

The Methodology of Da'wah



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Da'wah Manual Version 6.1

Who is better in speech than
one who calls (men) to Allah,
works righteousness, and says,
"I am of those who bow in
Islam"?" (Al-Qur'an 41:33).

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The Miraculous Argument

Miracles either exist or they do not exist.
If Miracles exist then it follows logically that God exists.
The Quran exists therefore God exists.

Introduction

What is a miracle? Well, simply put, it is an event or occurrence for which there can be no plausible naturalistic explanation. Therefore, in the context of our discourse it would be considered an act of Divine Intervention. The Qur'an in this context is not the Mushaf i.e. the book cover to cover – but the very words themselves that make up the Mushaf and in the order that they currently reside. Therefore one would understand that we are not referring to the product that was printed at a particular publishing house but the words that are contained within that Book. Therefore let us present the classical definition of what the Quran actually is:

The Arabic speech of Allah that was revealed to the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) both in wording and in meaning. It is collected between the two covers of the mushaf, was narrated in mutawaatir chains, and is a challenge to humankind.

We can learn six important things about The Qur'an from this definition.

1. **The Arabic speech of Allah:** The Quran is the speech of Allah revealed in Arabic. This means that anything that's not Arabic isn't The Quran. Therefore translations of the meaning found in any other language are not The Quran.
2. **Revealed to the Prophet:** We know that Allah revealed many revelations—including the Injeel and the Tawrah and the Zabur. Those are also revelation of Allah—but they're not The Quran. Only what Allah revealed to the Prophet (**salallahu alayhi wa sallam**) is The Quran.
3. **Revealed in Word and Meaning:** Not Only is the *meaning* of The Quran the same as what Allah meant; but the *words themselves* are also from Allah. (Unlike Hadith Qudsi, where the meaning is from Allah, and the words are from the Prophet (**salallahu alayhi wa sallam**))
4. **Collected between Two Covers:** Hadith Qudsi is from Allah, but it's not Quran. Similarly, there are verses that used to be in The Quran, but aren't anymore—even though they were once! These are the abrogated verses, and they're not considered Quran anymore, even though we still know what some of those revelations were. The Mushaf referred to- is that of Uthman (RA).

5. **Mutawaatir:** The Quran was related in a mutawaatir fashion—so many narrators narrated it, at every single step in the chain of narration that it is too well known and therefore impossible that they all lied or made a mistake.
6. **A challenge to Creation:** The Quran is an ongoing challenge to creation— to create something like it; a surah (see 2:23), a statement (see 52:34).

Now that we understand what The Quran is, we are more able to articulate that to the prospect and inform them of exactly what we are referring to when we talk about the revelation known as The Quran. As per the miraculous argument, the presences of miracles are an evidence for God – since only God can perform miracles.

***Note: Throughout this document verses are provided in English as this is an English manual. Therefore it should be understood that these verses are a translation or interpretation of the meaning and not The Quran itself or the Kalaam of Allah.*

There were many miracles performed by many prophets, be that Abraham (AS) in the Fire, Jesus (AS) breathing life into clay birds, or Moses' (AS) staff becoming a snake. However in each of these instances although true, neither we nor anyone alive today was witness to those things. However there is one miracle that is evident amongst us today – The Quran. The Quran is of the greatest sign of God present before mankind. It bares the hallmark of God and it is beyond creation. It is the greatest Hujja (evidence) against the people of Kufr and provides conclusive answers to their false rhetoric. It stands alone in defence of itself and should be used as the greatest evidence to justify this complete way of life known as Islam.

The onus is on the Muslim to highlight just how this book is Miraculous and therefore the only revelation currently attributable to God.

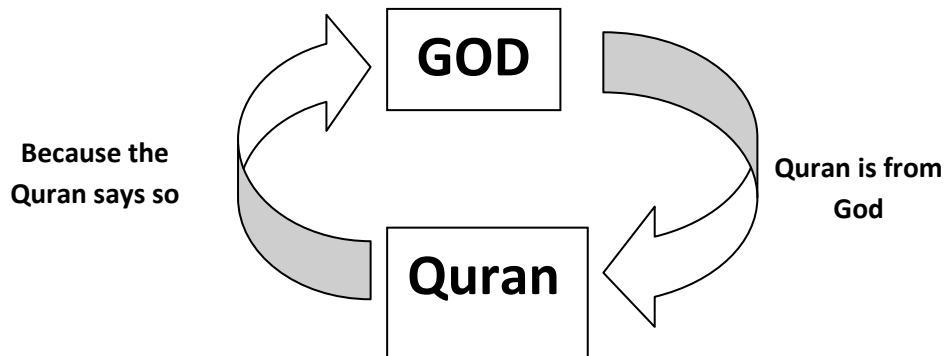
Where to Begin?

There are many revelations on Earth that claim to be from some or other Deity or group of Deities. How can one differentiate between them all? What are the criteria used to determine which one we select as the most appropriate or one we can ascribe to The God? Now many contemporary Du'aat play a lot of intellectual gymnastics with Atheists and adherents to other faith systems. This sort of excessive philosophical rhetoric can become overwhelming and is mostly unproductive; often leading to dead ends and very little of the message being imparted. Therefore a more justifiable approach is to bring The Quran in as early as possible, since this does two things in particular:

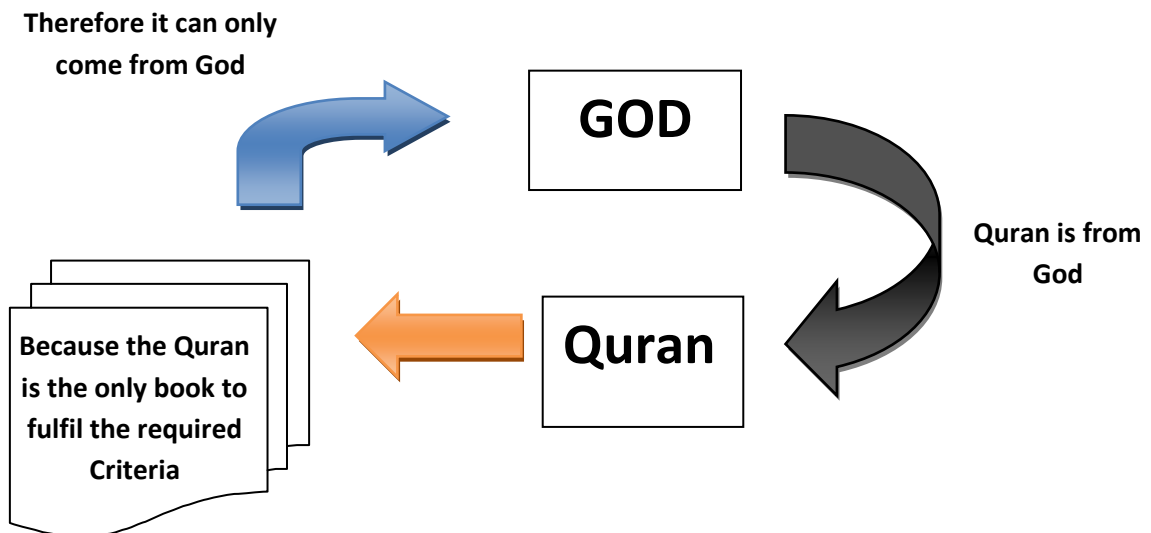
1. You are teaching them about Islam from the outset by using The Quran
2. You are able to avoid the intellectual gymnastics of debate in terms of philosophy or cosmological science.

One should note that we are proving the existence of God via means of rational reflection and through deduction based on the presence of Quran. We provide a rational foundation to why we believe what we believe and in particular why we consider The Quran to be from God. We do not and should not resort to what is known as circular reasoning i.e. simply stating that The Quran is from God, because it states that it is from God in The Quran.

1. Circular Reasoning is the incorrect way



2. Criteria based Reasoning is the correct way



CONTENTION: “If you use your intellect to justify the message what about the times where the message makes no sense to the intellect?”

The battle of Aql (intellect) and Naql (Text/Revelation) is an imaginary one, as there is no conflict between the two in reality and anyone who makes it an ‘either or’ is actually confused. This is because although the rational mind leads us to accept that The Quran is from God, it also leads to the understanding that we are limited before God – hence the correct intellect (Sahih Aql) and the Naql (revealed texts) will never clash. The Naql will be accepted over the Aql where there is a perceived contradiction or misunderstanding as we can appreciate the limitation in knowledge possessed by man and as such Allah knows best.

Below is a list of criteria that anyone of sound mind would use to justify and distinguish a revelation as being attributed to God almighty.

1. **Preserved in wording & Meaning.**
2. **Logical view of God**
3. **Internally consistent and profound**
4. **Externally consistent and profound**
5. **Miraculous Nature**
6. **Applicable Guidance and Purpose**

Just before we discuss how The Quran meets the above criteria it is extremely important to highlight the context within which The Quran was revealed. This is because once you come to understand and appreciate how The Quran was revealed before mankind or moreover the people at the time of revelation it will add an extra dimension to the realisation that it would become infinitely more difficult for this body of text to be the concoction of one or more groups of individuals.

The Quran was recited upon the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) by The Angel Jibreel (AS).

The Quran was revealed over a period of nearly 23 years, in many parts and not in the order that it currently resides. It was revealed to the people at the time of revelation through the spoken word, from the lips of a man who was known to be unlearned. Once spoken, that which was uttered became revelation; therefore, we must stress the fact that there is no editing/drafting process in the delivery of this message. Furthermore, how can there be when the revelation is being delivered to the people just prior to or during major events (battles, arguments, responses to queries from locals & delegates) and sometimes contained predictions. This would imply foreknowledge which is unmarked in history to such accuracy. It should also be noted that these words are being delivered before a people whose language skills are par excellence – Rhetoric, storytelling, poetry and oration are the qualities of the Arab nation of the time and in some regards even today. Indeed the word Arab means eloquent and the word they used to refer to non-Arabs – ‘Ajam’ denotes one who is dumb, mute or silent in terms of linguistic abilities. It is their skill to take your couplets reword them with better (driven towards meaning) words and recite those back to you or before your audience

thereby embarrassing you; to highlight their superiority over you. Therefore at the point of revelation we only have the spoken word of the messenger (through which the revelation is being delivered to mankind).

Preserved in Wording and Meaning

Any revelation revealed to Mankind must be as it was revealed by God. It cannot therefore be a translation subject to the translators understanding nor such that what it seeks to impart is lost in translation. The rational mind cannot accept that any book claiming to be from God is such that it is either incomplete, in doubt, or its language is such that it has become 'dead' with the appropriate people to decipher it no longer being amongst us.

So how does The Quran fulfil this? Well firstly the Quran was revealed in Arabic and the only version that is called The Quran is the Arabic version. Furthermore the Quran was memorised by thousands at the time of revelation. There are also ancient manuscripts in Turkey, London, Yemen and Uzbekistan – of which those in Yemen have been carbon dated to within approximately 15 years of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) himself. There are still many millions of people who speak the Arabic language and can understand the words of The Quran even without formal education in the Islamic sciences. The Quran has been at the forefront of the Islamic civilisation from its inception and has been accessible to rich and poor student and scholar. The quality of its preservation through ease of memorisation and to the dedication of scribes is such that any inconsistency jumps out like a black hair in a glass of milk.

“Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian.” (Noble Quran 15:9)

The remarkable thing about The Quran is that not only the wording but the meaning has been preserved through the use of supporting text – Hadith – which are the actions, speech and tacit approvals of the prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) the man authorised by God to reveal the message to mankind.

CONTENTION: “The Quran is simply a copy of earlier works”

It is strange when people say that The Quran copied the New Testament or the Old Testament due to them being slightly similar in message. This is actually a misnomer. The Quran itself discusses the origins of the previous revelations and the prophets that brought them to their people. The Prophets Moses (AS) and Jesus (AS) and Abraham (AS) are also Islamic prophets believed in by Muslims – so there will no doubt be parallels drawn and some overlap in content.

However the starkest contrast between them is that neither the New Testament nor the Old Testament can stand up to scrutiny as they currently stand today. With textual critics agreeing that large parts of both books are of ambiguous authenticity. The Quran however maps the criteria beautifully and does not contain any contradictions or errors of other faith books – so how does one copy, yet not copy the errors?

“And We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and as a criterion over it. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed and do not follow their inclinations away from what has come to you of the truth. To each of you We prescribed a law and a method. Had Allah willed, He would have made you one nation [united in religion], but [He intended] to test you in what He has given you; so race to [all that is] good. To Allah is your return all together, and He will [then] inform you concerning that over which you used to differ.” (Noble Quran 5:48)

Logical view of God

Why is it important for any revelation to first mention God at all? Well it would certainly create more questions than provide answers if the revelation was to omit the very author of the work itself, His nature, power and prevalence over everything else – especially if the core message is one of obedience to Him. Part of answering metaphysical questions on life and its purpose requires an appreciation of The One who ordained all matters in the first place – Thus God.

Now if a text was to describe The Lord of creation to be a gigantic solar system, 1000 light years away - as incredibly powerful and awe inspiring as that may sound it is irrational. This is because the one who created the universe isn't expected to be a part of it as this would mean that it caused its own creation alongside the creation of the universe! Therefore anything that is a product of the universe can never be the creator of it.

How does The Quran define the Creator? Look at Surah Ikhlas.

**Say He is Allah who is one
Allah the eternal refuge
None is born of Him and nor is He born
And there is to Him no equivalent**

This view holds that the unique and all powerful Creator was always in existence and is therefore The Creator and Maintainer of all things, while Himself being reliant on nothing at all. None shares His dominion through lineage or association and how can there, when if there were 2 or 3 or more Gods wouldn't each compete to take the throne of power and conduct affairs of creation as per their will. The presence of harmony, equilibrium, design and order highlights the unified approach of a single creator. As an example the presence of carbon in living things could also be an indicator of this unified approach of one Unique Creator.

Say, [O Muhammad], "If there had been with Him [other] gods, as they say, then they [each] would have sought to the Owner of the Throne a way." [Noble Quran 17:42]

CONTENTION: "What about Jesus...Don't some consider him to be God?"

Of course there are those who believe that Jesus (AS) is God or that he is the son of God or somehow of the same essence of God. Therefore they may argue that it is not rational to believe that there is a God as you have outlined. The key point to note with Christians is their understanding of God. They can be of any denomination but you need only concern yourself with what they think of Jesus (AS) in relation to God.

Therefore you should always ask a Christian "Do you believe Jesus (AS) is God or Created by God?" If they say he was created then this confirmation from their own mouth confirms how he therefore cannot be God as God does not have a period of non-existence and come into being. Therefore Jesus (AS) becomes creation as opposed to The Creator. You would then discuss the similarities between the message of Jesus (AS) and that of Islam – discuss the purpose of Prophets and how The Quran and the teachings of Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) confirm the mighty status of Jesus (AS) and his position in the overall order of the World. It should also be noted that if they recourse to the Bible as evidence for Jesus (AS) being divine – they would fail to find any quote where Jesus (AS) states he is God or to worship him.

If they state he was created but is the son of God – you can simply discuss how the fact that God should need a son is rationally inconsistent. An all powerful Creator does not require children or partners to support His dominion. However we can for the purpose of clarification inquire where they get their information. If they state the Bible – then one can advise that there are many quotes where one or other is referred to as the son of God and the context does not mean begotten but in terms of obedience to God – righteous.

1. "...which was the son of Adam, which was the son OF GOD." LUKE 3:38
2. ". . . Thus- said the Lord, Israel is MY son even my firstborn." EXODUS 4:2
3. "and Ephraim is my firstborn," JEREMIAH 31:9
4. ". . . Thou (o David) ART MY son; this day have I (God) begotten thee. " PSALMS 2:7
5. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of GOD.' ROMANS 8:14

More importantly we must analyse the source we are using to understand God...The bible is well known to have inconsistencies and its content is disputed by many scholars such that they have marked verses with a criteria from being highly likely to extremely unlikely the words of Jesus (AS) or God. If the Bible was certain there would be no need for this outline of differences in acceptance. (See the New Jerome Biblical Commentary)

Yet even more important is that we ask them to ponder on Jesus (AS) as mentioned in the Quran – tell them about the chapters referring to Jesus (AS) and Mary (surah Maryam) – recite the verses detailing his miracles as a baby in the cradle and as a grown man. Teach them the love and status that Jesus (AS) has in the hearts and minds of the Muslim.

Internally consistent and profound

A revelation from God cannot have contradictions, errors, be full of nonsensical jargon and details on things which have no implication on the Human being or his place in the social order of Creation. It must have an effect on his body and soul and speak to him individually even as it addresses mankind. It should have traits that allude to its metaphysical origins.

Philosophy of Science

Science is big on falsification testing, i.e. for a theory or hypothesis to be acceptable it must be falsifiable as per the philosophy of science. Surprisingly enough, The Quran contains its own falsification test. Such that it clearly defines before the reader/listener if it were from other than God you would have found within it much contradiction. It is stating that the presence of a contradiction negates any possibility that it could be from a divine source – for over 1400 years no contradictions have ever been found.

“Then do they not reflect upon The Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.” (Noble Quran 4:82)

Historical Detail

An astonishing point on accuracy of tradition is the speech of Jesus (AS) when he calls upon the Bani Israel i.e the children of Israel in reference to the Jews who descend from Jacob (AS). Although both Jesus (AS) and Moses (AS) have Judaic roots of origin – Moses’ mother and father were of Jewish heritage and Jesus’ (AS) mother was of Jewish heritage. Jesus (AS) always refers to the Jews as ‘Bani Israel’ whereas Moses says ‘O my people’. This is because Jesus had no father and was born miraculously and this extremely important point in Semitic tradition to be associated to the tribe from the father’s side is not overlooked in The Quran.

Another key distinction is made in reference to the rulers of Egypt. We now know based on the discovery of the ‘Rosetta Stone’ and the deciphering of the hieroglyphs that rulers of Egypt were known by different titles during different dynasties (Old Kingdom, New kingdom) – They were not all called Pharaoh. This key distinction is overlooked in works of antiquity, like the Bible, referring to the period; especially since the Egyptian language had become a dead language. The Quran does not make this mistake but accurately refers to the ruler of Egypt at the time of Joseph (AS) as King and at the time of Moses (AS) as Pharaoh – consistent with our historical discoveries and incredibly remarkable because no one could have known this during 7th Century Arabia.

CONTENTION: “How do we give Da’wah to Christians and Jews as they also have the revelation from God?”

When it comes to previous revelations as what was given to the Jews & Christians we should really avoid using the Cherry-Pick approach. This involves taking verses or passages from their books to highlight to them what they mean and what they should do. Firstly it can be extremely patronising to the prospect and for the most part you are not really qualified, unless you wish to devote in depth study to their books over your own, to use such arguments. Imagine a missionary telling you what Surah al-Fatihah means according to him. Depending on the situation there will be opportunities no doubt to do this but we wouldn't advise it as a primary course of action.

The greatest contention to their message is the authenticity of the message they are delivering. You should discuss how the treaty of Nicaea was formed and what occurred. How the scriptures were forced to undergo a form of analysis where the ones that were in line with the doctrine of Paul were accepted and others were discarded. So they used the doctrine to determine the revelation as opposed to allowing the revelation to speak for itself. Moreover who are John, Matthew, Mark and Luke? Furthermore textual critics even today including priests of the highest order produce bibles that are encoded with ratings on each verse ranging from a highly likely verse to one of doubtful origin. The King James Version Bible is based on Erasmus which apparently only used 2 manuscripts none of which dated earlier than the 12th Century so you clearly have doubts in reliability. Where you have such discrepancy how can you be so sure that Jesus (AS) said or God said what you are claiming them to have said. It really dismantles the whole basis of your religious code of practice.

The Old Testament itself does not forego a similar criticism when again the language in the Old Testament is stylistically so different in the words of one critic; the language shows more variation than the English of today to that of Shakespeare. The variation in linguistic style amongst the constituent parts of the Old Testament range from between 400 years or more. Therefore as the documentary hypothesis' suggests the Old Testament is more likely the work of many people over many centuries, with final versions from around 500 BC.

Word Order

Once again it's important to set the context; a spoken revelation, revealed verbatim with no drafting process. Therefore when we find a Palindrome (a word or sentence which will read the same when read left to right or right to left) in The Quran we need to stress just how special that is. Examples in English are, dad, mum, race car, madam, nurses run.

The largest palindrome in English is one word made up of 11 letters, **detartrated** which means: something from which the tartrates (salts or ester of tartaric acid) have been removed.

As you will note these are quite trivial or simple examples, however looking at the Quran we find something exceptional, a whole sentence profound in meaning and wording in chapter 74 verse 3.

“Glorify your Lord”

ربب اك ف اكبير = “Rabbaka Fa Kabbir”

You will note that the verse also starts (not shown here) with the letter wow. In this context and instance this letter wow is used to signify a new sentence as opposed to the usual meaning of “and”. Therefore the verse reads beautifully the same forwards and backwards.

Numerical Brilliance

The Quran details the similitude before God of the prophets Adam (AS) and Jesus (AS).

Indeed, the example of Jesus to Allah is like that of Adam. He created Him from dust; then He said to him, “Be,” and he was. (Noble Quran 3:59)

What is more startling is that the names of both Jesus (AS) & Adam (AS) are found the same number of times. Both being mentioned 25 times each.

Externally consistent and profound

A religious text could, for all intents and purposes, simply talk about cats and dogs and be correct in that regard but that wouldn't be very profound. The Quran on the other hand is something very deep and profound in meaning. The meanings themselves seem to be evergreen such that the wording used has multiple meanings each driven towards greater understanding of the subject at hand and time boxed beautifully to be most applicable to any age or period.

The Quran makes a series of statements in relation to life and the Universe that contains it. At this point, as is often done in many a Da'wah approach is for one to start correlating these statements with scientific phenomena discovered or even theorised now or in the past. This we must stress is a great mistake and there are number of issues with adopting such an approach.

Firstly, the principles accorded to Quranic exogenesis fall within a set of defined parameters, be that explaining The Quran through itself, The Sunnah, the companions or I'jma of the Scholars. Therefore to start stressing that certain verse definitely refer to some scientific theory or other is inappropriate to say the least especially where the interpretation of a verse can have a layer of meanings. This is because one can never say that verse x means y – where the Quran and Sunnah are silent. Instead we can only say verse x could mean y as only Allah truly knows the meaning.

The other issue is that scientific knowledge is based on principles of induction, assumption and scientism, each limited in scope and sphere and largely subject to interpretation (bias). Such knowledge is therefore knowledge of conjecture as opposed to the absolute truth as per The Quran. Knowledge of conjecture can be referred to as something unlike a complete guess but more like a

calculated assumption or calculated estimation being from 50-99% possible but never 100%. Therefore we can't start making u-turns in The Quran the way we know the world of science is susceptible and often required to do.

Finally understanding that these verses in The Quran are not there to teach you $E=MC^2$ or to teach you Germ Theory but the verses are there to make one ponder over the magnificence of the Creator, who created wilfully and with a purpose and in great splendour deserving the utmost awe and respect. After all who can originate and repeat creation like Allah? Therefore these verses highlight the supreme Lordship of Allah and therefore His unique status as being worthy of all worship. A point to note however is that since The Quran is from Allah it can point researchers in the right direction on which to base their efforts and analysis – the resting point of Noah's ARK on mount Judi and the fact that every living thing is created from water are examples of such.

Below are examples of some statements made in the Quran that point to the Creative power of Allah.

Orbits (including the Sun's Orbit?!)

And it is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all [heavenly bodies] in an orbit are swimming (yasbaḥūna). [Qur'an 21:33]

In the 7th century, at the time of revelation, the word 'yasbaḥūna', meaning to swim or float, was used to describe solar and lunar motion. These movements could be confirmed by the naked eye of a desert Arab. But the word also makes sense to us in the 21st century: it can relate to our contemporary scientific understanding of celestial mechanics.

Mustansir Mir, Professor of Islamic Studies at Youngstown State University, also makes this point:

The word yasbaḥūna (swim or float) in the verse 'And He is the One Who created the night and day, and the Sun and Moon – each swimming in an orbit' [Qur'an 21:33] made good sense to seventh-century Arabs observing natural phenomena with the naked eye; it is equally meaningful to us in light of today's scientific findings [i.e. celestial mechanics].

Interestingly, the above verse also mentions that the sun is floating or swimming in an orbit. This ostensibly conforms to the 7th century understanding of the geocentric universe. But a closer inspection of the language used in the Qur'an suggests that it is also compatible with 21st century science: it describes the Sun's own orbit of the Milky Way. According to scientists, it takes 226 million years for the sun to complete its orbit around the Milky Way.

The expansion of the universe

And the heaven We constructed with strength, and indeed, We are [its] expander [lamūsi' ūna]. [Qur'an 51:47]

The Qur'ān explains that God created the universe with a power or strength and that He is the one who expands it. The word used is lamūsi'ūna which means (are) surely its expander. From a classical 7th century perspective, this word suggests that God created a vast and fecund universe to sustain us. This was easily appreciated and understood by the 7th century listeners. However, what is remarkable is that the word 'lamūsi'ūna' can also mean that God is continuously expanding the

universe, or that He expanded it. This is surprisingly in line with modern discoveries about the expansion of the universe.

A Note on Future Findings

When we cannot find a link between the meaning of a particular word or verse and scientific fact, the verse can be a motivation to find new data and develop innovative scientific solutions.

If we cannot produce a meaningful correlation or reconciliation between science and the Qur'an, we find an open window of opportunity for a future scientific discovery or conclusion to provide a meaningful analysis.

There are a myriad of arguments indicating that the Qur'an is a Divine signpost. One simple example of the Qur'an's Divine origins is the miraculous nature of its complex language.

The Qur'an is a book which encourages reflection. Many of the statements in the Qur'an concerning nature and science have the ability to engage various audiences and appeal to their knowledge, whether a 7th century or 21st century audience. Yet, it remains valid and agreeable, with an ultimate established truth at its centre. This should surely make one think about Who its author is.

The Qur'an contains knowledge about the physical natural world, and about the inner dimensions of our souls. It relates to our feelings, wants and needs. The Qur'an informs us that we have a purpose in life, and that following God's guidance will lead us to inner peace in this life, and Paradise in the hereafter. A rejection of His message will lead to depression in this life and Hellfire after death.

We shall show them our signs in the universe and within themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth. Is it not enough that your lord is the witness of all things? [Qur'an 41:53]

Miraculous nature

We have stressed how this Quran is an oral tradition, therefore not written down but revealed as speech, to a nation which was big on oration as this was the backbone of their creativity. So they were masters of dissecting issues with the use of someone's language and hence used this to better their couplets or humiliate them. Take this body of work for example, by the time it gets to you it will have undergone countless revisions and updates, omissions and additions – still notwithstanding the possibility of yet more errors .So where we don't have a concept of editorial review i.e. first draft, second draft etc and no process of rehearsal we're dealing with a very fine and unique basis for success where the chances of error are magnified immensely.

We'll now shift our attention to the challenge to Mankind from Allah, the actual miraculous quality of The Quran – its linguistic superiority.

The Linguistic Superiority of The Quran is such that we should try and detail how and what that entails. The Arabs at the time of revelation could literally appreciate just how wonderful a recital this was hence they never accused the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) of authoring The Quran –

They knew it was not his work after all he had lived amongst them for forty years and was never known for his poetry in the circles of the day.

However for the non-Arabic speaking audience or even the audience of today it is necessary to break down just how the Quran is miraculous by way of its linguistic superiority – indeed the challenge from God is to produce something like it, which can never be done.

“And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful.” (Noble Quran 2:23)

Therefore let’s take an example: the native English speakers amongst us may or may not be familiar with the constructs that make up the English language i.e. knowing exactly what pronouns, adjectives, verbal nouns, metaphors or the like are, even though they use them seamlessly on a daily basis. However non-native English speakers will have undergone schooling in these constructs as part of their development in learning the English language hence they, on the whole, will have a greater appreciation of these constructs. In the same way we need to highlight to people just how and what makes this Quran so miraculous by clarifying its unique literary style.

Surprisingly enough when discussing miracles people often point to a particular verse or statement as being miraculous not realising that verse for verse the entire Quran is Miraculous as it’s the speech of Allah – inimitable by creation. Hence one is often instructed to use the correct terminology i.e. referring to Ayah (signs) as opposed to verses, and to call chapters Surah – thereby keeping the conformity to meaning which is far more than being simply verses and chapters of a book.

The argument for The Quran being miraculous is via a process of Deduction since; we only have the 29 letter of Arabic language and a finite set of grammatical rules and styles in the language. Therefore it is a closed system; since no new letters or constructs will be added to the language. Hence, the miracle stands true as even with the sum of ingredients to make The Quran – The Arabic Language; none have, or ever will, be able to challenge its inimitable style.

The Arabic language is made up of Poetry and Prose. Poetry has sixteen rhythmical patterns, like the waves of the ocean hence called Al-Bihar (The Seas). Prose is straightforward speech that one would use on a daily basis. There are sub-categories of Prose like rhymed prose known as Saj’ or Kahin (language style used by soothsayers of old). There is also something called Maqaamah which is a combination of poetry and prose wherein difference between both styles is easily noticeable.

The Quran however does not fall into any one of these categories on a surah by surah basis. Not meeting any of the categories of Al-Bihar it cannot be considered poetry and to call it such would be incorrect even though many verses have an end rhyme. On the other hand we cannot refer to it as a form of rhymed prose for example Saj’ as it employs features which render it stylistically different (See- Three Lines that Changed the World: The Inimitability of the Shortest Chapter in the Qur’an

www.hamzatzortzis.com). This unique use of literary elements has not been found in any Arabic prose, past or present.

Non-compliance to the Rules of Prose or Poetry

The Qur'anic literary form differs as it does not fit in to any of the literary categories explained above. Surah 93 (Ad-Duha) highlights non compliance, where the examination of the whole chapter indicates that it is not Saj' or Mursal as this verse has an internal rhythm, whereas Saj' does not have a consistent rhythm and Mursal has no rhythm or rhyme. Also it cannot be described as poetry; the totality of this chapter, or any other chapter for that matter, does not adhere to any of the al-Bihar

Unique Fusion of Metrical and non-Metrical Speech

The Qur'an achieves this unique literary form by intermingling metrical and non-Metrical speech in such a way that the difference cannot be perceived. The following examples illustrate this,

Chapter 15 :45-52 When reading the original Arabic of the above verse the reader moves from metric composition to prose without experiencing the slightest change of style or mode. The same mingling of metrical and non-metrical composition can be observed in the following verse from Chapter 12 Verses 31-35 of the Qur'an.

The phrase "This is the one you blamed me for" in Arabic is poetic. It has a metrical structure in which the rules of Arabic poetry are observed yet transitions seamlessly into the other verses. The Quran uses expressions that are eloquent, immersed in rhetoric and holds fast to grammatical rules of Classical Arabic.

Literary and Stylistic Differences

Although some feel that the early Meccan Surahs resemble the Kahin style they also appreciate that the following stylistic and literary features that render The Quran unique include semantically driven assonance and rhyme, grammatical shift; interrelation between sound, structure and meaning and its unique linguistic genre. It should also be noted that if it were the Kahin style then the Kahin stylists would have been able to challenge The Quran but they were unable. Indeed the likes of Walid bin Mughira, a disbeliever, who was known for his oration and oratory skills would not have made such a statement:

By God; none of you is more conversant than I with poetry, melodious hymns and songs, and by God never did I hear anything similar to what he says. It is so sweet and so graceful that it remains at the summit with nothing to surpass it".

A note on 'Aesthetic Criteria'

Literary forms are not based upon aesthetics, they are based upon the structural features of a text. Hence the reason that literary forms can be distinguished from one another.

To Conclude

The Quran is a unique form of Arabic that is neither Prose nor Poetry. It achieves this by intermingling metrical and non-metrical speech in such a way that its style is not affected and its meaning not distorted. Furthermore its expression is grammatically sound. Every surah has a special character, with its own unique form, and its unique use of literary devices. These features of The Quran are part of the reason why it has not been emulated to this day.

Hammilton Gibb's states,

"...the Meccans still demanded of him a miracle, and with remarkable boldness and self confidence Muhammad appealed as a supreme confirmation of his mission to the Koran itself. Like all Arabs they were connoisseurs of language and rhetoric. Well, then if the Koran were his own composition other men could rival it. Let them produce ten verses like it. If they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evidential miracle"

CONTENTION: "Groups of Intellectuals got together and authored the Quran"

Well for that to happen, we would first ask the prospect. Who could have possibly authored The Quran?

- a) A man, woman or group – if one man can do it we'd expect others to be able to do it – yet none have including those best able; the Arabs at the time of revelation. They instead went through war, boycott of trade and interfamilial feud to stop the message.
- b) An Alien Life form - Aliens are a part of the Universe, they do not exist outside of it therefore they cannot explain the conditions that exist pre-formation of the Universe.
- c) A Devil – Clearly the message would promote him and seek to cause chaos and disruption as we'd expect a devil to do devilish work.
- d) God– it can, by process of deduction and its miraculous nature, only be thus.

Applicable Guidance and Purpose

Any revelation devoid of actual guidance leaves the exponent perplexed and at odds with a coherent approach to seeking the pleasure of God. This is because it would be absurd for any theist to think that the Lord of all creation without whose will nothing can happen in the Heavens would somehow be absent from providing instruction for man to manage his affairs on Earth. The One who creates with purpose would somehow leave mankind to work it out for themselves and leave gaping holes in the way they should appropriately conduct themselves in relation to Him, themselves and towards each other. This is especially necessary where your actions on Earth prerequisites your affair after death. Therefore a perfect religion is one which caters for every sphere of life and provides practical solutions to the socio-economic, judicial and political realms within which man operates.

The central theme of The Quran is concerned with the Tawhid of Allah – That nothing except He alone is worthy of Worship; the oneness and absolute power of God. This is a key point. The ultimate answer to any question or reason for any ordinance in the religion is simply because Allah commanded it. Man is limited in power and ability and he can never come to appreciate the Lord of the Worlds except where the Lord Himself tells man just who He is. This is extremely crucial for anyone of sound mind to understand – there are many things that the human mind/body cannot grasp or comprehend and one of these is information related to Allah. Although we can come to rationalise His existence, only He can inform us of His Nature, Names and Attributes in a manner that we can comprehend. This knowledge can only come from Allah it can never be acquired through deep contemplation, meditation or philosophical discourse. Only through knowing Allah do we understand and come to know our purpose and place amongst creation – without which we are completely astray.

The Quran also discusses creationism which is apparent both in the universe and within mankind and the purpose of The Quran as a reminder and as guidance to mankind. The Quran teaches us about the purpose of life, the reason for our creation, the reality of death and consequences apparent in the afterlife. It defines boundaries in legality, finance, inheritance, marriage and social conduct – practical measures not idealistic philosophies, that are attainable and provides recommendations for fruitful living. It heavily stresses the obedience of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) and emulating him as a means of not only perfecting your worship but the criteria through which your worship will ultimately be accepted!

CONTENTION: “Many critical thinkers believe that all religions are completely fabricated man-made lies that were invented in order to gain power.”

Let’s assess the claim. It isn’t necessary for religion to be an attempt by religious men to gain power as we also have non-religious men; Stalin, Hitler, Pol Pot who statistically caused more devastation and loss of Human life than any religious war and used their ideologies to gain power. We need to assess each religion based on its own merits – what does it call to, why should one adopt this way of thinking and does it actually offer solutions.

We agree that democracy isn’t perfect but in as much as we have available we still use it and claim it does a decent job. However when we look at Islam we see a complete way of life and a solution to world problems. Furthermore, if it were simply the work of men – then how do we explain the miraculous nature of The Quran!

Designed Universe

The order and patterns of the Universe right from its very inception to the current world exhibit a clearly identifiable, intentional design. From the many mathematical and physical constants to the melting and boiling points of materials at given altitudes – these laws and forces exude without

doubt the unified and consistent method of a deliberate force. So much accuracy can never be the product of chance and chaos.

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?” (Noble Quran 41:53)

Creationism

From the options that can lead one to determine the origins of the Universe we must contend that there is no possibility that we came from nothing and by nothing and to expect such is a wilder leap of faith than to believe in the possibility of purple coloured ten legged flying cows.

Furthermore to expect a self creating universe is pretty much the same as expecting it to have come from nothing and we know that nothing can exist and not exist at the same time.

“Or were they created by nothing, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and the earth? Rather, they are not certain.” (Noble Quran 52:35-36)

The Quran a reminder, guidance and the criterion:

The Quran refers to itself as a reminder to those who reflect and ponder upon the meaning of life and seek to amend their ways and rush to forgiveness after having committed an act of transgression. It is guidance to those who believe and are conscious of their Lord and seek to please Him through solemn worship – living in accordance with what He has prescribed. It is also the Criterion to judge between right and wrong. It, due to its inherent and wonderful qualities is the only revelation present in the world today that can even be attributed to a divine source.

“And you do not ask of them for it any payment. It is not except a reminder to the worlds.” (Noble Quran 12:104)

“This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah –“(Noble Quran 2:2)

“Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion upon His Servant that he may be to the worlds a Warner –“(Noble Quran 25:1)

Purpose of Life & Reason for Creation

Who is more befitting to provide purpose of creation than the one who creates – surely the inventor knows His invention. Therefore we can only ever take that from God – the One who created us and all things.

“And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me.” (Noble Quran 51:56)

“[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the Exalted in Might, the Forgiving – “ (Noble Quran 67:2)

Reality of Death

Death is something no one in their right mind can disagree on – we will all die at some point in time. This is as evident to the believer as it is to the non-believer. The death that takes us away from the things we strived for, loved, cherished and wished to inherit forever...Only to be left with others. For even the graves of Kings have been looted and their treasures plundered, what then for the likes of mere men who spent their lives building humble abodes now occupied by strangers.

It is the approaching death and the reality of the time that it comes when one sees the reality of the World and what is to come of the afterlife – however there is now no opportunity to make amends.

“Every soul will taste death. Then to Us will you be returned. “(Noble Quran 29:57)

“And the intoxication of death will bring the truth; that is what you were trying to avoid.” (Noble Quran 50:19)

The Afterlife

The afterlife will either be a Garden of bliss or an abode of Hell. The parallels between both have been drawn such that each will be eternally occupied by either the Righteous or the sinful respectively. The Bounteous gifts that await the believers are such that no eye has seen or can think of while the torment is likewise as dreadful as beyond imagination.

The Quran stresses time and again to work towards the attainment of the garden of paradise and warns against the pangs of Hell...It is both as a source of hope in suffering and a deterrent for those who transgress.

The Quran offers a complete journey for mankind and provides a complete and conclusive paradigm for the world within which one finds oneself; from pre-creation to the point of seeing The Lords face in Heaven. No religion on Earth can provide such a detailed and thorough picture of the realities of this life and the next.

Heaven & Eternal Bliss- “Indeed, they who have believed and done righteous deeds - those are the best of creatures. Their reward with Allah will be gardens of perpetual residence beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever, Allah being pleased with them and they with Him. That is for whoever has feared his Lord.” [Noble Quran 98:7-8]

Hell & Punishment- **“We shall send those who reject our signs to the hellfire. When their skins have burned away We shall replace them with new ones so that they may continue to feel the pain: God is Almighty, All-Wise. “ [Noble Quran 4:56]**

CONTENTION: “I can’t find myself agreeing with a punishing God?”

Many people have a warped sense of justice when it comes to the divine. Somehow they can live a life of debauchery and crime yet find the gates of heaven open to them and all that their hearts desire. We can readily appreciate that crimes carry punishments – nobody looks at the judge and says “How could you sentence me to jail for only trafficking 10kilos of Heroine”, they instead appreciate that they broke the law and that carries a punishment both as a deterrent and as a penalty.

In Gods benevolence He gave you a choice, and clearly signposted the path to Heaven and Hell – It is never too late to repent, you just need to submit your will to Him and ask for His forgiveness then work on correcting your conduct.

Say, "O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He who is the Forgiving, the Merciful." (Noble Quran 39:53)

Moral Code

The Quran is replete with verses related to belief and morality, much more so than verses on judicial injunctions and legal matters. The Quran is guidance. So whoever wishes to meet their Lord in happiness then let them take the way identified by The Lord and not transgress the limits or go beyond the boundaries as then they will only have themselves to blame.

Today society swings with the opinions and whims of the leaders or majority – regardless if they have any insight into what is best for people. They only go by their own limited understanding and judge merit on the basis of what makes people happy. Therefore they engage in activities and justify their conduct on a basis of self interest – giving no moral high code as a standard to make judgement. The Quran however is an objective standard for morality given by the Creator. Some examples are given below:

Illicit sexual relations - **“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.” (Noble Quran 17:32)**

Fulfillment of oaths - **“O you who have believed, fulfill [all] contracts...” (Noble Quran 5:1)**

Greeting - **“And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet [in return] with one better than it or [at least] return it [in a like manner]. Indeed, Allah is ever, over all things, an Accountant.” (Noble Quran 4:86)**

Fear of poverty - **“And do not kill your children for fear of poverty. We provide for them and for you. Indeed, their killing is ever a great sin.” (Noble Quran 17:31)**

Finance & Inheritance

Usury (Riba) is without doubt the underlying cause of inflation and economic disaster around the world. Usury- the charging of money beyond principal debt is a crippling and quite frankly despicable practice. It has been forbidden by God in His Revelation – how much would the world improve if we were only to implement this one practical guideline.

Giving billions in aid to 3rd World or disaster stricken countries only to then charge crippling interest on debts without doubt defeats the so called acts of kindness and thereby completely does away with any notion of providing actual aid. It seems to represent the hypocrisy prevalent in the financial order of the day.

The World Conference on Riba, where world renowned scholars, academicians, leaders and practitioners deliberated on Riba, unanimously agreed that, an economy, which is deeply entrenched in Riba, would never be just and equitable to humankind. Riba is self-destructive such that the economic system is rendered unsustainable

Those who consume interest cannot stand [on the Day of Resurrection] except as one stands who is being beaten by Satan into insanity. That is because they say, "Trade is [just] like interest." But Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden interest. So whoever has received an admonition from his Lord and desists may have what is past, and his affair rests with Allah . But whoever returns to [dealing in interest or usury] - those are the companions of the Fire; they will abide eternally therein. (2:275)

At a time where inheritance was almost unknown if enforced equitably, The Quran details a systematic and superb division of inheritance such the likes as has possibly never been seen to such precision. It is such that each party is afforded the correct amount of cover and provision in accordance with the overall socio-economic climate of the Islamic system of governance (see Quran 4:11-12 as an example).

Marriage

In an age where debauchery and adultery and rampant illicit sexual gratification and fornication have become the object of jovial amusement, The Quran clearly determines a holistic approach to the conservation of social values, familial integrity and the continuation of the species in a manner that is agreeable to both men and women. Not one where the female is prostituted or used as a means for sexual gratification but one where recourse to responsible protection afforded by the man in a manner that uplifts her socially and psychologically.

And if you fear that you will not deal justly with the orphan girls, then marry those that please you of [other] women, two or three or four. But if you fear that you will not be just, then [marry only] one or those your right hand possesses. That is more suitable that you may not incline [to injustice]. (Noble Quran 4:3)

Social Conduct

Recent studies have suggested the single most important factor to building a stable society and of most importance to the citizens of that society is recourse to justice. As we know justice and the Law are not one and the same with many a time criminals managing to escape punishment or the rights of the common man being devoured. Therefore it is truly a point to note that the following verse is found on the walls of the Harvard School of law being described as the greatest expression of justice in history,.

O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah , even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted. (4:135)

Political system

To understand that The Lord has stipulated a code of behavior that governs your life entirely and as The One able to ordain religion has ordained a religion totally consistent with the physiological and psychological well being of mankind. The key tenet of the way one should govern is principally found in the adherence to what has been outlined by the instruction of God in The Quran and the embodiment of governance fulfilled by His messenger (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). Since without doubt if you accept the Lord as your creator and maker and fashioner and designer then you must succumb to the fact that He knows that which you do not know and he is more conversant with you than you know yourself. That He would not leave you without recourse to a clear distinguishable authority on how to conduct the affairs of the people and determine right and wrong and how mankind should live.

O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result. (Noble Quran 4:59)

Exemplary Worship

How does one live a book? Take from it and understand it and implement it? Surely if the ordinances and passages are explained, detailed and outlined by a human being; one just like us but with the authority and the God-given ability to explain just how we should take on the guidance. The prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) therefore is so inextricably linked to Islam and the true worship of God – that any attempt to implement worship devoid of his guidance is a sure recipe for disaster.

Indeed even more astounding is the fact that The Quran whenever it speaks about obeying God it accompanies that with obeying the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) – highlighting without doubt that obedience to God is only achievable by obedience to the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam)

He who obeys the Messenger has obeyed Allah ; but those who turn away - We have not sent you over them as a guardian. (Noble Quran 4:80)

And We did not send any messenger except to be obeyed by permission of Allah ...” (Noble Quran 4:64)

Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allah , then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (3:31)

A note on interpretation: How many interpretations do we have for Mona Lisa’s smile...Only Leonardo could truly tell us why she smiled the way she did...Therefore any text is open to the interpretation of the individual. For this reason Allah sent a man, like us to live The Quran so we would know exactly how the verses are to be interpreted.

Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam)

“Believe, then, in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be on the right path”. [Noble Quran 7:158]

Unlettered- He was unlettered; he could not read or write. He was 40 years old when he started receiving revelations, up till that point and throughout his entire life he was always known as trustworthy, truthful, and honest; someone who had never lied and someone who was always kind to everyone. This was fully accepted by the people around him (Muslims & Non-Muslims).

There are no examples of crookedness, delusions or lies in his blessed life. (Discuss explicit examples with the person why he couldn’t be anything but truthful).

Conditions- pre-Islamic message- Was born in to a chieftain tribe (Quraish).He was an excellent businessman, married to a very influential and wealthy woman named Khadijah (RA).

Conditions on death- Small House, Straw mat as bed, very few belongings – yet was the head of the state of Arabia and some 140, 000 followers/companions.

Events in lifetime- Actively participated in defending his message, at one point when digging a trench (During preparation for Battle of Khandaq), one companion remarked at how he had to tie a stone to his stomach due to hunger – he simply showed that he had tied 2 stones.

Days spent without food – Aisha (RA) states the stove was not lit for many weeks due to the scarcity of food.

The sharing of booty – why take only a fifth of the booty why not 75%? Even then, why was that fifth shared between the community, family and the poor?

His personal Qualities- He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was known by all as truthful and sincere including his enemies (Abu Sufyan confessed to Heraclius that he was never accused of lying). He was also the one with whom people left personal belongings; for safe keeping. This continued even up until his point of migration to Medina (even though the state of Makkah was hostile towards him). The Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) once shouted from the top of mount Safa to the people that if I told you an army was about to attack would you believe me – they replied yes since you are the truthful, yet they wouldn't accept his message for selfish reasons.

Character- A companion said regarding him: "I have not seen anyone who makes a person more cheerful..." and that "He used to smile much before his companions..."

He taught "Cleanliness is piety". And to his wife he said, "O Aisha, love the poor and let them come to you and God will draw you near to Himself."

Husband- He said "O my people! You have certain rights over your wives and so have your wives over you. They are the trust of GOD in your hands, so you must treat them with all kindness." He said "He is the best amongst you who is the kindest towards his wives and I am the kindest amongst you towards my wives."

Father- Whenever his daughter would visit him he would stand and greet her and offer her his seat and she would also do likewise. Whenever he came back from any journey or after taking part in a battle, he would first go to his prayer sanctuary, and then he would visit his daughter and then visit his wives.

Businessman- He said that whoever buys stolen goods, knowing such goods to have been stolen, becomes a party to the act of theft. He said, "When two people who are arranging a business transaction disagree, the commodity being present and neither being able to prove his case, the decision rests with the seller, or they may both reject the transaction."

Teacher - He would be teaching his companions in any given opportunity – sometimes by words, analogies and even depictions in sand; all so that people of all intellects could comprehend.

He said "convey from me, even if only one verse."

Statesman - They said: He was the greatest of the Arabs in oratory and beauty of speech and he said of himself that: 'I am the greatest orator among the Arabs'. It was noted that "His speech was not quick and continuous but that he spoke clearly, word by word." Nor did he use ornamental words. "They said: 'He used to talk little and everything was expressed in this brief talk. In his speech, there was no defect of excess or brevity. The words came one after another like pearls. Whoever heard them remembered them. He was the sweetest in talk among his companions. He used to keep silent

for long and not talk without necessity. He used not to speak evil words and what he spoke was just."

The Persian governor of Yemen during the reign of Khosrau II said (when asked concerning Muhammad, salallahu alayhi wa sallam): "We never saw a ruler more majestic, more fearless, and less guarded than him. He walked humbly among the people."

Judge- People of various faiths would come to him to pass judgement over them both in civil and criminal issues.

He once informed the people that many a communities ruined themselves in the past as they only punished the poor and ignored the offences of the exalted. Then he informed them that had his daughter committed theft, she would have also been punished as per the law. This was said at a time when he himself was the ruler of his nation.

General - In little over a decade he fought eight major battles, led eighteen raids, and planned another thirty-eight military operations where others would campaign under his orders and strategic direction. Wounded twice, twice experiencing his positions overrun by superior forces; he managed to turn the tables and rally his men to victory. More than a great field general and tactician, he was also a military theorist, strategic thinker and revolutionary heroic soldier. Couple this with the fact that he was fighting against seasoned generals, some of whom would later after joining him become extremely well known generals in their own right; Khalid bin Walid who battled the forces of Rome & Amr ibn al As who conquered Egypt, to mention but a few.

A comrade once remarked, that if the war become severe they would shield themselves from the enemy, by getting behind him, and only the brave would be standing next to him'

Conquest of Makah- The most important theme here is that of 'no personal retribution'. There were no accounts of fulfilling any personal vendettas against any of the hardened enemies of the Islamic state.

The leader of the opposition (Abu Sufyan), someone who had strived and encouraged others to strive against The Prophet was given an unconditional pardon. He himself chose to accept Islam.

His wife (Hind) who had mutilated the dead body of the prophets uncle and chewed on his liver was spared.

Their slave (Washi), responsible for the attack on the Prophet's (salallahu Alayhi wa sallam) uncle Hamza (RA), was spared on conversion to Islam.

Soldiers commanded to avoid bloodshed – The rules of war dictate that if the enemy surrenders then there should be no continuation of war.

No forced conversions – There are absolutely no examples during the conquest where it was announced that "convert or Die". Instead it was proclaimed that anyone behind a locked door was safe.

3 Options (Liar - Deluded or Truthful)

Let's look at him from an individual standpoint in terms of his characteristics and his call. He claimed to be the final prophet of God and that the Quran was revealed through him. Therefore in relation to him we have 3 possible options:

He could either be a liar, deluded or telling the truth

1. **Liar** - He was stoned, beaten, abused, had attempts on his life, he was continually persecuted. If he would stop preaching this message he was offered riches to make him the richest man in the city, offered positions of highest authority, women, gold, jewels etc but he never stopped preaching this message. Why do we lie? Ultimately for some benefit to us – yet this man is clearly rejecting anything of worldly benefit that would compromise his message. When he died he had the whole of Arabia under his command yet only had very few possessions, slept on a straw mat on the ground and lived in what could be described as a small house. Why would such a person lie if he gained nothing of worldly benefit from his lies?

2. **Deluded** - The occasion of the death of his son Ibrahim who was about 16 months old also coincided with an eclipse of the sun and the people began to circulate this as a miracle. The word went out saying that the sun was eclipsed in sadness over the death of Ibrahim. Upon hearing this Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is reported as saying "The sun and the moon are signs of God. They are eclipsed neither for the death nor birth of any man. On beholding an eclipse, remember God and turn to Him in prayer".

Now had he been a liar then what an opportunity. Here you are after 20 years of trying to persuade people that you are the prophet of God and that you've brought His message. I mean 1400 years ago what an opportunity to say "see I told you; even the suns eclipsed because of my sorrow", or if he was deluded then he would convince himself "The sun has truly eclipsed for my sorrow".

Furthermore could one who was deluded be, not only one, but all of these: Teacher, Father, Statesman, Politician, Spiritual leader, Judge, General – how can all these attributes rest in one person? If we knew any such man today wouldn't you agree that he would be an extraordinary person? To add to the fact that The Quran was revealed over a period of almost 23 Years – yet it is entirely consistent? Over 600 pages – you'd expect the lies and delusions to catch up with him after 23 years - yet not a single contradiction.

3. **Truthful** - This leaves us with the only option – **He was a man of Truth**

Obedience To The Prophet (Salallahu'Alayhi Wa Sallam)

Let's look at what The Quran says regarding him and why so much stress is placed upon the obedience of the Prophet (Salallahu'Alayhi Wa Sallam). It is because the obedience of Allah (God) cannot be carried out except through the obedience of the Prophet Muhammad (Salallahu 'Alayhi

Wa Sallam). God does not address each and every individual to tell him what He requires from him, as the Quran puts it:

“And it is not possible for a human being that Allah should speak to him, except by revelation, or from behind a curtain or that He should send a messenger and reveal by His leave what He wills” [Noble Quran 42:51]

So, whenever only the obedience of the Prophet (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) has been mentioned in the Quran, it includes without saying, Obedience of Allah (God), because the Prophet (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) does not say anything in the capacity of a Messenger unless he is guided by a revelation from Allah (God). **“And he (the Prophet Muhammad) does not speak out of his own desire. It is not but a revelation revealed (to him).” [Quran, 53:3-4]**

Following the Prophet (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) **“Say, if you love Allah, follow me and Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. (Quran, 3:31)**

Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, whom they find written down with them in the Torah and the Injeel. [Noble Quran 7:157]

“(The believers say): Our Lord, we have come to believe in what You revealed and followed the Messenger. So write us among those who bear witness” [Noble Quran, 3:53]

By name - **“Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him”. [Noble Quran 3:144]**

It was revealed through him – **“And those who believe and do righteous deeds and believe in what has been sent down upon Muhammad - and it is the truth from their Lord - He will remove from them their misdeeds and amend their condition”. [Noble Quran 47:2]**

Confirming his position - **"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Apostle of God, and the Seal of the Prophets: and God has full knowledge of all things". [Noble Quran, 33:40]**

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; ...” [Noble Quran 48:29]

His example - **"Surely there is for you the best example in the Messenger of God, for whoever seeks the pleasure of God and the Last Day (Day of Judgment), and remembers God often." [Noble Qur'an 33:21]**

“And if you obey him (the Prophet), you shall find the right path” [Noble Quran24:54]

He has authority - **“...And whatever the Messenger has given you - take; and what he has forbidden you - refrain from...” [Noble Quran 59:7]**

“All that the believers say, when they are called to Allah and His Messenger that he may judge between them, is that they say, ‘We hear & obey’: it is these who are successful. Whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger and fears Allah and has awe of Him: it is these who are the winners”. [Noble Quran24:51-52]

His obedience is alongside Gods Obedience - Whenever the Obedience of Allah (God) is mentioned in the Quran, it is always followed by the obedience of the Prophet which has never been missed even in a single verse. There is no verse in the entire Quran where the Obedience of Allah (God) has been mentioned alone with no reference to the Obedience of the Prophet. There is however some verses where only the obedience of the Prophet has been mentioned, and there is no reference to the Obedience of Allah (God).

“And obey Allah and the Messenger that you may obtain mercy” [Noble Quran 3:132].

“...and whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger will be admitted by Him to gardens [in Paradise] under which rivers flow, abiding eternally therein; and that is the great attainment.” [Noble Quran 4:13]

“O you, who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you. And if you disagree over anything, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is the best [way] and best in result.” [Noble Quran 4:59]

“And whoever obeys Allah and the Messenger - those will be with the ones upon whom Allah has bestowed favour of the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous. And excellent are those as companions”. [Noble Quran 4:69]

“Say: Obey Allah and the Messenger, but if they turn their backs, Allah loves not the disbelievers” [Noble Quran 3:32]

“And obey Allah and obey the Messenger and beware” [Noble Quran 5:92]

“So fear Allah and set things right between you, and obey Allah and His Messenger if you are believers”. [Noble Quran 8:1]

“O those who believe, obey Allah and His Messenger and do not turn away from him, while you are listening.” [Noble Quran 8:20]

“And obey Allah and His Messenger and do not quarrel with each other, and so lose heart”. [Noble Quran 8:46]

“And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he has won a great success”. [Noble Quran 33:71]

“If you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not diminish you anything of your deeds”. [Noble Quran 49:14]

“And whoever obeys the Messenger, thereby obeys Allah.” [Noble Quran 4:80]

Mentioned alone –

“And if you obey him (the Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi Wa sallam), you shall find the right path”. [Noble Quran 24:54]

“And establish regular prayer and pay the poor-due and obey the Prophet so that you may be blessed”. [Noble Quran 24:56]

On that day, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger will wish that the earth might be levelled with them. [Noble Quran 4:42]

His Disobedience – Just as the obedience of the Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) has been stressed as akin to the obedience of Allah; in the same way, disobedience of him has been warned against and is akin to the disobedience of Allah (God).

“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger and transgresses His limits, He shall admit him to Fire where he shall remain forever.” [Noble Quran 4:14]

“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error” [Noble Quran 33:36]

“And whoever disobeys Allah and His Messenger, for him there is the fire of Jahannam. There they shall remain forever” [Noble Quran 72:23]

To conclude: therefore, the obedience of the Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) represents the obedience of Allah (God). For this reason, the Quran in some verses deemed it sufficient to refer to the obedience of the Prophet (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) only, for the practical way to obey Allah (God) is only by obeying the Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam).

The Quran however did not deem it sufficient to refer to the obedience of Allah (God) without referring to the obedience of the Prophet (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam), this is to remove the remotest excuse for ignoring obedience to the Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam), leaving no doubt whatsoever in the fact that obedience of Allah (God) is not complete unless the obedience of the Prophet Muhammad (Salallaahu ‘Alayhi Wa Sallam) is fully observed.

From Theory to Practice

Knowing about the Quran is one thing, being able to articulate this knowledge to a prospect is a whole other matter. It is for this reason, Huffaz or even people who study Fiqh and other Islamic science sometime find it difficult to express themselves before a non-Muslim audience. This is the art of Da’wah. We often say to leave what you have learnt at the door till you understand how to deliver the message...Then add your pre-existing knowledge to the skeleton of the proposed framework; resulting in a more holistic approach to delivering the message.

We must remember our objective in Da’wah and understand where we would like our discussion to lead i.e. Shahada. However we cannot simply bombard the individual with information, this is also counter-productive. The middle way is to impart the message and the reasons for it being worthy of devotion and obedience. Then allow the prospect to present their findings and reasons which may be to the contrary. In this way you allow the sound mind to establish which proofs carry more weight. In the end it should be understood that only Allah guides, your job is to convey the message and invite to Islam; Allah guides whom He wills.

What are you calling people to...Islam? Define it for the prospect – Peace, Submission, Way of Life or an Ideology? One needs to have a definition which stays loyal to the tradition yet is appreciated by the prospect. Therefore in Da’wah we need an appropriate and conclusive definition which outlines just what you are inviting them to.

Islam is a code of conduct that governs every aspect of your Life, determined by the One who created you and exemplified by the man chosen by your Creator to teach you

Let’s break this down. Firstly it overruns every aspect of our lives, there is no part of our life where we can look around and say, I’m outside the perimeter of Islam in this or that regard – you can of course act unislamically. Secondly, the code of conduct is governed by the one who created us in the first place. You can easily appreciate that your invention should behave the way you inculcate or program it to work. You are also fully conversant with its purpose and what benefits or harms that invention better than the invention itself. Finally, it was exemplified, instructed, taught and lived through a man – who was the embodiment of this code of conduct to the fullest extent possible. In this case the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Now when you ask them to testify and bear witness that: There is nothing worthy of Worship except Allah and that Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) is His slave and Messenger – they appreciate that this is Islam and they have just undertaken a contract to adhere to it to the best of their ability.

Let’s now look at how we would use the aforementioned information in preceding chapters to produce a coherent and conclusive narrative to invite someone to Islam.

Initiation Techniques

If you were to initiate the conversation it would likely take the following path:

Hi, there Do you believe in God? Or do you think there is a purpose to your life? Or do you believe in Miracles?

Depending on their answer you could do one of the following as a follow up:

1. Give them the Miraculous Argument

Well my friend would you agree “Miracles either exist or they do not exist, and if they do exist this would mean that God exists, as Miracles are occurrences which have no naturalistic explanation hence acts of divine intervention. The Quran is a miracle and it exists as I will attempt to show you and therefore God does exist”

2. Discuss how a world without a creator seems irrational as we don’t expect things to appear from nowhere

If we look closely and carefully we only have two real options, either the world was created by something or it was the result of something from nothing and by nothing? Which do you agree with?

3. Based on their view on life ask them where they got that from?

Do you base your view on a religious scripture or are you of any religious background?

4. Tell them how you have evidence of God's Existence, i.e. The Quran.

What if I was to tell you that the way I live my life is as per the guidance from The One who created me and everything else. I take my guidance from The Word of God contained within The Quran and I have reasons to accept this as The Word of God which if you permit I'd be happy to share.

5. Or you may opt for a combination of the above

If they were to initiate a conversation with you:

They may ask you a question regarding Islam, a ruling a prohibition, an allowance for example...You give them an appropriate answer (within your ability) or you simply resort to the core of every commandment "I do it", or "Islam teaches us to do such and such" because God commanded it.

For example you take the following path:

Prospect: *Hello there, I have always wondered why a colleague of mine happens to disappear during the lunch break and I see him crawling around doing a form of gymnastics on a woollen rug. I believe that is your prayer?*

You: *Well hello there, my name is Abdul. Can I ask your name please? Once you have their name, confirm the question. "Well John, you wish to know why we pray the way we pray" Well for one reason it is what was instructed to us by the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) and the instructions of and obedience to the Prophet is like obedience to God. Hence we do it because God commanded it.*

Moving to the Crux

Now, depending on the answers given or the way the conversation was initiated it is important to take them to understanding how a revelation from God or attributed to Him, must fulfil certain criteria and also therefore be such that none could possibly have authored it except He.

Now John, we believe the Quran to be the word of God. However it isn't a case of blind faith it is based on rational criteria that we'd expect the Revelation to fulfil – So any book on Earth should fulfil these criteria for it to attributable to God.

You would then give them the six criteria as in an earlier chapter.

They may ask you to explain the criteria which you should easily be able to do – for example as per preservation, "well John, we'd expect that the revelation be in the language God intended as we don't want anything to be missing or misinterpreted by later generations or lost in translation."

They may also say something like – *“it should also tell us about complex mathematical theories or scientific formulae.”* Now although that may be something they expect from the revelation you can argue that *“we can work out a lot by our God given abilities be that in the world of mathematics or science – however the revelation should provide answers to the things we can’t come to appreciate by intellect alone i.e. things of the unseen, Life’s purpose, Death, the Afterlife and God Himself, as science & philosophy our tools of knowledge, can never answer any such metaphysical questions conclusively.”*

Having identified the criteria it is now time to move into how The Quran meets the criteria beautifully, and in doing so it isn’t a case of information overload but presenting one or two points in each section of the aforementioned criteria and allowing the person to retort and digest all the while.

Note: Before you highlight how The Quran meets the criteria you need to **define what The Quran is as per the definition given earlier**. Break it down to them so they know what you are referring to. Also as discussed earlier, you need to explain how the revelation was delivered to the people – this is very important and sets the context of your explanation. You should always highlight the fact that it was revealed as speech, with no editing process and was delivered over 1400 years ago.

Finishing Touches

Once they appreciate that The Quran is miraculous, marvellous, requires study, research and appreciate its divine origins – detail some of the things it teaches in reference to God, His commands and the obedience of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) – this will cement the need for them to obey and accept the messengership of the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Once you have done that and they have clearly appreciated what you have to say; invite them to Islam. Inform them that a Muslim is one who intends to live a life in accordance with the code of conduct defined by the Creator, in as much as possible. Tell them what is required to be a Muslim i.e. the Shahada and walk them through it in English and in Arabic.

Always take the prospects details unless they refuse and explain why you wish to keep in touch or continue the conversation. Give them material appropriate to their needs and leave in a cordial and amicable way – **even if you disagree on every point!**

***Remember all the while to entertain their doubts and thoughts throughout the conversation – it is a conversation and conversations are a two way affair not a one way road where you metaphorically batter them into verbal submission.**

An Example in Minutes

The following is an example of how you would undertake the Da'wah conversation from beginning to end.

Muslim: Hello there Sir, What do you feel is the purpose of your life?

Prospect: I think if I live a good life, help others and give some charity then I have pretty much fulfilled my purpose.

Muslim: That's actually a very noble outlook on life, by the way my name is Abdul can I ask your name please?

Prospect: Hi, I'm Jackson.

Muslim: Hi Jackson, now I'm just wondering based on what you said – how would you determine what is good and bad?

Jackson: Well Good things are good and bad things are bad, I guess. I just do the things as I see it, or as all of us in this society see as appropriate.

Muslim: You see the reason I asked, Jackson, is because good and bad become incredibly subjective. Something could be good for me but bad for another person. As an example if good is what makes us happy then making money makes some people happy, but that could be at the expense of someone else who is left unhappy. Or as per your examples helping others could be helping them steal or cheat. Even giving charity to one group of individuals as opposed to another – what determines if I should give charity to a dog's home over war-torn refugees.

Jackson: I guess you have a point, but then it's up to the individual.

Muslim: Exactly. However, what if we had a criterion that was totally objective, that came from the One who created us. Detailing good and bad and what we should and shouldn't do? Because it came from the one who created us, it would be better than us just making up our own minds. As you'd agree, the one who invents something knows best what it is to be used for.

Jackson: You're telling me there is a God right – I've heard it all before.

Muslim: if you'll allow me to explain I'll give you reasons why we believe there is a Creator and I'll give you reasons as to why we believe we have Revelation from Him.

Jackson: OK I guess there's no harm in reasoning with each other as we all want to get to the truth.

Muslim: Excellent. Therefore let me tell you – Miracles either exist, or they do not exist. If they do exist that means God exists – as miracles are unexplainable phenomena that have no naturalistic cause or explanation; thereby making them divine acts. The Quran exists, therefore God exists.

Jackson: So The Quran is a miracle?

Muslim: Yes, and I will detail just how that is shortly. It's like having a voice recording of Jackson and then for someone to say Jackson does not even exist. You see what I mean – it's as clear as that.

The Quran is the speech of God, revealed in Arabic, existing between the two covers of the book form in which it resides, was revealed to Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) the messenger of God. It is intact in wording and meaning and has been reported so numerous that to suggest it was fabricated would be tantamount to saying that China does not exist. It is also a challenge to all of creation to produce something like it. Being The Word of God this would be impossible as you will come to realise.

Jackson: you seem to be so sure. I'd love to hear what reasons you have as I've heard plenty from my days in Sunday school in reference to the Bible.

Muslim: OK Jackson, let's take a look at the criteria we expect any revelation from God to fulfil. It should be:

1. **Preserved in Wording & Meaning** – as we don't want peoples interpretations or ambiguous authenticity.
2. **Logical View of God** – as we can't accept God being a product of the universe if He indeed created it.
3. **Internally Consistent and Profound** – it can't have mistakes or contradictions
4. **Externally Consistent and Profound** – It can't claim things about the world that are untrue such as man being immortal
5. **Miraculous Nature** – it should be such that it cannot be imitated by creation.
6. **Applicable Guidance and Purpose** – It should provide instruction on how we are to live and define our purpose within Creation

Jackson: OK that makes sense

Muslim: Just before I detail how The Quran meets the objectives I'd like to clarify how this was revealed to mankind. It was revealed by the tongue of Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) to the people who excelled in oration and were linguists par excellence. The Quran didn't undergo a drafting process nor was it revealed in one go but piece meal over a period of almost 23 years. As an example Jackson, if I was to ask you to recall the details of your 11th birthday party or even this conversation in 5 years time – would you be able to reproduce it word for word?

Jackson: I don't think I would be able to do that.

Muslim: so you already see great difficulty of preserving any oral tradition in that it meets the criteria outlined.

Jackson: It will certainly be interesting to see how it's possible. I'm certainly intrigued.

Muslim: Let us begin with how the revelation has been preserved. It was memorised by thousands at the time of revelation and recorded upon parchments too – by two scribes at a time during the period of revelation. Thereafter undergoing an official authenticity review and accreditation for drafting into bound book form not only once but twice; once during the caliphate of the First and again during the caliphate of the third caliph – by which time the text was so comprehensively

widespread that its origins could not be doubted. We trace all versions of The Quran back to the approved versions of the Third caliph; which itself is traced back along an authentic chain of narration to that of the final reading of the Prophet Muhammad (sallahu alayhi wa sallam) during the final year of his life; where it was reviewed twice by him personally.

Even today you have children as young as 5 who have memorised The Quran by heart word for word. Indeed God states in The Quran four times in the Chapter called Al Qamar (the Moon) **“And We have certainly made The Qur'an easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember?”** This holds so true that you could throw every single bound version into the sea, get people from different countries together who had memorised the Quran and recreate it in a matter of days. There are also 4 ancient manuscripts in existence today – Turkey, Uzbekistan, Yemen and England.

What do you think about that?

Jackson: That’s certainly food for thought. So it’s something passed on orally – like a glorified Chinese whisper. I’ll be surprised if there aren’t issues.

Muslim: If you disagree with anything just point it out, and I’ll try my best to explain. Moving on though it discusses in chapter 112 how God has no beginning or end that he is One and Unique and that there are to Him no equivalents. This is acceptable to us as we cannot accept a Creator who was created as that would mean that He was not God but a creation of God and such an endless chain of creation would defy our own existence by a process of infinite regression. The chapter also highlights how His unique and ultimate dominion over all creation is highlighted through by Him being One, Unique and Eternal. Wouldn’t many Gods each compete to enforce their rule? This point is highlighted in The Quran where God says:

Say, [O Muhammad], "If there had been with Him [other] gods, as they say, then they [each] would have sought to the Owner of the Throne a way." [Noble Quran 17:42]

Jackson: that makes sense – I can’t see there being many competing Gods as Greek mythology suggests.

Muslim: For those big on science, the remarkable thing is that we have a falsification test provided by God himself in The Quran in order to scientifically analyse its origin. As detailed like this:

“Then do they not reflect upon The Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction.” (Noble Quran 4:82)

For over 1400 years no contradiction has ever been found. Would you agree that’s remarkable?

Jackson: I have to admit it is surprising

Muslim: The Quran goes on to discuss the creation of the Heavens and the Earth and how every living thing is created from Water, it makes a whole host of statements that make one ponder and reflect over the uniquely awesome creative power of God – who did not create the Universe aimlessly.

Now the Best bit...Its miraculous quality. The Quran is revealed in Arabic. It is not poetry as it doesn't conform to the 16 classifications of poetry. However it is neither prose as it has rhythmical rhyming verses in places. On a surah by surah basis it neither falls in to the subset of rhymed prose because it has clear differences in terms of the way it mingles metrical and non metrical speech. It is driven towards meaning and follows the rules of classical grammar all the while being extremely eloquent and full of rhetorical devices the likes of which have not been seen in any text past or present. It is neither a combination of poetry and prose like Maqaamah a 10th Century manifestation of the classical Arabic style (by Hamadhani), as the Quranic literary style flows seamlessly such that its rhythmic and non rhythmic verses go unnoticed and instead compel the reader/ listener to be filled with reflection and awe with the most appropriate word being used in each occurrence driven extensively towards meaning layered with meaning.

So The Quran is a unique style of Arabic – all by itself. The challenge to address the themes addressed by The Quran in a more unique or eloquent way have still so far been unsuccessful – even though many have indeed tried.

Finally, The Quran contains many Islamic injunctions, to inform the reader how they should behave in this or that regard, how they should treat parents and the poor and needy, how they should deal financially and judicially. Above all The Quran makes it a point to combine obedience of Allah with obedience of the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) such that wherever the obedience of Allah is mentioned the obedience of the Prophet is mentioned alongside it. There is even a verse where the obedience of the Prophet is mentioned and no reference to obedience of Allah – highlighting without any shadow of a doubt that obedience to Allah can only ever be achieved by living, emulating and following the guidance of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

“There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.” (Noble Quran 33:21)

“Say, [O Muhammad], "If you should love Allah, then follow me, [so] Allah will love you and forgive you your sins. And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (noble Quran 3:31)

Therefore Jackson, do you accept that the Quran could not have come from anyone other than God?

Jackson: I do accept that.

Muslim: Let me explain why we use Allah as opposed to God:

God is a word that has many meanings or can be used to denote gender or be plural i.e. God, Goddess, Godfather, Godson, Godmother, Gods. However the word Allah cannot be perverted for use in any such instance. Also The Quran that we agreed was a miracle and from God confirms that His name is Allah. Surah Al-Ikhlās: Chapter 112

Jackson: So that's why you use the word Allah

Muslim: Whatever comes from the truth is truth and therefore by accepting The Quran as being from Allah means you accept every verse, every injunction and every statement as being the truth and the way one should live if they wish to be in obedience to their Creator.

Jackson: Yes that makes sense and is what I also agree with.

Muslim: Therefore Jackson, now knowing what you know and appreciating the marvellous and miraculous nature of this Quran – I would like to invite you to accept its origin, its guidance and its teaching by willingly becoming a Muslim. Also Jackson when somebody becomes a muslim all his past sins are washed away and all his good deeds are carried forward with him and it is as if he is a newborn pure & free of sin.

Jackson: How do I do that; can I even do that?

Muslim: Yes, without a doubt. To become a Muslim you need only testify that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah alone, and that Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) is His slave and messenger. In so doing you willingly accept to try and live a life in accordance with the teachings outlined by God and exemplified by the life of His Prophet Muhammad. (Salallahu alayhi wa sallam)

Jackson: I willingly accept

Muslim: That is wonderful, let me quickly tell you about the 5 pillars of Islam: they are: 1.Shahada (Declaration of faith) 2.Salah(prayer) 3.Zakat(almsgiving) 4.Fasting 5.Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) and the 6 articles of faith which are: 1.Belief in One God 2.Belief in His Angels 3.Belief in His Books 4.Belief in His Prophets and Messengers 5.Belief in the Day of Judgment 6.Belief in God's Divine Decree.

Now then repeat after me first in English and then in Arabic.

“I bear witness that there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.”

Now in Arabic: “Ashadu an la ilaha illa Allah wa ashadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu”

Shahada & Retention

The Da'ee must understand what they are asking the prospect to do and the prospect must understand what is being asked of them i.e. what they are being invited to. It isn't simply a matter of believing in Allah and that the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) is His messenger. Why? simply because shaitaan also believes this but he is not a Muslim. Islam is professing on the tongue, believing in the heart and action through the limbs. Therefore the prospect should know and intend to live a life in submission to God when they take the testimony of faith, to the best of their capability.

One of the biggest problems for any organised Da'wah effort across the UK is the retention rate. It has become very difficult for teams to keep in touch with the people who have taken Shahada and it is unfortunate that in many cases people relapse back into Kufr. This can be due to a number of reasons but primarily it is due to a lack of Islamic social interaction, the new Muslim is overwhelmed by his non-Muslim company such that he returns to their ways. The other reason being that the Du'aat have rushed the individual into accepting the message, superficially without emphasising what it means to become a Muslim and why it makes absolute sense to do that. Beyond what research suggests is a matter of interpretation and opinions but indeed Allah knows best.

Primary importance (in the first few weeks after Shahada):

Teach them how to do wudu and how to pray, don't jump to banning all the vices they may currently be partaking in. Get them in touch with their local mosque and new-muslim study circle. Salaah in congregation is where they will feel the unity of the community to which they now belong. Proceed patiently they may have family problems/social stigmas. Don't push but accommodate. Give them a real taste of brotherhood/sisterhood in Islam & always keep them in your Dua's.

Common Questions

Today we live in the age of science and people actually believe science to be absolute fact. There are certain questions that will crop up often by truth seeking members of the public. Therefore this section will list some of the common questions with their appropriate answer, however you are encouraged to conduct further research to better equip yourself. One brilliant resource website is www.hamzatzortzis.com by brother Hamza Tzortzis.

Question. What about evolution?

Answer. Evolutionists must be forced back to the very first cell (which is as complex as a super-city), and explain how that came into existence? It could not function without all of its various components, so to suggest a series of accumulation is unfounded. However they will almost always retort with that being a different science altogether – as they deal with life changing over time not how life began. For the origins we need to study abiogenesis – which in simple terms “is life originating from inorganic matter” over time....**Yes that's right! Maybe if you wait long enough your table may turn into a dog.**

No one has yet synthesized a "cell" using basic components which would have the necessary properties of life. Instead they have tried the top down approach by stripping back genes of existing cells to try and ascertain the most minimal requirements for life. The alternative and more reasonable view must be biogenesis: that every living thing in creation came from a pre-existing living thing (which began with Allah initiating life). Therefore the best approach is to take it all back to the beginning as opposed to starting mid-way on a base of assumptions.

Evolutionists have a chequered past. Initially using and promoting the arguments of evolution to try and prove the white race as being evolved far greater than the black race – clearly a detestable concept to say the least. Even going as far as fabricating evidence in support of their theories; Archaeoraptor, Piltdown man, Nebraska man and other examples of fraud include the

drawings of embryos of Ernst Haeckel and pictures of the peppered moths, which are still in some modern biology textbooks taught as fact.

The Tiktaalik fish was proposed as the missing link between fish and amphibians in the process of evolution towards man: Richard Dawkins, in his book *The Greatest Show on Earth*, claims “Tiktaalik is the perfect missing link- because it almost exactly splits the difference between fish and amphibian, and perfect because it is missing no longer.” However footprints found in Poland delivered an almost fatal blow to the theory since the footprints show that there were animals walking upright even before the proposed Tiktaalik fish was making its way onto land. Tetrapod (upright walking animal) footprints found in Poland were “securely dated” at 18 million years older than Tiktaalik, which means that Tiktaalik cannot be part of the fish to legged animal transition.

Another example of the errors of evolution is the belief that birds descended from dinosaurs. This is because recent investigations into Ostrich embryos in various stages of development discovered that while it is known that dinosaurs have digits one, two, three (thumb, index finger, middle finger); birds have digits 2, 3 & 4 (index, middle and ring finger) and that for birds to have come from dinosaurs would therefore be impossible. Couple this with the fact that superficially bird-like dinosaurs appeared some 25 million to 80 million years after the earliest known bird, which is 150 million years old.

Other fossils like that of Sharks (400 million years old), Dragonfly (135 million years old) and starfish (100-150 million years old) show no evolution between the fossil found and the current species.

There are only two theories which compete against Creationism. They are Evolution and Extra-terrestrial life forms.

The first is evolution of species – in this context that we as humans share a common ancestor with chimpanzees. Evolution requires intermediate forms between species and palaeontology (pre-historic life/fossil study) does not provide them. Therefore this seems to be a classical case of pure dogma for which the world of palaeontology has found no transitioning evidence yet in the absence of accepting a Creator they must hold on to this stubbornly. Evolution must be redefined if it is to gain any acceptance in the Islamic ethos since Allah created Adam and hence he has no ancestor and that time does not create or develop creation; Allah does.

The second; that extraterrestrial life forms (Aliens) having created life, stems resolutely from the fact that we cannot accept that ‘over time inanimate things became animate’ by themselves, which is what underpins Evolution. Therefore we now have a huge amount of scientific interest towards outer space in order to establish our beginnings. Now there has never been any conclusive evidence of any living life forms present on any of the meteors that have hit Earth – simply put there is absolutely no living evidence of life forms in outer space. However even if there was, we still go back to the issue of ‘well who created them’, and so on – ultimately we go back to creationism.

Question. What about The Higgs Boson (so called God Particle)?

Answer. The Higgs Boson particle is the particle that other 'no mass' particles collide with to gain mass...the more they collide the heavier they get. Science related to this suggests that as the Universe cooled and as the temperature fell below a critical value, an invisible force field called the 'Higgs field' was formed, made up of 'Higgs Bosons.' The field prevails throughout the cosmos: any particles that interact with it are given a mass via the Higgs Boson. The more they interact, the heavier they become, whereas particles that never interact are left with no mass at all. Note although scientists seem to have measured something equivalent to this boson in tests – it has yet to be seen. Bare in mind photons are light particles that also have no mass. So what does this prove? Not much in the God debate – in reality they don't create out of nothing they simply add mass to existing particles as the theory suggests.

Question. I heard the universe came about by chance?

Answer. Let's look at the Mathematical probabilities of the Universe having come about by chance based on the various factors that influenced its creation to the way we see it today:

Stephen Hawking: If the rate of the universe's expansion one second after the Big Bang had been smaller by even one part in 10^{15} the universe would have re-collapsed.

P.C.W. Davies: The odds against the initial conditions being suitable for star formation is 10^{1021} . If they were any higher than what they were the universe expands too fast so no stars or planets are formed and if they are any less then the universe collapses in on itself.

P.C.W. Davies: A change in the strength of gravity or the weak force by one part in 10^{100} would have prevented a life-permitting universe.

Roger Penrose: Odds of the Big Bang's low entropy condition existing by chance are on the order of one out of 10^{1230}

There are around 50 such quantities and constants present in the Big Bang that must be fine-tuned in this way if the universe is to permit life.

Not only must each quantity be fine-tuned, their ratios must also be fine-tuned.

Now for life to exist – the range of values permitting this to happen are even smaller almost inconceivably so than the big bang itself – so the Universe has far greater chance of existing without life than it does with life. In fact it's a reverse argument – It would actually be more likely for the universe to not exist and for there to be no life. Therefore the Universe does not have to be the way it is and so did not come about by chance.

The odds against assembling the human genome spontaneously are incalculable. The probability of assembling the genome is between 4^{180} to $4^{110,000}$ and 4^{360} to $4^{110,000}$.

According to John D. Barrow and Frank J. Tipler, the odds of assembling a single gene are between and 4^{180} to 4^{360} . Therefore we simply have not had enough time on earth to give any credibility to chance based evolution.

Genes – The average gene has 500 bits of function information with the simplest life forms having at least 150 genes. That would be (500*150) 75000 bits of functional information – the probability for this to come about by chance would be $1^{1023000}$

To highlight, the chances of the “Big Bang” to occur and for “genetic life” to exist are so improbable that the probability is negligible.

The existence of the Universe, in the way that it does - is due to chance, natural law or design! However when we deconstruct each option (based on the aforementioned) we realise that:

Natural law doesn't necessitate the big bang or life (the way things have happened is not natural as it is more likely that the world should not be the way it is nor that life should exist)

Chance can never produce such a degree of complexity and consistency constants, mathematical laws, extremely complex structures even at cellular level show planning from the outset)

We therefore realistically, only have the option of purposeful design by a Creator.

Question. Is not religion is the greatest cause of war?

Answer. This is actually an incorrect statement and often used by many people with an aversion to religion. On closer inspection of the truth we find that causes such as Nationalism and Ideologies (communism/capitalism/socialism) have caused more wars/deaths.

Use the following as examples:

- Many millions in World Wars 1 & 2
- 70,000,000 under Chairman Mao
- 20,000,000 under Stalin
- 2,000,000 because of Pol Pot
- 950,000 innocent Iraqi's in the search for weapons of mass destruction
- 550,000 Iraqi children in the 10 year sanctions

Question. I heard we came about from nothing i.e by Quantum fluctuations?

Answer. To suggest that we can observe particles coming into existence from nothing in the form of a quantum vacuum, and then relate that as evidence to suggest the universe came from nothing, is incorrect. Firstly because the Quantum Vacuum is not 'nothingness' it is actually a field of energy; so we are not seeing something come from nothing. The theories which support this are based on the assumption that we consider this to be as close to nothing (therefore nothing). To add to that, experiments which seek to assess the behaviour of such quantum particles contain an inherent flaw as proposed by Heisenberg's Uncertainty principle – Which in

simple terms posits that you cannot observe the behaviour of something without having an impact on it. At quantum levels the minutest interference can give anomalous results.

Question. I can't see God?

Answer. You don't necessarily need physical evidence to prove something, for example proving you had a great, great, great grandfather. You use reason and logic to deduce you had one. Simply not seeing something does not qualify that it does not exist.

In the case of "we only believe it when we see it"; if God were visible to all, this would go against the fundamental principle of free-will. God's actual presence before humanity would ultimately violate free-will since if He was visible we would all believe in Him and would have no choice not to.

Question. Should not society decide how we live our lives?

Answer. Without God the concept of good & evil in actions or consequences all become subjective and agreeable by society. However we all judge by the straight line – Absolute Moral Law. There is no question that societies have different interpretations of morality but if you examine the following sentence you will see the illogic of thinking that societies determine morality. "The vast majority of the people in our country participated in that evil deed." If morality was up to society, that sentence would never make sense, but we know that morality is beyond societies and such a proposition is possible.

For example child abuse, rape or genocide – would never be acceptable to anyone on the planet if perpetrated against them or someone they love! Even if a whole society agreed on an immoral or evil thing – They could never justify it as right or good but as collateral or a necessary evil under the circumstances.

If there was no such thing as absolute morality then there would be no 'right' or 'wrong,' just things that you or your society happen not to like. Murder and Rape would not be wrong; they would just become manmade objections. The question then becomes: 'If man is the measure of all things which man? -Which society? If someone with enough power happened to like rape and murder, what right would we have to impose our morality on him? What would be wrong with the person or society, with the power, imposing their morality on you?

If objective moral values cannot exist without God, and objective moral values do exist, then it follows logically that God exists. Moral objectivity doesn't exist outside of humans – it is inherent and therefore programmed within us (biologists call innate). Where there is programming there is a programmer. This innate ability is of an advanced consciousness and has a purpose.

Question. Why doesn't God give me a sign?

Answer. The Quran itself is a book of signs. God describes Himself in His book as Al-Lateef meaning 'The Subtle' so what type of a sign are you looking for? Flashing lights- thunder parting

clouds? The very fact that we stopped and spoke among all the thousands of people or possibilities that could have happened since this morning – wouldn't you consider that a sign?

Also consider:

“We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?” (Noble Quran 41:53).

Question. Why don't Muslims behave the way you show Islam?

Answer. Ultimately any religion or organisation can be highjacked for personal reasons – someone could come along tomorrow and perform a heinous crime yet claim to be Catholic. However we know that Catholicism doesn't promote or ascribe to anything of what the person has done. Therefore it isn't fair to blame the religion for the mistakes of the people who follow that religion – especially if what they are doing has no basis in that religion. You could give the example of dictators belonging to a specific religion. Or use the following analogy to remain non-political: A Rolls Royce is an incredible car, a superb machine and of exquisite calibre and prestige among automotives. However give that car to a drunken man and if he drives it into a wall – do we say that the car is bad or do we blame the driver?

Question. Wait a minute...Isn't the universe eternal?

Answer. Actually based on observation we now know that it isn't. (This has in itself opened up a can of worms for the atheists as they can no longer hide behind this viewpoint).

The universe is expanding was discovered by Edwin Hubble in 1929

In the 1920s the American astronomer Edwin Hubble was the first to prove that there are galaxies outside the Milky Way.

When Edwin Hubble was hired to work at Mount Wilson Observatory in 1919 (part of the Observatories of the Carnegie Institution of Washington) as a junior astronomer, the most pressing question of the day concerned the nature of the cloudy patches called nebulae. Most of Hubble's colleagues at Mount Wilson thought they were all in the Milky Way, but he was not so sure. He succeeded in answering this question by taking the best possible photos of these objects, providing convincing evidence that at least some of them were well beyond the Milky Way. By discovering other galaxies Hubble expanded the known universe 100-fold. But he didn't stop there. By measuring the distances and motions of the galaxies he surprised everyone, including Einstein, by discovering that the universe is expanding

By using Cepheid variable stars to calculate the distance of the Andromeda Nebula (as it was then known) from the Earth, Hubble showed that it was a separate galaxy and not a gas cloud in the Milky Way. Later, by comparing the relative velocities of galaxies (measured as red shifts) with his measurements of their distances from the Earth, Hubble showed that the further away

a galaxy is from any point in space, the faster it appears to move because of the expansion of the Universe – Hubble's Law.

An example of why the Universe cannot be eternal in simple terms:

How can you add to infinity? What is 5 plus Infinity? You see my point? You can't expand on something which is infinite. Besides whatever grows has a beginning, so if we were to travel back and rewind this growth then, at some point however far off we would reach the beginning of the Universe and whatever begins to exist has a cause.

The Sun is a mass of thermo energy – i.e. gives off heat. We also know today that this energy is finite i.e. one day the Sun will stop giving out heat and 'burn out' much like a lamp powered by oil. Therefore if the universe had an infinite history the Sun would have reached a state of heat death (burned out a long time ago) and become the same temperature as its surroundings (outer space). Much like the way a water bottle continually loses heat till it reaches room temperature.

Missionary Tactics

A Brief Word on Missionaries:

We encourage all Du'aat not to actively involve themselves with missionaries this is because the environment is not conducive to serious discussion on the truth. They are there to spread their message and you are there to spread the truth. Therefore even when they are shown the error of their ways they do not use reason – instead they go around in circles continuing the debate – a method known as Gish Galloping. They have given up all hope of defeating Islam therefore by occupying you they prevent you from giving Da'wah to someone else. Therefore a most befitting reply and closure to any episode of dialogue between them would be as below while maintaining composure in all regards:

“And [the believers among] those to whom We have given the [previous] Scripture rejoice at what has been revealed to you, [O Muhammad], but among the [opposing] factions are those who deny part of it. Say, "I have only been commanded to worship Allah and not associate [anything] with Him. To Him I invite, and to Him is my return." (Noble Quran 13:36)

And remember:

“You will surely be tested in your possessions and in yourselves. And you will surely hear from those who were given the Scripture before you and from those who associate others with Allah much abuse. But if you are patient and fear Allah -indeed, that is of the matters [worthy] of determination.” (Noble Quran 3:186)

However a special note for anyone who seeks to be extremely polite in the face of abuse against Islam or tries to please those factions who attempt to ridicule the Muslims or their message, so that they may warm to them and accept them:

“And never will the Jews or the Christians approve of you until you follow their religion. Say, “Indeed, the guidance of Allah is the [only] guidance.” If you were to follow their desires after what has come to you of knowledge, you would have against Allah no protector or helper.” (Noble Quran 2:120)

How should we behave towards the older scriptures in their current form?

This issue is often one of confusion and debate amongst well to do Muslims. How do we tackle the scriptures and what they say? Well, the position we strive to take is one that inclines towards The Quran and Sunnah – simply put: we accept that there were previous revelations NOT because they have followers in their millions today but because The Quran confirms that the previous messengers received revelation. Therefore we believe in the original revelations of the scrolls of Abraham, Torah of Moses, Zabur of David and Injeel of Jesus; peace be upon them all. However due to various verses in The Quran we see that the people of these Scriptures had either forgot parts or changed the verses (intentionally & unintentionally) and therefore their books we have before us today are NOT the pure word of God.

So woe to those who write the "scripture" with their own hands, then say, "This is from Allah," in order to exchange it for a small price. Woe to them for what their hands have written and woe to them for what they earn. (Noble Quran 2:79)

And indeed, there is among them a party who alter the Scripture with their tongues so you may think it is from the Scripture, but it is not from the Scripture. And they say, "This is from Allah", but it is not from Allah. And they speak untruth about Allah while they know. (Noble Quran 3:78)

And [mention, O Muhammad], when Allah took a covenant from those who were given the Scripture, [saying], "You must make it clear to the people and not conceal it." But they threw it away behind their backs and exchanged it for a small price. And wretched is that which they purchased. (Noble Quran 3:187)

So for their breaking of the covenant We cursed them and made their hearts hard. They distort words from their [proper] usages and have forgotten a portion of that of which they were reminded. And you will still observe deceit among them, except a few of them. But pardon them and overlook [their misdeeds]. Indeed, Allah loves the doers of good. And from those who say, "We are Christians" We took their covenant; but they forgot a portion of that of which they were reminded. So We caused among them animosity and hatred until the Day of Resurrection. And Allah is going to inform them about what they used to do. (Noble Quran 5:13-14)

Therefore we prefer not to cherry-pick verse against verse from their scriptures but instead opt to highlight the unreliability of their scriptures (in their current form). There are obviously occasions depending on context and audience where the use of their scripture to highlight the error of their ways is used but this should not be an option from the outset. We argue that to try and ascertain the teachings of God from sources that are unreliable by their own scholarly admission (and also by The Qur'an) is a futile and obviously unfaithful objective.

The best position we take with regards to the teachings found in the Books of the People of Scriptures is as below:

Narrated Abu Huraira (RA): *The people of the Scripture (Jews) used to recite the Torah in Hebrew and they used to explain it in Arabic to the Muslims. On that Allah's Apostle (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said, "Do not believe the people of the Scripture or disbelieve them, but say: --"We believe in Allah and what is revealed to us."* (Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Number 12)

Thereby in following the instruction of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) we use The Qur'an as the measure or criterion to determine the right and wrong from what they present by way of discourse.

On a final note regarding missionaries, be advised that they will deliberately misquote texts from The Qur'an to highlight their beliefs as correct, so double check what they quote.

Credibility of any Scripture

Whilst giving da'wah to Christians you may come across those that have been brought up to blindly believe that the bible is the absolute word of God, therefore you should try and explain to them that any scripture that claims to be from God should be free from any errors and inconsistency.

Let us look at the internal consistency and the preservation and protection of scripture (peripheral conditions). Since anything which has doubtful, contradictory or has crooked statements cannot be attributed to God almighty, as He is perfect and free of any error whatsoever.

You will also note that we have stressed our examples against the Old/New testaments (Judaism/Christianity) in particular. This is because these are the two other religions which are traditionally monotheistic and have a concept of God, life's purpose, death and afterlife. Other religions are found lacking in at least one of these categories or they have a concept of Avatar. Hence because of these points they can easily be broken down due to their incompleteness without even entertaining their scriptures. Avatarism – Although many may have heard this term from a movie perspective it actually stems from a Sanskrit word which means "A manifestation of a deity in bodily form on earth. This is a concept heavily found in ancient Egypt, Hinduism and even in Christianity. This is an extremely illogical view of God. Therefore when any religion has such a concept we simply go back to the understanding of God and argue that becoming human essentially requires the removal of Godly attributes and hence the Avatar is no longer God.

Contradictions – The Qur'an is free from any contradiction or fallacy, yet other religious books contain many contradictions (of which many by their own account have been removed – consider Mill's Apparatus, for further details).

Old Testament:

- 2 Samuel 24 contradicts 1 Chronicles 21

- 2 Samuel 24:9 contradicts 1 Chronicles 21:5
- 2 Chronicles 36:9 contradicts 2 Kings 24:8
- 2 Samuel 10:18 contradicts 1 Chronicles 19:18

New Testament:

- Synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke) don't confer with gospel of John on style, content and discourse. E.g. Water to wine only in John.
- Luke 23:26 contradicts John 19:17
- Mark 16:1-2, John 20:1 and Matthew 28:1-2 contradict each other
- Matthew 27:3-6 contradicts Acts 1:18

It's strange that Mark's gospel was produced first then Matthew and Luke copy Mark almost word for word; however John's style is in complete contrast hence at one point considered heretic. Bibles must be read horizontally not vertically to see how each account varies. Now Mark describes Jesus' anger at many points yet Luke and Matthew never do, replacing or even omitting the word altogether, hence showing only compassion. Luke also removes all notions of grief and troubles from Mark's account. Also, in Mark's account, the disciples never seem to understand Jesus yet in Matthew's account they always do.

Crooked statements – The Qur'an contains no obscene or crooked statements but on closer inspection of others, we see the following:

- Hosea 13:16, 1 Samuel 15:3, 1 Samuel 15:35, psalms 137:8-9, 2 Kings 18:27
- Mark 16:8 – if they didn't tell anyone how does the narrator know?
- John 20 – this seems like the end?

Versions – There is only one version of the Qur'an, the same that was revealed to Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). The other books have many versions (revisions) with differing meanings in many places.

- Simply comparing the King James Version, New International, New American Standard, New World Translation
- The Roman Catholic (73) version has 7 more books than protestant (66) version.

Additions /omissions – The Qur'an is complete as it was revealed and in the language of revelation in entirety. Other religious books have had many revisions, alterations and even go as far as not possessing any record of origin or a copy in existence that is closely in line with its period of revelation.

- 1 John 5:7 – known as the Johannine comma “There are three that bear witness...” and the story of the female adulteress (John 1:8-11) and the ending of Mark (16:9-20) are not found in any Greek Manuscript pre 14th Century.

- John 3:16 – “begotten” removed as fabrication
- Deuteronomy 34:5-8 – talk of Moses in past tense, so how could that have been revealed to Moses?
- Mark 16:9-20, Luke 22:43-44 – have no evidence from the earliest manuscripts
- The most ancient authorities don’t have John 7.53–8.11
- In 1707 John Mill published the results of 30 years of exhausting study and research. During which was discovered 30,000 variations among the 100 Manuscripts that he scrutinised. Today we have around 5700 Manuscripts on record and number of variation is estimated figuratively between 200,000 and 400,000.
- "Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34) Turns out these comments cannot be found in the earliest Greek witness (a papyrus called P 75, which dates to about 200 C.E.) it is only found in Codex Sinaiticus of the Middle Ages.
- Others modern mistranslations are found in Mark 1:41 and Hebrews. 2:9
- Tampering based on different opinions as seen in Matt. 24:36 – (they tried to remove "not the son"), Matt. 17:12-13 – ‘then his disciples...’ (Was added to remove misunderstanding), Luke 5:38-39 (tampered with verse to prevent any likeness to Torah/Gospel).

Although you would think this enough to dispel any notion of authenticity, there were two very clever spins placed on the discoveries. The Catholic Church (Frenchman Richard Simon for one) used this to signify the importance of Churches and hence the need for Saints to clarify the right from wrong. The Clergy who followed the Protestant Reformation doctrine of sola scriptura, like Richard Bentley, an oxford professor, argued that these errors were present before but it didn’t impact our faith and that we merely need to perform an exercise to get to the correct bibles. Even then he could only afford a version close to a 4th Century Jerome Vulgate (Latin, post Nicaea Treaty). He however was unable even to live up to his claims and died before this could be done and his nephew had to return the money taken for the project.

Errors in transfer – The Qur’an was preserved by memory and inscription hence the issues around illiteracy were completely circumvented; it was also handled with care from the outset and by people of authority. The majority of early Christian scribes were largely illiterate and literacy could be deemed appropriate based merely on being able to sign your name. It wasn’t until Constantine became Christian some 300 years after Jesus (AS) that any real effort was made to ensure proper scribes were doing the transfers. There are a number of ways scribes made mistakes:

- On page 1512, next to Hebrews 1:3, of the Codex Vaticanus, the text contains an interesting marginal note, "Fool and knave, leave the old reading and do not change it!" Highlighting a mistake of a scribe.
- Greek manuscripts were all written in ‘scriptuo continua’—with no punctuation, for the most part, or even spaces between words. This means that words that looked alike were often

mistaken for one another. For example, in 1 Cor. 5:8, The final word, evil, is spelled PONERAS in Greek, which, it turns out, looks a lot like the word for "sexual immorality," PORNEIAS.

- Abbreviations - scribes sometimes abbreviated certain words to save time or space. The Greek word for "and," for example, is KAI, which some scribes simply wrote the initial letter K, with a kind of down stroke at the end to indicate that it was an abbreviation. Other common abbreviations involved what scholars have called the 'nomina sacra' (sacred names); a group of words such as God, Christ, Lord, Jesus, and Spirit that were abbreviated either because they occurred so frequently or else to show that they were being paid special attention. But the word Lord, KURIW, was typically abbreviated in manuscripts as KW (with a line drawn over the top), which some early scribes misread as an abbreviation for KAIRW, which means "time." The word Spirit (PNEUMA) would have been abbreviated in most manuscripts as PMA, which understandably could be—and was misread by some scribes as the Greek word for "drink" (POMA);
- Periblepsis ("eyeskip") - occasioned by homoeoteleuton (the "same endings") is where a complete verse could be missed out since the scribe believed that verse had already been copied.
- Dictation - similar sounding words when copying dictation - Rev. 1:5, where the author prays to "the one who released us from our sins." The word for "released" (LUSANTI) sounds exactly like the word for "washed" (LOUSANTI).
- Misreading – In 1Tim 3:16 we find that the abbreviated nomina sacra (theta sigma) for "God" (ΘΣ) word was actually an omicron and a sigma (OΣ), a different word altogether, which simply means "who." So it was not God made manifest in the flesh, but Christ "who" was. This misreading, found by Johann J. Wettstein in the ancient Codex Alexandrinus, and was due to a leakage of ink from the other side of the page.
- Incorrect understanding – In Miniscule Codex 109 produced in the fourteenth century the scribe was copying the genealogy in Luke chapter 3 from verse 23, and instead of copying the columns of names from top to bottom, he copied them across. Thus, in his copy of the Bible, almost everyone has the wrong father. Even writing God as having genealogy – couldn't the scribes read?

Preservation – Peripheral environment

- Its Language – Arabic is very much a living language and the Qur'an is only the Arabic version...Where other translations are called translations of the meaning. The four Gospels were written in Greek as opposed to the language of Jesus (PBUH) – Aramaic. The language of the Torah has been dated to be a mixture of 9th, 8th, 7th and 6th century BC even though Moses lived in the 13th Century BC. Making Moses by some accounts further from the Hebrew of the Torah than Shakespeare to modern English. Aramaic, Assyrian languages are now considered mostly dead except possibly from an academic perspective and even Hebrew or Sanskrit are languages only found in certain parts of the world.

- Accessibility – Qur’an has always been accessible to the rich /poor, King, pauper – there have not been any restrictions imposed on it. The Holy books of Hindus were for the ‘Brahmans’ not permitted to lower classes like ‘Untouchables’ they neither had the ability nor authority to read from it. The Followers of Jesus were crucified from early on by Romans – self imposed bans on personal copies of bibles were issued by Church.

- Memorised / written records – Qur’an was compiled in the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). There are manuscripts which exist within 15 years of him being alive. Since the Prophet passed away in 632 CE and the Sana’a manuscripts have been carbon dated to 645-690 AD with 95 percent accuracy. Their real age may be even younger, since C-14 estimates the year of the death of an organism, and the process from that to the final writing on the parchment involves an unknown amount of time, with parchments often re-used. It was also memorised by thousands then and by tens of millions today - word for word.

- There are no original copies of any other religious book of Major World Religions even closely in line with period of revelation.

- Oldest Manuscripts for Bible exist in Greek and not native language of Jesus (AS) which is Aramaic.

- No original Hindu texts from the period they describe.

- Promotion – The Quran formed the social and religious code of conduct for a civilisation and was at the forefront of their education, political and economic system. It gave rise to one of the greatest empires ever known on Earth. There has never been a reign of any empire attributed solely to any other religious book.

- Details on its collectors/ scribes – The life and death of the scribes of the Quran and its method of collection have been reported categorically, repetitively and unanimously. The same cannot be said about other religious works for which even the names of the scribes are unknown let alone their credibility.

- The scribes of Religious Books of the OLD and NEW Testaments are either doubtful or quite simply unknown, with no knowledge of their genealogy, pedigree or companionship to Jesus.

- The Hindu scriptures original authors remain unknown and steeped in folklore
- The King James Version Bible is based on Erasmus which only used 2 manuscripts none of which dated earlier than 12th Century

Protection – The authority and power of its adherents

- How was it recorded – The Arabic Qur’an was collected in entirety at the time of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). It was memorised more so than recorded and this is not a criticism but an actual marvel since the majority of the world was illiterate at this time. Literacy is largely a modern world phenomenon; it became advantageous due to the industrial revolution when it made economic sense to educate the masses.

- How its people lived – In no time in History have the Muslims been wholly occupied by any non- Muslim force from the establishment of the first Islamic state in Madina. Therefore they have never been forced to compromise its teachings or message. In contrast there was no real emphasis on Christianity until Constantine became Christian and even then there were the Treaties of Nicaea. Occupation of Oriental lands by western forces and Communism, Enslavement of Jewish tribes (Egypt/Babylon) are also in contrast to the conditions of the Muslims.

- Was it ever forsaken – Muslims have had no period of captivity or collective institutionalised pressure which required the Quran to be modified, amended or edited to be acceptable to the status quo. The Jews have undergone periods of slavery (Torah unavailable at Babylon) and or persecution – Christian Middle Ages (no bible could be owned), Stalin’s communism over Russia;

Hindus were ruled by Muslims in India for Hundreds of years and the Communist Ideology continues to rule over oriental faiths. UK secular law is superior to Christianity and secular law prevails over Hinduism in India, as did the British Raj when many Hindu practices were banned.

- Does it have any competing texts – The narrations of the prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) have always been considered separate to The Qur’an and were therefore recorded and classified as a separate entity to such an extent that it gave birth to the profound field of the sciences of Hadith. In this field the narrators and the text of the hadith undergo scrutiny. This is in contrast to other religious books where it cannot be determined where footnotes and explanatory glosses by copyists or narrators have been appended to original text. Or there is disagreement between heretical versions of texts (Jehovah/Mormons) or simply between the Catholic Church and Protestant Reformation or Greek Orthodoxy.

Old Testament & New Testament? All good can only come forth when it is encapsulated in the standard belief of One God. The revelations must be considered in entirety and through the Quran we are able to do that. It confirms and clarifies what came before it and that it will remain as law till the end of time.

Old Testament: Summed up by 10 commandments – observe them while believing in the one true God. The prophets of the ‘old testament’ make no mention of divinity of Jesus (PBUH) nor that he can guarantee salvation or that salvation is through him? Therefore where will these prophets and their followers go?

New Testament: Jesus came to fulfil the law not to replace the law – so why introduce an alien concept of Trinity? or the divinity of man? If salvation is so important and the sole crux of the religion why are there no unequivocal statements of Jesus (PBUH) saying that he is God or to worship him?

Say, "O People of the Scripture, you are [standing] on nothing until you uphold [the law of] the Torah, the Gospel, and what has been revealed to you from your Lord." (Noble Quran 5:68)

So how should we present The Quran to “People of the Scripture”?

“O People of the Scripture, there has come to you Our Messenger making clear to you much of what you used to conceal of the Scripture and overlooking much. There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book.” (Noble Quran 5:15)

A good way to think about previous scriptures is that they have now become obsolete; much in the same way that a particular software version is updated by a newer release. The latest release has the most up to date compatibility with the hardware – in this case ‘Mankind’. In case you are wondering about an update...this is the final version (the final testament).

Contentions on events in the seerah

Certain episodes in the life of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) have been misconstrued and used as propaganda against his noble character. Our purpose is not to detail an exhaustive list of answers to contentions (these are widely available online). We will instead, look at 3 specific accusations and explain them in such a method that can be mapped onto answering any contention, where possible.

Answers must be presented appropriate to the audience; however when conveying the message, your job isn't to serve as an “Islamic Advice Bureau” on answering contentions and simply arguing justification for your religion. So although you can discuss the biological, Historical or Societal viewpoint, of a contention with a person, you must realise that it must be in the process of giving Da'wah; else the task can become futile. This is important, especially since you will not have conveyed the message and/or will not have answers to every question.

Marriage to Aisha (RA)

- Societal (Ethnocentric Attitudes) – Any society generally conforms to a set of mutually accepted rules. The fact that Aisha(RA) herself was already engaged prior to deciding on marrying the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) shows that she was already considered marriageable in that society.

Morality is relative not absolute, it varies from culture to culture and society to society. What is perceived to be moral in UK may not hold to be true in other parts of the world, such as Africa and Asia. Morality is also relative to time, fornication/dating little time ago was regarded as taboo and a matter of shame for the family. However, now this is a common habit, dating can start as early as at the age of 10. Another example would be dress code, which was very modest in history but not so much now.

- Historical – The greatest answer to this contention is that throughout Historical evidence the age of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) or of Aisha (RA) were never used by enemies of Islam to slander the good name of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). While there are examples of where the enemies wrote demeaning poetry we don't find details of this accusation.

History demonstrates that the age of marriage was low, in olden times women married when they reached puberty or even earlier. Even in the USA, two centuries ago, age of consent was 10 and as low as 7 in Delaware, even today in some countries like Mexico and Philippines, age of consent is as low as 12. It should not be too astonishing to find therefore that Aisha (RA) was mature enough, as medical evidences states that puberty can occur at the age of 9.

During the time of Jesus (peace be upon him) it was not unusual or shocking for prepubescent girls to be married, and these marriages would generally be followed by a waiting period to allow for the girl to reach a point of maturity before the marriage was consummated.[Vermes, Geza (1973) Jesus The Jew William Collins sons and Co Ltd, p.219-222]

Jewish commentaries point to the marriage of Rebecca (the Biblical mother of Esau and Jacob) when she was three years old to forty year old Isaac.

Ancient Jewish marriage customs evidently allowed for prepubescent girls to be married during Jesus's lifetime without any objection. Arguably, Jesus (peace be upon him) could have just as easily done away with the custom of marrying prepubescent girls if such marriages were frowned upon.

In 385 C.E, Christian Theologian and Philosopher, St Augustine (known for his writings that influenced Western Christianity and Philosophy) ended an out of wedlock relationship of 15 years to enter an arranged marriage with a 10 year old heiress of higher social standing. (Read Saint Augustine of Hippo. (2006) The Confessions of Saint Augustine Translated by Edward Bouverie Pusey Echo Library)

- The marriage was revealed to the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) in a dream and the dreams of the Prophets are a form of revelation from God.

"Narrated 'Aisha: Allah's Apostle said (to me), "You have been shown to me twice in (my) dreams. A man was carrying you in a silken cloth and said to me, 'This is your wife.' I uncovered it; and behold, it was you. I said to myself, 'If this dream is from Allah, He will cause it to come true.' "" (Sahih Bukhari, Volume 7, Book 62, Number 15)

There are many instances in the lives of the Prophets where they are directed by God to do a thing or other. The cases we look at in particular are the throwing of Moses (AS), while in the basket, into the river or the sacrificing of Ishmael (AS) by Abraham (AS). In both cases inspiration from God, seemingly strange, yet lead to very good consequences because God does not do evil. Aisha (RA) went on to become amongst the 7 most prolific narrators of the Prophets conduct (hadith) and in doing so was an integral part of the knowledge of the religion.

- Pedophilia?

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1998, definition of Paedophile is:

"Pedophile: also spelled PAEDOPHILIA, psychosexual disorder in which an adult's arousal and sexual gratification occur primarily through sexual contact with prepubescent children. The typical paedophile is unable to find satisfaction in an adult sexual relationship and may have low self-esteem, seeing sexual activity with a child as less threatening than that with an adult." Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1998.

Apart from Aisha (RA), all his wives were more than 16 years old at time of marriage. Indeed, his first wife was twice widowed before and was older than him by 15 years. All his wives except Aisha (RA) were widows. Therefore, it is evident that Prophet's marriage with Aisha (RA) was not a norm and the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) had absolutely no problems in having adult relationships.

Intervention against Tribe of Banu Quraiza

- Historical – They were sentenced according to mutual Jewish law. The Judgment passed by a former Jew, Sad ibn Mu'adh (RA), from the AWS tribe, was in accordance to the Torah as we see in Deuteronomy (20:10-14). The Banu Quraiza had agreed to take his verdict and it was him not Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) who sentenced them.

- Societal -traitors/treason – throughout history we see that countries have and will go to war if they are denied the right to exist. The Banu Quraiza broke the treaty between themselves and Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) in helping the attackers and not protecting the Muslims – had the attacking forces gained dominance the story could have been very different. Treason to the state is something which is still punishable by death in many countries. Even in the UK

and its overseas territories it wasn't until the adoption of the European charter on Human rights that all forms of death penalty were reconstituted to lesser sentences.

- The Qur'an speaks of how (33:26-27) the people of the scripture, in this case the Jews, had supported the Quraish during the battle of the trench and how God had caused them to become terrified and so give up the siege. They had broken their pledge with the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) and hence with God.

Polygamous (Polygyny)

- Historical –No prophet, including Jesus, in any of the monotheistic books states that polygyny is prohibited. Also from biblical sources we see that Abraham had 2 wives (Genesis 16:13), David had 2 wives (Samuel 27:3), Jacob had 4 wives (Genesis 29 to 30) and Solomon is reported to have had 700 wives (1Kings 11:3). The torah even classifies laws of inheritance for polygamous relationships (Deuteronomy 21:15-16). There are also examples of historical rulers or kings that had wives in the 1000's (Emperor Taizong).

- Societal – The restrictions on wedlock were to keep the Christian faiths in line with pagan models; marry one wife yet have an unlimited number of concubines or prostitutes. Therefore the rights of property, inheritance and genealogy of children would only be a privilege of the one wife. Wars, work related injuries, female infanticide, growing male homosexuality, the fact that female foetus is stronger than the males and is therefore more prone to survive; cause the male population to fall below the female population – if there are not enough males for females what solution do we have for those women- who want to get married?

- Biological – In the absence of divine law, like many evolutionists propose, humans are nothing more than animals and our sole existence is survival – why even have wives? Why not just rampant satisfaction of urges? Why have the institutions of marriage with its laws and vows, with rules of inheritance and good keeping? Here we could open the door to the alpha male being the only one allowed to mate, therefore only he can take partners. You see how in the absence of God we are reduced to animals in name and also in nature.

- The Qur'an is the only religious text which actually advises to marry only one (see Qur'an 4:3); with the pretext to marrying up to a maximum of 4, being just (between them all). Even the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was not allowed to take on any more wives at a certain point (see Qur'an 33:52). Also in terms of the Prophet (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) being allowed to marry more than 4 – there were, in contrast, acts of worship which he was obligated exclusively to perform such as night prayers (see Qur'an 17:79).

Resource Sites

www.justdawah.org

www.onereason.org

www.theinimitablequran.com

www.hamzatzortzis.com

www.testthemessage.com

www.missionislam.com