

The Discoverer

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Universe of the Quran

The Arabic word Quran literally means a book to be read. The Quran claims to be the complete and absolutely unaltered communication from the single Intelligence who has originated and developed the entire Universe.

If this is true, then the Quran must be able to withstand, at least, the following tests: First, there should be no inconsistencies and contradictions in its contents. Second, it should not contain statements which are contrary to known facts, regarding, for example, the structure and functioning of the Universe. Third, it must be clear, unambiguous, and precise, so that its contents can be objectively confirmed or refuted.

If inconsistencies and ambiguities do indeed exist, then the book in question is either entirely man-made, or might have originated from the single Originator of the Universe but was later corrupted by humans.

The analysis of any book which claims to be a revelation must include the most important resource accessible to us as the human intellect. Surely enough, the Quran

itself challenges the reader to subject its contents to scientific scrutiny with an objective and honest intent.

Indeed, these criteria may be used to test any claimed revelation.

In this article, an attempt has been made to illustrate very briefly, whether or not the Quran withstands the tests of consistency and clarity. In other words, do the Quranic descriptions of the processes in the Universe precisely correspond with the actual processes themselves? Moreover, if the information contained in this book was unknown 1400 years ago, one would perhaps be led to question its presence in so ancient a document. Could the structurer of the Universe also be the structurer of the Quran? Are there any other tenable explanations?

The following excerpts from the Quran are representative, though certainly not exhaustive, of the accuracy of the statements contained in the Quran.

Have those who deny the truth not seen that the rest of the universe and the earth were joined together as one, which We subsequently ripped apart? And that We¹ made every living thing out of water? Will they then not believe?² [21:30]

We have built this universe with a force; We are most certainly expanding it. [51:47]

Moreover, He turned to the universe when it was smoke and said to it and to the earth: Come (together) voluntarily or involuntarily. They responded we come (together) voluntarily. [41:11]

... [The Originator is] the One who created the night, the day, the sun and the moon; each travelling in an orbit with its own motion. [21:33]

From research in cosmology, we know that matter and space were compressed into a single 'point' some 15 billion years ago. This primeval state then exploded — hence the popular term 'Big-Bang.' The Arabic word *ratq* literally means 'joined together as one.' and the Arabic word *fatq* literally means 'ripped apart.'

All life requires water for biological activity and needs this compound for propagation and survival. Furthermore, early life appears to have had its beginnings from water.

In 1925, the astronomer Edwin Hubble showed that galaxies are receding from each other as the universe expands. This expansion was predicted by General Relativity. The Arabic word *musiuna* literally means expanding.

It is now known that galaxies, stars and planets are formed from large bodies of collapsing gas and dust. These clouds of interstellar debris come together and coalesce primarily due to gravitational attraction. Recently, observers are witnessing the birth of stars and galaxies light-years away. Computer simulations have also shown the effects of these formations.

The sun has its own rotation as does the moon, and both bodies exhibit orbital revolutions as well. In the case of the sun, it revolves around the centre of our Milky Way galaxy and would require 250 million years to complete one revolution. The fact that the sun rotates was not discovered until the invention of the telescope in the 17th century.

¹The word We is one of respect, not plurality. The concept of God in Islam is that of a *single* Benevolent creator who has no partners and there is nothing like unto Him.

²Belief, in Islam, is something built on a methodology of proof and evidence.

Do they never observe ... the mountains and consider how they are rooted? And the earth how it is spread out? [88:17, 19, 20] Have We not made the earth as a resting place, and the mountains as stakes. [78:6, 7]. And [the Originator] has firmly anchored the mountains. [79:32]

Your Sustainer inspired the bees: Choose your dwellings in the hills, in the trees, and in that which [humans] have built. Then eat from all fruits and follow the paths of your Sustainer in submission. From within their bodies comes a fluid of different colours in which there is a healing for people. Certainly in this are signs for people who think. [16:68, 69]

Mountains have deep roots which go into the earth, their masses balanced on the earth in the same way as a ship floats partly above and below the water in hydrostatic equilibrium. This idea of mountains having roots was not realized until the nineteenth century.

The Arabic word *watad* refers to stabilization such as through having a firm foundation or as being pitched like a stake or peg into the ground.

Wahi has the connotation of guidance and beneficial information. In the case of the bees, this inspiration could have taken the form of instincts through genetic or other means. For example, bees communicate directions (of nectar sources, for example) by 'dances' which were first described by Karl Von Frisch in the 20th century. They normally get their bearings in relation to the sun, but when it is cloudy, they have a special biological adaptation in their eyes which enables them to follow the pattern of polarized light. It is also interesting to know that in this instance, the 'bees' are referred to as females (*nahli*). Today we know that the worker bees which go about gathering nectar are female.

... [the Originator] is the one who sends the winds as heralds of His mercy. When they have carried their heavy laden clouds, we drive them to a dead land. Then We cause water to descend and thereby cause fruits of every kind to sprout. [7:57]

... [The Originator] sent water down from the clouds and led it through sources into the ground. And then He caused sown fields of different colours to grow. [39:21]

Do you not consider how your Sustainer dealt with the tribe of Aad, and with many columned Iram, the like of which had not been created in the land. [89:6]

As it is widely known today, but was unknown until the sixteenth century, the Water Cycle is the process by which water evaporates from various bodies of water such as oceans, rivers and even forested regions, to form clouds. These clouds finally yield precipitation. The rainwater then seeps into the ground through various modes such as infiltration and then returns to the various bodies of water to complete the cycle.

The city of Ebla was discovered in the 1970s in the Middle-East. Archaeologists excavating the site found clay tablets which were the trade-records for this city. One of these tablets contains a reference to Iram, a city which was completely unknown until the excavation of Ebla. Unknown that is, except for its mention in the Quran. The city of Iram existed some 4500 years ago.

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