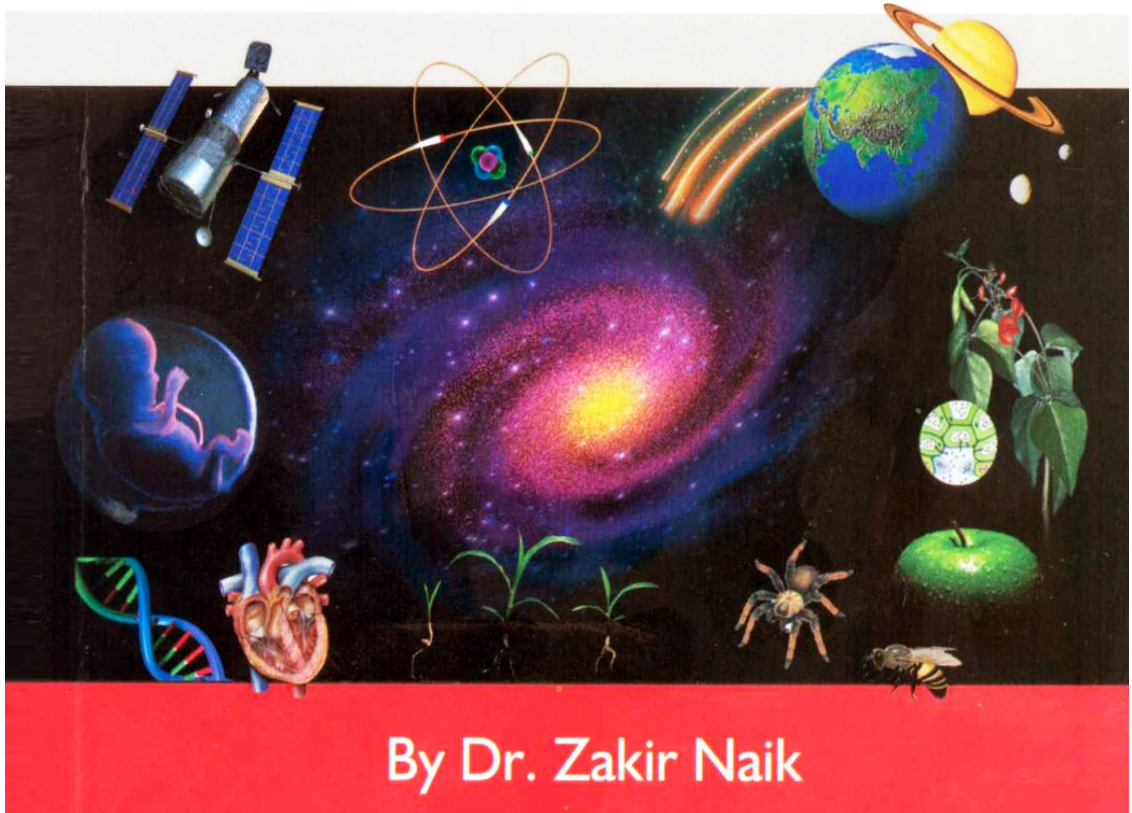


The Qur'ân & Modern Science

Compatible or Incompatible?



By Dr. Zakir Naik

The Qur'an & Modern Science

(Compatible or Incompatible?)

By: Dr. Zakir Naik

Edited By: Larbi Benrezouk

Copyright: Darussalam Publishers

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the written permission of the publisher.



Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
The Quran	6
The Challenge of the Qur'an	6
ASTRONOMY	8
The Creation of the Universe.....	8
The 'Big Bang'	8
There was an Initial Gaseous Mass before the Creation of Galaxies	10
The Spherical Shape of the Earth	10
The Light of the Moon is Reflected Light	12
The Sun Rotates	13
The Sun will Extinguish after a Certain Period	14
The Presence of Interstellar Matter.....	15
The Expanding Universe	15
PHYSICS	17
The Existence of Subatomic Particles	17
GEOGRAPHY	18
The Water Cycle	18
Winds Impregnate the Clouds	19
GEOLOGY.....	21
Mountains are like Pegs (stakes)	21
Mountains Firmly Fixed	22
OCEANOGRAPHY	24
The Barrier between Sweet and Salt Waters	24
Darkness in the Depths of the Ocean.....	25
BIOLOGY	27
Every Living thing is made of Water	27
BOTANY	29

Plants Created in Pairs, Male and Female	29
Fruits Created in Pairs, Male and Female.....	29
Everything Made in Pairs	29
ZOOLOGY.....	31
Animals and Birds Live in Communities	31
The Flight of Birds.....	31
The Bee.....	32
Fragility of the Spider’s Web/Home.....	33
Lifestyle and Communication of Ants.....	33
Honey has Healing Properties	35
PHYSIOLOGY	36
Blood Circulation and the Production of Milk	36
EMBRYOLOGY.....	37
Man is created from ‘Alaq - a Leech-like Substance	37
Man Created from a drop emitted frombetween the Backbone and the Ribs.....	39
Human Beings created from Nutfah	39
(Minute Quantity of Liquid)	39
Human Beings created from Sulaalah	40
(Quintessence of Liquid)	40
Man created from Mingled Liquids.....	40
Sex Determination	41
Foetus protected by three Veils of Darkness	41
Embryonic Stages	42
Embryo Partly Formed and Partly Unformed.....	44
The Senses of Hearing and Sight.....	45
General Science.....	46
Pain Receptors present in the Skin	46
CONCLUSION	48

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the dawn of human life on this planet, man has always sought to understand nature, his own place in the scheme of creation and the purpose of life itself. In this quest for Truth, spanning many centuries and diverse civilizations, organized religion has shaped human life and determined, to a large extent, the course of history. While some religions have been based on books, claimed by their adherents to be divinely inspired, others have relied solely on human experience.

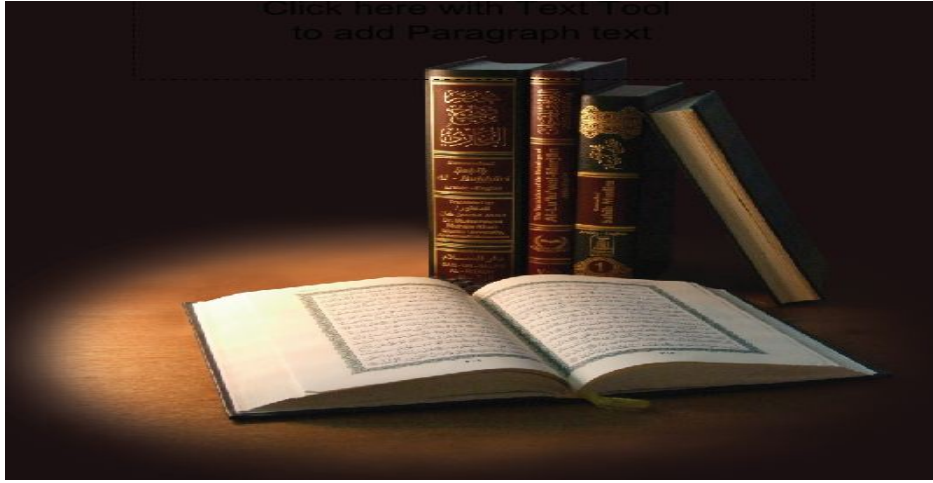
The Qur'an, the main source of the Islamic faith, is a book believed by Muslims to be of completely divine origin and that it contains Divine guidance for all humankind. Since the message of the Qur'an is believed to be for all times, it should therefore be relevant to every age. Does the Qur'an pass this test? In this booklet¹, I intend to give an objective analysis of the Muslim belief regarding the divine origin of the Qur'an, in the light of established scientific discoveries.

There was a time in the history of world civilization when 'miracles', or what was perceived to be miracles, took precedence over human reason and logic. But how do we define the term 'miracle'? A miracle is anything that takes place out of the normal course of life and for which humankind has no explanation. However, we must be careful before we accept something as a miracle. An article in The Times of India, Mumbai, published in 1993, reported that 'a saint' by the name 'Baba Pilot' claimed to have stayed continuously submerged under water in a tank for three consecutive days and nights.

However, when reporters wanted to examine the base of the tank of water where he claimed to have performed this 'miraculous' feat, he refused to let them do so. He argued by asking how one could possibly examine the womb of a mother that gives birth to a child. In fact the 'Baba' was hiding something. It was a gimmick simply to gain publicity. Surely, no modern man with even the slightest inkling towards rational thinking would accept such a 'miracle'. If such false miracles are the tests of divinity, then we would have to accept Mr. P.C. Sorcar, the world famous magician known for his ingenious magical tricks and illusions, as the best god-man.

A book claiming divine origin is in effect, claiming to be a miracle. Such a claim should be easily verifiable in any age, according to the standards of that age. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the last and final revelation of God, the miracle of miracles revealed as a mercy to all mankind. Let us therefore investigate the veracity of this belief.

The Quran



The Challenge of the Qur'an

Works of literature have been instruments of human expression and creativity in all cultures. The world also witnessed an age when such works of literature occupied pride of position similar to that now enjoyed by science and technology.

Muslims as well as non-Muslims agree that the Qur'an is Arabic literature par excellence – that it is the best Arabic literature on the face of the earth. The Qur'an challenges mankind in the following verses:

﴿ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ ۚ وَادْعُوا
شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٢٣﴾ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا وَلَنْ تَفْعَلُوا
فَاتَّقُوا النَّارَ الَّتِي وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْكَافِرِينَ ﴿٢٤﴾ ﴾

And if you (Arab pagans, Jews, and Christians) are in doubt concerning that which We have send down (i.e. the Qur'an) to Our slave (Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)), then bring a surah (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah if you are truthful. But if you do it not, and you can never do it, then fear the Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, prepared for the disbelievers.. (Qur'an 2:23-24)

The challenge of the Qur'an in this verse is to produce a single surah (chapter) like the surahs it contains. The same challenge is repeated in the Qur'an several times. The challenge to produce a surah, which is at least somewhat similar to a Qur'anic surah in beauty, eloquence, depth and meaning, remains unmet to this day.

A modern rational man, however, would never accept a religious scripture which says, in the best possible poetic language, that the world is flat. This is because we live in an age where human reason, logic and science are given primacy. Not many would accept the Qur'an's extraordinarily beautiful language as proof of its divine origin. Any scripture claiming to be a divine revelation must also be acceptable on the strength of its own reason and logic.

According to the famous physicist and Nobel Prize winner Albert Einstein, "Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind." Let us therefore study some verses of the Qur'an and analyze whether the Qur'an and modern science are compatible or incompatible.

It is worth mentioning here, however, that the Qur'an is not a book of science but a book of 'signs', i.e. ayats. There are more than six thousand 'signs' in the Qur'an of which more than a thousand deal with science.

We all know that many a times science takes a 'U-turn'. In this book I have considered only established scientific facts and not mere hypotheses and theories that are based on assumptions and are not backed by conclusive proof.

ASTRONOMY



The Creation of the Universe

The 'Big Bang'

The creation of the universe is explained by astrophysicists in a widely accepted phenomenon, popularly known as the 'Big Bang'. This theory is supported by observational and experimental data gathered by astronomers and astrophysicists for decades. According to the 'Big Bang theory', the whole universe was initially one big mass (Primary Nebula). Then there was a 'Big Bang' (Secondary Separation) which resulted in the formation of galaxies. These then divided to form stars, planets, the sun and the moon, among other things. The origin of the universe was unique and the probability of its occurring by 'chance' is zero.

The Qur'an contains the following verse, regarding the origin of the universe:

﴿أَلَمْ يَرِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَا رَتْقًا فَفَنَقْنَاهُمَا﴾

Have those who disbelieve not known that the heavens and the earth were joined together as one united piece, then We parted them? (Qur'an 21:30)

The striking congruence between the Qur'anic verse and the 'Big Bang' is inescapable! How could a book which appeared in the deserts of Arabia more than 1400 years ago contain this profound scientific truth?



There was an Initial Gaseous Mass before the Creation of Galaxies

Scientists say that before the galaxies in the universe were formed, celestial matter was initially in the form of gaseous matter. In short, huge gaseous matter or clouds were present before the formation of the galaxies. To describe initial celestial matter, the word 'smoke' is more appropriate than gas. The following Qur'anic verse refers to this state of the universe by the word dukhaan, which means smoke.

﴿ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ وَهِيَ دُخَانٌ فَقَالَ لَهَا وَلِلْأَرْضِ ائْتِيَا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا قَالَتَا

أَيْنَا طَائِعِينَ﴾

Then He (i.e. Allah) rose over towards the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth: "Come [into being] both of you willingly or unwillingly." They both said: "We come willingly." (Qur'an 41:11)

Again, this fact is a corollary to the 'Big Bang' and was not known to the Arabs during the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). What then could have been the source of this knowledge?

The Spherical Shape of the Earth

In early times people believed that the earth was flat. For centuries, men were afraid to venture out too far, lest they should 'fall off the edge'. Sir Francis Drake was the first person who proved that the earth is spherical when he sailed around it in 1577.

Consider the following Qur'anic verse regarding the alternation of day and night:



﴿أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُوَلِّجُ اللَّيْلَ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُوَلِّجُ النَّهَارَ فِي اللَّيْلِ﴾

See you not that Allah merges the night into the day (i.e. the decrease in the hours of the night are added to the hours of the day) and merges the day into the night (i.e. the decrease in the hours of the day are added to the hours of the night). (Qur'an 31:29)