

BELIEF IN THE BOOKS AND SCRIPTURES

QUR'AN - (The Qur'an with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Ünal)

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ
وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ ﴿٤﴾

And those who believe in what is sent down to you, and what was sent down before you (such as the Torah, Gospel and Psalms, and the Scrolls of Abraham), and in the Hereafter, they have certainty of faith. (Surah Al – Baqarah, 4)¹

وَنَامِنُوا بِمَا أُنزِلَتْ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا أُولَٰ كَافِرٍ بِهِ
وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا وَإِلَيَّ فَاتَّقُونِ ﴿٤١﴾

Believe in that which I have sent down (the Qur'an), confirming what (of the truth) you already possess, and do not be the first to disbelieve in it. And (you scribes, fearful of losing your status and the worldly benefit accruing from it) do not sell My Revelations for a trifling price (such as worldly gains, status and renown); and in Me alone seek refuge, through reverence for Me and piety. (Surah Al – Baqarah, 41)²

¹ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=2

² http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=2&min=40&show=10

عَامَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
 وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا
 وَأَطَعْنَا ۗ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ ﴿٢٨٥﴾

The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, and so do the believers; each one believes in God, and His angels, and His Books, and His Messengers: "We make no distinction between any of His Messengers (in believing in them)." And they say: "We have heard (the call to faith in God) and (unlike some of the people of Moses) obeyed. Our Lord, grant us Your forgiveness, and to You is the homecoming." (Surah Al – Baqarah, 285)³

قُلْ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ
 وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَالنَّبِيُّونَ
 مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُد مُسْلِمُونَ ﴿٨٤﴾

Say: "We have believed in God (without associating any partners with Him), and that which has been sent down on us, and that which was sent down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and the Prophets who were raised in the tribes, and that which was given to Moses, Jesus, and all other Prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them (in believing), and we are Muslims (submitted to Him exclusively)." (Surah Al – 'Imran, 84)⁴

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ ءَامِنُوا بِمَا نَزَّلْنَا مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا مَعَكُمْ مِنْ
 قَبْلِ أَنْ نَطْمِسَ وُجُوهًا فَنَرُدَّهَا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِهَا أَوْ نَلْعَنَهُمْ كَمَا لَعَنَّا
 أَصْحَابَ السَّبْتِ ۗ وَكَانَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ مَفْعُولًا ﴿٤٧﴾

O you who were given the Book (before)! Believe (sincerely) in (the whole of) what We have been sending down (on Muhammad), confirming what (of the truth) you already possess, before We

³ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=2&min=280&show=10

⁴ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=3&min=80&show=10

obliterate faces so as to deprive them of seeing, hearing, speaking and smelling, or exclude them from Our mercy as We excluded the Sabbath-breakers. (Bear in mind that) God's command is always executed. (Surah an – Nisa, 47)⁵

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا ءَامِنُوا بِاللّٰهِ وَرَسُولِهِ ءَ وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ عَلٰى
رَسُولِهِ ءَ وَالْكِتٰبِ الَّذِي اَنْزَلَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِاللّٰهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ
وَكُتُبِهِ ءَ وَرُسُلِهِ ءَ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلٰلًا بَعِيْدًا ﴿١٣٦﴾

4.136. O you who believe! Believe in God and His Messenger (Muhammad) and the Book He has been sending down on His Messenger in parts, and the (Divine) Books He sent down before. Whoever disbelieves in God, and His angels, and His Books, and His Messengers, and the Last Day, has indeed gone far astray. (Surah An – Nisa, 136)⁶

HADITH

Al-Bara' bin 'Azib (May Allah be pleased with them) reported:

A man was reciting Surat Al-Kahf, and a horse was tied with two ropes beside him. As he was reciting, a cloud overshadowed him, and as it began to come nearer and nearer, the horse began to trample violently. The man came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) in the morning and mentioned the incident to him. He (ﷺ) said, "That was tranquillity which descended as a result of the recitation of the Qur'an."⁷

Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "The believer who recites the Qur'an is like a citron whose fragrance is sweet and whose taste is delicious. A believer who does not recite the Qur'an is like a date-fruit which has no fragrance but has a sweet taste. The hypocrite who recites the Qur'an is like basil whose fragrance is so sweet, but its taste is bitter. The hypocrite who does not recite the Qur'an is like a colocynth which has no fragrance and its taste is bitter."

Ibn Mas'ud (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

⁵ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=4&min=40&show=10

⁶ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=4&min=130&show=10

⁷ <http://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/9/8>

The Prophet (ﷺ) said to me, "Recite the Qur'an to me." I said: "O Messenger of Allah! Shall I recite it to you when it was revealed to you?" He (ﷺ) said, "I like to hear it from others." Then I began to recite Surat An-Nisa'. When I reached the Ayah: 'How will it be when We shall bring a witness from every people and bring you as a witness against them?' (Having heard it) he said, "Enough! Enough!" When I looked at him, I found his eyes were overflowing with tears.⁸

Abu Umamah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) saying, "Read the Qur'an, for it will come as an intercessor for its reciters on the Day of Resurrection."⁹

COMMENTARIES

Tafseer by Ibn Kathir – a verse by verse tafseer

And those who believe in what is sent down to you, and what was sent down before you (such as the Torah, Gospel and Psalms, and the Scrolls of Abraham), and in the Hereafter, they have certainty of faith. (Surah Al – Baqarah, 4)

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

The people described here (2:4) are those whom Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* described in the preceding Ayah.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ

“And who have faith in what is revealed to you (Muhammad).”

It means, the people of *emaan* believes in what Allah *subhanahu wa ta`ala* sent them with, and in what the previous Messengers were sent with. They neither distinguish between them, nor do they reject what they were sent with from their Lord.

وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ

“And that was revealed before you (Muhammad)”.

What was revealed before you means the past Scriptures: Torah and Bible. We believe in all of them because they all were for hidayah, given to other prophets to provide Allah’s message so that people can understand true meaning of guidance.

وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

“And in the Hereafter they are certain.”

⁸ <http://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/9/18>

⁹ <http://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/9/1>

Believers are those who are certain about the life after death and the Day of Judgment when Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* will ask them about all their good and bad deeds. Hell or heaven will be decided. *Emaan* was mentioned about a lot of things, but *yaqeen* (certainty) was mentioned about the afterlife. It is because our actions of *emaan* are only useful when we have certainty of belief in the Hereafter. The Hereafter is so named because it comes after this earthly life.¹⁰

From the Risale-I Nur Collection by Beduizzam Said Nursi – a thematic tafseer

The Words, The Twelfth Word, First Principle

Look through the telescope of the following story which is in the form of a comparison, and see the differences between Qur'anic wisdom and that of philosophy and science: One time, a renowned Ruler who was both religious and a fine craftsman wanted to write the All-Wise Qur'an in a script worthy of the sacredness in its meaning and the miraculousness in its words, so that its marvel-displaying stature would be arrayed in wondrous apparel. The artist-King therefore wrote the Qur'an in a truly wonderful fashion. He used all his precious jewels in its writing. In order to indicate the great variety of its truths, he wrote some of its embodied letters in diamonds and emeralds, and some in rubies and agate, and other sorts in brilliants and coral, while others he inscribed with silver and gold. He adorned and decorated it in such a way that everyone, those who knew how to read and those who did not, were full of admiration and astonishment when they beheld it. Especially in the view of the people of truth, since the outer beauty was an indication of the brilliant beauty and striking adornment in its meaning, it became a truly precious antique.

Then the Ruler showed the artistically wrought and bejewelled Qur'an to a European philosopher and to a Muslim scholar. In order to test them and for reward, he commanded them: "Each of you write a work about the wisdom and purposes of this!" First the philosopher, then the scholar composed a book about it. However, the philosopher's book discussed only the decorations of the letters and their relationships and conditions, and the properties of the jewels, and described them. It did not touch on their meaning at all, for the European had no knowledge of the Arabic script. He did not even know that the embellished Qur'an was a book, a written piece, expressing a meaning. He rather looked on it as an ornamented antique. He did not know any Arabic, but he was a very good engineer, and he described things very aptly, and he was a skilful chemist, and an ingenious jeweller. So this man wrote his work according to those crafts.

As for the Muslim scholar, when he looked at the Qur'an, he understood that it was the Perspicuous Book, the All-Wise Qur'an. This truth-loving person neither attached importance to the external adornments, nor busied himself with the ornamented letters. He became preoccupied with something that was a million times higher, more elevated, more subtle, more noble, more beneficial, and more comprehensive than the matters with which the other man had busied himself. For discussing the sacred truths and lights of the mysteries beneath the veil of the decorations, he wrote a truly fine commentary. Then the two of them took their works and presented them to the Illustrious Ruler. The Ruler first took the philosopher's work. He looked at it and saw that the self-centred and nature-worshipping man had worked very hard, but had written nothing of true

¹⁰ <https://versebyversequranstudycircle.wordpress.com/2014/05/03/surah-al-baqarah-tafseer-ayaat-4-and-5/>

wisdom. He had understood nothing of its meaning. Indeed, he had confused it and been disrespectful towards it, and ill-mannered even. For supposing that source of truths, the Qur'an, to be meaningless decoration, he had insulted it as being valueless in regard to meaning. So the Wise Ruler hit him over the head with his work and expelled him from his presence.

Then he looked at the work of the other, the truth-loving, scrupulous scholar, and saw that it was an extremely fine and beneficial commentary, a most wise composition full of guidance. "Congratulations! May God bless you!", he said. Thus, wisdom is this and they call those who possess it knowledgeable and wise. As for the other man, he was a craftsman who had exceeded his mark. Then in reward for the scholar's work, he commanded that in return for each letter ten gold pieces should be given him from his inexhaustible treasury. If you have understood the comparison, now look and see the reality:

The ornamented Qur'an is this artistically fashioned universe, and the Ruler is the Pre-Eternal All-Wise One. As for the two men, one —the European— represents philosophy and its philosophers, and the other, the Qur'an and its students. Yes, the All-Wise Qur'an is a most elevated expounder, a most eloquent translator of the Mighty Qur'an of the Universe. Yes, it is the Criterion which instructs man and the jinn concerning the signs of creation inscribed by the pen of power on the pages of the universe and on the leaves of time. It regards beings, each of which is a meaningful letter, as bearing the meaning of another, that is, it looks at them on account of their Maker. It says, "How beautifully they have been made! How exquisitely they point to their Maker's beauty!", thus showing the universe's true beauty. But the philosophy they call natural philosophy or science has plunged into the decorations of the letters of beings and into their relationships, and has become bewildered; it has confused the way of reality. While the letters of this mighty book should be looked at as bearing the meaning of another, that is, on account of God, they have not done this; they have looked at beings as signifying themselves. That is, they have looked at beings on account of beings, and have discussed them in that way. Instead of saying, "How beautifully they have been made," they say "How beautiful they are," and have made them ugly. In doing this they have insulted the universe, and made it complain about them. Indeed, philosophy without religion is a sophistry divorced from reality and an insult to the universe.¹¹

The Words, The Thirteenth Word

If you want to understand one of the highest degrees of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition's miraculousness, listen to the following comparison:

Let us imagine an extremely strange and vast and spreading tree which is concealed beneath a veil of the unseen and hidden in a level of concealment. It is clear that there has to be a relationship, harmony, and balance between a tree and all its members like its branches, fruits, leaves, and blossom, the same as between man's members. Each of its parts takes on a form and is given a shape in accordance with the nature of the tree. So if someone appears and traces a picture on top of the veil corresponding to the members of the tree, which has never been seen, then delimits each member, and from the branches to the fruit, and the fruit to the leaves draws a form proportionately, and fills the space between its source and extremities, which are an infinite distance from one another, with drawings showing exactly the shape and form of its members, certainly no doubt will remain that the artist sees the concealed tree with an eye that penetrates and encompasses the unseen, then he depicts it.

¹¹ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.143>

In just the same way, the discriminating statements of the Qur'an of Miraculous Exposition concerning the reality of contingent beings (that is, concerning the reality of the tree of creation which stretches from the beginning of the world to the farthest limits of the hereafter, and spreads from the earth to the Divine Throne and from minute particles to the sun) have preserved the proportion between the members to such a degree and have given all the members and fruits a form so suitable that all investigative scholars have declared when they have concluded their researches into its depictions: "What wonders God has willed! How great are God's blessings!" They have said: "It is only you who solves and unravels the talisman of the universe and riddle of creation, O All-Wise Qur'an!"¹²

The Letters, The Twenty-Sixth Letter, Fourth Topic, Sixth Matter

My dear brother, that Topic holds great importance, because Satan is the atheists' master. Only when he is silenced will his imitators cease to be deceived. The fact that the All-Wise Qur'an mentions the unbelievers' vile expressions gave me courage. In order to demonstrate the complete worthlessness of that diabolical way, trembling and by way of supposing the impossible, I used the ridiculous expressions the members of Satan's Party are compelled by their way to accept and which willy nilly they utter through its tongue. And by using them, we cornered them at the bottom of the well and took possession of the whole field on account of the Qur'an; we exposed their frauds. Consider the victory through the following comparison:

For example, let us imagine a tall minaret the top of which touches the skies, and at the base of which a well has been dug that goes down to the centre of the earth. Two groups are disputing over proving where, between the top of the minaret and the bottom of the well, a man stands for his call to prayer to be heard by all the people throughout the country.

The first group says: "He has to be at the top of the minaret reciting the call to prayer to the universe, because we hear it. It is vibrant; it is lofty. For sure everyone cannot see him in that high position, but everyone can see him according to their degree on one of the steps when he climbs the minaret and when he descends it. They know that he ascends it, and that wherever it is that he appears, he is someone of high stature." However, the other, satanic and foolish, group says: "No, his position is not at the top of the minaret; it's at the bottom of the well, wherever it is he appears." But no one at all has seen him at the bottom of the well, nor can they see him there. Let us suppose he was as heavy and lacking in will as a stone; surely he would have been at the bottom of the well and someone would have seen him there.

Now, the battlefield of these two opposing groups is the long distance stretching from the top of the minaret to the bottom of the well. The people of light, called God's Party, point out the mu'ezzin at the top of the minaret to those with a lofty view. And to those whose sight cannot rise that far and to the short-sighted, they point him out on a step each according to his degree. A slight hint is enough for them, proving that the mu'ezzin is not a lifeless block of stone, but a perfect man who climbs upwards and appears and makes the call to prayer when he wishes. As for the other group, known as Satan's Party, they pronounce stupidly: "Show him to everyone at the top of the minaret, or else his place is the bottom of the well." In their folly they do not know that he is not shown to everyone at the top of the minaret because everyone's sight does not rise that far. Also, in exaggerated fashion, they want to claim possession of the whole distance with the exception of the top of the minaret.

¹² <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.152>

Then someone appears intending to solve the dispute between the two communities. He says to Satan's Party: "You inauspicious group! If the supreme mu'ezzin's position was at the bottom of the well, he would have been as lifeless, inanimate, and powerless as a stone. It could not have been him who appeared on the well's steps and minaret's degrees. Since you saw him on the latter, he is certain not to be powerless and lifeless. His position must be at the top of the minaret. In which case, either show that he is at the bottom of the well – which you can't, nor can you make anyone believe that he is there – or be silent! The arena of your defence is the well bottom. The remaining space and that long distance is the arena of this blessed community; they have only to point him out somewhere other than at the bottom of the well, to win the case."

Like this comparison, the Topic about the dispute with the Devil takes the long distance from the divine throne to the ground from Satan's Party and forcibly drives them into a corner. It leaves the most irrational, the most impossible, the most loathsome place to them. It drives them into a hole so narrow no one could enter it and takes possession of the entire distance in the name of the Qur'an.

If they are asked what the Qur'an is and they reply: "It is a good book, written by man, that teaches good morality," they should be told: "It must then be the Word of God and you have to accept it as such, for according to your way, you cannot say that it is 'good'!"

If they are asked what they know about the Prophet (UWBP), and they reply: "He was a very clever person with good morals," they should be told: "You should believe in him in that case, because if he was very moral and clever, he must have been God's Messenger. You say he was 'good,' but that is unacceptable according to your creed; you can't say that." And so on. Further aspects of the reality can be applied to other facets of the comparison.

In consequence, the First Topic, in which the Devil is disputed with, does not mean that the believers have to know about the miracles of Muhammad (UWBP) and learn about their certain proofs in order to preserve their faith. A slight hint, a small indication, will save it. All the deeds, all the qualities, all the conduct of Muhammad (UWBP) are miracles of a sort, proving that his position is at the highest of the high, not at the lowest of the low at the bottom of the well.¹³

The Letters, The Twenty-Sixth Letter, Fourth Topic, Second Matter

Everything becomes a mirror yielding knowledge of Him. As Sa'di Shirazi said: "To the conscious gaze every leaf is a book yielding knowledge of the divine."

In everything a window opens up onto knowledge of God.

In some of the Words we have illustrated with the following comparison the differences between the way of the scholars of theology and the true highway taken from the Qur'an: in order to have water, some is brought from a distant place by means of pipes, tunnelling through mountains. And some of it is obtained by digging wells everywhere. The first sort is fraught with difficulties; the pipes become blocked or broken. But those who know how to dig wells and extract water can find water everywhere with no trouble.

Similarly, utilizing the impossibility of causation and causal sequences, the scholars of theology cut the chains of causes at the extremities of the world and then proved the existence of the

¹³ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.387>

Necessarily Existent One. They travelled a long road. However, the true highway of the Wise Qur'an finds water everywhere and extracts it. All its verses cause water to flow forth wherever they strike, like the Staff of Moses. Each makes everything recite the rule: "In everything is a sign indicating that He is One."

Furthermore, faith (îmân) is not gained only through knowledge; many of the subtle faculties have their share of it. When food enters the stomach, it is distributed in various ways to various members. Similarly, after entering the stomach of the mind, the matters of faith that come through knowledge are absorbed by the spirit, heart, inner heart, soul, and other subtle faculties; each receives its share according to its degree. If they do not receive their share, faith is deficient. Muhyi'l-Din al-'Arabi was reminding Fakhr al-Din Razi of this point.¹⁴

The Letters, The Nineteenth Letter, Eighteenth Sign, Second Point

Take a highly decorated palace; to situate in relation to all the decorations a stone which is like the central point of many varied decorations, is dependent on knowing the entire wall together with all its decorations. And to situate the pupil of the eye in a human head is dependent on knowing its relations with the whole body and all the body's wondrous functions, together with the eye's position in the face of those duties. In just the same way, the most advanced of the people of reality have demonstrated numerous relationships between the Qur'an's words and their aspects and connections, and other verses and phrases. Scholars of the Hurufi School in particular have gone further, explaining and demonstrating to their followers a page of hidden meanings in a single of the Qur'an's letters.

Furthermore, since it is the speech of the Creator of all things, each of its words may be like a heart or seed; that is, a heart contained in an immaterial body formed of mysteries, or the seed of an immaterial tree.

Thus, words like those of the Qur'an, and even phrases or verses, may occur in man's speech, but an all-encompassing knowledge is necessary to situate them exactly as they are in the Qur'an, taking into account the many relationships.¹⁵

The Words, The Thirtieth Word, First Aim

I saw something resembling a dream or vision, an imaginary event, which was as follows. I saw myself in a vast desert. A layer of murky, dispiriting, and suffocating cloud had covered the whole face of the earth. There was neither breeze, nor light, nor water, none of these was to be found. I imagined that everywhere was full of monsters, dangerous and dreadful creatures. It occurred to me that through on the other side of this land there should be light, breeze, and water. It was necessary to get there. I realized that I was being driven on involuntarily. Under the earth I wormed my way into a tunnel-like cave and gradually travelled through the earth. I saw that many people had passed along this subterranean way before me, on all sides they were submerged. I saw their footprints, and once I heard some of their voices, then later they ceased. O my friend who is

¹⁴ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.382>

¹⁵ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.225>

accompanying me on my imaginary journey! That land is nature and the philosophy of Naturalism. And the tunnel is the way that the philosophers have opened up with their thought in order to reach the truth. The footprints I saw were those of famous philosophers like Plato and Aristotle,¹⁹ and the voices I heard those of geniuses like Ibn Sina and Farabi. Indeed, I saw in various books some of the things Ibn Sina had said and some of his principles, but he had become stuck, he could go no further, he was submerged before reaching the truth. Anyhow, in order to save you from anxiety, I showed you a small part of truth. Now I return to my journey.¹⁶

The Flashes, The Seventeenth Flash, Fifth Note

O evil commanding soul of mankind!

Consider the following comparison and see where you have driven mankind. For example there are two roads before us. We take one of them and see that at every step is some wretched, powerless person. Tyrants are attacking him, seizing his property and goods, and destroying his humble house.

Sometimes they wound him as well. The heavens weep at his pitiful state. Wherever one looks, things are continuing in this vein. The sounds heard on this way are the roars of tyrants and the groans of the oppressed; a universal mourning envelops the entire way. A person is afflicted with a boundless grief since due to his humanity man is pained at the suffering of others.

But because his conscience cannot endure so much pain, one who travels this way is compelled to do one of two things: either he strips off his humanity and embracing boundless savagery bears such a heart that so long as he is safe and sound, he is not affected even if all the rest of mankind perish, or else he suppresses the demands of the heart and reason.

O Europe corrupted with vice and misguidance and drawn far from the religion of Jesus! You have bestowed this hellish state on the human spirit with your blind genius which, like the Dajjal, has only a single eye. You afterwards understood that this incurable disease casts man down from the highest of the high to the lowest of the low, and reduces him to the basest level of animality. The only remedy you have found for it are the fantasies of entertainment and amusement and anodyne diversions which temporarily numb the senses. These remedies of yours are being the death of you, and so they shall be. There! The road you have opened up for mankind and the happiness you have given it resembles this comparison. The second road, the All Wise Qur'an has bestowed on mankind; it is like this: We see that in every stopping place, every spot, every town are patrols of a Just Monarch's equitable soldiers doing the rounds. From time to time at the King's command a group of the soldiers is discharged. Their rifles, horses and gear belonging to the state are taken from them and they are given their leave papers. They are apparently sad to hand over their familiar rifles and horses, but in reality are happy to be discharged and extremely pleased to visit the Monarch and return to his court.¹⁷

The Letters, Twenty-eighth Letter, The Seventh Matter, First Reason

¹⁶ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.567>

¹⁷ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.203.161>

Before the Great War, or around the beginning of it, I had a true vision. In it, I was under the famous mountain of Agra, known as Mount Ararat. The mountain suddenly exploded with a terrible blast. Pieces the size of mountains were scattered all over the world. I looked and saw that in that awful situation, my mother was beside me. I said to her: "Don't be frightened. This is happening at Almighty God's command, and He is All-Compassionate and All Wise." Suddenly, while in that situation, I saw that a person of importance was commanding me: "Expound the Qur'an's miraculousness!" I awoke and I understood that there was going to be a great explosion and upheaval, and that following it the walls surrounding the Qur'an would be destroyed. The Qur'an would then defend itself directly. It was going to be attacked and its miraculousness would be its steel armour. And in a way surpassing his ability, someone like myself would be appointed at this time to reveal one sort of its miraculousness; I understood that I had been designated.

Since the Qur'an's miraculousness has been expounded to an extent in the *Words*, to set forth the divine favours received in our service, which are sorts of blessings and emanations of its miraculousness, will surely assist it and pass to its account, and should therefore be set forth.¹⁸

FethullahGulen – The Essential Islamic Faith – a thematic tafseer

The Holy Qur'an

If We had sent down this Qur'an on a mountain, surely you would have seen it humbled, rent asunder by fear of God. Such comparisons do We coin for people that perhaps they may reflect. (59:21)

The Qur'an is the Divine Word or Speech sent down to humanity, the best pattern of creation that is uniquely qualified to receive it. Despite the Qur'an's weight and gravity, most people cannot feel and appreciate its significance, for they have closed their senses and faculties to it. Those who alienate themselves and their inner life from the Qur'an receive nothing from it.

For one who is a good "diver"
The Qur'an is an ocean replete with jewels;
While one indifferent to it
Has nothing to receive from it.

The Qur'an, revealed by God to meet all our needs, diffuses blessing and is peerless in its sublimity and holiness. Those who obey it live a blessed life and acquire (spiritual) superiority over others. The Qur'an changes their world into a kind of Paradise, in which its blessings bloom like flowers. To benefit from its blessing, we must obey its commands, reflect continually on its verses, and use it to answer our questions and solve our problems. The Qur'an is the very essence of life; the more you dedicate your life to it, the more blessed and fruitful your life becomes. The opposite is just as true.

¹⁸ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.424>

God's Messenger declares: The best among you is one who learns the Qur'an (with all the truths it contains) and then teaches it to others.¹⁹

If we are to be included among the best, we should go through the Qur'anic truths and teach them to others. The Qur'an is a Divine letter to us. Its contents contain all the principles according to which we must design our lives.

Our Creator has honored us with His Word. The more respectful and obedient we are to this Word, the more honored and respected we are.

God's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings, also declares: One who proclaims (the truths) of the Qur'an openly and recites it to make it heard by all people is like one who gives alms openly. Another who recites it secretly is like one who gives alms secretly.²⁰

Some people give alms openly to encourage others to do so. By reciting the Qur'an publicly, one exhorts others by example. Those who recite in secret should look for themselves in it, and consider it addressed to them personally. Like 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Muhammad ibn Ka'b al-Qurazi, and others, we should consider that all Qur'anic commands and prohibitions, promises and warnings are directed at us. If we do this, we will understand the Qur'an better and regulate our life according to it.

If we recite the Qur'an sincerely and in full consciousness of its being God's Revealed Word, we will feel revived. If possible, we should recite the Qur'an or hear its recitation as if God's Messenger were reciting it; or better yet, as if Gabriel were reciting it to God's Messenger, upon him be peace and blessings; or even better still, as if we were hearing it from God Almighty Himself.²¹

FethullahGulen – The Essential Islamic Faith – a thematic tafseer

The Qur'an Proves Muhammad's Prophethood

- When we study the Qur'an's words, styles, and meanings even superficially, we notice immediately that it is unique. So, in rank and worth it is either below—even Satan cannot claim this, nor does he conceive of it—or above all other books. Since it is above, it must be the Word of God.
- The Qur'an declares: You (O Muhammad) were not a reader of any Scripture before it, nor did you write (such a Scripture) with your right hand, for then those who follow falsehood might (have a right) to doubt it (29:48). Moreover, it is undeniable that Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, was unlettered, and that the Qur'an has presented an open-ended and eternal challenge to humanity: If you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down onto Our

¹⁹ Sahih al-Bukhari, Fada'il al-Qur'an, 21; Sunan Abu Dawud, Witr, 14.

²⁰ Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 4.201

²¹ <http://fgulen.com/en/fethullah-gulens-works/faith/essentials-of-the-islamic-faith/24592-the-holy-quran>

servant (Muhammad), produce a chapter of the like thereof, and call your witnesses, supporters, who are apart from God, if you are truthful (2:23). No one has ever met this challenge successfully.

- The Revelation spanned 23 years. How is it that such a book, which deals with Divine truth, metaphysics, religious beliefs and worship, prayer, law and morality, the afterlife, psychology, sociology, epistemology, history, scientific facts, and the principles of a happy life, never contradicts itself? In fact, it openly declares that it contains no contradictions and is therefore a Divine Book: Will they not then ponder on the Qur'an? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much contradiction and incongruity (4:82).

- The Qur'an is a literary masterpiece that cannot be duplicated. Its styles and eloquence, even its actual sentences, words, and letters, form a miraculous harmony. With respect to rhythm, music, and even geometric proportions, mathematical measures, and repetition, each is in its exact place and then perfectly interwoven and interrelated with others.

- Eloquence, poetry, and oratory enjoyed great prestige in pre-Islamic Arabia. Poetry competitions were held regularly, and winning poems were written in gold and hung on the Ka'ba's walls. The unlettered Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, had never been heard to say even a couple lines of poetry. However, the Qur'an he brought eventually forced all known experts to surrender.

Even the unbelievers were captivated by it. Nevertheless, to stop Islam from spreading, they said it was magical and should not be listened to. But when poets such as Hansa and Lebid converted and then abandoned poetry out of respect for and awe of the Qur'an's styles and eloquence, the unbelievers had to confess: "If we call it a piece of poetry, it is not. If we designate it a piece of rhymed prose, it is not. If we describe it as the word of a soothsayer, it is not." At times, they could not help listening to the Prophet's recitation secretly at night, but they could not overcome their arrogance long enough to believe in its Divine origin.

- Despite the high level of poetry, Arabic's vocabulary was too primitive to express metaphysical ideas or scientific, religious, and philosophical concepts adequately. Islam, using the words and expressions of a simple desert people, made Arabic so rich and complex that it became the language of the most magnificent civilization, one that made many entirely original contributions in scientific, religious, metaphysical, literary, economic, juridical, social, and political areas. How could an unlettered person launch a philological revolution that has no parallel in human history?

- Despite its apparent simplicity, the Qur'an has many levels of meaning. It illuminates the way for poets, musicians, and orators, as well as for sociologists, psychologists, scientists, economists, and jurists. Founders of true spiritual orders and schools of law and conduct found in it all the principles needed to guide their adherents. The Qur'an shows everyone how to solve their problems and fulfill their spiritual quests. Can any other book do this?

- However beautiful and interesting a book is, we read it at most two or three times and then put it aside forever. Billions of Muslims, on the other hand, have recited portions of the Qur'an during their five daily prayers for the last fourteen centuries. Many have recited it completely once a year, and sometimes even once or twice a month. The more we recite it, the more we benefit from it and the more desire we feel to recite it. People never tire of its wording, meaning, and content, and it never loses any of its originality and freshness. As time passes, it breathes new truths and meanings into minds and souls, thereby increasing their activity and liveliness.

- The Qur'an describes all our physical and spiritual aspects, and contains principles to solve all social, economic, juridical, political, and administrative problems regardless of time or place. Furthermore, it satisfies the mind and spirit simultaneously, and guarantees happiness in both worlds.

No one, regardless of intelligence, can establish rules to solve all potential problems. Even the best system must be revised at least every 50 years. More importantly, no system can promise eternal happiness, for their principles are restricted to this transient human life, which is infinitely short when compared to the afterlife.

In contrast, no Qur'anic principle has become obsolete or needs revision. For example, it states that wealth should not circulate only among the rich (59:7); that government offices should be entrusted to competent, qualified persons, and that absolute justice should be the rule in public administration and all disputes (4:58); that people can have only what they strive for (53:39); and that whoever kills a person unjustly is the same as one who would kill all humanity (5:32). These and many other principles (e.g., prohibiting usury, gambling, alcohol, and extramarital sexual relations; enjoining prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and good conduct), are strengthened through love and awareness of God, the promise of an eternal happy life, and the fear of punishment in Hell.

The Qur'an also unveils the mystery of humanity, creation, and the universe. The Qur'an, humanity, and the universe are the three "books" that make the Creator known to us, and are three expressions of the same truth. Therefore, the One Who created humanity and the universe also revealed the Qur'an.

- You cannot find people who do exactly what they ask others to do, or whose deeds reflect them exactly. However, the Qur'an is identical with Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, and is the embodiment of him in words, just as he is the embodiment of the Qur'an in belief and conduct. They are two expressions of the same truth. When asked about her husband's conduct, 'A'isha replied: "Don't you read the Qur'an? His conduct was the Qur'an." This clearly shows that the Qur'an and Muhammad, upon him be peace and blessings, are the works of God Almighty.

- Authors are usually so influenced by their surroundings that it is almost impossible for them to become detached. By contrast, even though revealed in parts on certain occasions, the Qur'an is as equally universal and objective when dealing with particular issues as it is exact and precise when dealing with universal matters. It uses precise expressions even while describing the beginning of creation and the end of time, and humanity's creation and life in the other world. Just as it sometimes draws universal conclusions from particular events, it sometimes goes from universal principles to particular events. This typical Qur'anic style cannot be found in any human work and is, therefore, another sign of its Divine origin.

- No author has ever written a book in his or her field that is as accurate as the Qur'an is in such varied fields as religion and law, sociology and psychology, eschatology and morality, history and literature, and so on. The Qur'an also contains at least the principles of all branches of knowledge, either in summary or in detail, and not even one piece of this knowledge has ever been contradicted. What more is needed to prove its Divine origin?

- Can any author claim that his or her work is absolutely correct and will remain so forever? Scientific conclusions change constantly. The Torah and Gospels undergo continuous alteration—

even a superficial study of Bibles published in different times and languages shows these alterations. Yet the Qur'an's truths retain their freshness or, in the words of Said Nursi, "as time grows older, the Qur'an grows ever younger." No mistake or contradiction has ever been found in it, and ever since the beginning of its revelation it has remained unchanged and displayed its uniqueness. It continues, even now, to conquer new hearts and reveal its hidden unlimited treasures, to bloom like a heavenly rose with countless petals.

- Based on your knowledge and reputation for honesty, can you speak on behalf of the president, the prime minister, and all other ministers; of associations for writers, lawyers, and workers; and of the board of university lecturers and scientists? If you can, can you claim to represent them as perfectly as each would want you to? If you can, can you legislate for all the affairs of the country? This is just what the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, achieved through the Qur'an. How can you claim that an unlettered person, who was totally apolitical until he was 40, could achieve such results without Divine inspiration and support?
- The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, is admonished in the Qur'an. If he were its author, would he give such a noticeable place to the grave slander against his wife? Would he not hide the revelation ordering him to marry Zaynab (discussed above), rather than publicize it, if it did not come from God? 'A'isha said later that if the Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, could have concealed any part of the Qur'an, he would have concealed this.

His uncle Abu Talib, who raised him since he was 8 and protected him for 10 years after his declaration of Prophethood, never embraced Islam. The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, loved his uncle deeply and desired his conversion, but was told that: You guide not whom you love, but God guides whom He wills. He is best aware of those who are guided (28:56). If he were the Qur'an's author, he could have claimed that Abu Talib had embraced Islam.

- Many verses begin with "They ask you" and continue with "Say (in answer)." These were revealed to answer questions asked by Muslims and non-Muslims, especially the Jews of Madina, about allowed or prohibited matters, the distribution of war spoils, (astrological) mansions of the moon, Judgment Day, Dhul-Qarnayn (an ancient believing king who made great conquests in Asia and Africa), the spirit, and so on. One without an all-encompassing knowledge cannot answer such questions. But his answers satisfied everybody. This shows that he was taught by God, the All-Knowing.
- The Prophet, upon him be peace and blessings, was very austere and shunned worldly gain, fame, rulership, wealth, and beautiful women. Furthermore, he endured great hardship and persecution. To claim that he—God forbid such a thought!—invented the Qur'an means that Muhammad the Trustworthy, as he was commonly known, was—we beg forgiveness for having to narrate such a false claim—the greatest liar and cheat history has ever known. Why would he falsely claim Prophethood and expose himself and his family to severe deprivation and persecution? Such an accusation as well as that of saying that he wrote the Qur'an, are totally groundless and lacking in evidence.
- The Jews and Christians were very strong opponents. Eventually, he had to fight the Jews of Madina several times and finally expel them. Despite this, the Qur'an mentions Prophet Moses about 50 times and Jesus many times; it mentions Muhammad's name only four times. Why should a person who falsely claims Prophethood mention the Prophets of those who are so opposed to him?

Can there be any reasons other than jealousy, prejudice, selfishness, and other negative emotions for denying Muhammad's Prophethood?

- The Qur'an also refers to certain facts of creation only recently established by modern scientific methods. How, except for Divine authorship, could the Qur'an be literally true on matters of which the people listening to it being revealed had no idea? For example, if the Qur'an were a regular book, could it have contained: Do not the unbelievers realize that the heavens and the earth were one unit of creation before we split them asunder? (21:30)

Whether the Qur'an refers explicitly or implicitly to scientific facts, and the exact relationship between the Qur'an and modern science, are matters of considerable controversy among Muslim intellectuals. Therefore, we will discuss this subject at some length.²²

²² <http://fgulen.com/en/fethullah-gulens-works/faith/essentials-of-the-islamic-faith/24593-the-quran-proves-muhammads-prophethood>