME TO TIME TO OUR SERVANT, THEN PRODUCE A SURAH LIKE THEREUNTO; AND CALL YOUR WITNESS OR HELPERS BESIDES ALLAH, IF YOUR DOUBTS ARE TRUE".

(AL-BAKARA/23)

"OR DO THEY SAY, "HE FORGED IT?" SAY "BRING THEN A SURAH LIKE UNTO IT, AND CALL (TO YOUR AID) ANYONE YOU CAN BESIDES ALLAH, IF YE SPEAK THE TRUTH!" (YUNUS/38)

They tried to bring the like of the Quran but they failed. It is therefore clear that as the challenge has not been met the Book is not of the speech of the Arabs.

MOHAMMED'S SPEECH?

It is also inconceivable that the Quran is merely the speech of Mohammed (saw). Afterall he (saw) is one of the Arabs. Also, whatever level of genius people may assign to him (saw) he is still a human being and one of his tribe and nation. Since the Arabs themselves failed to bring the like of Quran, this would apply to Mohammed the Arab. He (saw) could not bring the like of it, thus it is not from him.

Moreover, Mohammed (saw) has left some sound and absolutely correct hadith, namely the Hadith Mutawatir. The authenticity of these hadith is beyond repute since they were collected from groups of people in the same way the Quran was collated. However, if any of these traditions were compared with any verse of the Quran one would find no similarity whatsoever in the linguistic style. This is the case even though Mohammed (saw) would utter the revealed verse and say the tradition during one sitting. At such a sitting the style of each could easily be differentiated. No matter how much a man may wish to disguise his style of speech, ultimately he cannot because the style is a part of man himself. Mohammed (saw) could not and did not do that.

Further, none of the Arabs, who, particularly at that time, were the most acquainted with the styles of Arabic speech claimed that Quran is Mohammed's speech or even similar to his speech. The

only event recorded was when they claimed that Mohammed had brought, it from the Christian, Jabr. This story has been narrated above where Allah refuted, beyond doubt, the argument.

CONCLUSION

We have briefly examined the Quran. We have established that its origin could not be from a non-Arab, Arab or Mohammed (saw), and this leaves us only with its real source, Allah, the Supreme.

We have seen that its real miracle lies in its language. From the miracle of its linguistic style comes a challenge to all to produce something like it. It is an unmet challenge.

With this knowledge and with our minds fully convinced that Quran is from Allah all that is left to us is to allow our hearts to be filled with its blessings and to act upon it wholeheartedly. It is also left for us to obey its conveyer, Muhammad (saw), because the evidence that the Quran is from Allah is also the evidence that Muhammad (saw) is His messenger.

“AND WE SENT IT DOWN THE BOOK TO THEE FOR THE EXPRESS PURPOSE, THAT THOU SHOULDST MAKE CLEAR TO THEM THOSE THINGS IN WHICH THEY DIFFER, AND THAT IT SHOULD BECOME A GUIDE AND A MERCY TO THOSE WHO BELIEVE”
(AN-NAHL/64)

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